Georgia State University
ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University

Communication Theses | Department of Communication

12-4-2006

The Rhetoric of Volunteerism: Strategies to Recruit and Retain Volunteers in Nonprofit Organizations

Terry Bell Woods

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/communication_theses

Recommended Citation
Woods, Terry Bell, "The Rhetoric of Volunteerism: Strategies to Recruit and Retain Volunteers in Nonprofit Organizations" (2006). *Communication Theses.* Paper 18.

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Communication at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Communication Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gsu.edu.

THE RHETORIC OF VOLUNTEERISM: STRATEGIES TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN VOLUNTEERS IN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

by

TERRY BELL WOODS

Under the direction of Michael Bruner

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the rhetorical strategies of an international public service organization. Drawing upon narrative criticism, volunteer related literatures of the Continental Societies, Inc. were studied in order to gauge their rhetorical efficacy in light of the existing literature on nonprofit organizations and volunteerism. By analyzing the organization's literatures – their "story" – it was discovered that part of it was missing. In an attempt to fill this void, more effective materials related to volunteer recruitment and retention have been created to exemplify greater narrative fidelity, along with recommended organizational transformations that create a better fit between these "stories" and the truth of them.

INDEX WORDS: Volunteerism, Recruitment, Retention, Continental Societies, Inc., Nonprofit organizations, Narrative criticism, Rhetorical strategies

THE RHETORIC OF VOLUNTEERISM: STRATEGIES TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN VOLUNTEERS IN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

by

TERRY BELL WOODS

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2006

Copyright by
Terry Bell Woods
2006

THE RHETORIC OF VOLUNTEERISM: STRATEGIES TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN VOLUNTEERS IN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

by

TERRY BELL WOODS

Major Professor: Michael Bruner
Committee: David Cheshier
Shirlene Holmes

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies

College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

December 2006

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many hours and experiences have contributed to this work and there are some special people who must be acknowledged for contributing to its completion. I would be remiss not to begin this tribute by thanking my thesis committee, Dr. Michael Bruner, Dr. David Cheshier and Dr. Shirlene Holmes. Thank you, Dr. Holmes, for your academic reference and for opening your door to me and reminding me to "look within" to find calmness in the midst of agitation. Thank you, Dr. Cheshier, for your academic offerings – the suggested readings, loan of books, and consultations. Your extensive knowledge of rhetoric proved invaluable. I most especially thank my thesis advisor (an overall nice guy), Dr. Michael Bruner, for championing my cause. Your innate ability to provide direction in an intelligent and supportive way, while at the same time encouraging excellence, does not go unnoticed. I thank you for EVERYTHING!

To the members of the Continental Societies, Inc., I thank you for the sisterhood that led you to contribute materials for this study. You, and the success of your efforts, were foremost in my thoughts during this process.

Finally, to my husband Michael Woods, my mother M. Jean Cooper, my sister Pamela Payton, and my friends Diadra Ackols and Gladys H. Camp, Ph.D., I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your unwavering support. When I needed a tree to stop and lean upon, or a reflecting pool to stop and stare into, you were there. When I needed a shoulder to cry upon or an ear to listen, you were there. You have always been there – even when I wanted to give up, you had a way of encouraging me to "keep my eyes on the prize." I love you and can not thank you enough.

Sincerely, Terry Bell Woods

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		**iv**
LIST OF TABLES		**vii**
CHAPTER		
ONE	**EXPLORATION: LOOKING FOR ANSWERS**	
	Introduction	**1**
	Significance of the Project	**2**
	Historical Perspective on Volunteering	**3**
	Nonprofit Organizations	**8**
	Why People Volunteer	**10**
	Trends in Volunteer Management	**23**
	Theoretical Framework	**27**
TWO	**TRANSLATION: ALIGNING COMPLEMENTARY APPROACHES**	
	Volunteer Recruitment Strategies	**33**
	Volunteer Retention Strategies	**38**
THREE	**EVALUATION: ANALYZING THE FINDINGS**	
	Method – Narrative Criticism	**44**
	Acquisition of the Continental Societies, Inc. Literature Sample	**50**
	Creation of a Sign Vehicle Dictionary	**55**
	Data Coding	**56**
	Data Analysis	**57**
	Results	**59**

FOUR RECOMMENDATIONS: APPLYING THE FINDINGS

Conclusions 65

Suggestions for Organizational Transformations 65

Additional Suggestions 67

Directions for Future Research 72

Summary 73

REFERENCES 74

APPENDICES

A LETTER OF CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN STUDY 79

B LETTER OF REQUEST FOR LITERATURES 81

C SAMPLES OF NEW LITERATURES 83

Membership Workshop Presentation 84

General Tri-Fold Brochure 95

General Letter of Invitation 97

Thank You Letter to Existing Volunteers 98

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Contents	Page
I	LISTING OF VARIOUS LITERATURES REVIEWED	52
II	VOLUNTEER MOTIVATIONS	53
III	SIGN VEHICLE LIST	56
IV	INDUCEMENT AND DEMAND CATEGORIES	59

CHAPTER ONE

EXPLORATION: LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

Introduction

Why do they do it? What persuades volunteers to join nonprofit organizations, realizing the necessary commitment of time, energy and money? What is communicated to the volunteer to not only become a member but to maintain that membership as well?

This study investigates these questions by analyzing the rhetorical strategies of the Continental Societies, Inc., an international public service organization dedicated to the socioeconomic and cultural welfare of underprivileged children and youth. Drawing upon narrative criticism, this analysis involved studying the volunteer related literatures of the Continental Societies, Inc. in order to gauge their rhetorical efficacy in light of the existing literature on nonprofit organizations and volunteerism, while at the same time creating new and more effective materials related to volunteer recruitment and retention. Narrative criticism theorizes that the narrative rationality of stories has two major aspects: narrative probability (that the story is well told, believable and credible) and narrative fidelity (that it resonates with comparisons of the truths and the truths that the readers know to be true from their own lives). For the purposes of this study, a story is simply defined as the telling of happenings or a series of happenings, whether true or fictitious, and it is used in a metaphorical sense.

By analyzing the Continental Societies' volunteer related literatures (their "stories") it was determined that the motivations uncovered in the literature review do not always ring true to the wider audience of Continental volunteers, therefore part of the "story" was determined to be missing. In order to fill this void, new literatures have been

created to exemplify greater narrative fidelity or “stories” that are true and honest. With the intention of creating a better fit between these “stories” and their truth, organizational transformations are recommended.

Significance of the Project

This study aims to fill a gap in the academic literature that does not address rhetorical appeals associated with nonprofit membership recruitment and retention. Within the social sciences there is a substantial amount of empirical literature on volunteerism, social participation and motivations (Blau & Rabrenovic, 1991; Brady, Verba & Schlozman, 1995; Fisher & Ackerman, 1998: Knoke, 1981; Mattis,et al., 2004; Musick, 2000; Rose-Ackerman, 1996; Wandersman et al., 1987). Within communications the literature is not as generous in its discussions of the persuasive techniques involved in effective volunteer campaigns. One area largely ignored in trying to understand and alleviate recruitment and retention problems is the role of recruitment rhetoric, or lack thereof, in membership gratification.

This study will be relevant and useful because it demonstrates that a prerequisite to the success of a nonprofit organization is its ability to attract and retain volunteers. Identifying and understanding volunteer motivations as a necessary part of developing effective rhetorical strategies will serve the recruiting efforts of nonprofit organizations well. Once the rhetorical appeals are clearly understood, they can be adapted into effective, useful volunteer related material. These “stories” are evaluated based on their relevance to the personal values of the audience – the current or potential volunteer. A positively perceived communication experience will contribute to organizational effectiveness. Researchers have created various models explaining the role of

communication in organizations. These models show that communication satisfaction leads to organizational satisfaction, which, in turn leads to increased organizational involvement (Taylor, 1997).

In addition to the utility provided to nonprofit organizations, this study will contribute to the academic conversation which supports the fundamental premise that individuals are motivated by persuasive appeals (Shyles & Ross, 1984). Recruiting and retention efforts of nonprofit organizations should benefit from implementing the recommendations that result from this study.

Historical Perspective on Volunteering

Volunteerism is at the core of American business. It is deeply seated in the American social experience and the democratic system (Tomeh, 1981). It is a formalized, public, and proactive choice to donate one's time and energy freely to benefit another person, group or organization. President George H. W. Bush's praise of the "1,000 points of light" drew public attention to the growing importance of the voluntary sector, often called the nonprofit sector.

Research shows that one of every four or five Americans does some form of extensive volunteer work (Dutta-Bergman, 2004; Hayghe, 1991; Piliavin & Charng, 1990). Gallup polls estimate the value of time contributed by volunteers to be in the billions of dollars. Americans were asked in January 2002 if they had volunteered their time to a charitable cause within the past twelve months. Sixty percent (60%) said they had volunteered for a religious group or "any other charitable cause" within that time (Maybury, 2002). These statistics are important and equally encouraging because organizations are depending more and more on volunteers for a large range of services.

This dependence is critical for nonprofit organizations such as the Continental Societies, Inc. that rely heavily upon volunteers to provide the services they offer (Hollwitz & Wilson, 1993).

Basically, nonprofit organizations deal with two constituencies: the clients to whom they provide services, and those from whom they receive resources (donors and volunteers). Consequently, nonprofit organizations face two primary challenges: 1) client cultivation – identifying their target audience and its needs, and 2) resource attraction – obtaining donations in terms of money, time, property and volunteers (Yavas & Tiecken, 1985). Acknowledging the critical role of volunteering in the United States, researchers argue that the collective well-being of American society is determined, to a considerable extent, by the actions of individual volunteers. (Dutta-Bergman, 2004)

Most nonprofit social service organizations such as the YMCA, the Red Cross and the Continental Societies, Inc. depend on a constant supply of volunteers to function smoothly (Wilcox et al., 2003). One of the most important resources these organizations have is the volunteers themselves and the effort they put forward; therefore, it is important to find ways to attract these individuals to give their time and energy. Without them, many nonprofit organizations would simply not be able to function.

The question of how to increase the rate of participation in formal organized nonprofit efforts is significant, and an important undertaking for the leadership of nonprofit organizations is the recruitment and retention of committed volunteers. Essentially this is a problem of social influence, of attempting to encourage people to spend some of their time engaged in activities designed to benefit someone else, and/or society as a whole (in addition to any benefits accruing to the volunteer). The decision to

volunteer is an important, life-altering commitment for many individuals that often represents a significant proportion of total nonworking time. Volunteering affects expenditures of one of the scarcest and therefore most precious commodities: discretionary time (Fisher & Ackerman, 1998).

Nevertheless, volunteering appears to be a problem of action, not attitude. Although Gallup polls taken in 1987 showed an actual rate of participation in volunteer work to be less than that recorded in 2002, respondents agreed that "persons should volunteer some of their time to help people elsewhere" (Young, et al., 1993: 122). In a survey of adults and youth, conducted by Gallup on behalf of the national volunteer organization America's Promise between October 2000 and January 2001, respondents reported that one of the strongest drivers of volunteer participation is simply being asked to volunteer. The survey showed that 72% of those who were asked by someone in their community to volunteer time to help young people did so in the past year, compared to 26% of those who were not asked outright (Maybury, 2002).

Because the Continental Societies, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that is comprised of primarily African American women volunteers, I felt compelled to also look at the literature on volunteerism among African Americans. It confirms that African Americans have had a long tradition of voluntary participation. According to the research of Mattis et al. (2004), efforts to theorize how African Americans have participated in volunteer work have followed some general paths. First, some early theorists characterized African American volunteerism and social service involvement as compensatory in nature. Supporters of this approach emphasized that African Americans developed and involved themselves in volunteer activities out of a need to both

compensate for and to counteract the degradation that they experienced at the hands of racism. A second approach, the ethnic community thesis, suggested that African American volunteerism emerged out of the joint effects of shared oppression, a shared sense of destiny and a connected racial unity. Advocates of this ethnic community approach hypothesized that the pro-social involvement of African Americans resulted from a conviction among "ethnically identified" African Americans that voluntary social participation was a particularly effective way of achieving ethnic group survival. According to Howard Hayghe (1991), an economist in the Division of Labor Force Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics, a 1989 survey showed that volunteers who were African American tended to devote more hours a week to their volunteer activities than other volunteers.

Annie Barnes (1979) investigated the functions of Jack and Jill of America, another urban African American middle-class voluntary association. The composition of this organization is similar to that of the Continental Societies, Inc. in that there is a national, regional and local hierarchy. The initial function of Jack and Jill was typical of black voluntary associations for several decades. They served to help blacks adapt in American society by emphasizing politics, protests, and activities to improve the social status of the members. When Jack and Jill was organized in 1938, blacks were either denied access to many cultural and social activities or could only attend them under humiliating circumstances. A group of mothers met to determine how they could help their children adapt in a society where segregated facilities were legalized. They organized a chapter that would bring their children together in social and cultural relationships and provide recreation to children who were otherwise denied access to

commercial entertainment in the wider society. Shortly thereafter, Jack and Jill initiated another adaptive strategy of making financial contributions to public service projects concerned with children and the handicapped.

For members of Jack and Jill, opportunities were provided for its members to experience status, self-expression, and decision making power. Just as in the Continental Societies, Inc., these functions are demonstrated in the governing structure. Officers such as a president, vice presidents, secretaries, financial officers, etc. are elected. Obtaining membership to these organizations provide prestige, authority, leadership and networking opportunities.

A reciprocal exchange of these benefits directs a certain amount of responsibility. The economy and viability of volunteer organizations depends heavily upon a continuous blend of essential resources – money, material, time, effort, participation – primarily from the membership. Even the ability to attract funds from third parties, such as foundations and government agencies, usually requires a demonstrated commitment from the membership (Knoke, 1981). Commitment is reinforced by a high communication level serving to enhance understanding of policy issues and provide support for members, thereby motivating their contributions to the functioning of the organization. This supports my assertion that communication developed using appropriate rhetorical strategies that target the recruiting and retaining of volunteers is essential to the effective staffing of nonprofit organizations such as the Continental Societies, Inc.

To explain this desire to belong to voluntary associations and provide a contextual reference, I will begin with an overview of nonprofit organizations, delineating their basic characteristics. I will then explore the motivations of volunteerism – why people

volunteer. An understanding of the motivations and behaviors that drive volunteerism is necessary before appropriately effective rhetorical appeals can be constructed. Trends in volunteerism that effect recruiting efforts are enumerated prior to my ending the chapter with an exploration of the theoretical framework for analyzing rhetorical discourse.

Nonprofit Organizations

It is usually assumed that the essential characteristics of nonprofit organizations are that they are established to provide a service to the public and their mission is not to make money (Wolf, 1984). Although true, these characteristics may be confusing. For one thing, some nonprofit organizations are not organized to serve the general public (for example, country clubs and labor unions). The ideas that nonprofit organizations are simply organized to solve some societal problem or deliver some much-needed public service are also not completely accurate. Although nonprofit organizations often have a stated public service mission, they do not necessarily have a requirement of equity (that is, a mandate to serve everyone) the way public agencies usually do. For another thing, many nonprofit organizations are quite entrepreneurial, engaging in all sorts of money-making and fundraising ventures. This could be a cause of concern for those working in commercial endeavors whose businesses must compete with nonprofits for customers.

Here, the term *nonprofit organization* refers to those legally constituted, nongovernmental entities, incorporated under state law as charitable or not-for-profit corporations that have been set up to serve some public purpose and are tax-exempt according to the IRS (Wolf, 1984). They operate under article 501 of the Internal Revenue Code, and most notably include the “charitable nonprofits” that serve “religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary or educational purposes,” as they

are described in section 501c3 of the code (Blau & Rabrenovic, 1991). They must have the following five characteristics:

- They must have a public service mission
- They must be organized as a not-for-profit or charitable corporation
- Their governance structures must preclude self-interest and private financial gain
- They must be exempt from paying federal tax
- They must possess the special legal status that stipulates gifts made to them are tax deductible

The nonprofit organization that this study will focus on meets all of the above criteria. The Continental Societies, Inc., a public service organization, was founded as a national organization in 1956 by a group of energetic and dedicated service-oriented women. These women structured an organization to foster, promote and develop the welfare of children and youth with special needs. The Continental Societies quickly became a visible, viable and forceful organization of concerned women and it was inevitable that in November, 1971, at St. Paul, Minnesota, The Continental Societies would become nationally incorporated.

The Continental Societies, Inc. is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization consisting of forty local chapters located in seventeen states in the Continental USA, the District of Columbia and Bermuda. Chapters are composed of women representing a variety of professions, interests, and talents whose mission is to create environments, by conducting activities and projects in their localities, that improve the quality of life for children and provide appropriate opportunities for children to reach their optimal potential.

The information gathered on this organization is readily available due to my personal involvement. I was installed into the Atlanta chapter of Continental Societies, Inc. in March 2002. I have worked on the local, regional and national levels of the organization and currently serve as the President of the Atlanta chapter. In this particular role, I have seen first-hand the challenges of volunteer recruitment and retention. From an operational standpoint as well as an educational viewpoint, the usefulness of the recommendations that conclude this study is apparent.

Before getting to that position, we must take a look at why people volunteer. An understanding of the framework of the organization is not enough. Understanding the motivations of the volunteer is a precursor to employing persuasive techniques involved in effective volunteer campaigns. People volunteer for a number of different reasons. Benefit-cost literature, the theory of unified responsibility, and a host of additional reasons for volunteering are explored in the next section.

Why People Volunteer

Why do people volunteer and what do they get out of it? Like any organization, volunteer groups need to continually replenish their supply of resources to remain viable. The most important resource these organizations have is the volunteers themselves. Thus, increasing volunteer membership and volunteer participation should provide these organizations with more resources to achieve their goals.

One potential way to increase participation is to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs volunteers experience as a result of participating in the organization. A study of the benefit-cost literature was pursued by Chinman and Wandersman (1999) to address the issue of why people volunteer and what they get out of it. The researchers

found that when members of a voluntary organization have the opportunity to reap collective goods from others' work without participating themselves, it is in their economic self interest not to participate. This is called the free-rider problem. A solution to this problem is to provide selective incentives, which are contingent on members' participation and may not even relate to the goals of the organization. For example, an individual who may not be concerned with literacy levels among underprivileged children may participate in the Continental Societies, Inc. because it offers annual weeklong conventions in exciting cities around the United States. Providing incentives serves as a type of social control mechanism that prompts volunteers to give their own personal resources to the organization. It is an exchange: the leaders provide certain benefits to the members, and, in return, members donate a share of their personal resources (financial or participatory) that are used by the nonprofit organization to pursue its own goals (Wandersman et al., 1987). Volunteers must perceive the benefits of their participation as outweighing the costs to continue contributing their time and money. Survey data show that Americans are more likely to volunteer when they are compassionate to those in need, feel an obligation to give back some of the benefits they have reaped, and believe that enhancing the moral basis of society is an important personal goal, independent of whatever personal and social resources they might possess (Musick, Wilson & Bynum, 200: 1542).

According to the Marriott Seniors Volunteerism Study taken in 1991, the motive most frequently endorsed by older volunteers as a major reason for volunteering was "to help others" (83%). Other motives for volunteering included "to feel useful or

productive" (65%) and "to fulfill a moral responsibility" (51%) (Okun, Barr & Herzog, 1998).

Another important point in support of rhetorical appeals is the theory of unified responsibility that states that a sense of responsibility underlies the personal and social domains of individual action. Individuals who are more likely to be responsible actors in their personal lives are also likely to be actively engaged in responsible actions in their social lives. A sense of responsibility manifests itself in the way of life of the volunteer across a wide range of attitudes, interests and opinions. The choice to actively participate in the community is driven by a strong sense of reciprocity and exchange, with an understanding that responsible participation in the community rewards the individual participant in the form of better resources, stronger impact on policy, better health, and so forth (Dutta-Bergman, 2004).

Support for the theory of unified responsibility suggests that nonprofit organizations seeking to position themselves as viable volunteering outlets need to (a) highlight their responsible commitment to the community and (b) incorporate communicative strategies appealing to different aspects of a responsible lifestyle such as healthy eating, exercising, and environmental consciousness. Activities such as fitness walks for fund raising and cleaning up the local neighborhood are likely to draw the attention of volunteers. In addition, nonprofit organizations that emphasize a high belief that volunteers can influence their own behavior and the active orientation of the volunteer segment are more likely to attract volunteers as compared to organizations that communicate a more passive orientation.

According to Thomas Wolf, volunteers themselves have provided a host of additional reasons for volunteering that include:

- *Sense of self-satisfaction*. Many people like to use their free time in ways that bring them personal satisfaction and allow them to develop a positive self-image. Some volunteer because they want to feel needed, others like to keep busy in a way that is useful, and still others want to earn the respect of their peers and friends while doing something useful for the community.
- *Altruism.* Many people from all economic strata believe that helping others is a necessary part of a complete and good life. Often this impulse grows out of religious beliefs or family traditions and upbringing. In some cases, where individuals have little cash to spare, volunteering provides a way to express altruism. In others, volunteering may be combined with the giving of cash.
- *Companionship/meeting people.* Another important reason why individuals volunteer is to meet and mix with other people. Volunteering can allow them to widen their circle of acquaintances and develop personal bonds that can spill over into other parts of their life. Individuals who move to new communities, older people who have lost a spouse, even adolescents and young professionals looking for a more active social life, may all look to volunteerism as a way to widen their circle of friends.
- *Developing professional contacts.* In some organizations, volunteering can put people in touch with important members of the community. Some

people use volunteer situations as a way to make contacts that may lead them to other kinds of professional associations and opportunities. Internships that provide valuable experience may result from such involvement.

- *Social panache.* There is much prestige associated with certain organizations, and their volunteers represent an elite group within the community. Associating with these volunteers carries a certain degree of status and marks a person as being part of a desirable social group.

This list of reasons that volunteers provide as an impetus for their volunteerism illustrates the wide range of personal motivators that exist.

In keeping with what the previous work reports on altruism, psychologists and communication scholars have also demonstrated strong ties between civic engagement and personal contentment. Especially relevant to an understanding of why people volunteer is work on other helping behaviors (bystander intervention, obligated caregiving by virtue of marital bond or blood relationship, and sustained support such as providing companionship to the lonely, health care to the sick or services to the homeless) some of which suggests a primary motive for participation is “to feel good and boast self-esteem” (Omoto & Snyder, 1995, p. 671).

Existing research exposes key demographic variables that are also significant predictors of volunteering. Wilson (2000) pointed out that education boosts volunteerism by heightening awareness of problems, increasing empathy, and building self-confidence. Educated people are also likely to be asked to volunteer because they belong to more organizations where they learn civic skills and tend to have a desire to help others and to

do something good for the benefit of society (Wilson, 2000; Yavas & Riecken, 1985). Other studies show that highly educated people are not only more likely to volunteer in the first place but also volunteer for longer spells, partly due to the assignment of more rewarding tasks (Hoge et al., 1998; Wilson & Musick, 1999).

Certain groups of volunteers tend to gravitate towards specific organizations and institutions. Volunteers who are college graduates are more likely to work for educational and civic organizations, such as the Continental Societies, Inc., than for religious ones (Hayghe, 1991).

Kathleen Day and Rose Devlin (1998) conducted research that showed that volunteer work can increase individuals' earnings. Because volunteer work may lead to internships that afford the acquisition of useful skills and experience, it may serve as a favorable signal to employers. New entrants and those re-entering the workforce are often told "if you can't find a job, volunteer." Volunteer experience is regularly viewed as a fruitful activity that can enhance a person's resume and serve to improve future employment prospects. Day and Devlin ask, if volunteering leads to increased incomes, then why do we not observe more people engaging in this activity? The answer lies partly in the fact that volunteering is a costly activity – in terms of time, energy, and often money as well. Nevertheless, a majority of volunteers in a 1998 Canadian survey cited professional enhancement reasons for volunteering. As early as 1974 the U.S. Civil Service Commission began to advocate the recognition of experience gained from volunteer activities, and many federal agencies in the United States have begun to accept volunteer experience in lieu of paid employment experience.

It is also important to know that the majority of American adults performed some type of volunteer service in 2004, and most of them maintained that their motivation was to act on their moral values, according to a national survey conducted by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Fifty-seven percent say they had volunteered with a nonprofit organization or charitable cause in 2004, up nine percent from the previous year. Seventy-five percent of those who volunteer say that acting on their moral values was either an absolutely important or very important factor in why they volunteer. This compares with 47% who volunteer to gain new experiences, 42% because they were helped by a volunteer in the past, and 39% due to a desire to meet other people. Young adults were more likely than other age groups to say that gaining new experiences was a major motivation for volunteering (59%), while seniors (age 65 and above) were most likely to place more emphasis on their desire to meet other people (48%). By a ratio of more than two to one, the respondents felt that it is more important to volunteer one's time than to give money to a charitable cause. The survey also found that individuals believe participating in volunteer work brings personal rewards. When asked to choose who is more affected by volunteer work, 40% of volunteers say the person doing the volunteer work; 24% believe the person benefiting from the volunteer work; and 32% say the volunteer and recipient are affected equally (USA Today, 2005).

A functional analysis of volunteer behavior is another approach to take into account. According to Young, Hollister, Hodgkinson and Associates (1993), the functional approach considers the reasons, needs, or motives that underlie people's beliefs and behaviors, and also how these beliefs and behaviors serve important personal and social needs and goals. Applied to the case of people engaged in volunteer work, the

functional approach seeks to determine the motives and goals that individuals may satisfy through their involvement with volunteer activities, with the expectation that different individuals will be involved in the same activities for very different reasons. The researchers' work identified five motivational categories. Through participation, a volunteer may seek to satisfy a *knowledge function* (to learn, to gain a greater understanding of people, to practice skills and abilities), a *career function* (to enhance one's job and career prospects, to gain experience and contacts), a *value-expressive function* (to act on important values such as humanitarian values, altruistic concerns, or desires to contribute to society), a *social-adjustive function* (to fit into important reference groups, to gain social approval/avoid social disapproval), and/or an *ego-defensive function* (to reduce feelings of guilt, to resolve or escape from one's own personal problems).

Thus far, we have seen that people volunteer for various reasons. Benefit-cost literature suggests that volunteer participation increases when the benefits of participating in the organization outweigh the costs. Selective incentives that provide certain benefits to volunteers in exchange for the giving of personal resources, along with opportunities to help others and to feel useful, are identifiable motivators for volunteerism. People are more likely to volunteer out of a sense of compassion for others and because of an obligation to give back some of the benefits that they have received. Older volunteers most often endorse a desire to help others, to feel useful or productive, and to fulfill a moral responsibility. This sense of responsibility oftentimes sets the parameters for individual action. The theory of unified responsibility translates this propensity to be responsible actors in personal life into a desire to be active participants in community

life. Individuals with such a desire will be interested in organizations that highlight their responsible commitment to the community and appeal to various aspects of responsible lifestyles. In addition, recruitment efforts of nonprofit organizations are fueled by a sense of self-satisfaction – wanting to feel needed, keep busy, or earn respect while benefiting the community; altruism – unselfish benevolence; companionship – meeting and mixing with people; professional opportunities and enhancement – expanded networks and internships; and social panache – the prestige of belonging to an elite community organization. Demographic variables such as level of education are found to be significant. Distinctions such as problem solving skills, increased empathy, and self-confidence make it easier to face the demands of volunteering. Age is a factor. Young adults are found to cite gaining new experiences and opportunities (e.g. internships) as a major motivation for volunteering, while seniors (age 65 and above) placed more emphasis on their desire to meet other people. A further primary motivational category for volunteer participation is simply to feel good and boast self-esteem.

Other motivational categories identify volunteers seeking to satisfy certain basic functions to learn, to gain a greater understanding of people, to practice skills and abilities, to enhance job and career prospects, to gain experience and contacts, to act on important values, to contribute to society, to fit into important reference groups, to gain social approval, to reduce feelings of guilt, and to resolve or escape from personal problems. Finally, a large percentage of volunteers find that participating in volunteer work brings personal rewards to both the person doing the work and the person benefiting from the volunteer work.

All this not withstanding, recruitment is not the only issue that the nonprofit organization faces in terms of its volunteer membership. Given that the literature has declared that many nonprofit organizations would not be able to function without the time and energy contributed by the volunteer, retention is of primary concern as well.

Wilson and Musick (1999) conducted a study that focused not on who is most likely to volunteer but why some continue to volunteer while others drop out. Given the difficulty of recruiting volunteers in the first place, retention is a serious matter. Wilson and Musick (1999) point out that much of the writing on recruitment to groups implicitly assumes that the same dynamics that account for recruitment (e.g. selective incentives, ideological congruence, and network ties) also account for persistence and participation. Being able and willing to produce depends on what people can give and how well they are rewarded – what they bring to the job and what they get in return. Theoretically, a decline in resources – what people can give – should bring about a decline in volunteering. Similarly, if the work is unrewarding, volunteers are less likely to continue doing it.

While recruitment is essential to initiating commitment, retention is just as critical to the ongoing survival of nonprofit organizations that are faced with developing effective programs while balancing volunteers' needs. Judy Kent has identified five elements of successful volunteer management (Forsyth, 1999) as:

- **Assessment of Needs.** First, the organization must ask these assessment questions: How many volunteers does the organization need? What tasks need to be done? What skills should volunteers have?

- **Recruitment.** Next, the organization must devise a plan to identify and acquire the volunteers needed.
- **Risk Management Audit, Interviewing, and Screening.** The organization must assess the risk involved with volunteer positions; create job descriptions for volunteer positions; ensure appropriate screening techniques.
- **Orientation, Training and Monitoring.** The organization must design an orientation process that helps volunteers understand their role; provide a training program to develop needed skills; initiate a continuous feedback and evaluation mechanism.
- **Retention and Recognition.** The organization must develop techniques, events, and programs that acknowledge volunteers' contributions.

As these elements are put into practice, the organization may discover that it is hard to achieve a proper balance. It must respond to volunteers' requests for short-term and one-time opportunities while maintaining longer-term volunteer assignments. Both are important. Education and Outreach Specialist Andrea Skoglund (2006) believes there is a cause and effect relationship between the last two elements of successful volunteer management. She suggests that an effective orientation and training of a program's volunteers will engage participants in a way that results in volunteers' willingness to participate in the volunteer program for a significant period of time. Just as it is with paid staff, volunteers require and benefit from regular training. An important advantage of such training is the continued reinforcement provided when volunteers are reassured of the value of their services to the organization's mission.

The Shanti National Training Institute (http://www.shanti.org/snti/retention.html), an organization that serves people who work as leaders of volunteers, identifies a number of factors that influence volunteer retention, including the quality and thoroughness of the initial training experience, the effectiveness of volunteer management, and the degree of personal satisfaction achieved through volunteering. They believe that in order for volunteers to remain active and committed to an organization and its mission, their experience must be a positive one.

Several things contribute to a positive volunteer experience, which in turn increases retention. First, retention of volunteers is accomplished through developing feelings of importance and belonging (Murk & Stephan, 1991). Volunteers will be satisfied with volunteering if they have the chance to develop friendships, share experiences, communicate with others, and develop support groups. In addition, volunteers will feel positive about their experience if they have an opportunity to cultivate their role identity (Grube & Piliavin, 2000). Grube and Piliavin defined *role identity* as one's concept of the self that corresponds to the social roles held by the individual. A volunteer should perceive his or her role as important to the overall success of the organization. When this is the case, self-esteem should be increased, thereby fostering commitment to the individual's role identity as a volunteer.

So far, I have learned that volunteer retention can be enhanced by effectively matching volunteer interests with the organization's needs; responding to volunteer motivations; providing resources, mentoring, and training; preventing burnout; identifying leadership potential and recognizing contributions and service. Tools such as volunteer satisfaction surveys, attending to informal volunteer feedback and exit

interviews can help identify whether volunteers sensed achievement, personal growth, socialization, appreciation, and time invested wisely (Caracciolo, 2003).

The Continental Societies, Inc. does not currently employ these methods in its volunteer management. Given what has been learned, the implementation of these strategies, along with other rhetorical strategies identified in the following pages, could greatly enhance this organization's volunteer strength. The outcome of this research, therefore, includes a list of recommendations and literature examples that the organization can readily incorporate into its volunteer recruitment and retention plans.

The Continental Societies, Inc. is a public service organization that has been in existence for fifty years. As a result, the range of volunteer tenure is quite wide. There are members who have been volunteers for as many as fifty years working alongside young professionals who have been volunteers for only a short period of time. Due to this disparity in age among the volunteers, I believe that research that addresses various, specific demographics is particularly useful. For example, an understanding of the motivations of young professionals and college students to volunteer will facilitate the design of effective volunteer materials that will aid recruitment efforts, while an understanding of the motivations of older adults to volunteer will facilitate the design of effective volunteer materials that will aid retention efforts. These are but two of the age groups along the membership spectrum, but they represent a trend in the organization's membership pattern – a primary composition of relatively long term volunteers and relatively short term volunteers. Whether the volunteer is looking to receive advantages or to provide advantages, it is incumbent upon the nonprofit organization to recognize these motivators and then adapt them into rhetorical appeals aimed at potential and

existing volunteers. That is the thrust of this study. It criticizes the literatures and programs of the Continental Societies, Inc. that are designed for recruitment and retention to determine what, if any rhetorical appeals are used, why they are used, and what the significance of their use is. However, before investigating the theoretical framework for this study, a look at general trends in volunteer management is appropriate. This glance will show how these trends can guide recruiting efforts for the nonprofit organization and serve as a backdrop for the impending recommendations.

Trends in Volunteer Management

Individuals and organizations that manage and oversee volunteer programs face a twofold challenge: orienting, training and monitoring volunteers as well as retaining those volunteers (Forsyth, 1999). Changing demographics mean that volunteer management systems must be adapted to respond to changing needs. For decades, volunteerism outside the church or school primarily appealed to middle-class women. Volunteerism fit around their family needs and helped define their own identities, providing social opportunities, personal challenges and methods to utilize their intelligence and skills. Volunteers were usually only available during the day. They did not expect a high level of responsibility and willingly assumed even the most mundane tasks.

Times and people have changed. That traditional volunteer is rapidly disappearing. Only a small percentage of the population fits the stereotype of the unemployed, available, homemaker. The volunteer force has experienced changes in lifestyles; many now are single parents or two working parents, seniors, ethnic minorities, nontraditional students, and people with special needs.

According to McCune and Nelson (1995) there are some major trends in volunteerism that should guide recruiting and retention efforts:

1. *Break stereotypes: Volunteers come in all shapes and sizes.* There are new and diverse people to fill the needs. Seniors are skilled and reliable, and many are quite active. Community events such as health fairs or employment workshops provide contacts and initiate relationships. Minority groups, students, persons with disabilities, and people that fall into all types of categories can have an opportunity to become involved.
2. *Serve the corporate community while helping others.* Some corporations and agencies encourage their formal groups of employees to become active in volunteer work. These groups tend to prefer projects that identify them as an association, in which they work together to build affinity. Businesses frequently have a formal process by which they accept a volunteer project. They evaluate the nonprofit group, looking for the same accountability and good management they seek in the corporate community. They consider structure, training for volunteers, planning and the human, caring touch.
3. *Provide career perspectives and job skills along with volunteer experience.* People no longer anticipate staying on the same job their entire working life. It is predicted that people will make career shifts several times before retirement. Volunteerism provides information on different types of jobs that exist, training, and experience that can benefit people professionally. These benefits should be flaunted in rhetorical appeals for membership. Volunteer service also fosters a

sense of giving back to the community. These positive feelings of self-esteem and confidence are important to success in any job.

4. *Give volunteers what they really want.* In an increasingly automated, frantic, impersonal society, one of the greatest appeals for individuals may very well be contact with other human beings. Popular volunteer efforts are those where people work with other people –in teams, in small committees, or large groups. Volunteer efforts that provide direct, personal interaction rank high in desirability, especially among the elderly, because of the camaraderie built among the volunteers. In contrast, the younger demographic wants experience, skills, internships; they ultimately want jobs.
5. *Change with the changing times.* Differing lifestyles mandate flexibility and professionalism in volunteer programs. Flexibility means a variety of opportunities, not just routine work. A retired businesswoman needs a real challenge, responsibility and authority to make the program a success. The best way to discover those needs is to ask volunteers what their interest and backgrounds are. Give them choices. Offer activities that utilize the skills that the volunteers bring with them and therefore provide personal fulfillment. Professionalism mandates continual efforts in training for volunteers, rules and policies that govern equitably, recruitment techniques, statistics and reporting.

These trends suggest a need for complex volunteer structures to accompany rhetorical appeals. For example, the nonprofit organization that presents internships as part of its program offers its volunteers work experience that will help build a track record of success and accomplishment, as well as provides a foundation for future success and

increased appeal to employers. Nonprofit organizations must be willing to invest in their volunteers. Recruitment, training, recognition and management of volunteers are not free.

Thus far, we have seen that nonprofit organizations depend on volunteers to provide the services that they offer. We have seen that the critical role of the volunteer is manipulated by effective rhetorical appeals to join and then maintain membership in these organizations. This important issue of recruitment and retention is exacerbated by the nonprofits' heavy reliance on the volunteer. In the African American community, in particular, volunteerism's role has been even more crucial. In addition to providing a service to the organization, volunteerism has served as a means for African American volunteers to experience status, self-expression and decision making power when there were no other readily accessible outlets in which to do so. The research has shown us trends that indicate that people volunteer for various reasons that allow them to serve the common good as well as serve their own utilitarian needs. The elderly want camaraderie and a sense of belonging from their volunteer assignments. Younger people tend to want interactions and experiences that will lead to practical skills and ultimately to jobs. Understanding these motivations is the first step in developing effective rhetorical appeals targeted at specific demographics. An analysis of existing rhetorical strategies in the volunteer related literatures used by the Continental Societies, Inc. will determine their efficacy in terms of volunteer recruitment and retention. The next section will explore Aristotelian criticism and its usefulness as the theoretical lens in which to view these literatures.

Theoretical Framework

When consulting the American Heritage dictionary for a definition of the word *rhetoric*, several entries are discovered. The definitions range from "the art or study of using language effectively and persuasively" to simply "discourse." An assessment of various texts are of the same opinion that rhetoric is "an effective method for training effective communicators (rhetors) as well as a method for understanding on a theoretical and a practical level how people use language (discourse) to alter or shape understanding and to persuade others to some action" (MacLennan).

Dr. Jennifer MacLennan, a rhetorician with several years of experience teaching technical and professional communication at the college level, posits that rhetorical discourse is anchored in reality because it assumes that the rhetor has some commitment to a view of the world and the audience. She believes that the rhetorician must ask "what view of the world would the audience need in order for this discourse to make sense" and "what assumptions of theirs are being taken for granted?" This Aristotelian view of rhetoric supports the argument that the use of words effectively in writing is contextual, produced because of some exigency or problem in the world that a rhetor believes can be solved if only he or she can move the right audience to action through his or her words. This perspective substantiates the claim that nonprofit organizations looking to develop effective literatures for use in solving the problem of recruiting and retaining members will benefit from an understanding of the following theoretical principles. I would further suggest that, concomitant to this understanding, the rhetoric must be accompanied by institutional transformations that will provide a means for the persuasive appeals to be realized.

Herbert Simons' Persuasion in Society, defines persuasion as "human communication designed to influence the autonomous judgments and actions of others" (7). Seeking to alter the way others think, feel, or act, persuasive communication is one of the strategies that can be used for encouraging volunteerism. Most current theories and models of persuasion pay homage to the ideas of Plato and Aristotle (Simons, 2001; Shelby, 1986; Smith). In ancient times, oration was the art of persuasion. Training in rhetoric – the ability to speak, and later write, convincingly, effectively and eloquently – was an essential part of the education of a citizen (MacLennan). Plato was one of the first to believe that persuasion could be learned. His student, Aristotle, identified modes of appeal by recognizing three primary ways in which a communicator can persuade his or her audience (Alexander, Buehl & Sperl, 2001; MacLennan).

First, a communicator needs to consider emotional appeals – the things that the volunteer values, needs, hopes for, fears, and so on. Once the communicator understands the things that the volunteer cares about, he or she can show how what the volunteer is asked to do is in accord with values they already hold. Aristotle called this mode of persuasion "pathos." Second, logical appeals must be considered. A communicator must be careful in the construction of the discourse, being sure to provide the volunteer with logical and reasonable arguments. Logical fallacies must be avoided and a thorough knowledge of the issues being discussed must be demonstrated (Simons, 2001). Aristotle called this mode of persuasion "logos." The last of these three modes of persuasion – considered the most important by some rhetoricians – is "ethos." These ethical appeals reference the character of the communicator as it is displayed in the discourse. According to Aristotle, the communication of good will, good character, and good

judgment will serve to build trust between the audience and the communicator. Trust is at the heart of communication and, without careful attention to ethos, the effectiveness of the volunteer rhetoric is diminished.

Aristotle's "classical approach" is a useful strategy for the encouragement of volunteerism. It is particularly apparent in the emphasis business communication texts place on stylistic guidelines such as "the seven Cs" (completeness, conciseness, consideration, concreteness, clarity, courtesy, and correctness) (Shelby, 1986). This emphasis serves to promote trust (building on the Aristotelian principle of ethos). Nonprofit organizations seeking to develop, recruit and retain members can incorporate these tested and tried strategies into the development of their persuasive materials.

Rhetoricians such as M. J. Chambliss and S. E. Toulmin stress how aspects of the message can stimulate or stifle the persuasion process. Therefore, in judging the persuasiveness of a message, they question whether the author's premises are clearly stated, the arguments and counter-arguments well-developed, and whether the author evokes the emotion of the audience (Alexander, Buehl and Sperl, 2001). Sometimes, these techniques can actually alienate an audience in highly controversial discourse because the main claim often comes after the evidence is artfully presented. This interaction of the characteristics of the person and the message helps us to understand why and how persuasion occurs. In addition, it illustrates the importance of effective audience analysis.

As well as the "classical" approach, there are a wide range of recent theories on persuasion to support the nonprofit organization's attempt to effectively recruit and retain volunteers. *Motive-goal theories,* for example, assume that arguments that will move one

audience to accept a message or to give the desired response will not necessarily motivate all audiences. Consider the previously mentioned delineation of why people volunteer. We have seen that volunteer audiences consist of young professionals who are seeking employment, older volunteers seeking camaraderie, people wanting to be responsible participants in society, as well as educated people seeking to acquire civic skills. This approach challenges the persuader to "discover" or "invent" those arguments that can be expected to motivate these given audiences (Shelby, 1986). The *learning approach* to persuasion finds motive and reward appeals to be receiver-specific. This is evidenced in the volunteer who is seeking an internship in a nonprofit organization. In return for the volunteer service, the participant fully expects the assignment to afford new knowledge, experience and/or professional contacts. The *functional approach* strives not only to understand the needs of its audience, but also to identify a means of activating these needs (Ewald, 1988).

The functional approach to persuasion (Young et al., 1993; Shelby, 1986) has as its central proposition support for the hypothesis that favorable responses to the message contained in volunteer recruitment advertisements become more likely as the message appeals to a motivation important to the target audience. The desired persuasive effect (what the receiver is asked to believe or do) must be relevant to that receiver's needs. This is the essence of Aristotelianism – intentional persuasion: a deliberate effort to change attitudes or behaviors. In Aristotle's Rhetoric (Book II), he explores adapting communication to specific audiences – the young, the old, those in their prime, the well born, the wealthy and the powerful – that have specific needs. The focus, however, is not only on determining what those needs are, but rather on identifying means of activating

them. This supports the earlier stated notion that rhetoric must be accompanied by institutional transformations that will provide a means for persuasive appeals to be realized.

Persuasion theorists have extensively explored the goals of persuasion. In the early 1980s, communication theorist Gerald R. Miller challenged the prevailing assumption that the sole goal of persuasion is behavioral change of a resistant message receiver (Shelby, 1986; Simons, 2001). He posits that response reinforcing consists of strengthening currently held convictions and making them more resistant to change. According to Miller's theory, a campaign to support underprivileged children that is sponsored by the Continental Societies, Inc. might begin by transforming lip service commitments into strongly felt commitments (intensification), then transforming those commitments into donations of time and money (activation), then working to maintain strong behavioral support and discourage backsliding (deterrence). Each of these response steps would require a different rhetorical and institutional strategy. Understanding and utilizing these forms of response reinforcing as motivation to develop effective rhetorical strategies can be illustrated in examples of new and more effective materials related to volunteer recruitment and retention.

In Analyzing Discourse: Text and Talk, Robin Lakoff identifies another goal of persuasion as the attempt or intention of one participant to change the behavior, feelings, intentions or viewpoint of another by communicative means. Communicative means may be linguistic or nonlinguistic (e.g. gestures), but they are abstract and symbolic. Advertising, propaganda, political rhetoric and religious sermons fall into this category (Tannen, 1982). Discourse is defined as reciprocal only in case both, or all, participants

in it are able to do the same things, and if similar contributions are always understood similarly. Discourse that is reciprocal is, at the same time, necessarily egalitarian. Ordinary conversation falls into this category. Persuasive discourse (Kinneavy, 1971) aims to move the reader. It is a type of discourse that nonreciprocally attempts to effect persuasion.

Through an understanding of these basic rhetorical principles, this study strives to reveal how persuasive discourse achieves its purpose; how it has been adapted to its intended audience – potential and existing volunteers – in the form of volunteer related literatures and the nature of the ethical, logical and emotional appeals they use. The goal is to contribute something to the understanding of how, in general, rhetorical appeals work to shape how people think or act, not only to persuade volunteers to become members and remain members of nonprofit organizations but also in broader terms. This study will lead to a fuller understanding of how discourse, particularly persuasive discourse, is able to move an audience. Such knowledge is useful not only for its practical benefits, but because it forms a theoretical foundation for approaching many of the tasks that face nonprofit organizations such as the Continental Societies, Inc. daily as they construct and respond to the discourse that shapes their operational experiences. In this paper, I bring contemporary persuasion theory and variants of Aristotelian rhetorical theory to the attention of nonprofit organizations by providing the necessary context, focusing on effective rhetorical appeals and complementary institutional strategies that can be used to recruit and retain volunteers.

CHAPTER TWO

TRANSLATION: ALIGNING COMPLEMENTARY APPROACHES

The preceding chapter looked at volunteering from an historical and a theoretical standpoint, exploring a systematic statement of motivations and principles. The literature review revealed that different demographics have different needs ranging from affiliations, to job training, to making professional contacts, and so on. These motivations can then be translated into effective volunteer related materials that the nonprofit organization can use to recruit and retain its membership. This chapter will take an in-depth look at strategies that align with these findings. Identification of prospective volunteers and determining the appropriate rhetorical appeals to reach them are precursors to the success of volunteer campaigns of nonprofit organizations. It is essential that board members and staff of nonprofit organizations consider the motivations of prospective volunteers if they want their help (Wolf, 1984).

Volunteer Recruitment Strategies

Unfortunately, the focus in much of the volunteer recruitment literature is most often on the organization's needs. "We need fundraising volunteers." "We need volunteers to read to the children." "We need someone to donate legal services." "We need someone to keep the financial records." "We need people to donate coats to underprivileged youth." Identifying volunteer jobs is important, of course, and providing a detailed description of the responsibilities involved will prove useful when making the actual assignments. What is usually not clear, however, is an understanding of the volunteers' needs. An identification of the organization's roles and their necessary variety, framed in light of the volunteer audience's needs, is critical. The challenge is to

find out the motives or functions that are most important to individuals and urge them to translate those favorable attitudes into volunteer action (Young, et al., 1993). If the Continental Societies, Inc., as well as other nonprofit organizations, wants to recruit people to work for no money, it must develop communication strategies and appropriate opportunities that will appeal to this sense of satisfaction and fulfillment.

From the perspective of the volunteer, individuals considering whether to serve in an unpaid position often face difficult choices. Changing age-related interests, expanding demands on families, and the mounting pressures on personal and professional lives affect an individual's choice. Volunteer-dependent organizations can benefit from management practices focused on volunteer needs and satisfaction—in particular, by developing more appealing strategies for recruitment (Caracciolo, 2003).

Understanding what people bring to volunteer work is a helpful antecedent to developing appropriate strategies to address recruitment of these same volunteers. In studies of conventional labor markets, commonly cited examples of the resources individuals bring to the market are called human capital and include educational credentials and job training. Wilson and Musick (1999) believe the same logic can be used to explain how the labor market for volunteers operates. According to human capital theory, high resource people – as measured by criteria such as education, income and occupation – compete better in the volunteer market because they are better endowed with knowledge, organizational skills, and discretionary time.

Another type of resource identified by Wilson and Musick (1999) is social capital. It describes resources, such as information, trust, and cooperative labor, acquired and mobilized through social connections and how these basic resources provide a means

for people to cooperate on joint problems (Shah et al., 2001). Oftentimes the decision to volunteer is affected by what other people are thinking and doing as much as it is by what the volunteer is thinking and doing. Many people volunteer because they are members of a social group – it is a joint activity of a church, service organization or labor union that the volunteer belongs to. Many people are introduced to volunteering by friends and acquaintances. We have already seen that social panache drives the decision to volunteer for a number of people. Some organizations have a certain amount of prestige associated with them, and association with them provides status for the volunteer.

In other research on volunteer recruitment, Young, Hollister, Hodgkinson and Associates (1993) report on a study that sought to test the hypothesis that a brochure's persuasiveness depends on whether the message appeals to a motive important to the recipient of the message. On the front page of the brochure, three key phrases were printed; on the inside, each message was prefaced by the same introduction. More specifically, each began with the words: "You're probably thinking that if you become a volunteer, you'll have to give and give and give. But guess what? While you're helping others, volunteering can be doing important things for you. You'll be surprised at how much you GET out of volunteering. As a volunteer, you can…" This was followed by a message designed to show how volunteering could serve specific functions or motives. Results of the study showed that persuasive messages designed to stimulate volunteer work should seek to arouse functions important to the recipient. These findings corroborate Gerald Miller's previously mentioned theory of response reinforcing that serves to strengthen current volunteer convictions and make them resistant to change.

In addition, the appeals of nonprofit organizations should contain both "rational" and "emotional" themes. Rational themes would discuss the role of volunteerism in the community, while the emotional theme would stress the virtues of the volunteers themselves. Testament to the fact that such appeals can indeed stimulate volunteerism was President George H. W. Bush's praise of the "1,000 points of light," as well as the approving response to President Ronald Reagan's pleas for volunteerism in a televised speech in 1981 (Andersen, 1981). "I believe the spirit of volunteerism lives in America," the President said. "We see examples of it on every hand: the community charity drive, the rallying around whenever disaster strikes. The truth is, we've let Government take away many things we once considered were really ours to do voluntarily, out of the goodness of our hearts and a sense of neighborliness. I believe many of you want to do those things again." This, indeed, does appeal to some.

The role of values in efforts to promote volunteer work is equally as important. Values such as humanitarian concern, caring for others in need, and contributing to society are central components of volunteer activity and should be accentuated in the organization's rhetorical appeals. Research on people's motivations for volunteering repeatedly places values in a prominent position (Dutta-Bergman, 2004). Researchers Gil Clary and Mark Snyder created four types of print ads that either emphasized abstract reasons for volunteering (for example, "for our society to work, everybody needs to do their part"), emphasized concrete reasons for volunteering (for example, "I could make a lot of new friends through a volunteer organization"), gave abstract reasons for not volunteering (for example, "volunteering is somebody else's responsibility"), or presented concrete reasons for not volunteering (for example, "I don't have the time").

The study results consistently indicated that the two most effective ads involved countering abstract reasons for not volunteering and emphasizing concrete reasons for volunteering; and the least effective was the ad emphasizing abstract reasons for volunteering. When asked specifically about which ads would be most effective in attracting new volunteers, the results were quite similar to those cited above. When asked about which ads would be most effective in keeping current volunteers, the "emphasizing abstract reasons for volunteering" message was then rated as the second most effective strategy.

A final strategy for recruiting volunteers as suggested by Dutta-Bergman (2004) is that nonprofit organizations should be sure to create open lines of communication and present strong arguments to effectively communicate with the volunteering segment. When trying to recruit new volunteers by appealing to the older adult category, these organizations could construct volunteering in nontraditional frames of "having fun" or "hanging out with friends." When trying to recruit new volunteers by appealing to the working professional category, these same organizations could construct volunteering in other frames of "networking" or "skill acquisition."

This section has exposed several strategies that can be utilized to recruit volunteers. Included are:

- Frame the organization's volunteer roles (that align with organizational goals) in light of the potential volunteer's needs, appealing to motives that are important to the volunteer.

- Design persuasive messages to stimulate volunteer work, seeking to arouse the functions that are important to the volunteer and showing how participation can serve those specific functions or motives.
- Include both rational themes that discuss the role of volunteerism in the community, and emotional themes that stress the virtues of the volunteers themselves in the volunteer literatures.
- Understand what the volunteer can contribute (human and social capital) and recruit accordingly.
- Highlight an elite ("cream of the crop") status in the organization's recruiting literature.
- Accentuate values through the countering of abstract reasons for not volunteering and the emphasis of concrete reasons for volunteering.
- Create open lines of communication.

The above strategies suggest a systematic approach to recruiting volunteers that a nonprofit organization can embrace. Volunteer participation faces stiff competition for "free time." The implication is that the volunteer must receive clear messages that their work is needed and valued, and that they and the work that they will do is important in reaching the goals of the organization.

Volunteer Retention Strategies

The preceding section on volunteer recruitment strategies reports that persuasive messages designed to stimulate volunteer work should also seek to arouse psychological functions important to the recipient, demonstrating how these functions can be satisfied through involvement in volunteer activity (Young et al., 1993). Bearing this in mind, the

promotion of volunteer work may be viewed as a two-step process, whereby the initial recruitment of volunteers appeals to psychological motives and needs important to the individual and communicates the ways in which volunteering can serve these functions. In the second phase, where organizations seek to retain current volunteers, it seems important to develop and/or strengthen values relevant to volunteer activities.

The literature has shown that there are different motivators and different satisfactions for different targets of volunteers. In addition, retention strategies (rhetorical and institutional) are different from recruitment. Caracciolo (2003) suggests the following strategies to address retention:

- Improve volunteer management practices
- Appeal to volunteer needs and wants
- Accommodate generational and lifestyle differences
- Create a more diverse volunteer force
- Provide “episodic volunteering” opportunities
- Provide virtual volunteering opportunities
- Provide essential resources, training and mentoring
- Assure achievement from time well-invested
- Emphasize the importance of praise and appreciation

Incorporating these strategies in the organization’s business plan will insure that both the volunteer and the organization come away with something positive.

Having decided to give up their free time, some volunteers need to believe that they have something to give and that they are making a positive difference. They will become disillusioned if their input or impact is ineffective, perhaps more so than if they

were given extrinsic rewards for it. For this reason, it needs to be considered how satisfied people are with their volunteer work, and retention strategies should be converted into rhetorical appeals designed to strengthen the relationship between the volunteer and the work being done for the organization.

In addition to these retention strategies, Chinman and Wandersman (1999) reinforce the fact that the benefit and cost approach can be a useful retention strategy to improve the participation of volunteers. We saw in the previous section on *Why People Volunteer* that volunteers must perceive the benefits of their participation as outweighing the costs of the same. Most volunteers are likely to discontinue their service if they think they are wasting their time. Here, and in Caracciolo's list of retention strategies, importance is placed on the fact that, when recruiting volunteers, the various types of benefits to be gained by joining should be highlighted, not just the ones gained by working on the goals of the group (e.g., "We also have fun while trying to create an asthma awareness program"). After people join, the benefits that will keep them participating should be repeatedly assessed, and then tasks that are consistent with those benefits should be assigned (e.g. if a volunteer is interested in parliamentary procedure, he or she can be asked to work on the by-laws committee).

Not only do volunteers have many different interests, they also consist of all types of people, representing various age, educational and interest levels. Because of this, there should be just as much diversity in reward types. Recognition is yet another strategy that is frequently used by charitable and nonprofit organizations to address the predicament of retention. Formal recognition ceremonies and other non-economic rewards provide an important basis for volunteer recruitment and motivation because, by definition,

volunteers are not compensated monetarily for their efforts and are free to withdraw their support from the organization at any time. Fisher and Ackerman (1998) define recognition as a public expression given by a group to individuals who undertake desired behaviors. Although recognition can include elements that have monetary value, these aspects are neither necessary nor sufficient. Recognition symbols such as plaques, certificates, and trophies have no commercial value once they have been personalized to include the recipient's name, organization and charity event. At the same time, personalizing a recognition object increases its symbolic value to the recipient because it incorporates meanings that were absent in the original commodity (e.g., an "off-the shelf" trophy or plaque). Recognitions for contributions should have positive, direct effects, given the findings that people tend to feel more favorable toward individuals and organizations that provide positive feedback (Gruen, Summers & Acito, 2000). In light of these findings, when designing institutional rewards, the nonprofit organization should provide a wide range, with the awareness that different types of recognition is needed for different demographics.

In addition, the organization needs to understand the dynamics of human capital theory as it relates to volunteering. Wilson and Musick (1999) presume that if individual resources help determine why people take up volunteering, they will also help explain why people give it up. They propose that any decline in individual resources (education, income, and occupation) will increase the chances of exiting the volunteer labor force. The organization can use this knowledge to determine the need for campaigns to address retention.

Just as in the previous section on recruitment strategies, this section exposes strategies that can be utilized to formulate volunteer retention campaigns. They include:

- The list previously offered by Caracciolo (see page 39).
- Consider how satisfied people are with their volunteer work. Membership surveys, focus groups and interviews can accomplish this goal.
- Exploit the use of values such as humanitarian concern, caring for others in need, and contributing to society by referencing them in rhetorical appeals.
- Literatures should counter abstract reasons for not volunteering and emphasize concrete reasons for volunteering.

The key to the effectiveness of these recruitment and retention strategies is their conversion into effective rhetorical appeals that are disseminated to potential and existing volunteers via the organization's volunteer literatures. Organizations must meet the challenges of volunteer interest, values, and time. Being more mindful of the volunteer's perspective as an auxiliary to the organization's perspective will enrich the experience for everyone involved.

Shyles and Ross (1984) conducted a study that analyzed the inducements offered and demands made of potential volunteers in brochures advertising the Army's all volunteer force. The most widely reported problems concerning recruitment for the all volunteer force were the quality of personnel recruited and the retention and turnover rates of skilled personnel. In order to assess the appeals structure of Army advertising literature, the convention was therefore adopted that when the primary focus of appeals to potential recruits concerned their self interest, gain, and enhancement, the term used to describe such appeals was "inducement;" when the primary focus concerned service

commitments, such appeals were called “demands.” The research questions explored in the study were:

1. What are the semantic inducements and demands presented in Army brochures and pamphlets?
2. Which inducements and demands are emphasized most often in these documents?
3. How do the inducements and demands contained in these documents vary within the different service branches?

These same questions were applied to the Continental Societies, Inc. use of recruiting literatures in order to gauge their effectiveness.

As stated in the introduction, this study is concerned with rhetorical strategies related to volunteer recruitment and retention in nonprofit organizations. In order to determine the most appropriate rhetorical strategies, the following questions are key:

- What motivates people to volunteer in nonprofit organizations?
- What incentives are most effective and how are they communicated in an appeal?
- How are volunteers targeted for membership in nonprofit organizations?
- What are the best strategies to communicate with volunteers?
- What communication is most effective in retaining volunteers over time?

The answers to these questions, as expounded upon in these two chapters, resulted in recommendations for rhetorical and organizational transformations (see Chapter Four) that will assist the Continental Societies, Inc. in attracting and retaining as many quality members as possible. In an attempt to analyze the rhetorical strategies of this organization, the previous review of the literature was done. The isolation of motivating factors shows that there are a wide range of possibilities that drive people to volunteer.

CHAPTER THREE

EVALUATION: ANALYZING THE FINDINGS

Method – Narrative Criticism

In this study, I investigated the rhetorical strategies of the Continental Societies, Inc. by analyzing its volunteer related literatures and institutional strategies for recruiting and retaining volunteers. We have learned that there are a vast number of motivators driving volunteer behavior. Narrative criticism was used as the method to evaluate whether the Continental "story" related to the volunteer's own personal values. In order to ring true, a good story would speak to the maximum number of volunteer motivators. This chapter, specifically its use of narrative criticism, will help us to integrate the findings of the evaluation with the literature review in the previous chapters. Drawing upon narrative criticism, my goal is to gauge the rhetorical effectiveness of these literatures in light of the existing literature on nonprofit organizations and volunteerism, while at the same time creating new and more effective materials related to volunteer recruitment and retention.

Given the gap in the scholarly literature in specific regard to rhetorical strategies used to recruit volunteers in nonprofit organizations, along with the realization that nonprofits rely heavily on volunteers to provide their services, this analysis is crucial to the survival of one of the nonprofit organizations' most vital resources – its members. The previous review of scholarly literatures on volunteer recruitment and retention suggests that certain "stories" are more appealing to volunteers than others.

Narrative criticism, or the narrative paradigm, is a theory proposed by Walter Fisher (1984) maintaining that all meaningful communication is a form of storytelling or

a reporting of events. He considers it a useful way to appreciate human communication and offers the following explanation:

> The idea of human beings as storytellers indicates the generic form of all symbol composition; it holds that symbols are created and communicated ultimately as stories meant to give order to human experience and to induce others to dwell in them to establish ways of living in common, in communities in which there is sanction for the story that constitutes one's life. And one's life is, as suggested by [Kenneth] Burke, a story that participates in the stories of those who have lived, who live now, and who will live in the future. (p. 6)

Fisher claims that stories are fundamental to communication because they provide structure for our experience as humans, influencing people to belong to communities that share common explanations and understandings. He defines narration as symbolic actions, words, and/or deeds that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create and interpret them. Fisher suggests that narration affects every aspect of each individual's life and the lives of others in every verbal and nonverbal act of persuasion. Believing that human beings experience and comprehend life as a series of ongoing narratives, embedded in speakers' stories that have a beginning, middle, and end, Fisher posits that, from this set of stories, individuals choose the ones that match their values and beliefs.

Fisher's narrative criticism will be most helpful in this study. The preceding literature review demonstrates that the volunteer pool is not of a homogeneous nature. Volunteers, instead, originate from various backgrounds and different people will volunteer for different reasons. The narrative approach will facilitate the search for

commonalities (the motivations) embedded within the Continental Societies, Inc. volunteer literatures (the "stories") that the current and potential volunteer can identify with. In addition, the narrative approach tests for argumentative grounds of rationality. The previously identified strategies for recruitment and retention can be employed to fill any missing parts of the Continental "story."

There is a wide range of useful perspectives on narrative criticism. James Phelan (2004) writes that for the purpose of interpreting narratives, the approach assumes:

1) that narrative can be fruitfully understood as a rhetorical act: somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened.
2) that texts are designed by authors in order to affect readers in particular ways, that those designs are conveyed through the words, techniques, structures, forms and other dialogic relations of texts as well as the genres and conventions readers use to understand them, and that reader responses are a function of and, thus, a guide to how designs are created through textual and intertextual phenomena. At the same time, reader responses are also a test of the efficacy of those designs.
3) that the rhetorical act of storytelling entails a multi-leveled communication from author to audience, one that involves the audience's intellect, emotions, psyche, and values. Furthermore, these levels interact with each other. Reader's values and those set forth by the narrator affect their judgments of characters (and sometimes narrators) and judgments affect emotions.

Phelan states that, methodologically, this view of the recursive relationship among author, text, and reader means that the interpreter may begin the interpretive inquiry from

any one of these points on the rhetorical triangle, but the inquiry will necessarily consider how each point both influences and can be influenced by the other two (Phelan, 2004: 341). How the audience responds to the narrative will indicate their commitments to and attitudes toward the author, the narrator (the form that the author's voice takes), the narrative situation, and the values expressed in the narrative. Other researchers agree on the importance of the position of the audience in narrative analysis. Lucaites and Condit (1985) believe that the audience is absolutely essential to the rhetorical enterprise inasmuch as the rhetorician engages his or her craft for the precise purpose of achieving the active assent of an audience. Fisher (1984) believes that the audience (the volunteers) are moved by their perceptions and appraisals of central and relevant questions of value, commitment, and satisfaction. These perceptions and appraisals become their stories: narratives that must stand the test of probability and fidelity. This test of narrative rationality will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

The analysis of narrative is an approach that will allow me to explain how the Continental Societies, Inc. constructs appeals to potential volunteers. According to Mumby (1987), narratives are a pervasive form of organizational communication. Organization members tell stories to other members or outsiders to show how their organization is different from any other. Such stories can illustrate both positive and negative qualities of organizations. This analysis will identify the efficacy of such appeals in light of the review of recruitment and retention strategies discussed earlier, and provide an opportunity to make recommendations to the organization for new and more effective materials related to volunteer recruitment and retention.

Fisher's (1984) narrative paradigm theorizes that the narrative rationality of stories should be tested as a way to test argumentative grounds. Narrative rationality has two major aspects: narrative probability and narrative fidelity.

1. Narrative probability: that the story is coherent and good (it is well told, believable, credible and the like); the evidence of the unity of characters and their actions.
2. Narrative fidelity: that it meets the tests for reason and values proposed in the logic of good reasons; that the story "resonates" with soundness; the comparison of the truths in the story and the truths that the reader knows to be true from their own lives.

Fisher's logic of good reasons maintains that reasoning need not be bound to argumentative prose or be expressed in clear-cut inferential or implicative structures: reasoning may be discovered in all sorts of symbolic action – non discursive as well as discursive. Rowland (1987) supports the notion that narrative is important because people love stories. And they love stories because the plot, character development, and aesthetic quality of the language in stories make them more interesting than discursive argument. This is evidenced in the volunteer's interaction with the volunteer literatures ("stories") of the Continental Societies, Inc. New materials created for the organization (see APPENDIX C) provide good reasons to trust the notion that the volunteer commitment of resources will be well utilized.

Lucaites & Condit (1985) consider the requirements of a rhetorical narrative. They have identified consistency, brevity, unity of direction and unity of purpose as necessary components. A rhetorical narrative must be consistent with the audience's

general outlook on the world, with both its logical and sociological expectations. There needs to be compatibility between an agent's action and motive. The effective rhetorical narrative needs to portray motives for actions that are appropriate to the knowledge of the audience. Brevity is another requirement of a rhetorical narrative. It focuses the audience's attention precisely on the issue before it – no more, no less. Next, because the rhetorical narrative functions in general to compel the audience to a particular understanding of the facts of the case, to a particular point of view, the researchers believe it must project a voice that underscores the unity of direction of the discourse. The primary goal of a rhetorical narrative is to advocate something beyond itself. It operates in a context of formal advocacy and, in keeping with general functions of narratives, may invite only one interpretation. And finally, rhetorical narratives must encourage, and indeed enlist, the audience's active participation in the solution, describing a set of relations contributing to a conflict or problem and asking the audience to participate actively in the interest of the discourse to bring about the desired transformation.

Given the theoretical perspectives, motivators, strategies and analytical categories identified in the previous literature review, I believe it necessary to study the Continental Societies' rhetorical appeals from the narrative perspective. This theory explains human nature in terms of communication, claiming that people are "storytelling animals" that basically send messages to each other. The Continental Societies, Inc. volunteer literatures represent the "stories" shared between the organization and its volunteer audience, in other words the organization's happenings. The various themes raised in the preceding two chapters concerning volunteer motivations and recruitment and retention

strategies can be conceptualized as narrative elements and judged viable or not based on their narrative rationality. Lucaites & Condit (1985) define a rhetorical narrative as an interpretive lens through which the audience is asked to view and understand the verisimilitude of the propositions and proof before it. I, too, used narrative criticism as the lens through which I gauged the appearance of truth and reality of the volunteer experience for the reader, in other words rhetorical efficacy.

In what follows, I analyzed existing literatures of the Continental Societies, Inc. to gauge narrative rationality. Looking at each piece of literature and considering the volunteer motivations outlined in the literature review, I measured its narrative probability and narrative fidelity by exploring the following questions:

Is the "story" well told? Is it believable? Is it credible?

Is the organization unified with its actions in a cohesive plot?

Does the literature portray a sound story (beginning, middle and end)?

Does the story address values that create a "fit" between the narrative and the audience's world-as-experienced?

In addition, a review of the literatures to determine the inclusion of formal requirements of a rhetorical narrative: consistency, brevity, unity of direction and unity of purpose was conducted.

Acquisition of the Continental Societies, Inc. Literature Sample

In order to effectively proceed with this analysis, a sample of literatures had to be acquired. The Continental Societies, Inc. embraces forty chapters in seventeen states in the Continental USA, District of Columbia and Bermuda. Permission to solicit materials from the organization was granted by the national president (see APPENDIX A). Thirty

pieces of literature were acquired from the local, regional and national organizations to be used in this study. Literatures ranging from membership applications, invitation letters, and newsletters to general information brochures and membership induction programs were offered as a result of a request for assistance from the chapters, regional and national organizations (see APPENDIX B). I explored how the organization's national literature is used to inspire volunteerism and retention among the members by securing samples from the National Membership Chairperson. In addition, I looked at the kinds of literature that the regional organizations and local chapters are distributing to their constituencies in light of the scholarly literature by securing samples from regional and local chapter Membership Chairpersons. A listing of the literatures that were analyzed is presented in Table I.

TABLE I

LISTING OF VARIOUS LITERATURES REVIEWED

	Literature Studied	Received From
1	Membership Application	National
2	Continental Connection, Sept. 2004 (Membership Newsletter)	National 2nd Vice President
3	Continental Connection, Jan. 2006 (Membership Newsletter)	National 2nd Vice President
4	Social Invitation	Atlanta Chapter
5	General Information Brochure 1999/2000	Atlanta Chapter
6	General Information Brochure 2003	Atlanta Chapter
7	New Member Open House Invitation	Atlanta Chapter
8	Pictorial Information Booklet	Atlanta Chapter
9	2005 Membership Committee Recruiting Strategies	Atlanta Chapter
10	2006/2007 Membership Committee Recommendations	Atlanta Chapter
11	Prospective Members Quick Reference Sheet	Atlanta Chapter
12	Thank you interest letter	Atlanta Chapter
13	Open House invitation letter	Atlanta Chapter
14	Installation Ceremony program	Atlanta Chapter
15	Membership Packet	National Public Relations Officer
16	Membership FAQs	National Web site
17	New Member Application	Triad-Rowan Chapter
18	Interest Invite	Triad-Rowan Chapter
19	Thank you interest letter	Triad-Rowan Chapter
20	Interest Meeting Program	Triad-Rowan Chapter

21	Letters to new members	Triad-Rowan Chapter
22	Newsletter	Midwest-Western Region Newsletter
23	Information Brochure	Houston Chapter
24	General Information Brochure	New Bern Chapter
25	Interest Invite	New York Chapter
26	General Information Brochure	New York Chapter
27	General letter	Greater Miami Chapter
28	5K Walk/Run for Asthma Flyer	Greater Miami Chapter
29	2002 Member Questionnaire	National Membership Committee
30	Membership Workshop Recommendations	SE Region Membership Chairperson

In light of the critical analytical categories discovered in the literature review, and the motivators specific to each critical analytical category (see Table II), I have critiqued the volunteer related literature utilized by the Continental Societies, Inc. in order to gauge narrative rationality and the inclusion of the requirements of a rhetorical narrative. In the test for narrative rationality, the following considerations were made: Is the "story" well told? Is it believable? Is it credible? Is the "story" reasonable and value laden? Is the organization and its actions unified in a cohesive plot? Does the literature portray a sound story (beginning, middle and end)? Does the story address values that create a "fit" between the narrative and the audience's world-as-experienced? The literature review suggests that these questions are meaningful only if the "story" aligns with the volunteer's motivations and is, therefore, one that the volunteer wants to hear.

TABLE II

VOLUNTEER MOTIVATIONS

Volunteer Advantage	**Critical Analytical Category**	**Motivation**
Received	General	Simply being asked to volunteer
Received	Sense of belonging	Ethnic community thesis – shared sense of destiny & connected racial unity
Received	Personal satisfaction	Opportunities to experience status, self-

		expression, and decision making power
Received	Personal satisfaction	Prestige, authority, leadership & networking opportunities
Received / provided	Tangible volunteer benefits	Free-rider problem: when volunteers reap benefits from others' work without participating themselves. Solution: selective incentives that are contingent upon membership, but may not relate to goals of the org. Volunteer must feel that benefits outweigh the costs.
Provided	Personal satisfaction	Compassion toward those in need, obligation "to give back," personal goal of enhancing moral basis of society (doing what's right)
Provided	Age	Older adults – to help others, to feel useful & productive
Received	Tangible volunteer benefits	Reciprocity & exchange: community participation rewards the individual in forms of better resources, stronger impact on policy, better health, etc.
Received	Personal satisfaction	Sense of satisfaction (to feel needed, to keep busy, earn respect while doing something useful)
Provided	Values	Altruism - the belief that acting for the benefit of others is right and good; humanitarian values & a desire to contribute to society
Received	Age	Older adults: Companionship – meeting people; individuals moving to new communities, older people who have lost spouses
Received	Age	Young professionals looking for a more active social life
Received	Age	Young adults: Developing professional contacts; Internships
Received	Personal satisfaction	Social panache – prestige & status of associating with certain organizations
Received	Personal satisfaction	To feel good and boast self-esteem

Received	Tangible volunteer benefits	Knowledge function (to learn, to gain a greater understanding of people, to practice skills and abilities)
Received	Tangible volunteer benefits	Career function (to enhance one's job and career prospects, to gain experience and contacts)
Provided	Values	Value-expressive function (to act on important values such as humanitarian values, altruistic concerns, or desires to contribute to society)
Received	Sense of belonging	Social-adjustive function (to fit into important reference groups, to gain social approval/avoid social disapproval)
Received	Values	Ego-defensive function (to reduce feelings of guilt, to resolve or escape from one's own personal problems).
Provided	Personal satisfaction	To act on moral values
Received	Tangible volunteer benefits	To gain new experiences
Provided	Personal satisfaction	To reciprocate help given by a volunteer in the past
Received/ provided	Personal satisfaction	Personal rewards – both volunteer and recipient oftentimes affected equally by service

In order to conduct a proper assessment, the convention is adopted that when the primary focus of appeals to potential volunteers concerns the volunteers' self-interest, gain and enhancement (what is received), the term used to describe such appeals will be "inducements." When the primary focus of appeals to potential volunteers concerns the volunteers' service commitments to the organization (what is provided), the term used to describe such appeals will be "demands." The specific questions explored in this analysis are:

1. What are the semantic inducements and demands presented in Continental volunteer-related material?
2. Which inducements and demands are emphasized most often in these documents?
3. How do the inducements and demands contained in these documents vary within the different chapters?

Whether the volunteer is looking to receive advantages (inducements) or to provide advantages (demands), it is incumbent upon the nonprofit organization to recognize these motivators and then adapt them into rhetorical appeals aimed at potential and existing volunteers.

Creation of a Sign Vehicle Dictionary

A review of the literatures (thirty items) was undertaken and an inventory was compiled that independently listed the words and phrases that appeared in the text of each "story," which, in my judgment, had as a primary focus either verbal "inducements" offered by the Continental Societies, Inc. for the personal gain of potential volunteers, or "demands" for a commitment of time and energy in service to the nonprofit organization. The function of this investigation was to locate semantic content of the literature and to find all terms and phrases within the text of each referring to inducements and demands directed toward potential volunteers. In other words, my goal was to look at the Continental Societies, Inc. "story" being told to see if it draws upon the motivators isolated in the previous literature review.

In order to gauge the completeness of the "story," the narrative elements must first be identified. A sign vehicle list (Shyles & Ross, 1984) was developed in order to compile the most prudent collection of categories which would permit the most

exhaustive, reliable classification of terms. Table III presents the sign vehicle list that resulted from an investigation of the literatures. Category divisions were inspired by the volunteer motivations detailed in the previous literature review and listed in Table II. In order to meet the requirements of narrative rationality, these motivations must ring true to the wider audience of Continental volunteers.

Data Coding

Initial coding of the literatures was conducted by locating terms that appeared in the documents – the Continental Societies, Inc. "stories" – that matched in exact terms or implied meaning with the relevant terms and references in the sign vehicle list. Perceptual discrimination was employed at this stage of the investigation. After all terms appearing in the literatures were isolated, semantic judgments were made by placing selected terms into inducement and demand categories which, in my judgment, were most appropriate for the meaning of each term based on its content and usage. This allowed for a more accurate analysis of what narrative element the reader is responding to – an appeal to receive something (pathos: emotional appeals – the things that the volunteer values and needs) or an appeal to provide something (ethos: good will, good character, and good judgment that will build trust between the volunteer and the recipient of the volunteer's service).

TABLE III

SIGN VEHICLE LIST

Semantic Content	**Critical Analytical Category**	**Relevant terms / references**
Inducement	General	Invitations to volunteer, join or participate
Inducement	Sense of	References to racial unity; shared sense of destiny; to fit into

	belonging	important reference groups; to gain social approval / avoid social disapproval
Inducement	Personal satisfaction	Opportunity; decision-making power; self-expression; status; prestige, authority, leadership; networking opportunities; sense of satisfaction - feel needed, keep busy, earn respect, feel good; social panache, prestige; boast self-esteem; recognition
Inducement	Tangible volunteer benefits	Reciprocity & exchange; community participation rewards; to learn, to gain a greater understanding of people, to practice skills and abilities; to enhance one's job and career prospects, to gain experience and contacts
Inducement	Age	Older – companionship – meeting people; younger adults – developing professional contacts; internships; more active social life
Inducement	Values	To reduce feelings of guilt, to resolve or escape from one's own personal problems
Demand	Personal satisfaction	Compassion; "give back;" doing what's "right;" to act on moral values; to reciprocate help given by a volunteer in the past
Demand	Age	Older adults – help others, feel useful & productive
Demand	Values	Altruism; humanitarian values & a desire to contribute to society
Inducement / Demand	Tangible volunteer benefits	Free-rider problem: volunteers reaping benefits from others' work without participating themselves
Inducement / Demand	Personal satisfaction	Personal awards where both volunteer and recipient are oftentimes affected equally by the service

Data Analysis

The literatures varied considerably in terms of content, size, length, format (i.e. the appearance of printed characters on the page, paper selection, the way individual items were arranged, margins). For example, some invitations for membership were only one page long while other invitations featured over seven pages of copy. In addition, there was no standard size of format for providing general information across the

chapters. Because of these disparities, a general approach of recording the number of mentions per category was employed.

In addition to a critical analysis of the rhetorical appeals, I considered how realistically these literatures can be adapted in light of existing volunteer benefits and opportunities. Have Aristotle's modes of persuasion (pathos, logos and ethos) been utilized to persuade the potential and existing volunteer? What emotional, logical and character appeals are evident? Does the organization have to change to better meet the needs of its volunteers? In cases where the answer to this question is affirmative, the outcome is recommendations for organizational transformation to enable the necessary changes in volunteer benefits and opportunities, along with a sample set of rhetorically appropriate literatures that will aid recruitment and retention efforts.

The final piece of the investigation involved the facilitation of a membership workshop at the Continental Societies, Inc. national meeting held on Saturday, June 24, 2006 in McLean, Virginia. Forty-eight women from across the United States collaborated and brainstormed solutions to the problem of recruitment and retention within the organization. The "big questions" that drove the discussion were: What persuades people to join nonprofit organizations like the Continental Societies, realizing the necessary commitment of time, talent and treasure? What role do you play? What are you saying? What messages do you, and your chapter, communicate to the "prospective" member to not only become a member but to sustain that membership, as well? Along with the creation of specific messages to address recruitment and retention, concrete suggestions for action that will bring about improvement in both areas were offered. This

workshop presentation (See APPENDIX C) was developed to serve as a useful tool for the Continental Societies, Inc. to help its members recruit and retain volunteers.

Results

This analysis called for a way to look at the Continental Societies, Inc. ”story” being told to determine if it actually drew upon the motivators that are important to volunteers. This was accomplished through the segregation of inducements and demands. The first specific question explored in this analysis asked: “What are the semantic inducements and demands presented in Continental volunteer-related material?” Six inducement categories, three demand categories and two combination inducement-demand categories were identified. The inducement headings were general, sense of belonging, personal satisfaction, tangible volunteer benefits, age, and values. The demand categories were personal satisfaction, age and values. The combination inducement-demand categories were tangible volunteer benefits and personal satisfaction.

The second specific question explored in this analysis asked: “Which inducements and demands are emphasized most often in these documents? To answer this question, the number of mentions was tallied (see Table IV). Tallying categories that emphasize what the volunteer can receive or what the volunteer can provide helps to determine if appeals align with Aristotle’s principles of pathos, logos and ethos. General invitations to join or participate and personal satisfaction were the most common inducement mentions. The majority of the demand mentions were in the values category. The combined category of inducements and demands resulted in three mentions throughout the literatures examined. Hence, it is clear that Continental Societies, Inc. rhetoric

features more inducements than demands, indicating that the motivation most emphasized is what the volunteer will receive.

TABLE IV

INDUCEMENT AND DEMAND CATEGORIES

Inducement Categories	Number of Mentions
General	13
Sense of belonging	7
Personal satisfaction	13
Tangible volunteer benefits	1
Age	4
Values	2
INDUCEMENT TOTALS	**40**
Demand Categories	
Personal satisfaction	6
Age	1
Values	8
DEMAND TOTALS	**15**
Inducement-Demand Categories	
Tangible volunteer benefits	1
Personal satisfaction	2
INDUCEMENT-DEMAND TOTALS	**3**

The third specific question explored in this analysis concerned how inducements and demands vary by chapter. Of the thirty pieces of literature studied, twenty-two were received directly from six local chapters. Two chapters – Atlanta and Greater Miami – led in the number of inducement and demand mentions. Atlanta's greatest number of mentions was in the demand category of personal satisfaction. Emphasis was placed on the desire to engage in work aimed at improving the welfare of children and uncompromising aid to those in need. Overall, this category received 22% of the total

mentions. The literatures received from the Greater Miami chapter more often highlighted the inducement category of personal satisfaction focusing on opportunities to network, socialize and emphasize sisterhood. Overall, this category received 10% of the total mentions. All responding chapters had at least one mention in the inducement category of "general" exhibited through an invitation to join or participate in local projects.

The answers to these questions helped to measure narrative probability and narrative fidelity. Whether or not the "story" is well told, believable and credible is the first measure of narrative rationality. Of the chapters that sent in materials to be used in this study, most did a good job at one aspect of storytelling – relaying the happenings of the organization – through the use of general information brochures. The information was consistent across the chapters and verifiable on the national website.

The literature showed a need for more unity between the organization and its actions, which is the second measure of narrative rationality. The national membership committee questionnaire that was submitted for investigation indicated that one of the reasons members fail to maintain active membership in the Continental Societies, Inc. is due to a lack of clear strategic goals. Seventeen percent of those surveyed responded that prior to becoming a member they were not given any written materials outlining the history, duties and responsibilities of membership in the Continental Societies, Inc. This omission of logical appeals is obviously not the best strategy for recruitment or retention.

With few exceptions, the literatures addressed values that create a "fit" between the volunteer and the organization. These pathetic appeals directly align with Aristotelian theory and serve to demonstrate that the organization understands the things

that the volunteer cares about. The narratives used terms such as “to give and share wisely… with less fortunate youth of our communities,” “sufficient love, faith, strength and courage to be equal to whatever we may encounter as we extend our hands and hearts to others,” “creativity, resourcefulness and interaction with the children of the community,” and “promote, foster and develop the welfare of disadvantaged and underprivileged children” to articulate these values. Repeated references to the community offered a personal connection to the potential volunteers.

The last gauge of narrative rationality (narrative probability & fidelity) speaks to the portrayal of a sound story (beginning, middle and end). The sample of literatures studied indicates that a large portion of the “story” is missing. There were inducement and demand categories that were underutilized in the promotion of the organization. Tangible volunteer benefits such as the career function which enhances job and career prospects while gaining experience and contacts, as well as the knowledge function which emphasizes learning, gaining a greater understanding of people and practicing skills and abilities were hardly mentioned. Demographic considerations such as age, and what this sector of the population desires, is an area that received little attention as well.

The final examination explored the inclusion of formal requirements of a rhetorical narrative: consistency, brevity, unity of direction and unity of purpose. The sample literatures indicated no demonstrated problem exemplifying consistency and unity of purpose. The organization’s mission, “To create environments within our communities that empower children to have access to quality and appropriate opportunities to reach their optimal potential” clearly offers the purpose and is consistently articulated. Brevity, on the other hand, is not always paramount. The

amount of information offered in membership-related materials varies from chapter to chapter. The general information brochure provides an example of the disparity. Some provide more graphic content than verbal. While some focus on activities that potential members may be interested in, others list management information such as national officers and the organizational song. The Continental Societies, Inc. has to be diligent in its efforts to combine an economical use of words that focus on the issue at hand – the historical, informative materials that new recruits will need in order to function effectively – with enough persuasive content to convince the volunteer to join and maintain their membership.

The preceding analysis of the Continental Societies, Inc.'s volunteer related materials shows that the literatures are not as rhetorically effective as they ought be. They attempt to tell a "story," but using Fisher's narrative criticism as a lens to gauge rhetorical effectiveness, I determined that the "stories" did not consistently make salient the motivations that current and potential volunteers could readily identify with. In order to test for narrative rationality – whether the "story" is well told, believable, credible, reasonable and value laden - volunteer motivations were enumerated in Table II. The narrative elements needed to be identified. Table III (sign vehicle list) was developed to take the analysis a step further. The critical analytical categories that were identified in Table II were then categorized as inducements (appeals that concern what is received by the volunteer) or demands (appeals that concern what is provided by the volunteer). These correlate to Aristotle's pathetic and ethical appeals. After identifying the inducement and demand categories, Table IV was used to tally the number of times the major categories were mentioned. A review of the sample literatures determined that

more than twice as many inducements were mentioned than were demands. The implication is that consideration needs to be given to all motivational categories, whether the volunteer is looking to receive advantages or to provide advantages, in order to create rhetorically effective literatures. A greater implication lies in what has already been stated: this analysis called for a way to look at the Continental Societies, Inc. ”story” to determine if it actually speaks to the motivators that are important to volunteers. Because it does not, the recommendations in the next chapter are offered.

CHAPTER FOUR

RECOMMENDATIONS: APPLYING THE FINDINGS

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to analyze the rhetorical & organizational strategies of the Continental Societies, Inc. by studying volunteer related materials and programs in order to gauge their rhetorical efficacy (what, if any rhetorical appeals are used, & the significance of their use) in light of the existing literature on volunteerism & nonprofit organizations.

The first step was an analysis of the literatures on volunteerism and nonprofit organizations to determine what motivates people to volunteer. Once these motivating factors were isolated a method in which to study them was incorporated. Narrative criticism was chosen because of its utility in defining what makes a good story. In order to ring true to its audience (the volunteers), a good story speaks to the maximum number of these identified motivators. Samples of the Continental Societies' volunteer-related literatures were perused. By looking at inducements and demands contained within the documents, it was determined that the Continental Societies, Inc. "story" was not being told completely. It did not draw upon those things that we have learned serve to motivate volunteers. Because of this gap in the "story," the study concludes with two sets of recommendations for the organization.

Suggestions for Organizational Transformations

This research has shown that in order for the literatures – narrative "stories" – of the Continental Societies, Inc. to resonate with the wider audience of volunteers, they must exemplify more narrative fidelity; the comparison of the truths and the truths that

the volunteer knows to be true from their own lives must be sound. In other words, the literatures must tell a “right” and “honest” story, versus a misleading one. This can be accomplished by the incorporation of organizational transformations that align the organization’s “story” with what it is actually possible to provide. Some common sense suggestions gleaned from the research include:

- Incorporate tactics that appeal to healthy lifestyles such as the promotion of healthy eating, exercise and environmental consciousness, along with activities such as fitness walks for fund raising and cleaning up the local neighborhood.
- Partner with community sponsored events such as health fairs or employment workshops to provide contacts and initiate relationships.
- Provide continual efforts in training that can benefit volunteers professionally.
- Structure team-oriented programs and “sisterhood” activities that emphasize camaraderie.
- Provide a volunteer mentoring program, pairing inexperienced with experienced volunteers.
- Provide internships that will provide professional experience.
- Create open lines of communication and construct volunteering in terms that appeal to the target audience.
- Utilize membership satisfaction surveys, informal feedback opportunities (focus groups, interviews), and exit interviews to provide an indication of volunteer satisfaction.
- Provide virtual volunteering opportunities for home-bound, or otherwise restricted, volunteers.

- Construct a plan that facilitates the importance of ongoing praise and recognition (e.g. formal recognition ceremonies; plaques, certificates, and trophies; posters; pins; pictures; letters of support and appreciation) that emphasizes the roles of volunteers as important and integral parts of the organization.
- Repeatedly assess the benefits that caused volunteers to participate initially, and then assign tasks that are consistent with those benefits.
- Communicate clear strategic goals. Provide written materials outlining expectations, history, duties and responsibilities of participation to all volunteers.
- Underscore decision making power, leadership and prestige in communication to potential volunteers.
- Highlight "service" to the organization (providing advantages) along with "benefits" (receiving advantages) from the organization.
- Create opportunities for volunteers to use the skills that they already have.
- Work from within, capitalizing on the fact that most volunteers are recruited by people who are already affiliated with the organization.

The implementation of these organizational transformations will serve to aid the Continental Societies, Inc. in the successful recruiting and retention of its volunteers. These changes in volunteer benefits and opportunities are necessary in order for the organization to better meet the needs of it current and potential volunteers.

Additional Suggestions

The literature review suggests some common sense moves that the Continental Societies, Inc. should make. My analysis, on the other hand, indicates the following additional changes. First, the major incentives offered to potential volunteers did not

consist of instrumental rewards for joining the organization. These types of rewards include opportunities to gain job training through internships (not a component of the current organizational structure), to practice relevant skills and abilities, and to gain experience and contacts in exchange for volunteer service. The addition of these types of rhetorical appeals, along with organizational changes to provide such opportunities, will attract committed volunteers.

Second, few appeals focused on intrinsic rewards of camaraderie, a more active social life and a need to feel useful and productive, which often characterize the more traditional qualities and rewards allegedly available from affiliation with an organization such as the Continental Societies, Inc. Although the inducement category of personal satisfaction holds intrinsic value (i.e. personal satisfaction is good for its own sake), the language concerning personal satisfaction in Continental Societies, Inc. literatures revolves around the availability of personal satisfaction that is couched in terms of instrumental goals, not intrinsic values. Hence, in the literature, the Continental Societies, Inc. casts itself as a stepping stone to other goals which may be non-volunteer focused, while inducements emphasizing the more traditional values (underscoring decision-making power, leadership, prestige, etc.) are mentioned infrequently. Thus, the rhetorical strategy employed in current Continental Societies, Inc. literature may be characterized as rhetoric consistent with the attraction of volunteers who may come to view their association with the organization as a one-dimensional experience that offers few opportunities to serve and grow holistically. Such rhetoric might itself explain why the Continental Societies, Inc. has had difficulty in retaining committed volunteers.

Third, there is the issue of the relative infrequency with which any altruistic demands were mentioned in the literatures. Of the thirty documents perused, the demand category of values, which includes altruism, humanitarian values and a desire to contribute to society, accounted for only fourteen percent of the mentions. There is comparatively little emphasis given to requests for altruistic self-sacrifice which might enhance motivation to promote long-term involvement among potential volunteers. Rhetoric that promotes self-interest concerns on the part of recruits over service concerns may attract volunteers that the organization might actually want to avoid: people motivated by an implicit invitation to join the Continental Societies, Inc. in order to exploit the organization for the advantages that can be gained from it (the free-rider problem).

Perhaps rather than relying so heavily on instrumental self-interest appeals in order to attract volunteers who may perceive the organization as strictly a social outlet, future volunteer recruitment language can be used to attract volunteers who come to perceive the Continental Societies, Inc. as the service organization that it is. Future recruiting rhetoric that clearly articulates organizational expectations, emphasizing equally the intrinsic satisfaction of inducements (receiving advantages) and demands (providing advantages) available to volunteers will have greater narrative fidelity and therefore are likely to assist in the recruitment and then retention of quality volunteers.

Another recommendation is for the organization to communicate the desire to try to make the volunteer hours fulfilling for both the volunteer and the organization. The following steps can be employed:

1. Think about the volunteer's skills. Articulate how the skills that the volunteer already has (the same skills used in their workaday life as a doctor, lawyer, publicist, or accountant) can be used to help the organization achieve its goals. Volunteering can be framed as a way to develop new skills that can be put on the resume. Or it can be approached as a way to take a break from daily life by doing something completely different.
2. Consider what else the volunteer wants. Think about the volunteer's motives for volunteering. Although it is nice to do good, there may be something else driving them. Do they want to meet other people? Spend time with children? Or are they trying to teach the spirit of giving to their own kids? The organization that knows what the volunteer is looking for will have an easier time filling those volunteer slots.
3. Be realistic. The average volunteer donates 3.6 hours of time each week, according to the Independent Sector (the leadership forum for charities, foundations, and corporate giving programs committed to advancing the common good in America and around the world). Some may do more, some may do less. Both are fine. Approximately 85% of nonprofits rely on volunteers for at least some of their labor, so they need volunteers. What they don't need are people who make commitments they can't fulfill based on unrealistic expectations.

Targeted recruitment can be utilized to find volunteers who possess the degree of commitment needed by the Continental Societies, Inc. Motivations and backgrounds of current volunteers should be examined for any common factors. Do they all have the same type of motivation? Do they have similar backgrounds or education or

experiences or occupations? Do they come from similar groups? Did they all hear about the organization in a similar fashion? A membership survey will yield the answers to these questions. Common factors will enable the organization to identify populations who seem to like the volunteer work despite its requirements of time, talent and treasure, and the commonality will allow the organization to isolate the appropriate terms and references to locate others from that population group.

Additional questions that may be included in a membership survey include:

1. What strategies would you recommend to increase your Chapter's membership?
2. What do you think your chapter can do and say to retain members? What should the regional and national organizations do to help?
3. How does leadership affect membership in your chapter?
4. Does your chapter have a formal orientation for potential members prior to induction? A formal invitation event?
5. What makes the Continental Societies, Inc. an attractive volunteer organization for you?

In all that it does to advance its recruiting efforts, the organization must simply remember "to ask." The first attempts at recruiting should start with the population groups who are already connected to the organization. The Continental Societies, Inc. should capitalize on the fact that most volunteers are recruited by those people who they already know by asking the current volunteer to recruit a friend to volunteer with them. This approach will make it more likely to get a positive response because the group of potential volunteers with whom they will be talking will already be favorably disposed to the organization, at least informed about it and what it does. In order to support this effort, current volunteers

should have literature made available to them that consistently articulates the rhetorical appeals that the organization advances in order to accomplish its goals and objectives.

Directions for Future Research

Although thorough, this study was limited in respect to the sample size. The study analyzed thirty pieces of literature received from five national sources, two regional sources, and six of the available forty local chapters. As such, the sample is best described as a convenience sample drawn from available materials, and is subject to questions of representativeness. However, a serious effort was made to collect materials from all national, regional, and local sources. Due to this limitation, the study might best serve as a pilot study laying the groundwork for a more comprehensive study. Future research may seek to expand the boundaries of this study by performing similar narrative criticism across a larger, more representative, sample. This extensive sample would allow for more specific conclusions to be drawn about the volunteer related literatures of the Continental Societies, Inc.

Future research may also place more emphasis on the issue of how volunteering has changed over the years and how those changes affect recruiting and retention efforts. Attention could be given to the broader social areas that have transformed volunteerism and philanthropy. These areas could provide insight into additional motivating factors that cause people to volunteer. In future research on this topic, a richer list of organizational transformations may prove to serve nonprofit organizations well. An explicit look at corporate recruiting involvement could lead to a partnership that serves both the organization giving the service and the organization receiving the service well. A connection to pockets of volunteers that have already been created may prove to be a

smart move on the part of the organization in need of volunteers.

Summary

Narrative criticism has much to offer nonprofit organizations in their quest for workable solutions to address volunteer recruitment and retention. This paper has provided a first step toward making this method of analysis available to the nonprofit sector by synthesizing major conceptual approaches and suggesting organizational transformations to incorporate them into the business plan of the nonprofit organizations.

One of the initial questions posed in this research was, **"w**hy do people volunteer?" Using the narrative approach, I looked at the critical analytical categories of the motivations that cause people to volunteer with the Continental Societies, Inc. I found that the tests of narrative probability and fidelity were not always met. This suggested a need for organizational transformations and a set of rhetorically appropriate literatures. Both have been provided along with this study to address these deficiencies. The larger implication is that nonprofit organizations need to understand more of the "why" of participation along with the "who" in order to better help illuminate the advantages given and rewards received in volunteering, thereby convincing the volunteer to not only become a member but to maintain that membership as well.

REFERENCES

Alexander, Patricia A., Michelle M. Buehl, and Christopher T. Sperl. "The Persuasiveness of Persuasive Discourse." International Journal of Educational Research 35 (2001): 651-74.

Andersen, Kurt. "A Vision of Voluntarism." Time. 19 Oct. 1981: 30.

Barnes, Annie S. "An Urban Black Voluntary Association." Phylon 40 (1979): 264-69.

Blau, Judith R. and Gordon Rabrenovic. "Interorganizational Relations of Nonprofit Organizations: An Exploratory Study." Sociological Forum 2 (1991): 327-47.

Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba and Kay L. Schlozman. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation." The American Political Science Review 89 (1995): 271-94.

Caracciolo, Gerard L. "Volunteerism: A Perspective." The ASHA Leader 7 Oct. 2003: 1+.

Chinman, Matthew J. and Abraham Wandersman. "The Benefits and Costs of Volunteering in Community Organizations: Review and Practical Applications." Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly 28 (1999): 46-64.

Day, Kathleen M. and Rose Anne Devlin. "The Payoff to Work Without Pay: Volunteer Work as an Investment in Human Capital." Canadian Journal of Economics 31 (1998): 1179-91.

Dutta-Bergman, Mohan J. "Describing Volunteerism: The Theory of Unified Responsibility." Journal of Public Relations Research 16 (2004): 353-69.

Ewald, Helen Rothschild. "The Implied Reader in Persuasive Discourse." Journal of

Applied Communication Research 1988 <http://jac.gsu.edu/jac/8/Articles/19.htm>

Fisher, Robert J. and David Ackerman. "The Effects of Recognition and Group Need on Volunteerism: A Social Norm Perspective." Journal of Consumer Research 25 (1998): 262-75.

Fisher, Walter. "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument." Communication Monographs 51 (1984): 1-22.

Forsyth, Janice. "Volunteer Management Strategies: Balancing Risk & Reward." Nonprofit World 17 (1999): 40-43.

Gruen, Thomas W., John O. Summers and Frank Acito. "Relationship Marketing Activities, Commitment, and Membership Behaviors in Professional Associations." Journal of Marketing 64 (2000): 34-49.

Grube, Jean A. and Jane Allyn Piliavin. "Role Identity, Organizational Experiences, and Volunteer Performance." Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin. 26 (2000): 1108-19.

Hayghe, Howard V. "Volunteers in the U.S.: Who Donates the Time?" Monthly Labor Review 114 (1991): 16-24.

Hoge, Dean R., et al. "The Value of Volunteers as Resources for Congregations." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 37 (1998): 470-80.

Hollwitz, John and Charmaine E. Wilson "Structured Interviewing in Volunteer Selection." Journal ofApplied Communication Research 21 (1993): 41-52.

Kinneavy, James L. A Theory of Discourse. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971. New York: Norton, 1980.

Knoke, David. "Commitment and Detachment in Voluntary Associations." American

Sociological Review 46 (1981): 141-58.

Lucaites, John Louis, and Celeste Condit. "Re-Constructing Narrative Theory: A Functional Perspective." Journal of Communication 35 (1985): 90-108.

Maybury, Kelly. "Will Americans Heed Bush's Call to Service?" The Gallup Poll 12 Feb 2002 <http://poll.gallup.com/content/default.aspx?ci=5323&VERSION=p>.

Mattis, Jacqueline S., et al. "Who Will Volunteer? Religiosity, Everyday Racism, and Social Participation Among African American Men." Journal of Adult Development 11 (2004): 261-72.

McCune, Bonnie F. and Charlezine Terry Nelson. Recruiting and Managing Volunteers in Libraries. New York: Neal-Schuman, 1995.

MacLennan, Jennifer. "What is Rhetoric?" U of Saskatchewan <http://www.engr.usask.ca/dept/techcomm/whatis.html>.

Mumby, Dennis K. "The Political Function of Narrative in Organizations." Communication Monographs 54 (1987): 113-127.

Murk, Peter J. and Jane F. Stephan. "Volunteers: How to Get Them, Train Them and Keep Them." Economic Development Review. 3 (1991): 73-75.

Musick, Marc A., John Wilson, William B. Bynum Jr. "Race and Formal Volunteering: The Differential Effects of Class and Religion." Social Forces 78 (2000): 1539-71.

Okun, Morris A., Alicia Barr and A. Regula Herzog. "Motivation to Volunteer by Older Adults: A Test of Competing Measurement Models." Psychology and Aging 13 (1998): 608-21.

Omoto, A. M. and M. Snyder. "Sustained Help Without Obligation: Motivation,

Longevity of Service and Perceived Attitude Change Among AIDS Volunteers." Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 68 (1995): 671-686.

Phelan, James. "Narrative as Rhetoric and Edith Wharton's Roman Fever: Progression, Configuration, and the Ethics of Surprise." Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism, Jost, Walter & Wengy Olmsted, ed. Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Malden, MA, 2004.

Piliavin, Jane Allyn and Hong-Wen Charng. "Altruism: A Review of Recent Theory and Research." Annual Review of Sociology 16 (1990): 27-65.

Rose-Ackerman, Susan. "Altruism, Nonprofits and Economic Theory." Journal of Economic Literature 3 (1996): 701-28.

Rowland, Robert C. "Narrative: Mode of Diescourse of Paradigm?" Communication Monographs 54 (1987): 264 – 275.

Shah, Dhavan V. et al. "Communication, Context, and Community." Communication Research 28 (2001): 464 – 506.

Shelby, Annette N., "The Theoretical Bases of Persuasion: A Critical Introduction." The Journal of Business Communication 23 (1986): 5-29.

Shyles, Leonard and Mark Ross. "Recruitment Rhetoric in Brochures Advertising the All Volunteer Force." Journal of Applied Communication Research 12 (1984): 34-49.

Simons, Herbert. Persuasions in Society. California: Sage, 2001.

Smith, Tania S. "What Connection Does Rhetorical Theory have to Technical & Professional Communication?" U of Calgary. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~smit/theory.htm>.

Tannen, Deborah, ed. Analyzing Discourse: Text and Talk. Washington: Georgetown U P, 1982.

Taylor, Christi B. "Communication Satisfaction: Its Role in Church Membership Satisfaction and Involvement among Southern Baptist Churches." The Southern Communication Journal 62 (1997): 293-304.

Tomeh, Aida K. "The Value of Voluntarism among Minority Groups." Phylon 42 (1981): 86-96.

"Volunteer Service: Is Time More Valuable Than Money?" USA Today Magazine Apr. 2005: 11.

Wandersman, Abraham et al. "Who Participates, Who Does Not, and Why? An Analysis of Voluntary Neighborhood Organizations in the United States and Israel." Sociological Forum 2 (1987): 534-55.

Wilcox, Dennis L. et al. Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2003.

Wilson, John. "Volunteering." Annual Review of Sociology 26 (2000): 215-40.

Wilson, John and Marc A. Musick. "Attachment to Volunteering." Sociological Forum 14 (1999): 243-72.

Wolf, Thomas. Managing a Nonprofit Organization. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984.

Yavas, Ugar and Glen Riecken. "Can Volunteers be Targeted?" Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science 13 (1985): 218-28.

Young, Dennis R., Robert M. Hollister, Virginia A. Hodgkinson and Associates. Governing, Leading and Managing Nonprofit Organizations. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993.

Appendix A

LETTER OF CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN STUDY

E. Tonya Greenwood
National President
Continental Societies, Inc.
738 Wayside Road
Neptune, New Jersey 07753

Dear Ms. Greenwood

I hope that this letter finds you well. As you are aware, I currently serve as the President of the Atlanta Chapter of Continental Societies, Inc. My direct affiliation with the organization began in 2002 but my family has supported children through this organization for more than 30 years. This letter presents an opportunity to meld my support of the organization's mission with my commitment to academic research.

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Michael Bruner, Communication Department of Georgia State University, conducting a research study to analyze the rhetorical & organizational strategies of the Continental Societies, Inc. by studying volunteer related materials in order to gauge their rhetorical effectiveness (what, if any rhetorical appeals are used & the significance of their use) in light of the existing literature on volunteerism & nonprofit organizations.

The participation of the Continental Societies, Inc. will include the submission of volunteer related materials by the national organization and local chapters. There will be no cost to the organization as these materials can be forwarded via e-mail or U. S. mail (C.O.D.). This study will include a review of these materials along with organizational practices that support volunteer recruitment and retention.

There are no foreseeable risks to the organization. The benefit to the organization will be evidenced in the following desired research outcomes:

1. A list of recommendations to enhance efforts to recruit and retain volunteers (rhetorical appeals & organizational transformations)
2. Examples of effective volunteer related materials
3. A workshop on effective membership recruitment and retention to be conducted at the organization's annual meeting on June 24, 2006

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please contact me at 404-372-8777 or joutbw@langate.gsu.edu.

Sincerely,

Terry B. Woods

Terry B. Woods

****

I give my consent for the Continental Societies, Inc. to participate in the above study.

(Date) 2/28/2006 (Signature) E. Tonya Greenwood

E. Tonya Greenwood, National President
Continental Societies, Inc.

Appendix B

LETTER OF REQUEST FOR LITERATURES

March 15, 2006

Dear Continental Sister:

I hope that this letter finds you well. As you are probably aware, I currently serve as the President of the Atlanta Chapter of Continental Societies, Inc. My direct affiliation with the organization began in 2002 but my family (Mother Jean Cooper, Aunt Marian Gardner) has supported children through this organization for more than 30 years. This letter presents an opportunity to meld my support of the organization's mission with my commitment to academic research.

I am a graduate student in the Communication Department of Georgia State University conducting a research study to analyze the rhetorical & organizational strategies of the Continental Societies, Inc. by studying volunteer related materials in order to gauge their rhetorical effectiveness (what, if any rhetorical appeals are used & the significance of their use) in light of the existing literature on volunteerism & nonprofit organizations. National President E. Tonya Greenwood has approved the participation of the Continental Societies, Inc. in this work.

This is a request for you help. I am in need of any volunteer related materials that your chapter has used or currently uses in your efforts to recruit and retain members. This could be invitation letters, brochures, pamphlets, etc. – whatever literatures your chapter uses to address membership. It is not intended for your chapter to incur any cost. These materials can be forwarded via e-mail (tbwoods@bellsouth.net), fax (770-964-4771) or U. S. mail (C.O.D.).

The most appealing part of my work is that in addition to satisfying a graduation requirement, this study will provide benefit to the Continental Societies, as well. This will be evidenced in the following desired research outcomes:

1. A list of recommendations to enhance efforts to recruit and retain volunteers (rhetorical appeals & organizational transformations)
2. Examples of effective volunteer related materials
3. A workshop on effective membership recruitment and retention to be conducted at Conclave on June 24, 2006

Thank you for anything that you can send. The more data that I can evaluate, the more useful the outcome will be. I am working with a very tight time frame and ask, if at all possible, if you could help me with this immediately. Please let me know when you send something so that I can be sure to watch for it. In addition, if there is someone else in your chapter that you'd rather I communicate with, please let me know.

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please contact me at 770-969-8848 or tbwoods@bellsouth.net. I look forward to seeing you in the Workshop at Conclave.

Sincerely,

Terry B. Woods

Terry B. Woods
President
Atlanta Chapter of Continental Societies, Inc.

6465 RIVERTOWN RD • FAIRBURN / GEORGIA • 30213-2726
PHONE: 770-969-8848 • FAX: 770-964-4771

Appendix C

SAMPLES OF NEW LITERATURES

Appendix C – Membership Workshop Presentation

Membership WORKSHOP

(Volunteer Recruitment and Retention)

Terry Woods, Atlanta Chapter President
Facilitator

Sat., June 25, 2006 ~ 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
McLean Hilton ~ McLean, Virginia

MEMBERSHIP
Recruitment & Retention

Terry Woods, Atlanta Chapter President, Facilitator

Workshop Objectives

- 1st half – Discuss & Explore
- 2nd half – Create messages that specifically address recruitment & retention

The Big Questions

- WHY do they do it?
- WHAT messages do we communicate to persuade them?

The Role of Recruitment Rhetoric

- Prerequisite to success of a nonprofit organization
- Identifying & understanding volunteer motivations
- Motivations adapted into effective, useful volunteer related material

Nonprofits' Constituencies

- CLIENTS to whom we provide services
  - Challenge: client cultivation
- DONORS & VOLUNTEERS who provide resources
  - Challenge: resource attraction

The Decision to Volunteer

- Social Influence
- Life-altering commitment
- Affects a scarce and precious commodity:

DISCRETIONARY TIME!

A Problem of Action… Not Attitude

Why People Volunteer

- Benefit vs. Cost
  - Free-rider Problem
  - Solution: provide selective incentives
- Compassion to those in need
- Obligation to give back
- Enhancing the moral base of society

Other Reasons

- To HELP Others
- To feel useful or productive
- Responsible participation: reciprocity and exchange

Personal Motivators

- Sense of self-satisfaction
- Altruism
- Companionship/ meeting people
- Developing professional contacts
- Social panache

Demographic Variables

- Education
- Young Adults
- Seniors

Who is more affected by Volunteer Work?

- Person doing the volunteer work?

- Person benefiting from the volunteer work?

RETENTION

- Why do some continue while others drop out?
- The same dynamics that account for recruitment also account for persistence and participation.

How do you KEEP THEM?

- Match volunteer interests with organization's needs
- Provide resources, mentoring, and training
- Prevent burnout
- Identify leadership potential
- Recognize contributions and service

Useful Tools

- Volunteer satisfaction surveys
- Exit Interviews

Trends in Volunteer Management

- Break stereotypes: Volunteers come in all shapes & sizes
- Provide career perspectives and job skills along with volunteer experience
- Give volunteers what they really want
- Change with the changing times

What to DO?

- Understand the volunteers' needs.
- Develop communication and appropriate opportunities that appeal to the volunteers' sense of satisfaction and fulfillment.
- Recognize that difficult choices often need to be made.

Strategies to Address Retention

- Appeal to volunteer needs and wants
- Accommodate generational and lifestyle differences
- Provide virtual volunteering opportunities
- Recognition

- Provide essential resources, training and mentoring
- Assure achievement from time well-invested
- Praise and appreciation
- Create and maintain open lines of communication

Create persuasive messages

- "You're probably thinking that if you become a volunteer, you'll have to give and give and give. But guess what? While you're helping others, volunteering can be doing important things for YOU. You'll be surprised at how much you GET out of volunteering. As a volunteer, you can…"

COLLABORATION

- Form 5 groups (preferably with Continental sisters that you do not know)

- Create 2 messages (brochure, flyer, etc.) (20 minutes):
  - 1) Persuade potential membership (recruitment)
  - 2) Nurture existing membership (retention)

- Present messages to group (5 minutes each group)

NATIONAL HISTORY

Continental Societies, Inc., an international public service organization dedicated to the socioeconomic and cultural welfare of underprivileged children and youth, was founded in June 1956 and incorporated nationally in 1972.

Continental Societies Inc. embraces 40 chapters in 17 states in the Continental USA, District of Columbia and Bermuda. Chapters are composed of women representing a variety of professions, ages, interests and talents whose mission is **to create environments within our communities that empower children to have access to quality and appropriate opportunities to reach their optimal potential.** Continentals volunteer innovatively through tutoring, mentoring, after school programs, apparel donations and Walk-a-thons.

In the past 5 years, Continental Societies, Inc. has served over 1 million children and youth. Dynamic leadership and membership committed to serve and make a difference has enabled the Continental Societies, Inc. to gain national and international recognition as one of the foremost leaders in improving the quality of life for children.

When you want to volunteer with the very best... choose the Continentals!

* Do you feel strongly about making a difference in the lives of children?

* Are you looking for a place to donate your time, talent & treasure?

* Do you want to fulfill a desire to "give back" to the community?

* Are you looking for a shared sense of destiny and a connected unity?

* Do you want to make new acquaintances who share the same goals as you?

* Do you want to learn new skills?

* Are you looking for a sense of satisfaction in your service work?

If you answered "YES" to any of these questions, the Continental Societies, Inc. is the organization for you!!!

For more information please visit our national website at www.continentalsocietiesinc.org

The Continental Societies, Inc. is a *Service Organization.* Members must be prepared to commit to a high level of visible and active participation.

Continental Societies, Inc.

CONTINENTAL SOCIETIES, INC.
JUNE 1956

General Information Brochure

Celebrating 50 Years of Service to Children

"Our Children, Our Commitment, Our Concern"

ARTS & HUMANITIES: Annual Festival

MOTTO

"There is a destiny that makes us Sisters, none goes her way alone. All that we send into the lives of others, comes back into our own."

RECREATION: Easter Egg Hunt

Volunteering with the Continental Societies, Inc.

WHAT YOU GIVE:

- Compassion and help towards those in need (Doing what's right)
- Contribution to society
- Action based on moral values
- Reciprocal help (someone once helped you)
- Personal Rewards/Satisfaction to Recipient

WHAT YOU GET:

- Prestige of belonging to an elite group
- Respect, while doing something useful
- Companionship, new friends
- More active social life
- Greater understanding of people
- Self-expression and decision making power
- Opportunity to practice skills and abilities
- Professional contacts
- New experiences
- Personal Rewards/Satisfaction to Giver

NATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

The Continental Societies, Incorporated is an affiliate of the National Council of Negro Women. The Continental Societies, Inc. have sponsored national scholarships including the Bethune-Cookman, the Morris Brown College, the Tuskegee Institute - Continental Scholars and the Gloria L. Scott Continental Societies Girl Scout Award. The Continental Societies support Operation Big Vote and the National Urban League. It is represented in Conferences of Black Women, including the American Cancer Society and The National Hook-Up of Black Women.

National Program: Five-Point Programmatic Thrust

In 1972, the Continental Societies initiated its national program, **"Operation Awareness: HEER (Health, Education, Employment, Recreation) plus Arts & Humanities."** Eac segment of this program was chosen because its significance in the lives of young people. Continental women feel a necessity to provid activities and projects in these areas to enhan the lives of the young people they serve.

HEALTH: Annual Coat Drive

Projects include coat drives, health fairs, drug awareness programs, community health seminars, Reading is Fundamental sponsorships, tutoring, scholarship awards, career and job readiness workshops, etiquette and leadership academies and cultural programs. Special programs are developed t provide exposure to college campuses for middle and high school students, to motiva and stimulate their minds and cultivate awareness of their culture and opportunities fo future study. Each component of our Five-Point Programmatic Thrust is designed to encourage young people to become good citizens and future leaders.

Appendix C – General Letter of Invitation

Continental Societies, Incorporated

P. O. Box XXXX
Washington, DC XXXXX

Officers

President

First Vice-President

Second Vice President

Recording Secretary

Assistant Recording Secretary

Corresponding Secretary

Treasurer

Financial Secretary

Chaplain

Parliamentarian

Public Relations Officer

Immediate Past President

Date

Dear Prospective Member,

The Continental Societies is an international public service organization dedicated to the socioeconomic and cultural welfare of underprivileged children and youth. It is comprised of 40 chapters in 17 states throughout the Continental USA, District of Columbia and Bermuda.

The success of our organization depends directly upon its members – women who volunteer their time, talent and treasure in an effort to fulfill a mission to create environments within our communities that empower children to have access to quality and appropriate opportunities to reach their optimal potential.

History tells us that African American volunteerism emerged out of the joint efforts of shared oppression, a shared sense of destiny and a connected racial unity. The Continental Societies embraces that same connectedness as we act out our motto: "There is a destiny that makes us Sisters, none goes her way alone. All that we send into the lives of others, comes back into our own."

As we strive to serve the needy, we realize that there are many demands for our time in this hurried and sometimes harried world in which we live. In exchange for the time that is given in service through the Continental Societies, Inc., volunteers get the prestige of belonging to an elite group; respect, while doing something useful; companionship and new friends; a more active social life; a greater understanding of people; self-expression and decision making power; an opportunity to practice skills and abilities; professional contacts; new experiences and the personal satisfaction of helping those in need.

We invite you to become a part of this Sisterhood. Please join us at a New Member Open House to be held on _____ at xx:xx pm. At this time you will get additional information about the Continental Societies, Inc. and have an opportunity to meet the members and ask questions.

For more information, please feel free to contact me at xxx-xxx-xxxx or visit our national website at www.continentalsocietiesinc.org.

Continentally,

Continental Societies, Incorporated

P. O. Box XXXX
Washington, DC XXXXX

Officers

President

First Vice-President

Second Vice President

Recording Secretary

Assistant Recording Secretary

Corresponding Secretary

Treasurer

Financial Secretary

Chaplain

Historian

Parliamentarian

Public Relations Officer

Immediate Past President

Date

Dear Volunteer,

2006 has been a wonderful year of service for the Continental Societies, Inc. The success of this year's programs and activities is due in part to your commitment to the organization.

Your motivation to help underprivileged children may stem from an obligation to give back some of the benefits you have received or because of a desire to contribute to society. Perhaps you volunteered because you wanted to feel useful and productive or to meet new friends. Perhaps it was your sense of responsibility that set the parameters for your individual action. Or maybe you have discovered, like many of us, that participating in volunteer work brings personal rewards to the person providing the service as well as the person receiving the service. Whatever motivated you to volunteer your time, talent and treasure, ***WE THANK YOU!***

"What you are is God's gift to you; what you make of it is your gift to God." Please accept our appreciation as a reminder of the hope that you bring to children around the world through your support of the Continental Societies, Inc. We look forward to your continuing participation and support. May God bless you for putting your compassion into action.

.
Continentally,