Discourse:
The Journal of the Speech Communication
Association of South Dakota

Volume 2
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DEDICATION

"The mind is not a vessel that needs filling,
but wood that needs igniting."  Plutarch

Our premier volume last year began with a quotation by Sir Isaac Newton, who said, “If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.” Once again, our work stands on the shoulders of those who have served and those who still serve as our teachers, our mentors, our peers and our predecessors.

The current volume is dedicated to a living giant in our midst whose teaching, debate coaching and judging has ignited and continues to ignite the minds of literally thousands of students, both in South Dakota and across the country. We dedicate Volume II of Discourse: The Journal of the Speech Communication Association of South Dakota to Judy Kroll. Her achievements, experience and advice for new educators, especially those charged with directing speech activities, are highlighted in an article by Andrea Carlile that begins on page 15 of this volume. Thank you, Judy, for your ongoing service to our discipline.
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DISCOURSE MISSION STATEMENT

Discourse: The Journal of the Speech Communication Association of South Dakota publishes original articles from academics and professionals of all levels in communication, rhetoric, forensics, theatre and other speech-related or theatre-related activities. As such, the journal embraces the interdisciplinary nature of the field of speech communication. The journal accepts articles with the diverse range of concerns of the theoretical to the applied, from the humanities to the social sciences, and from the scholarly to the pedagogical. The journal’s primary audience is constituted of teachers and scholars in communication, theater, and English; and coaches of speech, debate and theatre performance activities.

A part of the vision of this journal is the education of all people involved in the journal experience: the reader, the author, the reviewers, and even those involved the editorial process. Works considered for publication will be of high quality and contribute to the knowledge and practices of the SCASD community. While manuscripts should be written with clear, efficient, and readable prose, our educational philosophy for the journal underpins our requesting constructive critique for all reviews. Reviewers should strive to provide professional, productive, and civil feedback to the editor and author. For insight into the review process, we request that all of our reviewers please consult the following article on peer review: http://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2013/sep/27/peer-review-10-tips-research-paper.
CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS VOLUME 3, FALL 2016

*Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD* is seeking original manuscripts for Volume 3, to be published Fall 2016. The journal is generalist in scope and nature. As such, we seek theoretical, applied, and pedagogical (Great Ideas for Teaching—GIFT) articles from the various interest areas of the fields of communication, rhetoric and theatre. Submissions are welcome from either in-state or out-of-state scholars. Manuscripts are accepted from academics and professionals of all levels in communication, rhetoric, forensics, theatre and other speech-related or theatre-related activities. Please indicate whether the manuscript is being submitted to either (1) the theory and research or (2) the GIFT section of the journal. Research or GIFTs grounded in communication or theatre theory are encouraged.

All submissions will undergo a review process, and select manuscripts will be shortlisted for blind review by at least two peer scholars. Shortlisted authors must commit to a timeline for revision, resubmission and potential publication.

**SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

All manuscripts should be double-spaced Word documents, using 10-12-point font (Times, Courier, or Calibri type). Manuscripts must be submitted following the current APA or MLA style guidelines, however, if accepted for publication, a manuscript submitted in MLA must be converted to APA style during the author’s revision process. Theory or research submissions should be no more than 7000 words in length. GIFT submissions must be 2000 words or less if they report on a one-time class activity, and may be up to 2500 words if they are about a semester-long project. Manuscripts should contain no material that identifies the author (Remove all identifiers in the properties of the document (go File | Properties | Summary and delete your name and affiliation. Then re-save the document prior to submitting).

- Authors should submit a separate title page that includes an abstract of no more than 125 words, author’s name/s, job title/s, institutional affiliation/s, educational affiliation/s, and the physical mail address, telephone number and e-mail address of the main contact for the submission.
- A separate cover letter must also accompany the submission. The cover letter must contain the following information: (1) the title of the manuscript; (2) the author’s name/s and institutional affiliation/s; (2) the first author’s/contact person’s mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number and (3) A statement attesting to the author’s adherence to ethical guidelines, as they apply to the submitted work.
- These guidelines include those set forth by of the National Communication Association Code of Professional Ethics for Authors (See NCA website or write NCA, 1765 N Street NW, Washington, DC 20036), which are as follows:
  1. The manuscript is original work and proper publication credit is accorded to all authors.
  2. Simultaneous editorial consideration of the manuscript at another publication venue is prohibited.
  3. Any publication history of the manuscript is disclosed, indicating in particular whether the manuscript or another version of it has been presented at a conference, or published electronically, or whether portions of the manuscript have been published previously.
4. Duplicate publication of data is avoided; or if parts of the data have already been reported, then that fact is acknowledged.
5. All legal, institutional, and professional obligations for obtaining informed consent from research participants and for limiting their risk are honored.
6. The scholarship reported is authentic.

Manuscripts submitted to Discourse must conform to these guidelines and include language that is inclusive and non-defamatory.

DEADLINE

The deadline for all submissions for Volume 3 of Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD (published in Fall 2016) is March 1st, 2016, by midnight. All submissions are to be E-mailed to Anthony M. Wachs, Upcoming Editor, Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD, at sdspeechcomm@gmail.com

For more information or assistance with the submission process, contact the editor by telephone at 605.626.7706, or through the above email address.
2015 SPEECH COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH DAKOTA AWARDS

SCASD Outstanding Young Speech Teacher.......................... Amanda Nelson

Distinguished Service Award........................................... Kevin Brick

Hall of Fame Award....................................................... Doug Tschetter

Hall of Fame Award....................................................... Kris Hayes
FROM THE EDITOR

Message from the Editor: The Power of Community
By Karla Hunter

“Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.”
— Andrew Carnegie

Once again, our volume represents the combined efforts of dozens, including submitting authors, reviewers, and editors. Once again, we, the editors of Discourse, owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to all of them. The passion and dedication that launched this newly-revitalized journal after a 20-year hiatus could not be sustained without the breadth and depth of the support we continue to receive.

It is through this spirit of collegiality and collaboration that we strive to continue our service to the communication discipline. Our lead invited article by Joshua Westwick and Kelli J. Chromey celebrates an incredible outcome of the community building power of our classes. The second invited article by Andrea Carlile highlights the wisdom of one of the debate community’s greats—long-time debate coach and judge Judy Kroll, to whom this volume is dedicated.

Two research articles appear in this volume. The first, by Scott Anderson, analyzes the history and implications surrounding President Obama’s rhetoric in response to a racial controversy; and the second, by John R. Katsion, provides an analysis of the communicative power of the visual images that appear on currency.

Our section of Great Ideas For Teaching Students (GIFTS) this year begins with an article that argues for the importance of expanding our teaching of rhetoric to include non-Western cultures and outlines a method for doing so (Sarah Drury). The section continues with GIFTS to help us strengthen our students’ abilities to assess logical fallacies (Nancy Bressler), and to empower our students in the quest for social justice (Phillip E. Wagner), followed by those offering tools to aid students in day-to-day conversations (Nathaniel Simmons) and in their ever-increasing needs for virtual teaming skills (Brian C. Britt & Kristen Hatten). The volume closes with an only slightly-tongue-in-cheek recommendation for helping students overcome the fear of giving constructive criticism in peer feedback by playing out and discussing a slightly embarrassing instructor scenario (Stephanie Kelly).

As a scholar and an instructor, I am as enthusiastic about grasping, applying, and teaching the combined knowledge, wisdom, and experience this volume offers as I am about the privilege of bringing it to you.
Invited Article

A Life-Changing GIFT: The Impact of Classroom Climate and Community Building

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Abstract
The study of classroom climate and community has been a hallmark of communication education research for several decades (Dwyer et al., 2004). This wealth of meaningful research has provided scholars and instructors an abundance of practical strategies and knowledge to help develop and strengthen classroom climate and community. Moreover, this research has illustrated the relevance and need for a positive classroom climate and community within our educational institutions. The impact of creating a community-oriented classroom climate was documented by Dwyer et al. (2004), who found that, “Fostering a positive climate and sense of community for students in educational settings has been linked with retention and academic success” (p. 265). Considering the notable educational value of this initiative, the importance of developing a supportive classroom climate becomes apparent. Recognizing the necessity of community development to student success, this essay describes the key elements of classroom climate and community, presents a unique activity to begin building community in the classroom, and concludes by discussing an extraordinary student bond forged through community development in one of our courses.

Elements of Classroom Climate and Community

Many instructors recognize the importance of climate and community development within the classroom and have taken steps to include these elements which can be designed to increase student success. From a pedagogical perspective, overlooking these elements of the course design may have potential negative impacts for students. David and Capraro (2001) posited that, “Teachers who fail in the attempt to build a classroom community will in turn classify students by their ability and will often negatively influence the achievement of those students” (p. 81). Thus, understanding the components of community and climate within the classroom can aid

Joshua N. Westwick, Ed.D., is an Assistant Professor of Communication Studies and Theatre and Director of the Basic Communication Course at South Dakota State University. In addition to teaching the basic course, he teaches General Communication, Small Group Communication, and Instructional Methods. His research interests include instructional communication, communication apprehension, and the basic course. His research has been published in Communication Education, the Basic Course Annual, and several state journals.

Kelli J. Chromey, M.S. (SDSU, 2013) is a doctoral student and Assistant Basic Course Director at North Dakota State University. Her research areas include the basic course, organizational communication, and impostor phenomenon.
instructors’ ability to develop and refine classroom activities which can improve community and climate in the classroom. Additionally, we can potentially improve students’ academic achievement and development.

According to Rosenfeld (1983), communication climate is defined as “the social/psychological context within which relationships occur” (p. 167). Although initially developed to help assess group interaction (Rosenfeld, 1983), the concept of communication climate has also focused on research which explores the impact of communication climate within educational settings (Dywer, 2004; Gillen et al., 2011; Johnson, 2009; Meyers, 1995; Rosenfeld, 1983).

While a clear definition of classroom climate has not been agreed upon (Gillen, Wright, & Spink, 2011), Myers (1995) suggested that “students’ perception of climate rests on how well teachers establish an environment in which mutual interaction is valued, encouraged, and supported” (p. 193). A positive classroom climate exists when student-to-teacher and student-to-student interactions are an important and respected component of the course design. Booker (2008) explored the role of the teacher and peers in developing community in the classroom. The results of this study indicated that the role of the instructor, followed by the role of peers, had a significant impact on the students’ sense of belonging within the classroom community. This research illustrates the value of providing opportunities for interaction, not only between the teacher and student, but also between students. Achieving the aforementioned interactions within the classroom can be established by a systematic process which often begins on the first day of instruction.

Creating Classroom Community

David and Capraro (2001) suggested that there are various methods used to create community within the classroom. Allen (2000) suggested that, “The first step in creating community in the classroom is helping students drop their guard long enough to begin to get to know one another and their teacher as people” (pp. 24-25). The beginning of the semester is an excellent time to begin building community and encouraging students to interact with each other and the instructor. One way instructors can facilitate this is through the use of icebreakers at the beginning of a new class (Barkley, 2010). Generally, these icebreakers occur within the first couple of days of the semester and are designed to help students form relationships with their peers and instructors. This relationship development is vital to building a sense of community in the classroom that can help students feel secure and supported (Allen, 2000).

Additionally, “students should develop a process of understanding, sharing, compassion and empathy” (David & Capraro, 2001, p. 81). Thus, instructors should create opportunities at the beginning of the semester, and throughout the course, for dialogue, which allows students an opportunity to engage one another. This is especially significant for our undergraduate students as their need for inclusion and communal belonging is particularly relevant (Booker, 2008). Allen (2000) explained that, “Students need to feel not only that their teacher and classmates know a little about them, but that they are accepted for who they are, too” (pp. 25-26). Thus, in order to effectively develop the classroom community and climate instructors must offer their student’s opportunities to disclose about themselves and to establish trust amongst their peers. We have found great success through the use of an interactive activity at the beginning of the semester which focused on breaking down communication barriers and increasing the breadth and depth of the student-to-student and student-to-faculty relationship.
Comm Besties: An Activity to Build a Supportive Classroom Climate and Community

Interviewing and introducing a classmate is an icebreaker that has been used repeatedly in several communication classrooms. The activity encourages students both to speak publicly and to become acquainted with their classmates. The authors of this manuscript have used this activity for a number of years; however, we put a unique spin on it to enhance the community development and classroom climate. In order to better acquaint students and help them feel comfortable with one another in the class, we created the “Comm Bestie” activity.

In this activity, students are asked to find a partner and spend time in class getting to know that individual. Random selection of the pairings is important to ensure that students create a new friendship during the class rather than choose a person they may already know. Students ask questions of their fellow classmate that any best friend should know (e.g., hometown, hobbies, something unique about them). After ten minutes of discussion, the students are asked to introduce their new Comm Bestie to the rest of the class.

When this part of the activity concludes, we inform the students that the student they interviewed and introduced is now their Comm Bestie for the semester. We then provide some instructions and guidelines for the pairs. Should their Comm Bestie miss a class session, they have someone to contact for class notes or questions. Additionally, they have someone to look to for a reassuring smile if they are feeling nervous during a speech. Finally, each student has someone with whom they can feel comfortable discussing course concepts or individual challenges that may arise during the semester. This activity heeds Johnson’s (2009) advice to develop multiple opportunities for peers to interact continually throughout the course.

Our hope when engaging in the Comm Bestie activity is to create a friendship amongst the student pair that will last throughout the academic semester and even outside of the classroom into remaining college semesters. This activity begins to build the class community and develop a supportive communication climate. Community is built through discussion and disclosure when students begin to personally disclose and understand each other (David & Capraro, 2001) thus creating an inclusive classroom environment (Booker, 2008).

An Extraordinary Outcome of Classroom Community Building

The outcomes of establishing a strong classroom community extend beyond the outcomes of empirical research. In certain situations the impact of community building can have surprising and life-changing outcomes. One particular life-changing case occurred during the fall semester of 2011, when two students were arbitrarily assigned to be Comm Besties. During the course of the semester, the two randomly-assigned Comm Besties became friends. In a local newspaper, one of the students recalled how their friendship developed in the class: "We sat next to each other and I think we exchanged maybe a handful of sentences and we just knew that we were best friends at that point. It was really strange, but it was pretty cool" (Kubal, 2015).

Unbeknownst to the instructor, the friendship they developed in the classroom continued well beyond the end of the semester. As relationships evolve they grow in both breadth and depth. That is, as the relationship progresses individuals feel increasingly more comfortable sharing more topics with one another and more comfortable going into greater detail with those topics (Gamble & Gamble, 2014). The relationship between our, now former, students continued to grow for some time. In fact, it was long into their friendship when one of the
students disclosed her medical history with the other and explained that one day she would need to have a kidney transplant.

What started out as a joke and friendly banter about being an organ donor soon became a reality. In May 2014, three years after the students met and became Comm Besties, one of the students donated her kidney to the other. As The South Dakota State University Collegian (Smith, 2014) described it, the connection created in the South Dakota State University basic communication course “turned into an inseparable bond when one girl stepped up in her friend’s time of need” (p. A1). Though this extraordinary outcome may not be typical in many classrooms, students choosing to continue their Comm Bestie friendships outside the classroom is typical at our university and has positive impacts on student success – and changes lives.

Conclusion

Allen (2000) writes about the intrinsic value of getting to know each other as individuals in the classroom as well as the positive outcomes of classroom community creation. When classroom climate and community become keystones of an instructors pedagogical roadmap amazing things can happen in the classroom. Allen (2000) stated, “The atmosphere of acceptance creates an environment for a lot of positive things to happen” (p. 24). As illustrated in this essay, extraordinary outcomes are possible. The friendship between the two students enrolled in the basic communication course developed through the process of understanding, sharing, compassion, and empathy (David & Caparao, 2001). In our example, creating a community in our classroom resulted in the most positive thing to happen, a true friendship was formed that extended beyond the classroom. Additionally, a student’s life was saved. Community building within the communication discipline holds the potential to foster meaningful, enduring, and even life-changing relationships.

References


Invited Article

Spotlight on Distinguished Service: Judy Kroll

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As a young forensics educator, I am constantly reminded that my work, like the work of *Discourse*, stands on the shoulders of giants. Keeping the roots of forensics education alive is essential in growing the activity. For me our Aristotelian roots remain ever present because Aristotle’s pursuit of truth lies at the core of modern forensic activity. He once wrote, “Those who educate children well are more to be honored than they who produce them; for these only gave them life, those the art of living well.” This sentiment encapsulates the essence of a forensics giant from South Dakota, Judy Kroll. While this National Forensics League (NFL) Hall of Fame member officially retired from the classroom at Brookings High School in 2012 after 32 years, she continues to be a formidable force within the forensics community. She recently took the time to answer some questions for *Discourse* about her career as a debate coach.

1. How did you become involved with forensics?
I became involved in high school. I did not do it as a freshman but a lot of my friends were involved, so I decided to try as a sophomore and I was hooked. My coach, John Westby, encouraged me to attend Northern and I ended up in Speech and Debate Education. End of story.

2. What have you enjoyed most about coaching?
The kids I coached were, and still are, amazing. The relationships I gained were worth every single minute of the thousands of hours put in. Also, many of the best friends I still have were, and are, in this activity.

3. Would you please share one or two favorite coaching experiences?
Two of my favorites:
A. In the year 2000 we qualified 3 teams in policy debate to the National NFL Tournament. These kids were able to accumulate a record 72 rounds of debate (more than any other team in the nation, and the record still stands). They also were the first two teams from the same school to be the last two undefeated teams ever in policy debate. We ended up debating ourselves, and we ended up in the final round. The students placed 2nd, 3rd, and 38th.
B. It may seem odd but another favorite time was always during any given year when my first year students would understand the term INHERENCY.

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1 Questions adapted from Central States Communication Association Newsletter.

Andrea Carlile (MA, South Dakota State University) is the Director of Forensics at South Dakota State University. She is the 2013 recipient of Pi Kappa Delta’s Bob Derryberry Outstanding Contributions from a new Forensics Educator award, and the 2014 recipient of the Speech Communication Association of South Dakota’s Outstanding Young Speech Teacher Award. In her brief tenure at SDSU she has coached the 2013 and 2014 South Dakota Intercollegiate Forensics Association Champions and qualified students to the AFA-NIET.
4. What advice do you have for new coaches?
My advice is:
A. Know that you are making a big commitment if your goal is having a competitive team.
B. If you are in teaching, then don’t forget to educate. Teach them to understand the material. Don't do their work for them--teach them how to do it themselves. Teach them that this is a life-long activity to help them be successful in life. The goal is not about winning, but about learning how to work hard, cooperate, make life-long friends, have fun, learn that ethics and honesty will and should follow you forever... I could go on. If you take on this job you become a role model. Students want you to be their hero. They want to know you and for you to know them. So, you have a great responsibility. Do these things and they will be successful and follow you anywhere.

5. How has your involvement with SCASD benefited you with professional and networking opportunities?
SCASD has given me so many things. 1. This is where I learned that coaching was about educating and not just winning. 2. This is where I truly found that I had a font of knowledge to tap. I loved listening to the experienced educators who I learned to revere and eventually call friend. We don't always think that history is important but I learned from my elders that keeping this organization going was important for many reasons, but that education was at the forefront. Finally, everyone must give back to the organization, and everything else in life, in order to keep things going. You can't be selfish with your time and knowledge.

Kroll’s insights into forensics embody the notion that she is one who strives to educate our children in the art of living well. As she reflects on a career that has included achievements most coaches only hope to reach, she keeps the purpose of forensics at the center: education and relationships. Kroll’s focus on education and relationships are at the core of what I believe compels myself and a new generation of forensics educators. We all too often view ourselves as coaches first and educators second, but if we are truly, truly, living up to words of our forefather Aristotle, being a great educator like Judy Kroll will propel us and our students into a life well-lived. Kroll is certainly giant whose shoulders we stand upon.
A Guilty Conscience:
Barack Obama and America’s Guilt in “A More Perfect Union”

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Abstract
On March 18, 2008, Barack Obama addressed the status of racial equality in America in a speech titled “A More Perfect Union.” The speech came on the heels of a media firestorm that erupted around Reverend Jeremiah Wright, Obama’s religious advisor and friend, whom media accused of harboring allegedly racist and anti-American sentiment. The association with Wright undermined Obama’s status as the post-racial candidate and threatened to derail his presidential bid. Using Kenneth Burke’s dramatistic process (the guilt-purification-redemption cycle), this article argues that Obama’s use of guilt may have contributed to his success. In the speech Obama elucidated three types of guilt concerning racial inequality: Obama’s guilt, the guilt of European Americans, and the guilt of African Americans. Although the disparate notions of guilt evoked by the speech had the potential to divide America across racial lines initially, it helped Obama preserve his candidacy and provided a foundation for America’s redemption.

Key Words: Barack Obama, Racial Inequality, Guilt, Dramatism, Victimage, Scapegoat, Mortification, Purification, and Kenneth Burke

Introduction
The candidacy of Barack Obama heightened America’s racial awareness more than any other presidential election in recent history (Tesler and Sears 52). With a race-neutral approach, Obama ascended the highest rank in American politics, becoming the forty-fourth US President (Nagourney n. pag.; Helman n. pag.). In fact, even prior to his success in the 2008 primary election, news media hailed Obama as the post-racial candidate who transcended the division of identity politics in the post-civil rights era (Hoagland n. pag.; Schorr n. pag.; Steele n. pag.). Obama’s journey to the White House, however, did not go unimpeded. In early March, he encountered his most critical exigency to date with the controversy surrounding Reverend Jeremiah Wright of Chicago’s Trinity United Church of Christ, Obama’s pastor and friend of more than two decades. As snippets of Wright excoriating a “white America” and the “US of KKK” circulated endlessly on social media, Obama’s association with Wright made national headlines (qtd. in Kantor n. pag.).

On March 18, 2008, from the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Obama addressed the Wright controversy in a speech titled “A More Perfect Union.” Although the conservative news media sensationalized Obama’s connection to Wright in an effort to thwart his candidacy, most pundits responded favorably to the speech. David Broder proclaimed it “politically ambitious, intellectually impressive, and emotionally compelling,” calling it Obama’s “most important [speech] . . . since his keynote at the 2004 Democratic National
Eli Saslow sounded a more conciliatory note when he said of Obama’s invocation, “He’s trying to remain loyal to his pastor but also differentiate himself politically” (n. pag.). Charles Krauthammer, by contrast, called the speech a “brilliantly sophistic justification of . . . scandalous dereliction” (n. pag.). Perhaps the fairest assessment came from Sean Carroll, who explained that Obama responded with a “nuanced and honest assessment of race-based resentment in America” (n. pag.). While critiques ranged from laudatory to scathing, nearly all recognized the speech as a defining moment for Obama.

Critical examinations have acknowledged Obama’s attempt to unite America through a color-blind message that crosses multiple demographic lines (Darsey; Terrill; Frank). An alternative interpretation, however, reveals that guilt may have contributed to Obama’s success in “A More Perfect Union.” That proved key given that guilt, in the context of racial inequality, occupies a prominent place in the American psyche (Mitchell n. pag.); prior assessments of the speech had overlooked that element. Guilt—rarely viewed through a positive lens and seldom a preferred rhetorical strategy among political candidates—holds motivational value. As Kenneth Burke reminds us, when people experience guilt, they seek ways to correct it (Permanence 284).

Using Burke’s dramatistic process—the cycle in which people experience guilt, seek ways to purify it, and achieve redemption—and other theoretical insight on guilt, I interrogate the question, “How does Obama purify his and America’s guilt concerning racial inequality in ‘A More Perfect Union’ and provide America a path to redemption?” I demonstrate how three layers of guilt manifest in the speech: Obama’s guilt, the guilt of European Americans, and the guilt of African Americans. Although the different types of guilt in the speech had the potential to divide America across racial lines initially, it helped Obama move beyond his association with Wright, preserve his candidacy, and provide a foundation for solidarity between white people and people of color on the issue of racial equality. To help America achieve redemption, Obama established a foundation for both purification strategies to operate. Purification, the process by which people attempt to expel and cleanse guilt, occurs through victimage or mortification (Girard 18; Foss, Foss, and Trapp 209). Victimage, the more common of the two, manifests in a scapegoat who is blamed for society’s problems, as when someone assigns blame to an external source. Mortification, by contrast, is a self-inflicted sacrifice. In Permanence and Change, Burke defined mortification as “a scrupulous and deliberate clamping of limitation upon the self” (289). For example, one may decide to leave the credit card at home before a trip to the mall to reduce the urge to spend unearned money, or choose to avoid the ice cream aisle at the grocery store when doing the weekly shopping to avoid the tendency to overindulge. In any case, through mortification we deny ourselves the impulse to act on a certain behavior. While Obama purified his guilt through victimage by scapegoating news media and government institutions, America’s purification will happen through mortification. Obama asked listeners to sacrifice their racialized worldviews and invest simultaneously in the modern welfare state to protect and ensure equality for future generations.¹

Examining Obama’s speech in this way yields at least two insights for rhetorical scholarship. First, it calls for reconsideration of the ways in which guilt functions in the dramatistic framework. While the tendency exists to treat guilt as a singular concept, I demonstrate how Obama’s speech elicits three distinct notions of guilt concerning one topic—

¹ For this essay, I use Michael Omi and Howard Winant’s definition of “racialization.” They conclude that racialization occurs when a dominant group ascribes an identity, racial or otherwise, to a subordinate group for the purpose of continued domination (71). For an extended conversation, see their book Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s.
racial inequality. A close examination of how these three notions intersect illuminates how guilt can manifest simultaneously for speakers and their audiences, and the ways in which rhetoricians can utilize different strategies for purification. Although Burke’s model asserts that a speaker may employ the scapegoat or mortification, few rhetorical studies examine the intersection of both approaches. Second, examining Obama’s speech from this perspective challenges the characterization of his discourse as inclusive. Although the end goal for Obama and America is equality, Obama first cultivates a sense of division between European and African Americans on the basis of America’s guilt over racial inequality. This division, however, has the potential to create what Brian Jackson calls an “alchemic” fusion of two conflicted audiences with different notions of guilt through appeals to a higher value: the assurance of equality for future generations (49).

In pursuing these claims, this essay proceeds in four parts. First, I contextualize Obama’s speech within the history of the black church, unpack the rhetorical problem brought forth by Wright, and demonstrate how Obama’s use of guilt challenges existing rhetorical scholarship on his discourse. Second, I offer a theoretical discussion of the dramatistic process that demonstrates the manifestation of three layers of guilt in Obama’s speech: Obama’s guilt as the “bad conscience” conceived by Friedrich Nietzsche; the membership guilt experienced by European Americans; and the existential guilt experienced by African Americans, as theorized by Martin Buber. Third, I analyze the speech and show how both scapegoating and mortification are required for Obama’s and America’s redemption. Finally, I conclude by discussing how Obama’s use of guilt helped him disavow his ascribed post-racial identity, and I explain how my reading of the speech contributes to our understanding of guilt as a rhetorical strategy.

**Overcoming Defiance and Opposition in the Black Church**

More than Jeremiah Wright, the exigency of Obama’s rhetorical situation materialized from generations of defiance in the black church. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the political and social imperative of slavery, and what it left in its wake, caused the black church to operate in defense against oppressive white culture. According to Hans Baer and Merrill Singer, religion in this context provided a source of identification and a form of self-expression for many African Americans who were trying to make sense of their surroundings (xvii). Religious scholar C. Eric Lincoln explained that during its inception, the black church emphasized that African Americans were not God’s curse, nor did their existence mean serving white “masters” (qtd. in Billingsley xxiii). Simply put, the black church developed in social resistance but also sought a unique place within organized religion. The black church thus found its origin, not through established religion in America, but in acknowledging what it meant to be an African American living through slavery (Billingsley 13; Baer and Singer 4).

As European Americans asserted their position in the racial hierarchy during the slavery and post-slavery eras with violence, public lynchings, and economic retaliation, the black church continued to provide spiritual sustenance to its constituents and sought ways to counter white oppression (Tribble xvii; Clardy 203). At the dawn of the twentieth century, W.E.B. Du Bois’s vision of pastoral ministry directed the goals of many black preachers. In this vision, ministers were moral leaders who mobilized people for community involvement and congregational development.

Since the last quarter of the twentieth century, the persistence of inequality between the races has represented an integral part of the black worship experience—especially with regard to
cultural, political, and socioeconomic policies (Clardy 205). For example, African Americans in post-civil rights America face a resurgence of blatant racism and, for the first time in history, the economic and social distinctions among people of color create internal tensions that previously did not exist (Pinn 28; Billingsley 187). People of color continue to compete with white people, but now also with each other in unprecedented ways. According to Pinn, the struggles of the 1960s produced a black middle class that enjoyed new advantages in the 1970s and 1980s (34). The emergence of the black middle class, coupled with the development of black secular institutions and the increase in rivaling black religions, complicated Du Bois’s pastoral vision. These new challenges fragmented the black church and its common vision of earlier times (Tribble 8). For these reasons, the black church has experienced difficulty carrying out its dual mission of salvation and liberation (Tribble 87).

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the black church confirmed over 25 million members in more than 63,000 congregations, creating a division that continues to reinforce the need for transformative leadership (Pinn 35; Tribble 88). Jeremiah Wright is one pioneer who leads the call for reform. With a message rooted in Black Theology of Liberation, Wright condemns oppressive institutions and urges African Americans to support a vision of faith unlike white evangelical Christianity (Walker and Smithers 31; Saslow n. pag.). Liberation and salvation, for Wright, will occur when African Americans enjoy full equality. In his capacity as senior pastor at Chicago’s Trinity United Church of Christ from 1972 to 2008, Wright delivered sermons that articulated tension and unrest within the African American community (Clardy 205). Although media characterized him as a black racist, Wright impacted Trinity and its congregants in positive ways. By 1986, he had mentored more than a dozen young preachers through Trinity. In 1990, Trinity founder Reverend Kenneth B. Smith commended Wright’s dynamic leadership as a reflection of the pride that people take in the church (Billingsley 172). In 2008, however, Wright reminded America of the long road ahead on the journey to equality, and his comments reopened wounds thought by many to have healed over time. As the controversy surrounding Wright’s inflammatory comments continued to shock, America wondered how Obama would respond.

The negative attention surrounding Wright created a unique rhetorical challenge that summoned Obama to respond publicly. According to Clarence Walker and Gregory Smithers, Obama’s association with Wright threatened to derail his presidential bid (14), and Obama’s chief strategist, David Axelrod, recognized that Wright’s rhetoric undermined Obama’s “well-cultivated post-racial image” (qtd. in Tesler and Sears 4). Others corroborated Axelrod’s observation and noted that Obama’s association with Trinity emphasized his “blackness” (Walker and Smithers 53). Voters showed a similar concern, and in many instances Wright’s statements alarmed Americans. Democrats feared that Obama’s connection to Wright would cost him the election (Tesfamariam n. pag.), and many acknowledged that the pastor seemed “a world away from the calm and considerate image that Obama . . . presents” (Broder n. pag.). On March 18, 2008, Obama responded to Wright and the status of racial inequality in America in “A More Perfect Union.”

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2 Tribble explains that transformative pastoral leadership encompasses ministry that is engaged in changing people, churches, and communities.

3 According to Walker and Smithers, Black Theology of Liberation is a Christian movement created by black ministers in the late 1960s. The movement’s leaders believed that the teachings of Jesus Christ held a positive message for people of color, despite the racism they encountered from white Christian Americans.
Critical assessments of Obama have acknowledged his ability to create a message that transcends party and demographic lines. For example, in his analysis of Obama’s 2008 campaign speeches, James Darsey argued that Obama used the metaphor of a journey to project an experience relating to all Americans. The success, for Darsey, resided in Obama’s ability to unite his personal journey with America’s national journey (89). In the same vein as Darsey, Robert Rowland and John Jones argued that Obama, through a metaphor of hope in his speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention, balanced communal and individual values, thus making the American Dream seem more attainable for every American (“Recasting” 442). David Frank and Mark McPhail viewed Obama’s convention speech as an attempt to cultivate racial reconciliation. Although Frank argued that Obama linked minority and identity groups to shared American values, McPhail remained skeptical, explaining that Obama reinforced a discourse of whiteness through its dominant rhetorical tropes: innocence, race neutrality, and positive self-presentation (583). As these critiques show, a central theme has remained on America’s ability, or lack thereof, to coalesce in order to overcome its differences, racial or otherwise.

The literature on “A More Perfect Union” has reinforced the characterization of Obama’s discourse as inclusive. Rowland and Jones recognized Obama’s ability to unite America through racial acknowledgement and commended Obama “for honestly confronting the most controversial and emotional issue in American politics, race” (“One Dream” 125). Judy Isaksen concurred, explaining that Obama occupied a middle-of-the-road spot that transcended the “bipolar” problem and put forth a new position that “calmly” but “substantively” confronted racial progress (457; 468). For Robert Terrill, Obama’s embodiment of double consciousness, W.E.B. Dubois’s invitation and call for people to view themselves through the perspective of others, enabled listeners to invoke the Golden Rule and helped them “find that common stake we all have in one another” (374-381). David Frank explained that Obama contextualized race in religious terms. He used the prophetic tradition, which merges Jewish and Christian faith with the experiences of African Americans, to wage acknowledgement between the races and emphasize “carnal recognition” (“Prophetic” 167-171). Frank observed a similar strategy at work in Obama’s first inaugural address and claimed that Obama employed a “multi-faceted conception” of religion that catered to a diverse audience with differing beliefs and values (“Rhetorical Signature” 619). Most scholars agree that Obama’s discourse holds the potential to unite America in shared values, whether through invoking the Golden Rule, the American Dream, or an all-encompassing conception of religion.

My work on “A More Perfect Union” offers a slightly different explanation for Obama’s success, and challenges the characterization of his discourse as patently inclusive. While I agree with Terrill that Obama succeeds in enabling listeners to employ the Golden Rule, I remain skeptical that shared optimism about the future is enough to transcend America’s turbulent racial history. America must first acknowledge and work through its guilt concerning racial inequality, past and present, before it can focus on preserving the future for subsequent generations. Contrary to Isaksen, my reading of the speech has Obama emphasizing America’s violent racial history. Rather than “calmly” and “substantively” confront racial progress, I hold that Obama forcefully and unabashedly illuminates the guilt that exists between the races. While progress narratives have a tendency to downplay the reality of any discrepancies that may exist between the races, an emphasis on guilt brings inequality to the fore. I would echo most of the scholarship that claims Obama’s rhetoric holds the possibility for transcendence, but I maintain it is not through universal appeals or inclusive metaphors that Obama’s discourse will help America overcome its differences—nor did it contribute to his success in overcoming the rhetorical
problem in “A More Perfect Union.” Rather, Obama deployed a tripartite construction of guilt in the speech to help mitigate the damage caused by Wright, salvage his presidential campaign, and provide a foundation for America to work through racial tension of past and present. While the end goal for Obama, and America as a whole, is equality, it is through the production of the racial guilt in the speech that America recognizes its stake in preserving the future. The potential for transcendence exists not in America’s future but in its ability to work through a racialized past and invest in government programs such as healthcare, education, and welfare in the present.

In the following section I discuss guilt, victimage, and mortification in the Burkean framework. First, I outline the three types of guilt that materialize in the speech: Obama’s guilt as a result of “bad conscience,” European Americans’ collective guilt, and the existential guilt of African Americans. I then demonstrate how this multilayered construction requires the simultaneous use of a scapegoat and mortification for purification.

**Guilt, Victimage, and Mortification**

The relationship between rhetoric and emotion has been acknowledged since the time of Aristotle. Emotions, in his work, represent the feelings people experience, which have the potential to affect the judgments they make. Aristotle maintained that when people argue, they must do more than make a claim worthy of belief; they must also put listeners in the right frame of mind. “[P]ersuasion,” he explained, “may come through the hearers, when the speech stirs their emotions. Our judgments when we are pleased and friendly are not the same as when we are pained and hostile” (Book I, Chapter II, Paragraph III). For example, to arouse anger in an audience, a speaker must first understand the nature of anger and what makes the audience angry, because arousing an angry audience is quite different than stirring a friendly audience. Burke, like Aristotle, recognized the need to identify the moods and emotions of listeners. In the Burkean view, a rhetorician’s success hinges on the ability to know the appetites of the audience and on “their being ripe for the evocation of [the] chosen emotion” (Brown 17). In “A More Perfect Union,” Obama identified guilt as America’s prevailing emotion on racial inequality.

Guilt generally reflects the anxiety people experience when they violate and transgress socially established norms (Stein 15). Although guilt, for Burke and others, connotes a type of anxiety, we must proceed cautiously. To ascribe guilt a universal definition is dangerous because guilt is a concept with “blurred edges” (Smith 18). According to Burke, guilt results when people reject the implicit and explicit rules that govern social life, the hierarchies that order the world in which we live (Religion 210). For example, a person may feel guilty for shoplifting from a grocery store or for accepting a phone call in a movie theater. While one is a crime and the other merely violates an unspoken social rule, both deviate from the hierarchy that dictates acceptable behavior. Because no person can obey all social rules, everyone fails or disobeys to some extent (Bobbitt 34; Foss, Foss, and Trapp 208). For Smith, guilt manifests in a host of transgressions that range from debt to uncleanness and crime, concepts that individually may seem unrelated. But viewed in the context of guilt such deviations impel us to “restore the boundary,” as Smith observed (20), or what might be called seeking redemption in the Burkean framework. To understand the function of guilt in “A More Perfect Union,” we must treat it conditionally, embracing an approach that sees guilt as context dependent.

The rhetorical potency of Obama’s speech materializes in the confluence of three disparate notions of guilt: Obama’s guilt, the guilt of European Americans, and the guilt of
African Americans. While each type results from unique circumstances, taken together they underscore the significance of guilt in “A More Perfect Union.” Obama’s guilt is understood best in light of Friedrich Nietzsche, who characterized guilt as “bad conscience” (32-33). Guilt, for Nietzsche, manifests when people default on their contractual obligations. When Obama announced his candidacy, he entered into an unspoken agreement with the American people to uphold the ideals of democracy. The connection to Wright, a staunch and outspoken critic of the American political system, manifested the Nietzschean guilt that Obama may have felt for seemingly voiding the contractual agreement. Guilt for America, however, manifests in different ways.

European Americans experience guilt in a more collective sense. Broadly speaking, collective guilt implies that one is a member of a group that has done something wrong (Katchadourian 21). While most of the current generation is not directly responsible, some believe that white people as a whole share some culpability in the racial violence of the past two centuries. Burke noted that the possibility exists for individuals to inherit the guilt of their predecessors (Permanence 278), what Margaret Gilbert would characterize as membership guilt (231). Although most white people did not actively inflict violence against people of color, many chose not to intervene, which implicated them for inaction. As awareness of that inaction transfers from one generation to the next, membership guilt replicates across time (Katchadourian 96-97). In the context of “A More Perfect Union,” membership guilt stems from the shared knowledge of European Americans’ troublesome past. White people then shoulder the burden of guilt associated with their ancestors’ transgressions—wrongdoing that resulted from both action and inaction.

African American guilt, by contrast, operates in the existential sense theorized by Martin Buber. Existential guilt manifests through self-assignment when people fail to capitalize on their potential or realize the essence of what they are called to become. Under a system of white oppression, people of color could not and have not achieved their full potential, thus making it possible for them to experience guilt existentially. In Good and Evil, Buber clarified the effect that existential guilt can have on the psyche: “Their life was ‘set in slippery places’; it was so arranged as to slide into the knowledge of their own nothingness; and when this finally happens . . . the great terror falls upon them and they are consumed” (40). Because the urge to elevate oneself to a higher level is naturally embedded in human consciousness, when people do not succeed, whether due to societal impositions or their own limitations, they may experience guilt existentially.

The convergence of guilt in “A More Perfect Union” creates the possibility for Obama and America to recognize their individual and collective roles in racial inequality. That is, the speech provided Obama a platform to enable listeners to acknowledge their own guilt while simultaneously identifying their collective stake in fixing it. When people experience guilt, Burke reminds us, they are motivated to correct it (Permanence 284). Although the impulse to correct our transgressions has always been present, Americans required a rhetorical catalyst to provoke them into action. “A More Perfect Union,” as such, creates the possibility for Obama and America to become joined in not only the problems but also the solutions associated with racial injustice.

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4 Hannah Arendt’s essay details how membership guilt can arise from inaction. Arendt explains that after World War II, many Germans felt guilty because of their heritage. Although the majority of Germans did not contribute directly to the extermination of Jews during the Holocaust, responsibility laid on the shoulders of those who sympathized with Hitler during the war and aided his rise to power (260).
People naturally seek to eliminate guilt by victimage through a scapegoat or through an act of mortification (Burke, *Permanence* 286-289). These strategies of purification serve to excise guilt, promote social cohesion, and restore balance to the social order. Many scholars have explored guilt (Olson; Villadsen; Wood) and victimage in political discourse (Bobbitt; Brummett; Engels; Foy; Moore). For example, Mark Moore examined the scapegoating and mortification of Illinois Governor George Ryan. At the end of a political career plagued by corruption, Ryan, a lifetime proponent of capital punishment, scapegoated the criminal justice system and then, in an act of mortification, placed a moratorium on the death penalty and commuted nearly two hundred death sentences (Moore 313). David Ling observed a similar phenomenon in Senator Ted Kennedy’s address of July 25, 1969, to the people of Massachusetts. Although Kennedy was behind the wheel, he rejected any wrongdoing in the car accident that killed Mary Jo Kopechne, portraying himself as a victim of a helpless scene characterized by a “narrow bridge” and an “unlit road” with “no guard rails” (Ling 368). While Moore demonstrated the ways in which rhetoricians can employ both strategies for purification, Ling’s analysis indicated how speakers and their audiences can be jointly implicated in the dramatistic process. Neither study, however, offers a clear explanation of how purification happens when multiple and seemingly contradictory notions of guilt manifest in the Burkean frame—the fundamental task of Obama’s speech. Obama had to provide the means for his own purification and for two different audiences with conflicting types of guilt with regard to racial inequality. Although these studies examine the intersection of both purification strategies, they represent the exception to the rule because most analyses focus solely on either the scapegoat or mortification.

Victimage through the scapegoat mechanism shifts blame for problems onto individuals who are not necessarily responsible. Rene Girard explained that scapegoats may be guilty of their accused crimes, but accusers often select victims because they belong to marginalized groups or communities susceptible to persecution (17). Scapegoating can then occur in racialized terms. For example, when poor white Southerners scapegoated African Americans for the South’s economic woes, they adopted lynching as a physical sacrifice and solution to their problem (Gilmore 15). Once a community assigns a scapegoat they sacrifice it in physical or symbolic terms.

To induce sacrifice, whether physically or symbolically, a community must prepare its scapegoat. One way to make a scapegoat worthy for sacrifice is to prime it fatalistically (Burke, *Literary* 40). A fatalistic sacrifice positions the scapegoat as something that has fallen out of popular favor. For example, politicians who fall out of favor with their constituents may become scapegoats for their party. If the party faces scrutiny, it may ascribe blame to its unfavorable politicians and bring about fatalistic sacrifice. Girard’s characterization of the disabled scapegoat helps clarify this point. According to Girard, while the term “disability” may connote physical

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5 For Nietzsche, victimage is not a curative for guilt; it simply prolongs the feelings associated with guilt by assigning it to another source. Jeremy Engels insightfully details the victimage of Richard Nixon. By transforming the “majority” of Americans into victims of the minority (the tyrannical protestors who undermined democracy), Engels explained, Nixon cultivated a politics of resentment intended to keep America in need of his leadership (315). The resentment the majority felt toward the minority continued to fester without resolution. Using Nietzsche to frame Obama’s guilt, I show how Obama’s scapegoating of media and government institutions does not purify America’s guilt over its racially disruptive past.

6 Burke explains that a scapegoat can be transformed in one of three ways: legalistically, fatalistically, or through poetic justice. A legalistic sacrifice assumes the scapegoat violated the governing rules of its community, and a sacrifice through poetic justice suggests the scapegoat is too perfect for this world, as with Jesus Christ. However, I am concerned with the scapegoat who is sacrificed fatalistically.
limitations, it refers also to individuals who experience difficulty adapting to society, such as foreigners (18). The aforementioned politicians, if deemed incapable of adapting to their party’s needs, would constitute a disabled scapegoat in the Girardian sense. When members of an out-group become scapegoats, they may choose to inflict sacrifice upon themselves to restore balance within their own social hierarchies.

Some scholars have complicated our understanding of the scapegoat mechanism. Matthew Foy, for instance, explained how Steve Barber, a student at University of Virginia’s College at Wise, resisted his symbolic death after being scapegoated for writing a “violent and allegedly threatening” short story (94). In an effort to disrupt attempts to sacrifice him for the guilt from the university’s 2007 massacre and the continual threat of on-campus killing sprees, Barber created a counter narrative that positioned himself as a “victim of abuse by corrupt school and law officials,” thus resisting his symbolic death (Foy 97). According to Robert Westerfelhaus and Diane Ciekawy, when scapegoating occurs across multiple hierarchies, people may capitalize on their advantageous position in one to improve their place in another (269). Young members of Kenya’s Mijikenda village utilized resources of the modern state to accuse their elders of witchcraft, they explained, which provided them access to fiscal and land benefits normally reserved for village elders (273).

An analysis of how racial guilt manifests across different hierarchies would seem plausible since white people have benefited at the expense and exploitation of people of color for generations in a variety of contexts. Such an examination, however, would not address the problem of racial inequality in Obama’s speech. Rather than absolving guilt across multiple hierarchies, Obama’s task is to provide a means to purification for different types of guilt within one hierarchy, the racial hierarchy that does not afford opportunity equally to all Americans.

An exercise in self-restraint, mortification suppresses the desires that cause guilt to arise. Mortification, in short, is the process by which we make ourselves suffer for our guilt or sins. For instance, the aforementioned scapegoated politicians may forego a run for reelection, a self-inflicted sacrifice that would remove them from politics altogether. The use of mortification to expiate guilt and restore balance to the social order has proven popular for both political and corporate leaders (Foss; Ling; Moore). For example, Sonja Foss demonstrated how the Chrysler Corporation’s request for federal aid as part of a bailout created guilt for the company. In an act of mortification, Foss argued, Chrysler engaged in self-inflicted punishment by issuing a rebate to restore its corporate image (75). Although his connection to Wright created a need for Obama to repair his image, Obama employed the scapegoat mechanism rather than mortification to purify guilt.

From here the essay continues with analysis of “A More Perfect Union,” beginning with a close reading of Obama’s guilt as bad conscience and his use of a scapegoat for purification. It then continues with a discussion of the collective guilt of European Americans, addresses the existential guilt of African Americans, and ends by discussing America’s mortification to purify its guilt concerning racial inequality on the path to redemption.

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7 “Disability,” for Girard, “belongs to a large group of banal signs of a victim, and among certain groups . . . every individual who has difficulty adapting, someone from another country or state, an orphan, an only son, someone who is penniless, or even simply the latest arrival, is more or less interchangeable with a cripple” (18).
Obama and the Guilt of “Bad Conscience”

The rhetorical power of “A More Perfect Union” resides in Obama’s distribution of guilt. Obama begins with an explanation of his role in the Jeremiah Wright controversy. “Given my background, my politics, and my professed values and ideals,” he explained, “there will no doubt be those for whom my statements of condemnation are not enough” (3). Obama continued to propose rhetorical questions: “Why associate myself with Reverend Wright in the first place? Why not join another church?” (3). He charged, “if . . . that [was all] I knew of Reverend Wright, there is no doubt that I would react in much the same way” (3). Obama acknowledged his guilt through prolepsis, the anticipation of America’s objection to his connection to Wright. As the Wright story unfolded, many wondered why Obama would associate with Wright, an outspoken critic of American democracy. Obama’s statements thus reflect the bad conscience of guilt in the Nietzschean work, which manifests when individuals default on their contractual obligations. Given his response, Obama understood that the association would elicit censure from the American people.

While Obama justified his relationship with Wright, he simultaneously implicated listeners for propagating a racialized worldview. Obama stated, “As imperfect as he may be, [Wright] has been like family to me. . . . I can no more disown him than I can disown the black community. . . . no more than I can disown my white grandmother . . . who helped raise me . . . [and] who on more than one occasion has uttered racial or ethnic stereotypes that made me cringe” (4). Obama then indicted listeners: “I’m sure many of you have heard remarks from your pastors, priests, or rabbis with which you strongly disagree” (4). This is not a black problem; this is not a white problem: it is an American problem. Every American holds some responsibility for the problems of the past that continue to inform the present. Audience members, as such, become co-scapegoats who bear some responsibility for allowing racial inequality to persist. But, as Girard pointed out, while the scapegoat shoulders the burden for society’s problems, it is endowed with the power for correction (43). When Obama justified Wright’s imperfections as the norm, America recognized its role in racial inequality—namely, that everybody is guilty of perpetuating the cycle, but they also possess the power to correct it.

To cleanse his own guilt, Obama deployed the scapegoat mechanism on two fronts: he blamed government institutions and faulted the news media for promoting racial inequality. In the proem of the speech, Obama criticized the government for allowing slavery to continue. “The [Constitution] was eventually signed,” Obama suggested in his opening remarks, “but ultimately unfinished. It was stained by this nation’s original sin of slavery, a question that . . . brought the convention to a stalemate until the founders chose to allow the slave trade to continue for at least 20 more years” (2-3). That the forefathers created a malleable document rather than a permanent doctrine makes them an easy scapegoat. Obama, however, seemed to vindicate the forefathers for this limitation. “The Constitution,” he noted, “should be perfected over time” (2). The chance for redemption, Obama explained, rested on the forefathers’ plan “to leave any final resolution to future generations” (2). Subsequent generations would eventually improve any discrepancies set forth in America’s founding document.

According to Girard, scapegoats can materialize in disabled individuals or entities (18). More than physical limitations, disability refers also to individuals who experience difficulty adapting to society, such as foreigners. The forefathers-as-disabled scapegoats manifested with
their inability to forge a permanent document to accommodate America’s racial and ethnic others. The forefathers could not provide the stability necessary to free America from the burden of its racial transgressions, a shortcoming Obama calls the current generation to correct.

In addition to implicating listeners and scapegoating the government, Obama blamed media for perpetuating racial unrest. Early in the speech, Obama charged, “At various stages in the campaign, some commentators have deemed me either ‘too black’ or ‘not black enough’” (2). Shortly after, he warned that problems would ensue “if . . . Trinity United . . . conformed to the caricatures being peddled by some commentators” (3). Later, Obama asserted, “Talk show hosts and conservative commentators built their entire careers unmasking bogus claims of racism while dismissing legitimate discussions of racial injustice” (6). In every instance, media become a scapegoat for promoting racial resentment. Media are therefore responsible for widening the racial divide in the election, portraying Wright as a fanatic, and hindering progress toward racial reconciliation.

Characterizing media and government as unequipped to correct America’s racial problems makes them eligible candidates for what Burke called “fatalistic sacrifice.” This sacrifice is appropriate when a scapegoat has fallen from grace—out of popular opinion, so to speak (Burke, Literary 40). While the notion of politicians blaming government and the media is far from novel, Obama’s remarks foreground these problems and validate his treatment of them as a scapegoat worthy of sacrifice.

The assignment of blame to media and government institutions is, however, ineffective for purifying guilt in the Nietzschean frame. For Nietzsche, the scapegoat is not a curative for guilt; it simply prolongs the feelings associated with guilt by attaching it to another source. By assigning blame to these entities, Obama did little to resolve his guilt or the guilt that America may feel for its troublesome racial history. The displacement of blame onto a scapegoat, Nietzsche maintained, “concentrates” guilt, “sharpens the sense of alienation,” and only “strengthens the resistance” (48). Rather than purify his own guilt, Obama merely “hardens and freezes” the bad conscience that manifested from his relationship with Wright, an episode that may have called into question Obama’s electability for some Americans (48). If the scapegoat provides Obama any relief, it is temporary, ephemeral at best.

While Obama implicated listeners for promoting a racialized worldview, he did not sacrifice them fatally. Contrary to government and the news media, the audience was not cast out of favor by Obama for two possible reasons. First, he recognized their role in his ascendance to the executive branch. Second, he understood that America would have to make a different type of sacrifice to purify its guilt—one enacted through mortification that required Americans to sacrifice their racialized worldviews and invest simultaneously in the modern welfare state.

Obama’s task in “A More Perfect Union” was, first, to help America recognize its racial guilt and, second, to provide a means through which America could excise its guilt. The expiation of guilt for America rests upon listeners’ willingness to support the government and its programs to safeguard the future. Before providing America the basis for purification, Obama must first divide listeners into two different camps concerning racial inequality: European Americans and African Americans.
The Collective Guilt of European Americans

For European Americans, Obama acknowledged the likelihood of collective guilt. Many, if not all, European Americans shoulder the collective guilt associated with years of legalized discrimination. For decades, white Americans maintained their place in the racial hierarchy through policies designed to subordinate African Americans and other racial minorities, essentially institutionalizing racism. Although many of the policies that disenfranchised African Americans and other populations of color ceased after hard-fought political battles, the wounds still remain. Obama reminded listeners:

Legalized discrimination, where blacks were prevented, often through violence, from owning property, or loans were not granted to African American business owners, or black homeowners could not access FHA mortgages, or blacks were excluded from unions, or the police force, or the fire department meant that black families could not amass any meaningful wealth to bequeath to future generations. (5)

Although most European Americans today do not bear direct responsibility for the policies that subordinated African Americans, the wealth and prosperity they inherited from previous generations came at the expense of racial equality. In Permanence and Change, Burke characterized this phenomenon as “categorical [emphasis original] Guilt, one’s ‘guilt’ not as the result of any personal transgression, but by reason of a tribal or dynastic inheritance” (278). Obama assigned guilt to white listeners based on that inherited prosperity—the privileges that were not afforded equally to people of color.

The Existential Guilt of African Americans

African Americans, on the other hand, may experience guilt existentially. This guilt manifests when people realize they may not achieve their full potential (Buber 66). Obama articulated how these feelings manifested for people of color in earlier generations: “A lack of economic opportunity among black men and the shame and frustration that came from not being able to provide for one’s family contributed to the erosion of black families, a problem that welfare policies for many years may have worsened” (5). As Obama prompted listeners to recognize the possibility of existential guilt, he simultaneously implicated the welfare state. Although Obama invited African Americans to view the government as a scapegoat, its status as such is not adequate for purifying guilt in this context. For redemption to occur in the Burkean framework, the act of purification must equal the burden of guilt (Permanence 290). No amount of blame assigned to the government could ever match the guilt that African Americans may feel for the ways in which discrimination of the past two centuries has interfered with their ability to reach their full potential.

This existential guilt, which stems from denial of black civil rights in the Jim Crow South, and dates back to America’s inception, continues to afflict the current generation of African Americans. “For the men and women of Reverend Wright’s generation,” Obama explained, “the memories of humiliation and doubt and fear have not gone away, nor has the anger and the bitterness of those years” (6). “That anger is not always productive,” he said, “[b]ut the anger is real. . . . [T]o condemn it without understanding its roots only serves to widen the chasm of misunderstanding that exists between the races” (6). “Guilt,” Shelby Steele explained, “is the essence of white anxiety [and] inferiority is the essence of black anxiety” (qtd. in Bobbitt 143). This Buberian conception of guilt reverberates throughout Obama’s speech, and
creates the need for symbolic purification, and ultimately redemption, in the Burkean framework. While African Americans may feel guilty for not achieving their potential—a byproduct of institutionalized racism and legalized discrimination—some European Americans may feel anxiety about their place in the racial hierarchy, knowing that they have profited at the expense of African Americans. Thus, an uncomfortable tension exists between white people and people of color in the social fabric of America.

America’s Redemption

Obama validated the guilt of European and African Americans, but beyond the scapegoat mechanism remained passive in suggesting paths to redemption. These disparate notions of guilt, he explained, lead to “resentment [that] builds over time” and inhibit America’s ability to work through its racial problems (6). When resentment goes unabated, the result is “a cycle of violence, blight, and neglect that continues to haunt us” (5). Obama’s failure to provide America with an adequate way to excise its guilt provokes listeners to consider mortification, a sacrifice that would safeguard America’s future against racial inequality.

The principle of perfection provides one way to understand sacrifice in this Burkean sense. Perfection, Burke explained, becomes recognizable through a master word, “a god-term” that expresses what people aspire (Religion 25). Obama deployed the word “perfect,” or some variation, eleven times in his speech. Closer examination reveals that, in nearly every instance, a discussion of future generations ensues. If guilt is about the past, and sacrifice about the present, then redemption represents America’s future. In the context of racial equality, Obama likely understands that only a focus on the future is capable of bringing America together, the one thing that will incite listeners to recognize their collective roles in the need to confront and work through the past, and sacrifice in the present, to assure equality for future generations.

America’s preservation lies in the hands of Obama’s listeners, but change takes time. Obama acknowledged this limitation: “I have never been so naïve as to believe that we can go beyond our racial divisions in a single election cycle or with a single candidate” (7). “But I have asserted a . . . conviction,” he maintained, “that, working together, we can move beyond some of our old racial wounds and that . . . we have no choice—we have no choice if we are to continue on the path to a more perfect union” (7). Although Obama could not solve the problems of the past, he attempted to give America the power to control its future. For better or worse, America’s decisions today will influence tomorrow’s generation. In the pursuit of a more perfect union, Obama explained, justice means that the American people “must always believe that they can write their own destiny” (7). And “[t]he path to a more perfect union,” he continued, starts with acknowledgement “that investing in the health, welfare, and education of black and brown and white children . . . will ultimately help all of America prosper” (7). Obama continued, “It is not enough to give health care to the sick, or jobs to the jobless, or education to our children. But it is where we start. It is where our union grows stronger” (9). Until America restores its faith in the government, inequality will persist. Restoring faith in the government begins with restoring confidence in Obama and investing in education and healthcare programs that will safeguard America’s future.

Until every American recognizes our political system as both a perpetrator and solution to racial inequality, the government cannot help America achieve perfection. Although he disguised it as a choice, Obama gave listeners an ultimatum:
For we have a choice in the country. We can accept a politics that breeds division and conflict and cynicism. . . . Or, at this moment, in this election, we can come together and say, “Not this time.” This time we want to talk about the crumbling schools that are stealing the future of black children and white children and Asian children and Hispanic children and Native American children. . . . The children of America are not “those kids,” – they are our kids. (8)

Because America’s preservation depends on action at this juncture, listeners cannot reject Obama’s plea for a discussion on race, one that acknowledges the government’s ability and limitations in the pursuit of equality. Moreover, Obama’s shift in voice articulates a collective concern. He begins with an outward reference, an informal mention of “those” kids. His voice then shifts to the inward-turning, possessive pronoun “our,” which illustrates Americans’ common stake in the future. If the past is any indication of the future, especially with regard to the racial issues of the last two hundred years, the audience has no choice: America must unite and sacrifice the worldviews that promote racial inequality. Such a sacrifice alone, however, does not guarantee redemption. To ensure cultural purification, America must repress its desire to blame government for intensifying racial inequality, the “deliberate slaying of appetites and ambitions” that Burke embedded with mortification (Religion 135). This form of self-sacrifice requires that Americans resist the urge to blame Washington for the policies and legislation that may have widened gap between the have’s and have nots, and exacerbated other inequities that have manifested across racial lines. To suppress this impulse, and to ensure equality for tomorrow’s generations, America must invest in healthcare and education today.

Conclusion

In 2008, when political divisiveness was at fever pitch, many news media outlets acknowledged Obama’s ability to unite America (Hoagland n. pag.; Steele n. pag.). In January, nearly two months before the spectacle surrounding Jeremiah Wright, NPR Senior News Analyst Daniel Schorr noted, “Obama’s appeal seems to transcend race,” and indicated the likelihood of America embarking on a “new, ‘post-racial’ political era” (n. pag.). The post-racial characterization continued to gain momentum after “A More Perfect Union” and throughout Obama’s ascendance to the Oval Office. So why did Obama choose not to reaffirm this ascribed post-racial identity? The problem with the discourse of post-racism, as Michael Lacy and Kent Ono have pointed out, is that it presents the illusion of progress while significant disparities still exist (1). As Eduardo Bonilla-Silva explained, unequal access to cultural, political, and economic capital perpetuate racism in the twenty-first century (14). A post-racial perspective, these scholars would agree, undermines our ability to recognize the continued existence of racial inequality.

Although Obama could have affirmed his post-racial identity, his use of guilt stemmed likely from a disavowal. Viewed this way, Obama’s use of guilt as a rhetorical strategy complicates our common understanding of his discourse and challenges the scholarship that emphasizes his attempt to unite America. Guilt, which holds the potential to divide Americans across racial lines, provided Obama a way to challenge the progress narrative and help America acknowledge and work through the reality of racism, both past and present. While this essay examines the function of guilt in “A More Perfect Union,” it may be useful to apply a similar strategy to Obama’s other speeches. The use of guilt, which may have contributed to Obama’s success, can provide insight into the ways in which politicians and rhetoricians attempt to
subvert the discourse of post-racism. Examinations of guilt in other contexts that have the likelihood to elicit dissenting opinions such as the rhetoric surrounding immigration reform or religion may also prove insightful. An investigation of the discourse surrounding the recent and ongoing Syrian refugee crisis would yield interesting conclusions on both fronts.

Obama likely understood the motivational power of America’s guilt around racial inequality. While the tendency exists to treat guilt singularly, “A More Perfect Union” demonstrates that it can manifest in broad and varied forms that require different strategies for purification. After Obama scapegoated the news media and government institutions, America confronted its guilt through mortification. Obama’s plea for America to invest in the welfare state reinforces Girard’s contention of the scapegoat’s capacity for correction, as it suggests that the government, while responsible in part for perpetuating inequality, also has the ability to assure equality for future generations of Americans. Within the spectrum of political discourse, “A More Perfect Union” reinforces the notion that politicians attempt to purify their guilt through a scapegoat, while their audiences enact mortification.

As Obama’s second term winds down, the continuation of events highlighting racial inequality serves to remind us that America is far from the post-racial utopia that some envisioned. Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Freddie Gray, and the more recent shooting in Charleston, South Carolina demonstrate the complexities surrounding racism and racial inequality in the twenty-first century. While guilt may not provide the solution, or even all the answers, an examination of how it manifests across different contexts has the potential to help America better understand and work through its racial differences.

**Works Cited**


“Symbols Are Important”: Nation-States and the Images on Our Money

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Abstract
Visual rhetoric has been an area of growing interest for those within the communication field, and this study aims to add to that body of work. One area within the study of visual rhetoric is the everyday, mundane images produced by nation-states, and more narrowly, the images on a nation’s currency. Traditionally, scholars who study images on currency have seen them through the lens of state-as-pedagogue—in other words, that the state is using that “sacred space” to teach their citizenry. Political theorist and scholar Jacques E.C. Hymans (2004, 2010) challenges this notion, and instead posits that nation-states try to connect with their citizenry through a state-as-legitimacy-seeker approach in which the goal is to connect, not by teaching, but by capturing the spirit of the age. This study applies Hymans’ methodology to the images on the obverse side of the US dollar coin from its inception in 1794 to the beginning of the Presidential dollar coin collection in 2011. It was found that Hymans’ method holds promise for studying nation-state motivations behind the images on money, and more broadly, for visual rhetoricians interested in the intersection between nation-states, messages, motivation, and image.


Introduction

Young girls across this country will soon be able to see an inspiring woman on the ten dollar bill who helped shape our country into what is today and know that they too can grow up and do something great for their country. (Lee)

United States Senator Jeanne Shaheen recently remarked that the $10 bill will be the first American paper money to picture a woman. Currently the face on the $10 bill is that of the first Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, and he has graced the bill since 1928. Current Treasury Secretary Jack Lew sees the inclusion of a woman as a monumental step forward, because it signals to the American public “how important it is to recognize the role that women have played in our national life and in our national history.” He goes on to say that, even though it is only a symbolic representation on money, it is significant because “symbols are important” (Lee).

Symbols are no doubt important, but are symbols important on currency? After all, money is used every day and in many ways, but do people notice the images on their currency?

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Do they even care? There is a growing body of research that sees the study of images on money as a valuable way to analyze the values and ideas a nation-state is trying to communicate to its citizens. Eric Helleiner notes that a national currency “may foster national identities . . . through cultivating a collective memory and a nationalist culture . . .” (1414). Josh Lauer argues that American paper money should be seen as a form of mass media—an attempt by the government to merge legal obligations of tender with national mythic symbols to “impute value” to its citizenry (111). So what are the messages and motivations behind the images chosen for a nation’s money? The answers to this question would be helpful not only to those interested in how nation-states create cultural identification, but also to communication scholars interested in the study of visual rhetoric.

Rhetorical scholar Sonja Foss says visual rhetoric has two meanings: “In the first sense, visual rhetoric is a product individuals create as they use visual symbols for the purpose of communicating. In the second, it is a perspective scholars apply that focuses on the symbolic processes by which images perform communication” (143). This study focuses on the second meaning of visual rhetoric and on adding to a better understanding of how state-produced images communicate to their public. Visual rhetorical scholarship has already delved into the power of the mundane, mass-produced, state-manufactured image, and this study could add to that growing body of work by potentially offering new insights into how nation-states, motive, and images come together to “perform communication.”

Research on Images on Currency

This section will provide a broad overview of the existing research on the images found on currency. In particular, this literature review will focus on research that looks at how nation-states use the images they place on their money. Much of this research takes what Jacques Hymans calls a “state-as-pedagogue” approach. In this approach, the images found on a country’s currency are seen as a way for the state to teach citizens about their history, cultural heroes, and what is expected from them: the images serve primarily a teaching function (“Changing Color” 6). A good example of this approach is the work done by Eric Helleiner and Emily Gilbert in their book Nation-States and Money: The Past, Present and Future of National Currencies (1999).

Emily Gilbert shows how Canada used its currency to negotiate symbols of nationhood. She writes, “Moreover, the public was further linked together through the currency in that it was a simple and effective medium for the communication of national symbols” (26). Gilbert shows how Canada used this circulating text to promote certain images it wanted its citizens to see. She notes, “. . . the images of money advanced official ideologies of the nation-state to itself as well as to outsiders” (41).

1 Here are some studies that look at a variety of state-produced images and discuss their rhetorical significance: The images placed on stamps: Ekaterina Haskins (2003)., “‘Put Your Stamp on History’: The USPS Commemorative Program Celebrate the Century and Postmodern Collective Memory” QJS vol. 89.1: 1 – 18.; The images placed on money: Josh Lauer (2011)., “Money as Mass Communication: US Paper Currency and the Iconography of Nationalism” Communication Review vol. 11.2: 109 – 132.; and the images used on statues and public memorials: Carol Blair, Marsha Jeppeson and Enrico Pucci Jr. (1991) “Public memorializing in postmodernity: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as prototype” QJS vol. 77.3: 263 – 288. This is but a sampling of a growing body of work that looks at the rhetorical significance of the symbols used by the nation-state to commemorate its history.
Christina McGinley analyzed the representations of women on the US dollar coin during the early part of the nineteenth-century. She observed, “Coins are an important means by which nationality is represented and through which citizens identify themselves . . . Coinage and its iconography, therefore, work symbolically to define the boundaries between the public and private as an ‘arm’ of the State” (247). She examined the way the female imagery on these dollar coins evolved, and how the ruling male audience reacted to them. Ultimately, she took a state-as-pedagogue approach in showing how these coins reveal the way the American state wanted its citizenry to look at women in its society. Virginia Hewitt also revealed the way countries within the British Commonwealth used images on money to “. . . symbolise both British authority and indigenous cultures” (97). Hewitt makes the interesting note that the struggle over the images that would go on the Euro shows “. . . how closely paper currencies and the images they carry have become associated with national identity” (97).

Eric Helleiner contends that the design on banknotes is important in fostering national pride. He quotes a letter from S. M. Clark, a clerk in the White House, to then Secretary of the Treasury Solomon Chase, explaining why the imagery on the American dollar bill was chosen:

The laboring man who should receive every Saturday night, a copy of the Surrender of Burgoyne for his weekly wages, would soon inquire who General Burgoyne was, and to whom he surrendered. This curiosity would be aroused and he would learn the facts from a fellow laborer or from his employer. The same would be true of other National pictures, and in time many would be taught leading incidents in our country’s history, so that they would soon be familiar to those who would never read them in books, teaching them history and imbuing them with a National feeling (1412).

These images were going to be seen by a majority of the population, and as Helleiner points out, “Images on money may also have been particularly effective tools of propaganda because they were encountered so regularly in the context of daily routines” (1413). The images chosen to be part of an American’s everyday experience were important in shaping the users’ beliefs in what America was going to be. In a more recent article, Peter Bayers echoes this sentiment when he notes that, even though the symbols on a coin may not be looked at closely, because of their daily circulation these images are “ingrained in the popular unconscious” and are avenues through which the government can teach its people about the nation (38). He goes on to analyze the way the US Mint has depicted Native Americans on the recent nickel and what it is teaching the citizenry through the myths the Federal Government continues to propagate.

These studies show the importance of the way symbolic representation on money helps to form a citizen’s national self-identity. Currency, in these theorists’ eyes, has become more than just a vehicle for the easy transfer of money; it has also become one of the many ways the nation-state tells its stories to its people. The images on any nation’s currency help to propagate stories of national heroes and villains, and these repetitive images serve to build a sense of national identity. In this way, the state assumes the role of pedagogue teaching its citizenry.

The state-as-pedagogue approach has its merits, but some believe this approach does not fully reflect the way a state uses images on its currency. As Jacques Hymans notes, “States that simply boast of their power risk offending the reigning values and ontologies of the day . . .” (“East Is East” 97). To Hymans, a better approach is to view the images on currency as a way for the state to connect to the “spirit of the times” in an attempt to increase its legitimacy with its citizenry. Researching the images on the Euro, Jacques Hymans calls this the “state-as-legitimacy-seeker” approach (“Changing Color” 19).
In this approach, the state does not generally have the time or the power to impose its nationalist views on the public: “The state is rarely secure, powerful and motivated enough to force-feed its values on its citizenry” (“Changing Color” 6). Instead, the state seeks to mirror cultural shifts and convey its legitimacy to its citizens by connecting with the ideas or concepts that seem important to its people at that time. What better way for the nation-state to be heard than to link with the current voices of its citizens: the cries of the people become the cries of the state. Hymans sees in this approach a better explanation for the images used by nation-states on their money (“Changing Color” 6).

In developing his state-as-legitimacy-seeker approach, Hymans borrows from the work of Ronald Inglehart and John Meyer and their concept of “cultural shifts.” This approach posits that “certain ideas and values have risen and fallen internationally” (“Changing Color” 8). These ideas and values can be traced through shifts in the locus of social power and initiative within a society. These shifts in who or what is the main actor or initiator of power move forward from the State, to the broader society, and finally to the individual (“Changing Color” 8). Inglehart and Meyers then show that along with each shift in actor, there has also been a shift in the goals of life within societies: from devotion to a country’s traditions when the state was the actor, to material progress when society was the actor, and finally, to the current post-materialist goal of enjoying the journey rather than only the destination when the individual is the actor (“Changing Color” 8). So these shifts occur along two axes: “the locus of actorhood and nature of the goals” (“Changing Color”, 19).

Hymans developed a methodology using Inglehart and Meyer’s cultural-shifts model and applied it to the images on European paper money from the onset of national banks in the 19th century to the present day to see if there were any apparent cultural shifts (“Changing Color” 9). His methodology will be examined in more detail later on in this paper; suffice it to say Hymans found that the cultural-shifts model held a lot of merit. He found that the images on the paper money of various European nation states did indeed fit the cultural-shifts model as outlined by Inglehart and Meyer.

The work of Hymans seems to offer a fresh approach that could be used by those interested in the study of the rhetoric of images found on the artifacts of nation-states. Much of the work in this area has taken the state-as-pedagogue approach, yet Hymans’ method could offer new insights into the ways nation-states establish their communities and how they see their publics. If correct, the ideas of Hymans could offer rhetorical news to those interested in the visual by showing how states try to identify with their publics rather than impose their views on them. Seeing the state as legitimacy-seeker rather than as an all-knowing pedagogue, offers the rhetorical critic new ways to look at images found on a wide range of state-produced media and could lead to a fuller understanding of how the state produces and interacts with its citizenry.

**Research Question**

The research question driving this study is this: Will we see the same cultural trajectory, from the source of power (State to Individual) through to the meaning of life (Traditional to Post-materialist) on American money, and does the absence or inclusion of this cultural shift approach offer any new insight to visual communication scholars? One way that we will not see a new insight is in the static nature of the images found on American paper money: the dead president image has not changed much since the early 1900’s. Yet the images found on American coinage might be more fertile ground to test the merits of this approach. The obverse, or front, side of
coins has been a veritable artist’s canvas, with new images being introduced on quarters, nickels, and dollar coins on a regular basis. Also, the Hymans research looked at paper money, and this study could add to a better understanding of his approach by testing his theory on coins. To limit itself, this study will look at the images found on the obverse side of the US dollar coin.

The dollar coin was chosen for two reasons. First, it was chosen simply as a way to limit the number of images, and to give a more concrete data set. Secondly, and possibly more importantly, it was chosen because it is one of the oldest ongoing denominations in the United States, and as such, will give a good historical overview of the way this country has approached the symbols on its money. Though not as popular as dollar bills in terms of circulation, the dollar coin has consistently been used by the federal government to promote itself to its citizenry. As Ingham (2004) so succinctly states, “monetary space is sovereign space” (57) and the canvas of the dollar coin has been routinely used by the US federal government as a “space” to communicate its history values. And as mentioned earlier, these images have been “ingrained in the popular unconscious” (Bayers 13). Regardless of its popularity in terms of circulation, the obverse side of the dollar coin offers a wide variety of state-produced images, and also a rich vein of historical data to mine as we test Hyman’s theory.

Methodology

This study will apply the methodology of Jacques Hymans to the images on the obverse side of the US dollar coin from 1794 to the present day. To look for these cultural shifts, Hymans looked for a forward trajectory of images moving along the actor axis and the goal axis. He looked for movement along the actor axis from State, to Society, to Individual. For the goal axis, Hymans looked for images that followed a trajectory in emphasis from traditional allegiances to the State, to materialist acquisition, to today’s post-materialism (“Changing Color” 9).

In analyzing these two axes, Hymans showed that the images depicting the state as actor moved through the traditional, materialist and post-materialist goals. When the actor shifted to society at large, the movement was still through the traditional, material and post-materialist goals. And finally, when the actor shifted to the individual, the images followed the same trajectory. So how are these shifts in actor and goal represented visually? Hymans decided that images with a State/Traditional orientation would be those depicting “state symbols in classical/antique garb, classical gods (e.g., Athena, ‘Columbia’), or purely ornamental figures” (“East Is East” 99). A State/Materialist orientation would be represented by “historical heads of state, generals, other statesmen (e.g., George Washington, Douglas MacArthur),” and State/Post-materialist images would be depicting “representatives of ‘official culture’ (e.g., Francis Scott Key, Edward Teller)” (“East Is East” 99).

In looking for images that conveyed movement along the Society/Traditional axes, Hymans looked for images of “classical/antique imagery of mass, class, sector or region representatives (e.g., toga-clad allegorical figure of ‘Commerce’, ‘Old Man of the Mountain’)” (“East Is East” 99). Hymans felt a Society/Materialist orientation was best represented by “imagery of real-world mass, class, sector or region representatives at work (e.g., farmers in the fields)”, and along the Society/Post-materialist axes, Hymans looked for “imagery of real-world mass, class, sector or region representatives at play (e.g., a local square dance)” (“East Is East” 99).

Finally, for the Individual/Traditional orientation, Hymans looked for images of “historical non-state actors from classical/antique era or representations of individual-level
virtues (e.g., Aristotle, Saint Elizabeth Seton)”, for the Individual/Materialist, images of “historical non-state actors who made significant social or economic contributions (e.g., Susan B. Anthony, Henry Ford, Thomas Edison)”, and for the Individual/Post-materialist, “historical non-state actors who made significant cultural incl. scientific contributions (e.g., Man Rey, Elvis Presley, Albert Einstein)” (“East Is East” 99). It is important to note that Hymans’ methodology only focuses on human figures on currency because of the relative ease of identifying human figures, as opposed to flowers or animals, and also because of the centrality of human figures on currency (“Changing Color” 6). Please refer to Table 1, as this will give the reader a good summation of the images and axes mentioned, as well as a visual overview of Hymans’ methodology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Traditionalist</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classical/antique imagery used to represent states, classical gods, ornamental figures (e.g., 'Columbia', Athena, classically beautiful human form)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Materialist</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historical heads of state, other statesmen, soldiers (e.g., George Washington, Douglas MacArthur, US Army GI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Postmaterialist</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Producers of “official culture” (e.g., Francis Scott Key, Edward Teller, US Marine Band)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Society/Classes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classical/antique imagery of mass, class, sector, or region representatives (e.g., toga-dad allegory of 'Commerce', 'Old Man of the Mountain')</td>
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<td>Imagery of real-world mass, class, sector, or region representatives at work (e.g., farmers in the fields)</td>
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<td>Imagery of real-world mass, class, sector, or region representatives at play (e.g., a local square dance)</td>
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<td><strong>Individual</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Historical non-state actors from classical/antique era, or examples of individual-level virtues including religion (e.g., Aristotle, Saint Elizabeth Seton)</td>
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<td>Historical non-state actors who made significant economic or social contributions (e.g., Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Susan B. Anthony)</td>
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<td>Historical non-state actors who made significant cultural incl. scientific contributions (e.g., Man Ray, Elvis Presley, Albert Einstein)</td>
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**Texts to Be Studied**

This section will briefly discuss the dollar coins that will be the focus of this study. The first dollar coins produced by the American colonies were the variety of continental dollar coins. These coins featured a wide variety of designs and were not made by a central banking authority, so the quality and imagery varied widely. The first standardized dollar coin was the Flowing Hair silver dollar from 1794 to 1795 (see Figure 1). Then came the Draped Bust design from 1796 to 1803 (see Figure 2), the Seated Liberty design from 1836 to 1873 (see Figure 3), the Morgan design from 1878 to 1921 (see Figure 4), the Peace design from 1921 to 1964 (see Figure 5), the Eisenhower design from 1971 to 1978 (see Figure 6), the Susan B. Anthony design from 1979 to 1999 (see Figure 7), the Sacagawea golden dollar from 2000 to 2006 (see Figure 8), and finally,
the Presidential dollar coin, which began in 2007 and will come to completion in 2016 (see Figure 9).2

The modern process of making coins starts with an approved sketch in the Engraving Department at the Philadelphia Mint. This sketch is then turned by a sculptor-engraver into a model twelve times bigger than the actual coin. A negative is cast from this model, which is then touched up; legends, such as lettering on the coin, are also added at this point. Finally, a positive model called a galvano is made from the negative, and this finished model is then approved for minting by the Mint director and the Secretary of the Treasury (Gibbs and Segan 327). When minting began in 1794, the process of achieving an “approved sketch” was much simpler: the chief engraver of the US Mint created the image he felt was the most appropriate. Now, a sketch must go through an approval process involving various committees, such as the Fine Arts Commission, before an image is approved for minting.

This study will only focus on the images on the front of the coins for two reasons: (1) the relative frequency of change on the front, as opposed to the reverse, side of the coins; and (2) the front continues to receive the most scrutiny by the general public. The front of the dollar coin has changed with every new issue, from allegorical female figures, to real men from history. By contrast, the reverse of the coin has consistently shown an eagle and has not been subject to the same level of debate over how it should look. Also, the obverse of the coin is the side that has come under the most scrutiny by the public and collectors. One example would be the 50 States Quarter series launched in 1999. In this series, only the front changed, indicating that it is the side of most importance in terms of analyzing the coin’s visual impact upon the public. In sum, this study will analyze the obverse, or front, side of each of the various dollar coins, starting with the Flowing Hair dollar coin and ending with the George Washington dollar coin.

**Procedure of Study**

This study will look at the dollar coins as they were released from 1794 to 2011 and apply the descriptions offered by Hymans of images as they fall along the two axes of actor and goal of life. Only the obverse image will be examined, as the reverse side has consistently featured an image of an eagle or the Statue of Liberty and has not changed much over the years. It will then be decided which of Hymans’ descriptions of actor and goal best captures the overall impact of each image.

**Analysis**

In looking at the images on the dollar coin, at first the Actor/Goal of State/Traditional was most prominent. From the first dollar coin issued in 1794, known as the Flowing Hair dollar coin, to the 1935 Peace dollar coin, the main image depicted was that of an allegorical female. This fits the State/Traditionalist goal described by Hymans as “state symbols in classical/antique garb, classical gods (e.g., Athena, ‘Columbia’), or purely ornamental figures” (“Changing Color” 10). Each of these figures fits the idea of a classic state symbol that of a personification of

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2 This study will not include the trade design from 1873 to 1885 because the coin did not circulate in America. It was strictly used for overseas trading, which is why it is called the trade dollar. Bruce Amspacher, “The Different Types of US Dollar Coins” pcgs.com, 6 November 2015, [database online]; available from http://www.pcgs.com/News/The-Different-Types-Of-Us-Dollar-Coins accessed 9 August, 2015.
Liberty in the classic look of the goddess Columbia. Most of the images from 1794 to 1935 showed just the portrait of a woman, with the exception of the standing Liberty image, where the female image of Liberty was depicted sitting with a shield by her side. The image on the Draped Bust dollar of 1795 looked less like a classical god and more like what one critic describes as a “buxom Roman matron, with rich, curling tresses scarcely contained by the ribbon and large bow at the back of her head . . .” (Vermeule 30). Yet following Hymans’ methodology, that image would still fall squarely in the classical category (see Figures 1-5).

In 1965 the Eisenhower dollar coin was introduced, featuring the portrait of the 34th President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower (see Figure 6). Here we see a cultural shift from that of State/Traditionalist, to that of State/Materialist. Hymans describes the images found in the State/Materialist axes as “historical heads of state, generals, other statesmen (e.g., George Washington, Douglas MacArthur)” (“Changing Color” 10). The use of the portrait of a president would signify a cultural shift from allegorical images of liberty to real images of what liberty means to us as a country. So here we clearly see a cultural shift toward the Materialist goal, but remaining with the State as actor.

The next change in image on the dollar coin was in 1979, featuring the portrait of Susan B. Anthony, a famous American suffragette and important historical figure (see Figure 7). In the coding method offered by Hymans, this image is described as “Historical non-state actors who made significant social or economic contributions (e.g., Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Susan B. Anthony)” (“East Is East” 99). Hymans would place this image in the Individual/Materialist category, which suggests a distinct cultural shift in American society. It also shows more of a leap in the locus of power than a gradual shift as the Ingham-Myers model predicted. Instead we see a move from State directly to Individual as the source of power, and that might help to account for the failure of the coin: it represented too great a shift for the general public and did not reflect the cultural mood. In the Reagan era, a coin that had an image from the intermediary Society/Classes actor might have fared better than a leap to the Individual. The coin came out in 1979, at a time when the American people were moving from the post-Watergate, Jimmy Carter era to the beginnings of the more conservative Reagan era. The nation-state sought to legitimize itself by connecting with the image and story of a cultural revolutionary, but in doing so it might have misread the growing conservative cultural milieu.

The next change in the image on the dollar coin was in the year 2000, with the introduction of the Sacagawea gold dollar (see Figure 8). This coin depicts the Native American woman Sacagawea with her child on her back. Sacagawea would be known to most Americans as the woman who helped Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery in their trek through the Louisiana Purchase: without her aid, Lewis and Clark would have surely failed. This image falls within the Individual category and best represents the Post-materialist goal. The Individual/Post-materialist category is described by Hymans as “historical non-state actors who made significant cultural incl. scientific contributions (e.g., Man Rey, Elvis Presley, Albert Einstein)” (“Changing Color” 10). In placing this image along the goal axis of the table, this study sees Sacagawea as better representing a contribution to the sciences or arts than to the economic wellbeing of the country. Though it could be argued that exploring and mapping the Louisiana Purchase contributed greatly to the economic betterment of this country, this study would argue that the Sacagawea image is best seen as that of a nurturer, which is also explicitly shown through the mother and child motif. If this coin had used images of Lewis and Clark, who were employed by the state, then it would fall in the Traditional/Materialist, rather than Post-materialist, category.
Finally, in February 2007 the dollar coin image changed once again with the beginning of the Presidential dollar coin program (see Figure 9). Through this program, “The United States is honoring our Nation’s Presidents by issuing $1 circulating coins featuring their images in the order that they served in office. The United States Mint issues four Presidential $1 Coins each year . . .” (“The Presidential $1 Coins”). This program reflects another leap, but this time backward against the trajectory the coins had been following. As stated earlier, Inglehart and Myers believe that society is moving forward along the Actor/Goal axes from State/Traditionalist to the current Individual/Post-Materialist. If Inglehart and Myers are correct, then the inclusion of the faces of past presidents means that the images on the US dollar coin have moved back to the State/Materialist orientation.

Results

The first result to come out of this study is the indication that the state-as-legitimacy-seeker model does hold promise for the analysis of state-produced images. It was found that the images found on the US dollar coin moved along the goal axis on a trajectory from Traditional, to Materialist, to Post-materialist. Also, the movement along the actor axis followed a trajectory from State, to Society, to Individual. Overall, this study shows that the state’s motivation in choosing images for dollar coins could to connect with public sentiment rather than to teach the citizenry. In rhetorical theory, we might call this nation-state practice an attempt at Burkean identification.

This idea of the state attempting to connect with a cultural zeitgeist seems to model Kenneth Burke’s ideas of identification and consubstantiality. According to Burke, one of the fundamental ways that people are persuaded is through finding common ground: “. . . two persons may be identified in terms of some principle they share in common, an ‘identification’ . . .” (Burke 21). Burke goes on to say that identification is achieved when two parties perceive a “consubstantiality” with each other (21). If the nation-state is producing images that connects with the present citizenry, this would seem to model identification and consubstantiality at their finest. And viewing the state’s motivation as legitimacy-seeking rather than pedagogical could offer new avenues for rhetorical analyses of a wide variety of state-produced images.

The second finding of this study is that the cultural shifts have not occurred incrementally in the American experience. From 1794 to 1971, the images did seem to move incrementally along the goal trajectory predicted by Hymans in his original study, but with the introduction of the Susan B. Anthony dollar in 1979, the trajectory skips over Society as actor directly to Individual as actor. The shift along the goal trajectory, from Materialist in 1971 with the Eisenhower dollar, to Post-materialist with the Susan B. Anthony dollar, does seem incremental. The biggest jump was seen along the actor axis: instead of incremental movement from the State, through Society, to the Individual, images began with the State as actor, then skipped over Society to land squarely in the Individual locus of power.

This leaping movement, rather than incrementally, was not expected by Hymans, who instead posited a gradual shift in trajectory described by Inglehart and Meyer. The question this study asks is whether that leap is the result of an attempt by the state to connect with the citizenry (state-as-legitimacy-seeker), or an attempt to teach its people about the historical figures who built the nation (state-as-pedagogue). Following the state-as-legitimacy-seeker approach could suggest that nation-states may sometimes attempt to leap, rather than step incrementally, to connect with its citizens. In using the image of Susan B. Anthony, the nation-
state may have sensed that the country was ready to celebrate the life of a woman praised for her defiance of authority. But, as noted earlier, the nation was moving in an opposite direction at the time and the state may have jumped too far along the actor axis.

A third result is the finding that the images on money can follow a backward trajectory. This backward movement was seen in 2007, when the trajectory of images along the actor axis moved from the Individual (Sacagawea) back to the State (US Presidents). This backward movement was not found in Jacques Hymans’ original study looking at European money, but it is seen in the images found on American dollar coins. Does this mean that the spirit of the times might be reversing to an earlier goal and actor, or that the state simply missed the cultural shift it was trying to embrace? Or does it better fit the state-as-pedagogue model?

Hymans sees backward movement in the images found on British and American currency. He connects this to the cost of changing images on money that is used worldwide: “It might be that changing the imagery on hegemonic, globally utilized paper money involves much higher transaction costs, including the cost of informing end-users of the changes and the cost of collecting the old bills for replacement. These costs may induce the hegemon to maintain its money’s traditional ‘look’” (“Changing Color” 29). In other words, cost may force the state to not seek legitimacy through its currency, even though it may want to. Clearly this is not the case with the US dollar coin, as the dollar coin does not have the same global usage as American paper money. If the Inglehart and Myers cultural-shifts approach is correct, what does this say about the American nation-state? If we stick with the legitimacy-seeker approach, maybe this backward trajectory is an attempt to convey to the citizenry the worth of state-produced money and programs. In 2007, the American economy began to fall into a recession, which lasted until the end of 2009 (US Bureau of Labor Statistics). The state, in seeking identification with the people, sought to allay fears and reassure the populace that indeed their money was worth something. One way to accomplish this was to remind people of the great leaders of their nation’s past, and thus move the source of power back to the State.

The fourth finding of this study is that motivations behind the images chosen by the state are not always easily discerned. Until the introduction of the Presidential coin series, the images being used on the dollar coin seemed to fit Hymans’ proposed model. But the shift to images of past Presidents raises the question: is this a sign of a backward trajectory along the actor axis within the state-as-legitimacy-seeker approach, or is this a prime example of the state acting as a teacher, a pedagogue? Or is this some combination of the two—the state teaching its citizens as a form of legitimacy seeking? Either way, this study shows that discerning the motivations behind state images is highly dependent upon which approach you choose. Whether you see the state as legitimacy seeker or the state as pedagogue, you can find a way to justify your approach. This is problematic with Hymans’ model, and leads to the final result.

The final result of this study is that the state-as-legitimacy-seeker approach needs a multiplicity of coins to better assess the movement along the axes of actor and goals. In looking only at US dollar coins, we may be limiting ourselves too much in the images available to be coded and compared. Instead, if we looked at a cross-section of US coins, we might get a better sense of the movement among society’s goals and actors. For instance, at the same time the dollar coin began to focus on past Presidents, the images on the US nickel began to celebrate the Lewis and Clark expedition in 2005, and in 2010 the US Mint released the first in a new series of quarters depicting America the Beautiful. Looking at these images together might give us a better understanding of the motivations behind the state’s choice of imagery, and a better grasp of the cultural shifts with which the state is trying to connect.
Areas for Further Research

As stated earlier, research using this model may need to look at a larger cross-section of American coins. It could be worthwhile to compare the imagery on the penny, nickel, dime, quarter, and dollar coins. Another series that could be examined is the 50 States Quarter series completed by the US mint in 2008. In this program, each state picked the image for its state quarter. This series could provide an interesting way to explore how the nation-state connects with the cultural shift of the age: images chosen by the people become the images the nation uses to identify with its people.

Another area for future research would be to move beyond images on currency. Does Hymans’ approach hold merit for those interested in looking at images beyond our coins and currencies? One area outside of the images on money that could be examined with the cultural-shifts approach would be US stamps. As with coins, the stamp has been a canvas on which the state has regularly tried to portray itself to its citizens. This methodology could be applied to any mass-produced state image that has changed over the course of time, such as images on passports.

Finally, can Hymans’ methodology move beyond coding for only human figures? To study the 50 State Quarters series, for instance, it would be necessary to code for state flowers and birds. How do non-human figures fit the actor/goal axes, and would it be possible to code them?

Conclusion

Senator Shaheen hopes that the image of a woman on the ten dollar bill will instill in the people of America a better understanding of the impact women have made in the history of this country (Lee). She sees it as a chance to teach the masses, but what is the motivation of the federal government charged with creating that image? Does it see it as an opportunity to act as a pedagogue, teaching its citizens what it means to be a part of that nation, or as a chance to catch the spirit of the age and produce an image that strengthens identification between the people and the nation-state? This question of motivation behind the images the nation-state chooses to place on its money has been the focus of this study.

Jacques Hymans believes that a nation-state’s main motive for the images it produces is to seek legitimacy with its people. Applying the work of political theorists Ingelhart and Myers, Hymans has created a methodology to look at that very thing: how nation-states try to create a sense of legitimacy with their people through the images they place on their money. This study applied his methodology to the images on the obverse side of the US dollar coin from 1794 to 2011. Hymans argues that we will see a forward trajectory in society being mirrored in the images on our money. That trajectory will see the locus of power, and the overall national goal shift from state to individual, and from material acquisition to enjoying the journey called life. That trajectory will be reflected in the images on our money, as the nation-state producing those images tries to capture, or reflect, that same cultural shift it senses in its people.

This trajectory was seen to be partially accurate with the images found on the US dollar coin, but it seemed to move forward in a leaping fashion, rather than incrementally as proposed by Hymans. In the end, the forward cultural trajectory that Hymans describes seemed to come to a stop with the introduction of the Presidential coin series starting in 2011. Whether this was a sign of a backward trajectory or the state reasserting its pedagogical function was, in the end,
hard to ascertain. Yet this study has shown that Hymans’ approach can be fruitful for those interested in the motives behind the images on our money. Scholars interested in visual rhetoric may find in Hymans’ work a new and useful way to further explore state-produced images.

Figure 1. Flowing hair dollar by United States Mint, Smithsonian Institution - National Numismatic Collection, National Museum of American History. Licensed under Public Domain via Commons - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flowing_hair_dollar.jpeg#/media/File:Flowing_hair_dollar.jpeg


Figure 4. Morgan Silver dollar by Brandon Grossardt for the coin image. George T. Morgan for the coin design. - Actual coin. Licensed under Public Domain via Commons - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1879S_Morgan_Dollar_NGC_MS67plus_Obverse.png#/media/File:1879S_Morgan_Dollar_NGC_MS67plus_Obverse.png
Figure 5. Peace dollar by Wehwalt. Own work. Licensed under Public Domain via Commons

Figure 6. Dwight D. Eisenhower dollar by Brandon Grossardt for the photograph; Frank Gasparro for the coin design. Actual coin. Licensed under Public Domain via Commons –

Figure 8. Sacagawea golden dollar. Image used by permission of the worldcoingallery.com.
Figure 9. George Washington dollar Presidential $1 Coin by United States Mint. US Mint Pressroom Image Library with direct link. Licensed under Public Domain via Commons - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:George_Washington_Presidential_$1_Coin_obverse.png

Works Cited


GIFTS Articles

Theory/GIFT article

Incorporating Confucius and Ancient China into a Rhetorical Theory Course

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Abstract
In our globalized world, students of communication benefit from experiencing diverse cultures and perspectives throughout the curriculum. One way to encourage twenty-first century global learning is to infuse the study of Chinese discourse into rhetorical theory courses. This essay first provides a rationale for the importance of comparative rhetoric and a review of relevant literature on ancient Chinese rhetoric. Then, the essay details a three-week module on ancient Chinese rhetoric with readings and activities, and an appraisal of the activity, with the goal of demonstrating the necessity and feasibility of introducing undergraduate students to globalized rhetorical studies.

Key Words: Rhetoric, Confucius, Chinese Rhetoric, Comparative Rhetoric, Rhetorical Theory, Pedagogy, Diversity, and Globalization

Introduction

Today’s students in higher education often hear that they live in a globalized world. Indeed, the world is increasingly interconnected—not only accessible via efficient air travel and technology, but also linked across geopolitics, economics, and culture. Intercultural, global learning is no longer an optional add-on to a college degree, but rather “one of the new basics in a contemporary liberal education” (AAC&U, 2007). To be engaged and active twenty-first century citizens, as well as successful and competitive employees in a global marketplace, U.S. college students need to be prepared to responsibly and productively engage diverse perspectives, as well as to identify connections and significant differences across societies (Bennett, Cornwell, Al-Lail, & Schenck, 2012; Sterns, 2009). Highlighting the importance of this educational goal, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) recognized “global learning” as a key learning outcome in its 2010 VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) Rubrics. The rubric describes global learning as demonstrating the “critical analysis of and an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies … and their implications for people’s lives and the earth’s sustainability” (Rhodes, 2010).

In the field of communication studies, recent teaching innovations prepare our students to participate in this rapidly changing environment, encouraging meaningful reflection on and engagement with the globalized world (Driskill, 2007; Gareis, 2008; Heuman, 2009; Simmons & Chen, 2014). Less common, however, are pedagogical adjustments to courses that teach the...
historical development of rhetorical and communication studies. A survey of several undergraduate textbooks covering the rhetorical tradition yields a consistent framing around the rhetorical tradition of the Greco-Roman, Western canon (Bizzell & Herzberg, 2000; Herrick, 2012; Williams, 2009). While these texts often highlight the previously neglected contributions of women—an important, recent development—they also tend to be geographically focused around the Mediterranean origins of rhetoric and rhetorical theory. When diverse perspectives are included, they often relate to contemporary communication.

There are, however, multiple traditions of communication in the ancient world, and undergraduate instructors should teach a more global, comparative rhetoric (Mao, 2010). Encouraging responsible comparative study means instructors must strive to teach ancient rhetorics within the corresponding linguistic and cultural traditions while still providing space for students to compare and contrast with other rhetorical traditions (Kirkpatrick & Zu, 2012; Lyon, 2008). Teaching a more comparative approach to ancient rhetoric enables students to take the perspective of their own culture while recognizing the contributions of other cultures (Lyon, 2010), which encourages the sort of global learning deemed important for twenty-first-century students.

Of particular interest and potential are recent developments in comparative rhetorical scholarship on ancient Chinese discourse. Like the cultures in the traditional histories of rhetoric taught in undergraduate and graduate classrooms in the United States, China has rich philosophical and discursive traditions that trace back thousands of years. Today, it occupies a position of global prominence. Indeed, at 1.37 billion people, China is the most populous nation in the world (CIA, 2015) and the largest gross domestic product in the world at $17.62 trillion—a statistics derived using purchasing power parity—an economic scaling method that captures the value of all services and goods produced into U.S. dollars (CIA, 2014). Pick up a recent monograph on globalization, and China is likely to play a featured role. Understanding contemporary China requires not only consideration of its current political and economic status, but also its history and cultural traditions—including ancient Chinese philosophy and communication practices.

In thinking about how to broaden rhetorical history to include non-Western rhetorics, China offers a compelling case, because of both its global influence and the prevalence of available and relevant communication studies scholarship. Yet for instructors with no background in ancient Chinese history, philosophy, or rhetoric, the task of infusing one’s course with such material can be daunting. Writing in his 1932 work on the Chinese philosopher Mencius, the rhetorician I. A. Richards maintained that Chinese rhetoric must be taught "authentically … within its own tradition, yet providing space for students to compare and contrast, ultimately promoting greater understanding of the roles and functions of speech in the ancient world" (p. 87).

In the summer of 2012, I began the process of integrating Chinese rhetoric into an upper-level undergraduate course on ancient rhetorical theory, Classical Rhetoric. My primary goal was to broaden student understanding of language, ethics, virtue, the community, and the self across the ancient world. This task requires instructor and student alike to reflect on methodologies and assumptions, prompting an investigation of “our understanding of the Other” and “our understanding of ourselves” (Mao, 2007, p. 216). A challenge to this goal is how to encourage understanding without engaging in the “essentializing impulse”—the tendency to stereotype based on shallow perceptions of culture and diversity, prioritizing simple differences—that “can ostracize, trivialize, and reduce complexity of recognizing and coming to greater understandings
of diversity (p. 217). Lyon (2010) has commented on the appropriateness of rhetorical studies to engage in this comparative work: one of the key aspects of rhetorical study is “in recognizing and negotiating difference—real difference” (p. 351-352).

Comparative studies of ancient rhetorics encourage students to develop a greater understanding of the potentials and limits of speech and language across different societies, providing them historical foundations to interpret and analyze the rhetorics in the diverse, globalized world in which they live. The remainder of this essay details the process of adapting undergraduate courses in communication history and rhetorical theory to incorporate ancient Chinese rhetoric.

**Exploring Chinese Rhetoric**

Incorporating ancient China into a study of the rhetorical tradition carries two main learning objectives: first, students will identify and learn ancient Chinese perspectives on speech and argumentation; second, using knowledge learned about Greek, Roman, and Chinese rhetoric, students will compare and contrast significant themes in ancient rhetorical theory.

My own study of Chinese rhetoric began with an intensive two-week summer seminar at the University of Hawaii’s East-West Center, as part of an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Grant.1 I mention this to demonstrate that despite my own lack of language training—a significant limitation that must be acknowledged, both here and in the classroom—teaching Chinese rhetoric does not require that the instructor speak Chinese.

Instructors wishing to commit to such a comparative rhetoric module on China are fortunate in the wealth of scholarship that has emerged in rhetoric and composition studies. Lu’s (1998) book *Rhetoric in Ancient China, Fifth to Third Century B.C.E.* provides an accessible and insightful comparison for those trained in Greco-Roman rhetoric. Recent special issues or sections of several rhetoric-focused journals offer further resources and pedagogical techniques on comparative rhetoric in general and Chinese rhetoric in particular (Mao, 2013; Mao, 2010; Swearingen & Mao, 2009; Wang, 2004), and scholarship in this area continues to grow (Combs, 2003; Garrett, 2012; Lipson & Binkley, 2009; Lu & Frank, 1993; You, 2010; You & Liu, 2009). Finally, those teaching ancient Chinese rhetoric can benefit from scholarship on philosophy of ancient China (Ames, 2002; Hall & Ames, 1995; Shankman & Durrant, 2002).

**Teaching Confucius in Rhetorical Theory**

While many avenues exist for infusing Chinese rhetoric into courses, the activity detailed here comes from a three-week unit in an upper-level Classical Rhetoric course focusing on the rhetoric of Confucius.2 The course themes orient toward understanding rhetoric in the contexts of the individual, community, and governance, and engages in many traditional debates on wisdom, truth, ethics, and rhetoric’s influence on society, both in ancient times and today. Prior to the unit on Chinese rhetoric, students completed units on ancient Greek and Roman rhetoric. In keeping

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1 The author of the essay took part in a faculty development program provided by the grant “Asian Studies and the Liberal Arts: A Wabash College and DePauw University Collaboration” from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (ref. #41000710). This program sent faculty from Wabash College and DePauw University to a summer seminar on ancient China at the University of Hawai’i East-West Center. The East-West Center periodically offers interdisciplinary programming for college and university instructors on infusing Asian Studies into the curriculum. For more information, see the East-West Center, http://www.eastwestcenter.org.

2 All student material included in this essay has been approved by the Wabash College Institutional Review Board.
with my method for reading primary texts in the course, I approach the study of Chinese rhetoric through two orientations: first, focusing on the theory of rhetoric in Confucius, and second, reading Confucius’ Analects as rhetoric (Confucius, Ames, & Rosemont, 1998). This provides an opportunity for undergraduate students to think in both theoretical and interpretative ways.

**Reading Schedule and Themes**

The following reflects a reading schedule for a three-week unit on ancient Chinese rhetoric, relying on Analects and drawing heavily from categorizations of yan (speech) (Lu, 1998) and bian (argumentation) (Lu & Frank, 1993) in ancient China.

**Table A**

*Sample Schedule*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>Reading and Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 2</td>
<td>Confucius, Analects. Book 2 Confucius, Analects. Sayings of Wisdom: Books 4, 7, 12, 14, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 3</td>
<td>Reading: Confucius, Analects. Narrative: Book 7.11, 12–13, 15.6–15.8 Reflections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The module begins with a philosophical orientation to reading cross-culturally (Ames, 2002). Ames advises the reader that to understand Confucianism, one must “feel its pulse rather than locate an artery” (p. 95). The visceral metaphor provides an opportunity to discuss with students how to appropriately engage cultures other than their own— not merely to study and locate differences, but rather to feel the culture, to seek understanding of its very lifeblood. This careful introduction should help keep the class from falling into the shallow East-West comparisons typical of early work and criticized by more recent scholarship (Lu & Frank, 1993; Mao, 2007; Swearingen, 2010). Having prepared students to now approach the rhetoric of ancient Chinese on its own terms, the instructor can then provide an introduction to yan and bian to focus on theoretical understandings.

Focusing on yan, or speech, provides instructors a rhetorical classification system to guide class discussion because, as Lu (1998) argues, Confucius’ Analects offers the “first treatise on Chinese speech and communication” through a framing of yan as the representation of oral speech, persuasion, and eloquence (p. 163). Furthermore, Lu traces how the writings of Confucius demonstrate theories of speech, including de yan (virtuous speech), xin yan (trustworthy speech), wei yan (upright speech), shen yan (cautious speech), and yay an (correct speech) (p. 164). Instructors can use Lu’s detailed descriptions of each category of speech to identify and assign specific analects to represent particular categories for comparison and discussion.

When introducing perspectives on Chinese rhetoric, instructors should also review the concept of bian. According to Lu and Frank (1993), bian can be translated as “argumentation,” but is better understood as argumentation traced through cultural traditions resting on “social values” (p. 452). In other words, argumentation from a Chinese rhetorical perspective highlight the social context and historical connections of a proposal rather than the persuasive invention
strategies found in ancient Greek rhetorical theories. Studying the similarities of rhetoric and bian can further conversations about understanding Chinese communication practices within their own cultural context (Lu & Frank, 1993). Recent scholarship can aid instructors in selecting passages from Analects that focus on the role of speech and persuasion (Ding, 2007; Garrett, 1993a; Garrett, 1993b; Kirkpatrick, 2005; Lu, 1998; Mao, 2007; You, 2006) as well as the process of bian (Lu, 1998; Lu & Frank, 1993).

Class Instruction and Activities

As Andy Kirkpatrick and Zhichang Lu (2012) explain, ancient Chinese rhetoric often takes an indirect style of address, which contrasts the “direct and agonistic” legal style of classical Western rhetoric (p. 25). After spending most of the semester reading classical Western rhetoric, students benefit from a structured, collective reading of Analects toward the beginning of the unit to introduce them to this indirect style of reasoning. My experience suggests that students’ ability to read and comprehend subsequent material was stronger after collectively reading (out loud), annotating, and discussing the first book of the Analects during the first week of class. The following schedule for the first week of class facilitates this process:

Table B
First Week Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>In Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Ames “Thinking through comparisons.”</td>
<td>Discuss comparative reading strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Confucius, Analects. Book 1</td>
<td>Read Book 1.1–1.4 as class, annotating and discussing. Read Book 1.5–1.8 in small groups, annotating and discussing. Discuss Book 1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To avoid over-classification and a narrow focus on rhetorical theory, instructors should also have students read substantial narrative passages from Confucius to focus on reading Analects as a text. The instructor can assign sections of Analects that point students toward the rhetorics of definition, juxtaposition, analogy, history, and metaphor (Lyon, 2010; You, 2006; Lu, 1998; Garrett, 1993a). The second and third week of the unit provide an opportunity to read Analects and identify rhetorical strategies in the text while still exploring the rhetorical theory of yan and bian.

Instructors should be careful to build time into class for reflection to ensure open dialogue about reading Analects within its own historical and cultural context. It may be useful to return to themes from Ames (2002), as well as to engage Mao’s (2007) discussion that comparative study should be accompanied by efforts to “rein in further the essentializing impulse” in order to avoid being led “astray” (p. 217). Instructors may find that Mao’s (2007) suggestion to link “discursive fields” of meaning and interpretation may aid summation and reflection in the final section of this unit (p. 223–225).
After studying Chinese rhetoric in its own right, instructors should move students toward comparison. In fact, it is useful to periodically remind students throughout the unit that understanding and comparing are two different critical tasks. Comparative work should be undertaken through class discussion over several meetings, as well as through a culminating activity, titled here as “Rhetorical Encounters.”

The activity “Rhetorical Encounters” compares ancient rhetorical perspectives. This assignment can be completed either as an oral presentation or written assignment. For an oral presentation, students should be divided into triads and assigned three rhetorical figures—one from Greece, one from Rome, and a third from China. Instructors should use figures that students have studied in the course; for example, a triad might be assigned to represent the perspectives of Isocrates, Cicero, and Confucius. Then, each triad crafts a dialogue among the three figures on a relevant rhetorical concept such as virtue or political speech, with each student representing (acting as) one of the figures. Instructors should encourage the students to write the scripts for the three characters as advocating and explaining their viewpoints, demonstrating to the class the points of agreement and disagreement among the three perspectives. One way of encouraging students to have fun while demonstrating their knowledge is to have the first task of the dialogue involve demonstrating how these three figures have arrived in your classroom in this era—this often produces humorous “time travel” justifications and the light tone at the beginning of the presentation helps students feel more comfortable performing in front of the class. Each triad presents their dialogue to the class and, once they have finished, their classmates may ask questions.

If the instructor chooses a written format for the “Rhetorical Encounters” activity, students construct a written dialogue among the three rhetorical figures. For this version of the assignment (a paper or a final examination grade), each student would independently select the three figures, one from each unit of the course. Then, the instructor should offer a question for the dialogue. For example, the three figures might be discussing “What are the qualities and practices of an ideal speaker and citizen?” and students might be instructed to reflect on themes such as speaking and citizenship, rhetoric and governance, the importance of virtue, definitions of eloquence, and the importance of appropriate speech in society. (The instructor should caution students to choose a few concepts to explore in depth rather than try to address all of these themes.) It might be useful to suggest a model for the dialogue, perhaps from a previous course reading such as Plato’s *Gorgias* or Cicero’s *De Oratore*. Furthermore, to demonstrate comprehension of the course readings, students should be encouraged to use footnote citation when they paraphrase specific passages. As a culminating activity, “Rhetorical Encounters” encourages critical and creative thinking, provides an opportunity for oral and/or written expression, and offers a strong reflective component.

**Appraisal of the Teaching Experience**

I have taught a course module on Chinese rhetoric three times, and student evaluations have consistently provided positive responses to open-ended questions. A majority of students responded that they found the unit interesting or insightful. Some comments reflected that students found the unit challenging because it was so different, while others remarked that it helped them to see rhetoric in a different way.

The evaluation comments, combined with the performances in the “Rhetorical Encounters” activity, suggest that some students reached capstone levels of global learning,
while others reached significant milestones in the aforementioned AAC&U VALUE Global Learning Rubric (Rhodes, 2010). For example, exemplary dialogue assignments analyzed how three figures related to themes such as the definition of “rhetoric” in relation to yan, the framing of rhetoric/yan and citizenship/community, or the role of virtue in relation to public speaking. One student’s dialogue between Plato, Aristotle, and Confucius ended with a discussion of how different societies encourage learning the art of rhetoric or ethical communication, with Confucius warning Aristotle about the importance of teaching caution: “When one learns how to restrain themselves and not rush into speech, they will be able to speak well in the other areas. If you are ever more curious I would tell you to reference the Analects in sections 4.23–4.24, 14.3, and 16.7 to see where cautious speech is employed.” Another student drew attention to the differences among ancient theories on whether natural ability was the most important factor in mastering rhetoric, citing passages from Antidosis (Isocrates) and Analects (Confucius). These assignments demonstrated capstone levels in aspects of global learning, which the VALUE Rubric states “evaluates and applies diverse perspectives to complex subjects… in the face of multiple and even conflicting positions” (Rhodes, 2010). In this assignment’s case, the complex subjects are theories of rhetoric.

Other students who used historical and contemporary examples in “Rhetorical Encounters” demonstrated milestone levels of global learning, showcasing that they could explain and connect “two or more cultures historically… demonstrating respectful interaction.” While a few essays struggled to do more than identify the different perspectives of the three rhetorical figures, this is understandable given the challenge of introductory comparative work. Overall, most students appreciated the unit and demonstrated some gains in global learning, as assessed through the “Rhetorical Encounters” activity.

A significant challenge to implementing this unit is that many instructors are unfamiliar with ancient Chinese history and philosophy. Still, with resources on ancient China available and growing, instructors of rhetoric would do well to think globally, in both ancient and contemporary settings. The inclusion of the Chinese rhetoric unit can lead to a richer view of rhetorical theory and encourage students to explores how rhetoric forms and functions in diverse societies past and present. Broadening the classical canon of rhetorical study enhances student global learning, particularly around historical perspective-taking.

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Assessing Logical Fallacies in Persuasion:
Using Role-play to Identify and Critique Solid Reasoning in Public Speaking

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Abstract
Because the development of solid reasoning skills is an instrumental aspect of speech formation, this teaching activity draws connections among the identification of logical fallacies, the recognition of the importance of soundly reasoned arguments, and the reduction of speaker apprehension. Students are asked to design their own humorous skits that exemplify a logical fallacy. This exercise encourages them to consider not only how fallacies can be based on faulty reasoning, but the broader implications of logical fallacies, including speaker credibility, underlying rhetorical uses, and to what extent a lack of speaker motivation can lead to deficient reasoning. Through student collaboration and a classroom atmosphere that emphasizes humor within the project, this activity can also decrease speaker apprehension.

Courses
Public Speaking, Advanced Public Speaking, Persuasive Speaking, and Introduction to Communication

Objectives
- To increase students’ ability to identify common persuasive logical fallacies.
- To increase the application of course concepts to students’ persuasive arguments and bolster their ability to make sound reasoning arguments in their own persuasive speeches.
- To expand students’ ability to evaluate the logic of reasoning.
- To reduce speaker apprehension and increase student comfort levels while speaking in public.

Introduction and Rationale

As Perloff (2013) argued, persuasion is the ultimate human experience. Within the field of persuasion, fallacies are a fundamental aspect (Aristotle, 1984). Speakers often focus on other public speaking aspects, such as the motivation for the speech, underlying rhetorical themes, and message creation. This exercise includes those elements while also focusing students’ attention on formulating soundly reasoned statements. Poorly reasoned statements made during a speech can reduce speaker credibility, create uncertainty about the speaker’s ethics, and undermine other crucial statements made during a speaker’s message (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992).

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A common example of reasoning that has gone wrong because of faulty logic or weak reasoning is a logical fallacy (Hansen, 2002). These arguments imitate solid reasoning, but are actually examples of weak reasoning or faulty logic to support claims (Hansen, 2002). This teaching activity recognizes that logical fallacies can stem from a speaker’s attempt to persuade. Logical fallacies and false reasoning statements are common, everyday occurrences (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2009). According to Floyd (2011), ten of the most commonly used logical fallacies that are also clearly distinct from one another are: ad hominem, slippery slope, either/or, false-cause, bandwagon appeal, hasty generalization, red herring, straw man, begging the question, and appeal to false authority. See Appendix A for brief descriptions of each logical fallacy.

However, this activity extends beyond the desire to merely identify logical fallacies. Instead, it allows students to assess and critically analyze how to make sound reasoning arguments in their speeches. Rather than only reading about logical fallacies and examples of poor reasoning skills, students bring these concepts to life. This employs a pedagogical idea of active learning, in which student activities are the main focus of the learning process (Prince, 2004). Pedagogical research has shown that when students are actively engaged in classroom activities, instead of lectures, there is a better understanding of course content and a greater collaboration with peers (see, for instance, Baepler & Walker, 2014; Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Roehl, Reddy, & Shannon, 2013). Active learning activities are those that “involve students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing” (Bonwell & Eison, 1991, p. 1). One of the categories of instructional methods within active learning is role-playing (Zayapragassarazan & Kumar, 2012).

This activity uses role-play to not only demonstrate poor reasoning skills, but also to demonstrate how to correct them. Students are instructed to apply their knowledge of logical fallacies by designing a humorous skit that persuades their classmates about a topic and exhibits the faulty reasoning behind their logical fallacy. First, students demonstrate the logical fallacy through their skit; after their presentation is complete, students provide a second version in which they utilize only solid reasoning skills. The clear distinction between the two examples demonstrates how to utilize solid reasoning when engaging in public speaking. The activity culminates with a discussion about the broader implications of logical fallacies, poor reasoning skills, and the motivation and rhetorical techniques that can underlie persuasive arguments.

Finally, this activity can also help to reduce speaker stage fright and speech anxiety. Instructors should encourage the students to speak as their characters, not as themselves, during their skits. Through the use of an artificially created character designed for comedy, students feel comfortable to speak freely and demonstrate both illogical and sound reasoning. Research has also shown that humor can reduce communication apprehension and avoidance (Hackman & Barthel-Hackman, 1993). Lefcourt and Martin (1986) even identified what they called “coping humor,” which employs humor to manage stressful situations. Students can use humor through this activity to reduce stress associated with public speaking.

I also recommend that instructors assess students on more of a pass/fail scale to eliminate the additional pressure of attaining a high grade. Booth-Butterfield (1988) concluded that by manipulating motivation and acquaintance factors in the classroom, student anxiety and avoidance could be decreased. By eliminating the pressure of a grade and having students work in small groups, an instructor can help students feel less anxious about public speaking.

Finally, research has shown that students who connect with their fellow classmates are motivated to take pleasure in class activities and perform better on academic assignments.
(Battistich et al., 1995). As Glaser and Bingham (2009) observed, “any activity that required the students to interact helped them get to know each other and seemed to have deepened their sense of connectedness” (p. 60). Therefore, this activity encourages student interaction to foster a sense of connectedness that reduces anxiety toward public speaking.

**Description of the Activity**

This activity can be completed in less than one hour, making it feasible to complete within most scheduled classes. Prior to the class, instructors should print out a copy of Appendix B, which features ten different types of fallacies; cut along the solid lines. Put the cutouts into a container.

After class has begun, explain to the whole class that a logical fallacy is “a line of reasoning that, even if it makes sense, doesn’t genuinely support a speaker’s point” (Floyd, 2011, p. 370). Emphasize that fallacies are not necessarily wrong or bad, but are illogical and do not support the speaker’s argument. Next, introduce the ten most common logical fallacies. Facilitate a discussion that explains not only each logical fallacy, but also the circumstances in which one might use a logical fallacy as a speaker. I begin the discussion portion by asking the class as a whole the following questions:

1. Have you ever heard a speaker use a logical fallacy? What was your reaction to his/her statement? What was your overall impression of the speaker?
2. Can you think of a context in which a logical fallacy can also employ sound reasoning? In your experience, is this possible?
3. When a speaker does use illogical reasoning, to what extent does that hinder the speaker’s credibility and ethical objectives within the speech?

These discussion questions will draw connections between the student objectives and the course content.

The overall goal of this activity is for students to assess sound reasoning within speeches. However, instructors can also note that even if a speaker uses a logical fallacy, that does not mean the speaker’s entire argument should be ignored. Assessing logical fallacies also means engaging in a charitable reading of what the speaker is saying. In other words, students can analyze how audience members can take the time to acknowledge that the speaker’s message may have merit even if the speaker engages in a logical fallacy.

Next, divide the class into 10 groups and have each group draw a logical fallacy from the prepared container. Within the next 10–20 minutes (time length depending on the class period), each group should design a short skit about 1 minute in length. During this skit, each group should clearly attempt to persuade the audience about something, as well as demonstrate the fallacy that they have arbitrarily picked. Students can create the situation and characters in their skit; students also devise their own arguments and reason for giving the speech. After the group presents its skit, the rest of the class guesses which logical fallacy was depicted. Once the class correctly guesses the logical fallacy, the group will then present a line of reasoning that avoids the logical fallacy.

A few guidelines for the skit:

- Emphasize that the students should create characters in their skits. These can be real or fictional, but they should not be themselves or anyone else in the classroom. This is a crucial element to bolster students’ public speaking skills.
- Also encourage the students to use humor when creating their skits. I do caution students to avoid unnecessary giggling or enticing laughter from their group members. This is also not a Saturday Night Live skit – so no mockeries, parodies, etc. The students’ goals are both to entertain and to have a coherent line of reasoning in their presentations.

After the preparation time has elapsed, ask for volunteers who would like to present first. Each time I have used this activity in the classroom, many volunteers were eager to present. Allow approximately 3 minutes for each group. This should give enough time for the skit, fallacy identification, and alternative reasoning.

Debriefing

Once all the students have presented their skits, I recommend having two discussions that reflect the broader implications of sound reasoning in persuasion. First ask each group to consider among themselves the following debriefing questions:

1. In what ways did your fallacy serve your underlying argument? In what ways did it not?
2. How did your motivation for persuasion affect your logical fallacy?
3. What could be a rhetorical use for your fallacy? How could your logical fallacy bolster your ethos potential with the audience?
4. Imagine you heard someone give a speech that included one example of unsound reasoning or a logical fallacy within an overall compelling argument. How could you overcome that one flaw to critically listen to the rest of the speaker’s message? How can you, as an audience member, separate logical fallacies or faulty reasoning from the broader message the speaker is trying to convey?

These debriefing questions encourage a stimulating conversation among each small group. Rather than merely identifying logical fallacies or poor reasoning, students now have the opportunity to consider the broader implications, including speech context, motivation, rhetorical uses, and the assessment of other speakers. Once each group discusses, gather the class together as a whole to continue the conversation. This allows each group member to reflect on sound reasoning with his/her own arguments, as well as to consider how to listen to others’ speeches.

Appraisal

Overall, this activity encourages students to become active learners rather than passively listen to a professor explain the communication ideas. For instance, students have commented that when a speaker has used a logical fallacy, some students can and some cannot see past the flaw. This continues a discussion about the rest of the content in the speech, the context and motivation of the speech, and the situation in which the speech occurred. While field-testing this in the classroom, I have noticed that the students are more engaged in the creation of the skits and discussions with their classmates and less interested in watching the clock, texting their friends, and packing up early. I typically use activities like this prior to having students give any formal speeches for grades. This helps them develop public speaking techniques and confidence before any official assessment. The students have been encouraging to each group and respectful of the scenarios their fellow classmates have created. This exercise can be the beginning of meaningful discussions about critical listening, charitable reading of speeches, rhetorical uses of
persuasion, and the motivation behind persuasive arguments. Therefore, this activity promotes interaction, creative and critical thinking, and solid reasoning skills in each of the students.

References


Appendix A

Ad hominem = When a speaker irrelevantly criticizes a person rather than the person’s argument.
Bandwagon appeal = When a speaker asserts that because many people have accepted the argument, so should the audience.
Begging the question = When a speaker uses an argument in which a conclusion is derived from premises that presuppose the conclusion.
Either/or = When a speaker incorrectly provides two alternatives and suggests that because one option is so negative, the audience should adopt the alternative.
False authority = When declarations are made by someone who is not an expert.
False cause = When a speaker incorrectly reasons that a previous event caused a later event simply because one preceded the other.
Hasty generalization = When a speaker has a few examples that support his/her claim, then makes an extensive and widespread conclusion.
Red herring = When a speaker redirects the audience’s focus to one irrelevant and trivial detail of the speaker’s argument.
Slippery slope = When a speaker extends a chain of causal premises beyond what can reasonably be supported by the premises.
Straw man = When a speaker misrepresents an opponent’s argument to make it appear easy to defeat.

Appendix B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ad hominem</th>
<th>False cause</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bandwagon appeal</td>
<td>Hasty generalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begging the question</td>
<td>Red herring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Either/or</td>
<td>Slippery slope</td>
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<tr>
<td>False authority</td>
<td>Straw man</td>
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Social Justice Storytelling: Giving our Students More than Just an Education in Speech

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Abstract
In an effort to highlight the practical and relevant applications of public speaking, this activity was designed to give students a safe space to discuss current social justice issues. Beginning with an open-ended narrative prompt, this activity requires students to take turns building upon a social justice narrative, giving them an opportunity to practice confident delivery and healthy dissent while also further enhancing public speaking skills and fostering a social-justice orientation.

Courses
Public Speaking; Small Group Communication; Interpersonal Communication; Intercultural Communication

Objectives
- Give students an opportunity to practice communication skills
- Provide a platform for students to engage in critical dialogue about social justice issues

Introduction and Rationale

So often in our public speaking courses, we focus on giving our students the skills they need to succeed as speakers; yet we often forgo discussions of deeper themes of what they can do with those speaking skills. Be honest—have you ever heard a “how to bake brownies” speech? How about a “why we should get out of school a week earlier in the semester” speech? While these topics allow students the opportunity to practice principles of effective public speaking, they run the risk of trivializing the power of our discipline. If our courses and discipline matter as much as we say they do, shouldn’t our students be tackling much bigger issues than “why we all deserve A’s on this speech”?

I think so and would guess that many others do as well. Therefore, I have made it a commitment to offer students a space where they can practice public speaking skills while simultaneously learning how to use those skills to be an effectively engaged citizen speaker. Given that the basic course (and other lower-level communication courses) are often required in many general education curricula, a focus on social justice situates the discipline as one with both practical and social merit. But beyond justifying our discipline and padding our assessment efforts, the public speaking course is a space rife with the potential for reflexive thinking and critical dialogue.
Social justice storytelling—or the practice of reflexive and collaborative narrative building—is one activity that further promotes ethical speaking by fostering an other-oriented view of the communication situation. As Frey and associates (1996) contend, fostering a social justice sensibility is a fourfold process that “(1) foregrounds ethical concerns; (2) commits to structural analyses of ethical problems; (3) adopts an activist orientation; and (4) seeks identification with others” (p. 111). Of course, all of these behaviors undergird ethical public speaking practices as well. Further still, social justice storytelling provides a safe space for students to closely analyze their assumptions, feelings, and understandings of complex social justice issues in collaboration with other students who may have divergent or aligning views on the same topic, thus situating this activity and the classroom as a collaborative learning space (Breunig, 2009). As an anti-oppressive pedagogical practice, this activity encourages students to formulate bold and honest claims as a method of critical resistance to pervasive (and often unchecked) dominant ideologies and sets the stage for well-reasoned critical action in response to social injustice (Breunig, 2009; Freire, 2006; Giroux, 2004; Jones, 2009).

Below, I present social justice storytelling as a rich pedagogical technique, birthed out of a pivotal pedagogical moment that helped inspire the idea that the skills we are teaching our students have more power than many of us realize.

Social Justice Storytelling

“You’ll never believe what happened yesterday. I walked into the grocery store, turned to the left, and there, right in front of me, I saw...”

This is how I have always started the second day of class in my courses. I then give each student leeway to take the story where they want; one student talks for a few seconds then receives a signal from me to stop and yield the floor to another. Together, we weave a grand, illustrious, and often ridiculous, narrative. You would be shocked where they take it. My mother would be embarrassed. Still, we have fun and together we create a safe climate that sets the foundation for their future public speaking endeavors. This usually works quite well for us. By the time speeches roll around, students have already gotten comfortable, shall we say, “pushing the boundaries,” and this translates into them pushing boundaries in their speeches. This activity allows students a safe space to practice impromptu speaking, quick recovery, creativity, audience analysis, and adaptation—all elements that enhance public speaking. In short, I love the activity and it has worked wonders.

But last semester was different. I couldn’t bring myself to use this activity on the second day of class. I don’t think my students would have been ready for it anyway. Literally, just a few days before, on August 9, 2014, a short distance away from our beloved university, Michael Brown was shot dead in Ferguson, Missouri. I recognize that this issue is political for some, but for those of us here, it wasn’t political—it was personal. As students trickled back onto campus, we could still feel the sting of what had happened just a few days before. There were demonstrations, sit-ins, public forums—we were all trying to deal and heal.

And yet, in the midst of a horrendous tragedy that rocked our nation and our community, the semester had to move forward. Even on the first day of class, you could feel the tension, the anger, and the confusion. As best as I could, I tried to connect the content of my course to social justice and civic engagement like I do in every course I teach, but the script I used semester after semester seemed like just that to me—a simple stump speech on why what I did mattered. In the
wake of one of the biggest social justice issues of my students’ lives, the script felt stale and
cold. My students did not care; they were too consumed with Ferguson, and rightfully so. I was
too. We all were. So I could not do it, not this semester. I could not expect them to engage with
me in some ridiculous group narrative about the grocery store. How could we be laughing about
oranges falling off the shelf or a lady tripping over a wet floor sign when one of our own had just
been gunned down in our streets?

I tried my hardest to think about how I could use Ferguson as a theme throughout the
semester. Students clearly wanted to talk about it and it seemed like it might be a way to engage
them. Then the guilt set in: was I using a national tragedy to bring legitimacy to my course and
my teaching? Conflicted, I decided to move the semester forward like any other semester. I
walked into the second day of class just like I had many semesters before, expecting to use an
activity that I loved. But instead of “You’ll never guess what happened at the grocery store
yesterday...” another set of words fell out of my mouth: “So....this Ferguson thing...”

I’ll never forget that moment. What followed took triple the time I had ever allowed for
the activity, but I did not stop it. We followed the same format. I started the prompt and students
took turns weaving together a story. We followed the same set of instructions. I let students
speak for about 20–30 seconds, paused at an appropriate time, and then directed another student
to pick up where the last had left off. It worked the same way, but the story was much different
this time. There were no oranges falling off of shelves or people tripping over wet floor signs—
there were emotions, there was an indictment, there was sense-making, there was healthy dissent.
It was powerful. Perhaps it was not a “story” in terms of a linear narrative, but there certainly
was a story going on—one where students could feel safe and supported in using communication
skills to help solve, or at least better understand, a social problem that was rocking our world.

“They just shot him. He’s dead and he didn’t even do nothing.”

“I can’t believe it happened so close to home. Why here? It’s embarrassing.”

“My brother told me that the city is a mess. Trash everywhere. People stealin’ stuff.”

This impromptu activity emerged as a way for students to vent their frustrations and to
dialogue about a highly controversial topic. There were tears. Emotions. Not everyone agreed.
The activity spawned more critical and engaging dialogue than I had ever observed in an
undergraduate course. Therefore, I believe that social justice storytelling has the potential to be a
liberating, engaging, and effective activity for students to gain both impromptu speaking skills
and an understanding that public speaking is an important practice for advancing social justice.

Setting the Stage

Of course, social justice issues can be controversial. Although Ferguson hit our institution
hard, I have to acknowledge that not everyone agreed on the problems or solutions. This is much
less of a problem than an opportunity to get undergraduate students engaged in healthy dissent.
For instructors with a desire to use social justice storytelling, there are many different ways to
start the process. First, it involves being engaged with current issues on a local, national, or
global level. While the selection of the social justice issue to explore is certainly instructor-led,
pulling on highly publicized or emotive events is a great way to ensure that students engage
meaningfully with the issue. Ultimately, there should be an emotional connection; students (at least a small percentage of them)—should have an opinion or, at the very least, be informed about the issue.

This simultaneously models to our students that good public speaking endeavors are emotional—they stem from or inspire passion—and that these endeavors are relevant, revealing to students the importance of connecting topics to their audience and reaching consensus. While there is no “right way” to begin the process of social justice storytelling, instructors should always keep in mind the multi-dimensional goals of effective public speaking when selecting a prompt.

**Facilitating Dialogue**

The best public speaking endeavors are inherently conversational. I stress to students that good public speaking is not about an endless flow of knowledge; it is dialogue, not merely dissemination. Social justice storytelling helps them realize that a conversational speaking style does not mean that public speaking is dialogic; rather, it is a starting point for the interrogation of the audience’s passions, emotions, and beliefs. It is a foundation upon which consensus is built. As such, instructors using this activity should start by offering a simple, open-ended sentence:

“*So…this Ferguson thing…*”

“*Last night I saw the television promo for Caitlin Jenner’s new show…*”

“*There seems to be a lot of crazy stuff going on in the Middle East right now…*”

“*How about Tom Brady and the deflated footballs?*”

Facilitating dialogue begins with a prompt about a social justice issue. Again, I recognize that these issues are often controversial and loaded, and present potentially tricky situations. To me, that is a good thing. I want my students to know how to communicate confidently even when their beliefs are challenged. I want them to understand how to communicate ethically with people from different backgrounds. I welcome the messy. If you are more conservative in your teaching technique, simply choose social justice issues that are not as controversial. Start the conversation and let students take it where they want.

After you begin the open-ended sentence prompt, point to one student to take it over. At first, students may appear timid or unwilling. Encourage those students to say whatever comes to mind. After students speak for a few seconds (this ranges: I allow some to speak one sentence; others are so consumed, they speak for longer). While there is no formula, remember that this activity is designed for all students to engage, so each should participate a healthy amount. However, because all students need to engage, be careful not to allow one or two students to dominate the discussion. Whenever there is a natural break in thought or sentence structure, quietly hold up a hand, signaling the student to “stop” and point to another student (or have the speaking student point to another), who will then pick up the conversation where it left off. The goal is not to highlight one person’s beliefs, but rather to use those beliefs as a stepping-off point for others. Guide the conversation; if it gets too emotional, redirect. If it falls apart, re-insert yourself and restart the conversation.
Debriefing

Debriefing is a crucial part of any activity. However, with social justice storytelling, the debriefing is a bit more of a meta-cognitive endeavor. Since the goal of the activity is collaborative sense-making, students reflect on that sense-making as it manifests. I do not often debrief on the social justice issues themselves. I have to understand that the learning outcomes that guide my course are mostly focused on public speaking skills, not an actual comprehension of social justice advocacy. Thus, the goal is to provide them with a space to feel out what public speaking in front of an audience is like. However, I have been amazed to see how deeply students engage with social justice issues in their speeches and assignments. This activity prompts their thinking that social justice advocacy and public speaking are closely related; it inspires a social justice sensibility (Frey, Barnette-Pearce, Polluck, Artz, & Murphy, 1996).

Appraisal

Students may at first be uncomfortable with social justice storytelling. I found that they were ready to engage about Ferguson, but when it came to talking about marriage equality, illegal immigration, or other things, the results ranged. Accordingly, instructors should exercise a healthy level of caution when using this activity. However, as communication faculty, we are well-primed to deal with conflict, dissent, and argumentation. I have found that students are highly engaged once they recognize that the classroom is a safe space for their opinions. Their commitment to tackling social justice issues in subsequent speeches also demonstrates to me the development of a social justice orientation. Of course, some students are ready to engage more quickly or deeply than others. This process can also help students recognize where their true passions lie, helping them identify relevant themes for future speeches and assignments.

As a whole, social justice storytelling is a powerful and empowering endeavor, especially for faculty who want to encourage their students to use public speaking as more than a “how-to” platform. It helps students see the connection between our discipline and real-world problems. It helps solve the “why do I need to take this class?” question, and ultimately inspires them to use the public speaking skills they are gaining to go out and make a difference in the world. The term “social justice” resonates differently among people. As Boulding (1988) notes, “our inability to recognize, agree about, or measure [social] justice is perhaps the greatest difficulty we encounter in trying to direct social policy toward it” (p. 49). Whether you talk about Ferguson, global terror, rape culture, or any other social justice issue, simply talking about timely and challenging issues has great potential to stretch the basic course—and your students—in new directions.

References


Using Social Lubricants to Increase Conversationality

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Abstract
Responding to the epidemic of the dying art of conversation (Asha, 2014; Barnwell, 2014 April), this activity constructs a space in which students tap into social lubricants as a conversational, artistic tool to increase conversational skills. Inspired by Monahan & Lannutti’s (2000) social lubricant work, this study views social lubricants—any object or action that facilitates social interaction, such as a dog or a compliment—as a vital resource that merits pedagogical attention. After completing a role-play in which students tap into a social lubricant to achieve an assigned goal, students will be able to: (a) define social lubricants; (b) describe the utility of social lubricants in social interaction; and (c) critically appraise ways in which using social lubricants can lessen communication apprehension.

Courses
Interpersonal Communication, Basic Survey Course, Group Communication, Organizational Communication, and Intercultural Communication

Objectives
- After completing this single-class activity, students will be able to: (a) define social lubricants; (b) describe the utility of social lubricants in social interaction; and (c) critically appraise ways in which using social lubricants can lessen communication apprehension.

Introduction and Rationale
As communication teachers, we highlight the importance of listening, cultural awareness, and even the influence of self-disclosure on relationships in various courses, yet the art of effective conversation is complicated when face-to-face conversation is replaced with tweets, texts, and emoticons. In fact, Asha (2014) argued that the art of conversation is one of the biggest casualties of living in an online, connected world. This casualty is continually reflected within the classroom. As an example, Barnwell (2014, April) reflected upon his experience with students’ lack of conversationality in a recent assignment:

Unless the student facilitator asked a question, most kids were unable to converse effectively. Instead of chiming in or following up on comments, they conducted
rigid interviews. They shuffled papers and looked down at their hands. Some even reached for their phones—an automatic impulse and the last thing they should be doing (para 5).

The influence of technology on communication has captured scholastic attention (Asha, 2014; Engdahl, 2007; Hinduja & Patchin, 2009). At the same time, the science and art of conversation, or pedagogy of conversationality, remains untouched which leaves communication instructors grappling with how to get today’s student to hold an effective conversation without technology. Barnwell (2014, April) explained, “As I watched my class struggle, I came to realize that conversational competence might be the single-most overlooked skill we fail to teach students” (para 6).

In order to address this need, this activity proposes teaching social lubricants as a pedagogical tool for communication instruction. Social lubricants have been defined as “a mechanism to ease feelings of anxiety and nervousness during social interactions” (Monahan & Lannutti, 2000, p. 175). In other words, social lubricants can be anything in one’s context that facilitates social interaction between two or more people. For instance, in Monahan & Lannutti’s (2000) study, they discovered that alcohol acted as a social lubricant for women with low social self-esteem when speaking with a confederate male. Such women reported feeling more at ease in conversation and were more satisfied with their conversational efforts. In fact, the social lubricant enabled them to initiate more conversations while also lessening communication apprehension. Further, Holmes (1998) identified compliments as useful social lubricants, which speaks to the multiple forms social lubricants can take within a conversation.

To increase awareness of social lubricants’ utility, this activity encourages students to (a) identify social lubricants in various real world social settings, thus potentially reducing communication apprehension in such settings, and then (b) use social lubricants to obtain a social goal. This activity posits that a social lubricant can be found within any context. For instance, a child in a shopping small, a dog in a park, and holiday punch at a party can all be exploited as social lubricants to initiate and maintain conversation. In other words, the following activity affords students an opportunity to use social lubricants as a means to move beyond small talk, or “a type of conversation focused on inconsequential topics such as the weather” (Verderber & Verderber, 2013), as they find their own conversational voice and meet relational goals.

**Activity Description**

Typically, this activity requires 20–30 minutes including debriefing. Prior to the activity, the instructor will need to prepare three index cards with instructions. Type or print the following scenarios on three different index cards (one scenario per card) in bulleted form:

- **Scenario 1 (Exaggerate the following!)**
  - Social Goal: To obtain a potential partner’s name
  - Setting: Shopping mall
  - Social Lubricant: Child (~2 years old)

- **Scenario 2 (Exaggerate the following!)**
  - Social Goal: To obtain a potential partner’s phone number
  - Setting: Park
  - Social Lubricant: Dog

- **Scenario 3 (Exaggerate the following!)**

**Notes:**
Social Goal: To obtain consent from a potential partner to go on a romantic date  
Setting: College (or work) party  
Social Lubricant: Punch bowl with punch

At the start of class, and after briefly introducing students to the concept of social lubricants, ask for six volunteers. Ask the volunteers to go into the hall, then instruct the rest of the students to clear a “stage” for the activity in the front of the classroom.

Next, meet with volunteers in the hall to inform them that they will be demonstrating how to use social lubricants in different contexts. Have the students group themselves into pairs and explain that each pair will have a different relational goal (some easier than others). Give one index card to each pair. Designate one individual in each group to use the social lubricant and ask the individual on the receiving end to slightly resist the efforts of the individual attempt to use the social lubricant. Remind volunteers to use the social lubricant as a conversational starting point to achieve their assigned relational goal. Alternatively, you could have the individual who is not using the social lubricant to be unaware of what is happening and only inform them that they are in their given setting and must interact with a given subject (e.g., child in shopping mall, dog in park). Regardless of role and approach, ask volunteers to exaggerate each scenario.

Return to the classroom and bring in each volunteer pair one at a time. Tell the class to (a) identify the social lubricant used in each scenario, and (b) take notes on conversational strategies they believe to be effective or ineffective. After each pair performs their scenario and meets their relational goal, it is vital to debrief.

Debriefing

I recommend the following topics for debriefing: (a) the influence of context on social lubricants; (b) the influence of social lubricants in reducing communication apprehension in dyadic or group settings (i.e., shifting the focus from the speaker to the object); (c) how students might use social lubricants to move beyond small talk toward self-disclosure and discovery; (d) the potential need to adapt to differing social lubricants in various contexts; and (e) disadvantages or advantage of social lubricants in various social settings such as school, work, and home.

Alternatively, prior to group discussion, instructors could have students independently journal for 5–10 minutes on their observations of social lubricants used in the scenarios. Journaling can give students the opportunity to individually process their observations and experiences prior to collective debriefing. Potential reflective journal or discussion questions include:

- Which social lubricant was most effective? Why?
- How do these scenarios mirror or differ from “real life?”
- What makes a social lubricant effective?
- Describe a social setting in which you tend to feel anxious. What social lubricants might you use to lessen your anxiety within that context?
- Discuss the need for individuals to use social lubricants. Provide examples of when you think using social lubricants may be most and least appropriate and effective.

Such questions not only construct a reflective space for students to consider the value of tapping into social lubricants within their dyadic or group interactions, but also provide an opportunity
for students to demonstrate their understanding of social lubricants. Additionally, this allows students the opportunity to identify potential social lubricants and critically appraise ways in which using social lubricants in various contexts might lessen their own communication apprehension, thus fulfilling activity goals and objectives. As students reflect, it is important for instructors to consider ways in which students might respond to this activity.

In my experience, students typically achieve the relational goal indicated on their index card in five minutes or less. The latter scenario of using punch to “score a date” is typically the most difficult. In that particular scenario, students sometimes use additional social lubricants, such as complimenting jewelry worn by their conversational partner, to facilitate conversation. Students usually laugh and enjoy their classmates’ performances. This activity encourages hyperboles that help students to identify social lubricants. In fact, students often share other examples from their personal lives of times they used a social lubricant to speak with someone, or someone tried to use a social lubricant to speak with them. Additionally, this often lively discussion can lead into brainstorming of social lubricants they can use in the future to achieve relational goals and reduce any relational anxiety or apprehension they might experience.

**Appraisal**

This activity offers students the opportunity to define, identify, and critically assess existing and potential social lubricants in their social worlds by investigating in fictitious, yet familiar, scenarios. In addition, they learn the art (and fun) of initiating and maintaining conversation as they tap into social lubricants as a tool. In other words, students’ creativity is challenged as they must artistically construct dialogue with an “unknown” partner. Doing so helps students to visualize the ambiguity of social interaction, meaning that there is not necessarily a “right way” of initiating or maintaining conversation with others. It is important to realize this activity privileges students who are more comfortable in group settings, which may enable them to more easily model how to use a social lubricant. Using volunteers for this activity is crucial, as it not only allows individuals who feel comfortable to comply, but enables those students to help others by modeling interpersonal assessment skills in what to say, how to say it, and what to use to start and maintain such conversations.

This activity is easily adaptable to a variety of courses as well as student demographics such as age and life experience. For instance, rather than focusing on “traditional” students’ experiences, this activity could be used with adult learners or working adults by altering scenarios to include more workplace situations:

- **Alternative Scenario 1 (Exaggerate the following!)**
  - Social Goal: To obtain a potential employer’s business card
  - Setting: Airport gate
  - Social Lubricant: Laptop bag with a prominent company logo

- **Alternative Scenario 2 (Exaggerate the following!)**
  - Social Goal: To make a casual fundraising request
  - Setting: Restaurant
  - Social Lubricant: Menu

- **Alternative Scenario 3 (Exaggerate the following!)**
  - Social Goal: To establish a connection for a future sales approach
  - Setting: Country club
  - Social Lubricant: Business card
The scenarios could also be tweaked to include intercultural or organizational contexts. The use of props such as a stuffed dog or company merchandise may also help to construct various “real world” settings. Additionally, this activity could be adapted so that the class either knows the social lubricant and goal the performers are attempting to demonstrate. The audience could also give performers a relational play-by-play in “what to do next.” Doing so may capitalize on classroom dynamics and students’ collective creativity.

Overall, this activity allows students to easily identify, describe, and assess ways in which they might benefit from using social lubricants to increase their dyadic and group communication skills as they work toward their relational goals in a fun and safe classroom environment.

References


Simulated Creative Collaboration: 
Experiencing Challenges to Innovative Virtual Teaming in the Classroom

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Abstract
This activity provides students with in-depth experience working as part of an innovative virtual team, which will enable them to better understand the relative advantages and disadvantages of various approaches to creative collaboration in different contexts. Participants are divided into groups, which must then solve an assigned problem using a specified communication technology and creative process from the literature. The instructor will introduce a variety of obstacles to communication using each technology, which may inhibit students’ creative processes. Following the activity, the class will discuss these challenges, participants’ responses, and the range of experiences with different collaborative processes and technologies.

Courses
Virtual Teams, Computer-Mediated Communication, Small Group Communication, Organizational Communication, Innovation and Collaboration

Objectives
- Enable students to enact a variety of creative processes in a simulated virtual team or distributed work group with realistic scenarios and constraints.
- Provide firsthand experience to help students better understand and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various creative collaborative approaches under different conditions.

Introduction and Rationale
New communication technologies provide a range of opportunities for collaboration well beyond face-to-face interactions with co-located, or geographically close, associates. However, the proximal and temporal distance between partners on virtual teams creates a wide array of

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additional challenges for creative collaboration efforts, which traditionally rely upon free and natural communication between parties (Sonnenburg, 2004). Firsthand experience will help students to better understand the nuances of such obstacles and be better equipped to manage them in practice.

**Description of Activity**

This activity can be conducted in as few as 30 minutes, although it may be more appropriate to allot two or more hours. This will allow time for the activity to fully develop and will permit a sufficiently long debriefing for class members to discuss their individual experiences. Each student and the instructor will use a computer with Internet access during this activity. If possible, plan to use multiple rooms.

Prior to the class period in question, the instructor should either devise a problem-solving scenario for the activity or adapt one from recent news. For instance, one might ask students to adopt the role of a consulting unit assisting the Ferguson, Missouri, police force, with the task of addressing current racial tensions in the area. It may be easier to use such a scenario pulled from a real-world news story than to construct an artificial case, especially since doing so will foster a variety of realistic solutions and promote serious problem-solving efforts.

The instructor will divide the class into several teams. Each team should be tasked with resolving the scenario using a different creative process, such as attribute listing, morphological analysis, mind mapping, brainstorming, imagery development, analogical thinking, or any number of other appropriate techniques (see, for instance, Nemiro, 2008). Each team will then be assigned a different communication technology, such as videoconferencing or whiteboard software. Free versions of many such communication tools can be found online. Finally, the instructor and each student should have access to an instant messaging (IM) account; the instructor may configure these accounts prior to the activity.

Note that, if multiple rooms are used for the activity, then the instructor should plan to remain alone in one room and to distribute individuals on the same team among different rooms. An information sheet will be distributed to each class member detailing how to access their respective IM accounts and online technologies. The instructor may choose whether or not to list the IM usernames of their fellow team members, or whether to vary this from team to team. This sheet, however, should instruct the student to remain on his or her IM account throughout the activity. For the sake of easy administration of the activity, each sheet should be enclosed an envelope labeled with the corresponding student’s name and his or her assigned room.

When beginning the activity, the instructor will introduce the scenario and the problem, then distribute the envelopes and instruct the students not to open them until they have reached their destinations.

From here, the activity will largely run itself. For an extra twist, the instructor may use his or her own IM account to distract some team members. Such distractions might include assigning additional tasks that either supplement or conflict with the primary goal of the assignment. For instance, you might demand a brief report about a certain aspect of the problem (which will require research) or ask about concerns external to the project, such as planning an outing for a visiting colleague. Alternatively, the instructor might instead play the role of a “friend” communicating with certain team members in order to distract those individuals with off-topic banter. This will further enrich the simulation of true virtual teams, as members of such teams may be distracted by other work tasks and recreational activities.
Once the allotted time for collaboration has expired, all of the students should return to the main classroom for a debriefing. This discussion should address the various technologies and creative processes used, the solutions that individuals and teams developed, and their experiences were throughout the process. This discussion should also cover obstacles to virtual teaming, including the lack of physical presence and the nonverbal cues that accompany it, as well as how teams attempted to overcome those obstacles during the activity.

**Connection to Concepts, Theory, and Skills**

Nemiro, Beyerlein, Bradley, and Beyerlein (2008) note that creative processes are increasingly handled by teams rather than individuals, and they detail a variety of creative techniques that can be used in different situations. Most individuals have learned very few techniques to stimulate innovation, and have experienced even fewer of them first-hand, so this activity will broaden the range of students’ creative skills. Virtual teaming, however, adds several extra obstacles that may stifle some creative efforts. Proximal and temporal distance can inhibit communication, and they also make team members more prone to external distractions. This problem is particularly prevalent, since organizational members involved in virtual teams often have other obligations as well. First-hand experience as part of a virtual creative team will help students to more fully understand these challenges.

**Typical Results**

The authors administered this activity, basing their scenario on McDonald’s struggles to maintain restaurant operations in Iceland in late 2009. Students in a Virtual Teams class were asked to solve this problem together using Google Documents and whiteboard web pages. They were also given AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) accounts named after McDonald’s food items. Per the authors’ instructions, the five teams used drawings, idea checklists, force field analyses, brainstorming, and analogical thinking (see Nemiro, 2008) in their attempts to solve the problem.

Students were assigned to several different rooms, with no fellow teammates being co-located within the same physical space; this forced teams to use computer-mediated communication to address the task at hand. The authors also restricted some members’ communication with their fellow team members to the assigned technologies, explicitly forbidding them from using alternative in much the same way that a manager might expressly compel employees to collaborate using a specific, company-sanctioned piece of software. Some teams were given the AIM usernames of their teammates, thereby facilitating real-time conversations within the team, while others were not. One student, though, after talking with others assigned to his room, created an AIM Blast group called “McCheating” to communicate with many users at once. Information about the group spread throughout the class until almost all students were interacting through this feature. Teams were thus able to more effectively solve the problem and even collaborate with other groups. This approach resembled the ways in which organizational members can communicate outside formal channels, crossing institutionally defined boundaries to access more diverse sets of knowledge and skills (Johnson, Donohue, Atkin, & Johnson, 1994).
Appraisal

The processes explored during this activity will vary to some degree each time, as different students will inevitably develop different approaches in response to the same situation. The diverse methods that students use to try to improve their communication should be discussed during the debriefing. These varied results reflect the variety of issues that individuals in virtual teams encounter, and student recognition of this range of experiences, challenges, processes, and solutions represents one of the most important outcomes for this activity. A flexible activity of this nature necessarily leads to unpredictable results, which in turn necessitates an open-ended means of assessing the activity’s success.

The instructor may gauge student comprehension while the activity is ongoing—checking on teams’ progress and understanding may even serve as one of the “distractions” used to challenge groups. However, the debriefing discussion is a more ideal opportunity for assessment, as only at this point will students observe the variety in processes and outcomes that other teams developed. Students should be able to describe the ways that particular elements of the communicative scenario facilitated or inhibited different aspects of the collaborative process, perhaps even leading them to favor some techniques or ideas over others. Ideally, after hearing from each team, they will be equipped to synthesize their findings and consider which creative approaches worked better than others, as well as to identify other contexts in which certain approaches might be more or less suitable. The instructor should elicit such evaluations during the discussion.

If the discussion leaves any doubt about whether the activity’s desired outcomes were achieved, follow-up assessments can be used to compel students to further explore their experience. For instance, students could write a short (1–2 page) paper detailing the challenges their team faced, how they overcame those obstacles, and how their approach resembled and differed from those chosen by other teams.

References


Constructive Peer Evaluations: The Toilet Paper Stuck to My Shoe Lesson

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Abstract
Peer evaluation is a useful learning tool that provides students with a holistic view of their work. However, getting students to provide quality feedback to their peers can be a struggle. The purpose of this activity is to make students realize that constructive criticism, when given tactfully, is the only polite option so that they will share thorough, useful feedback throughout the semester.

Courses
Any course in which peer feedback is utilized. This activity has been especially helpful in public speaking and data communication courses.

Objective
Through this activity, students will realize that constructive criticism, when given tactfully, is polite.

Introduction and Rationale
Peer feedback has long been used in college courses to give students a more holistic view of their work (Nilson, 2003). There are a variety of communication courses that benefit from peer feedback, including public speaking (e.g., feedback on speeches and visual aids), research methods (e.g., feedback on assessments and reports) and visual communication (e.g., feedback on infographics and logo designs). The recent popularity of hybrid classes has allowed for peer reviews to become a more popular instructional tool, using virtual lab time as an opportunity to leave peers feedback through discussion boards (Ertmer et al., 2007). Discussion board peer feedback is typically hosted on a course management system (CMS) such as Blackboard or Moodle. Students often enjoy completing assignments through a CMS because they are internet-based systems that can be accessed at a student’s convenience in terms of both time and preferred internet-connective device (Gibbons, 2009). Thus, a CMS is a convenient platform to facilitate peer feedback discussions.

As any instructor who has ever required peer feedback knows, it is difficult to elicit quality peer feedback that includes both praise and constructive criticism. The explanation for this struggle may be found in politeness theory, which teaches us that humans will seek to avoid communication that could be face-threatening to the speaker or receiver (Brown & Levinson, 1978; Brown & Levinson, 1987). In other words, students often hesitate to give peers constructive criticism in order to save face: both their own face, as they may appear unkind, and the face of the student being criticized, who may become embarrassed. Thus, the job of the
instructor is to reframe constructive feedback as an act of politeness that students should not hesitate to offer.

Quality feedback helps receivers understand how to accomplish their goals (Wiggins, 2012), so when feedback is vague—such as “nice work” or “I didn’t like the topic”—peer feedback is not useful. During semesters in which peer feedback has lacked substance, a short lesson and activity has dramatically changed the quality of feedback. Both are described in the following sections. Note that this is not a lesson that should necessarily be used every semester, but only in response to weak peer feedback.

Preparing the Classroom

This lesson is best implemented immediately after the first round of poor peer feedback has been submitted. Before students arrive to the next class period, the instructor will need to prepare the classroom. The only materials needed are a streamer of toilet paper and piece of tape.

The toilet paper should be placed on the floor, hidden from students—behind a podium is ideal. The toilet paper should lay with a piece of tape connected to it, sticky side up. The tape should overhang enough to stick to something else, as shown in Figure 1. It is important for the toilet paper to be (a) out of student view, (b) somewhere the instructor would naturally walk during class, and (c) easy for the instructor to step on.

The Lesson

The instructor should ensure that students have access to the feedback that they wrote. This may involve handing back authored work or asking them to pull up electronic feedback. If students do not have access to classroom computers, they will likely have their cellular phones present (Tindell & Bohlander, 2012) which they can use to access their CMS discussion boards through a mobile app or browser. Once students have access to their work, the instructor should move about the classroom while reviewing the purpose of peer evaluations (to give peers feedback that will help them meet their goals), emphasizing the usefulness of tactful, constructive criticism. Halfway through the review, the instructor should step on the tape and toilet paper and pace throughout the classroom dragging the toilet paper on their shoe. The instructor should continue with the review as though unaware of the toilet paper. (It may be wise to practice this in front of a live audience before trying it in the classroom, as it can be hard to keep a straight face once the toilet paper comes into play.)
Student Reactions

Once students notice the toilet paper, most will initially either snicker or look to their peers for behavioral cues. A few good classroom citizens will try to subtly get the teacher’s attention or step on the paper as the instructor passes by. Once the students inevitably catch on and start laughing, the instructor can stop talking and acknowledge the toilet paper. At this time the instructor should move on to the debriefing.

Debriefing

The instructor should remove the toilet paper and tape it prominently in the classroom as a visual reference for discussion. Students should be asked about the influence the toilet paper had on them as an audience. Such questions may include:

- How well were you able to pay attention to what I was saying once you noticed the toilet paper?
- What did the toilet paper do to your perception of my competence?
- Is it possible to look credible with toilet paper on your shoe?
- Was it kind or unkind when people in this classroom tried to help me get the toilet paper off of my shoe?
- What is more polite: pointing out the toilet paper or leaving me unaware?

The instructor should guide the conversation to the idea that pointing out the toilet paper was an act of kindness intended to boost the instructor’s credibility, and that the purpose of peer evaluations is the same. Students can discuss the notion that there are many types of toilet paper in communication: ums in presentations, circular reasoning in arguments, clutter in visual reports, redundant wording in writing, etc. By completing effective peer evaluations that include constructive criticism, students are helping their peers to enhance their peers’ competence in future endeavors and to achieve the goals of their assignments.

Activity

After the short lesson, students can be given an opportunity to seek clarity on the feedback process. It is important to avoid setting strict parameters for the content of peer feedback because that may prevent students from giving substantive feedback for fear that it wouldn’t fit into a designated box; however, some students may need guidance to get started. If so, instructors might suggest Strang’s (2013) schema for peer feedback, which includes an assessment of purpose, content, and style.

Students should then be directed to review the feedback they wrote to ensure that it helps their peer remove all of the toilet paper, so to speak. The teacher should emphasize that the students’ job is to share anything their peers should be aware of, and that doing so is really more polite than not pointing out an area of potential improvement. It is rare for a student not to have additional feedback to share during this activity.

Conclusion

In total, this activity takes 15 minutes: 5 minutes to set up the classroom, 5 minutes for the lesson, and 5 minutes for the activity. Despite being a very brief lesson and activity, it is
productive. The activity has been less effective when used before the first round of peer feedback; it seems to be most fruitful when students have already struggled with what to share with their peers. Overall, though, the outcome of these 15 minutes of work is evidence that students have reframed their understanding of peer feedback: sharing ways to help their peers save face in future assignments, rather than threatening face by being rude.

References


Constitution of Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD
Ratified by the Editorial Executive Committee, November 2014

Article 1. Name
The name of the journal shall be Discourse: The Journal of the Speech Communication Association of South Dakota (Also known as Discourse or Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD).

Article 2. Affiliation
Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD shall be the official journal of the Speech Communication Association of South Dakota (SCASD).

Article 3. Publisher
Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD shall be self-published and distributed through the SCASD official website, the url for which shall be disseminated via CRTNet and professional networking channels. Each volume of the journal shall contain the Call for Manuscripts for the following volume. The call will also be disseminated via CRTNet and professional networking channels. The annual deadline for submissions shall be February 1.

Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD shall be published annually in the Fall beginning with Volume 1, Fall 2014. As the number of quality submissions increases, the Editorial Executive Committee will consider a move to a biannual (Spring and Fall) publication schedule.

Article 4. Purpose
Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD shall be a scholarly journal committed to the submission of refereed manuscripts concerning human communication, performance, and the education of these matters.

Article 5. Structure and Responsibilities
Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD Editorial staff shall consist of the following members:

a) An Editor
b) An Associate Editor
c) An Editorial Executive Committee
d) An Editorial Board
e) An Article Review Board

a) The Editor shall serve a three-year term.

The Editor shall be responsible for the general management of the journal. His/her duties shall consist of receiving submissions, delegating manuscripts to appropriate reviewers, and making final decisions concerning the acceptance or rejection of all manuscripts received by Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD. The Editor, working with the reviews and recommendations of the Associate Editor and Editorial Board, is responsible for the quality of all manuscripts published by Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD. The Editor shall also be responsible for constructing an Editor’s Statement for every volume of Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD.
b) The Associate Editor shall serve a three-year term in preparation for an additional three-year term as Editor, assuming that all duties assigned by the Editor have been performed as agreed. The Associate Editor shall perform duties as assigned by the Editor.

c) The Editorial Executive Committee
The Editorial Executive Committee shall consist of the Editor and Associate Editor. This body is empowered with the authority to make and enact necessary and proper decisions regarding operations and handling of the journal (e.g., obtaining and communicating with reviewers and Editorial Board members, marketing the journal, any changes of web-hosting services, decisions on printing and dissemination, acquisition of funding as needed, copy editing services, etc.). Any actions that alter standards and practices (e.g., the blind review process; the mission statement; general formatting) of the journal shall also invite participation from the Editorial Board.

d) The Editorial Board
The Editorial Board shall advise the Editor in matters concerning the publication of the *Discourse: The Journal of the SCASD*, including changes to the constitution and to editorial policy. The members of the Editorial Board shall include past Editors of Discourse and the sitting SCASD association President, as well as the best possible blend of members who are experts from the various publics represented by the journal. All members of the Editorial Board shall be expected to review at least 2-4 manuscripts per volume (see item e), and to provide precise copy edits for at least one additional manuscript per volume.

e) Article Reviewers
Article Reviewers, including Editorial Board Members, shall be experts in their respective fields and will be asked to blind review manuscripts in their field of expertise and make recommendations to the Editor as to whether each manuscript reviewed should be: (1) accepted without change, (2) accepted pending minor revision, (3) revised and resubmitted, or (4) rejected.

**Article 6. The Review Process**
For every volume of Discourse, the Editorial Executive Committee shall ensure that all submissions are devoid of identifying information before sending all eligible submissions that meet a minimum set of standards (defined by a rubric) for a minimum of two blind peer reviews using a standard review rubric. In the case of a “split” recommendation between reviewers, the Editorial Executive Committee may choose to send the piece for a third review.

**Article 7. Meetings**
The Editor shall present on the state of the journal at the annual Speech Convention Association of South Dakota convention.
Article 8. Amendments

This constitution may be altered, amended or repealed by a two-thirds majority of members present (which may include a roll call vote via online or digital communication) at a General Meeting of the Editorial Advisory Board.