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AMERICA’S QUANDARY— <JUSTICE> MASKING INJUSTICE:

IDEOLOGICAL ANALYSES OF

AMERICA’S MOVES TOWARDS ITS PROMISE |

A PEDAGOGICAL PRIMER ON RHETORIC

by

RONALD JERRY WALKER

Under the Direction of George Pullman, PhD, and Elizabeth Sanders Lopez, PhD

#### ABSTRACT

*Rhetoric*, persuasive discourse, and *rhetorical analysis*, art and science of rhetorical *text* scrutiny, are invaluable aspects of composition pedagogy. Rhetoric commands our world. This dissertation project manifests four features. First, it reveals *America’s promise* through rhetorical artifact *texts*. Second, the project presents an academic investigation—*America’s moves* towards its promise. Third, it recounts the continuing injustices suffered by women and peoples of color, all hidden behind (rhetorical) masks, that continue to plague America. And fourth, this collection altogether serves as a pedagogical primer on rhetoric. Founding documents and public monuments serve as a ruse that masks injustice and inequality. This is *America’s quandary*, a reality that unfortunately escapes journalistic focus. Masks enable the American hegemony of sexism, racism, homophobia, xenophobia, and classism to thrive. This nation’s affluent “founders” completely ignored and erased the vast majority of peoples co-

inhabiting our boundless lands—millions of indigenous Native American nations; women, not mentioned anywhere among America’s founding documents; abducted African (forced) laborers commanded to toil generational lives, as *chattel*; and poor whites. Later immigrants, especially peoples of color, would also be denied their “liberty and justice for all.” Today, the USA is World Number One—in obesity, in opioid addiction, in female prison incarceration, in male prison incarceration, in military defense spending, in military weaponry (international spread), and in war (today Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Libya, Niger). And in international intrigue (arrogance). *America’s quandary* is our lack of universal healthcare, the antiquated Electoral College, the rising 1%, the shrinking middle class, the widening gap between America’s rich and poor, and our obsessive desire to police and command the world. This project interrogates rhetoric “to unmask and demystify” America’s rhetorical hegemony of disadvantage and inequality; while America faces a bleak future. We English teachers are First Responders for our culture. Our democratic republic must have—to survive—a committed populace of engaged citizens whose critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and civic responsibility can invigorate American culture. If We are successful, America will be successful; if We fail, America will fail. Perhaps if We could just make America *better*, all would work out.

INDEX WORDS: Rhetorical analysis, Rhetorical devices, Critical thinking, Argument essay

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

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2020

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation project is dedicated to Eleanor Jessie Toombs Walker and Henry Winfred Walker, my parents, without whom none of this, my accomplishments, would have been possible. My mother read stories to my younger brothers and me, before we were of school age; I grew to share her enjoyment of reading and writing. My father would also read daily, primarily newspapers but also other materials; I learned from him the importance of attention to detail. My parents, both public school teachers, instilled in me, and my siblings, a joy of learning. Our proud Walker family heritage is public school education: my brothers, my grandparents, my daughter, and my, also, assorted aunts, uncles, and cousins have all been public school teachers. I primarily learned from my parents, the importance of perseverance and having a positive outlook on life. The glass is *always* half-full; “there are always alternatives” (Mr. Spock, *Star Trek*).

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My journey toward this doctorate in English has been very long, but actually, overall, quite enjoyable. My parents instilled in me a joy of learning. And, my instructors here at Georgia State University, I have found to be detailed and dedicated. I am especially appreciative to the three members of my dissertation committee, with each of whom I have enjoyed multiple classes during my tenure here. Dr. Pullman was first to agree to be a part of my committee, and volunteered to serve as my committee chair. I am most appreciative of his positive outlook and early suggestions about my dissertation focus. Dr. Pullman also suggested that I ask Dr. Lopez to join my dissertation committee; I had been somewhat uneasy in my understanding of how and who to approach. Once I determined my topic focus, Dr. Lopez periodically read my submissions and offered suggestions. She has been most accessible whenever I had questions or ideas to pursue. I have been fortunate that my committee members allowed me to determine the focus of my project. For several semesters, I remained undecided about my dissertation topic. But, fortunately, Dr. Gu offered suggestions during one of his classes that provided for me the spark for my dissertation journey. This topic suggestion really has sustained my interest in this project; my interest is such that I could have written hundreds of additional pages.



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## **A COMMENT ABOUT RHETORIC AND THE RHETORICAL ANALYSIS**

methodologies (perspectives) and orientations to be used

Writing theorist Erika Lindemann introduces a chapter “What do teachers need to know about rhetoric?” in her college textbook that begins with a Kenneth Burke headnote, “... all human beings practice rhetoric and come under its influence” (38). Lindemann’s concept of rhetoric is introduced compellingly:

For most of its history[,], rhetoric ... has been associated with education. As writing teachers, we are part of that tradition and ought to understand its broader currents and cross currents. Studying rhetoric for its own sake introduces us to some of the most influential thinkers of Western culture. Second, a knowledge of rhetoric helps us understand our world ... [because] every day we use words to shape attitudes and encourage people to act in certain ways. ... Not all communication has a rhetorical purpose, but much of what we say, hear, read, and do involves someone’s influencing someone else to make choices. Rhetoric enables us to understand those choices and the processes whereby we make them.

(Ibid.)

This present project herein uses several “theoretical lenses” in support of its primarily ideological critique as it seeks to uncover answers to the dissertation research questions that are introduced. And quite helpfully, Lois Tyson profoundly articulates the advantages of this practice for critical analysis (herein, rhetorical criticism):

[E]ach theoretical lens alters the way we perceive ourselves and our world ... [as each critical lens will] inform our individual and collective identity; our interpersonal relationships; our history; and our cultural productions, including but not limited to literature [and rhetorical artifacts]. ... Thus, taken together,

critical theories enlarge our understanding not only of literary works [but also rhetorical artifacts], ... of human experience in general. (425)

Brock, Scott, and Chesebro use the term “experiential perspective” while Kuypers refers to this mix of methods as an eclectic mix; Foss calls it “generative criticism” and explains the practice (“you generate units of analysis or an explanation from your artifact rather than from previously developed, formal methods of criticism”). And Tyson further elaborates about the efficacy and real meaning of various strategies for rhetorical analysis,

... [S]ome of the schools of criticism ... are overtly political: their goal is to change society for the better in some way. Other theories see themselves as apolitical, as removed from the forces that shape history and politics. [H]owever, most critical theorists today recognize that **all** critical theories are produced by historical realities and have political implications whether or not their advocates are aware of those realities and implications. For example, many politically oriented theorists believe that the creation of a purely aesthetic realm of literary [or rhetorical] analysis is, itself, a political move that reflects a desire to escape history, a desire to carve out a ‘safe’ space where one can feel protected from the unpredictable and often frightening realities of the world. (Ibid., emphasis added)

But Tyson ably enlightens us that such an imagined strategy “... that ignores political reality does not thereby remove itself from politics. It merely protects, however inadvertently, whatever power structure is in place by drawing our attention away from that power structure. ... Indeed, ‘apolitical’ theories always serve conservative power structures” (ibid.).

This present project will primarily utilize “ideological criticism” and “ideographic critique,” both concepts of which examine “ideology” and “ideographs.” These four terms first

need unpacking because unfortunately the first two phrases in reference to this method of rhetorical criticism are too often used interchangeably.

Rhetorical theorists Foss, Wander, McPhail, and Sheckels, among others refer to this methodology for rhetorical analysis (perspective) as “ideological criticism.” The word “criticism” is commonly used in our social science academic disciplines whereas in English studies, the more common terminology in use is “analysis.” Theorists McGee, Burghardt and Jones, Kuypers, and (indirectly) rhetorical study editors Brock, Scott, & Chesebro among others refer to this particular approach as “ideographic criticism.” There appears to be no hard-and-fast rule of differentiation, but in actuality, ideological analysis is inclusive of ideographic criticism (or critique), the rhetorical analyses of ideographs, a term introduced for rhetorical study by McGee as denoting the “condensed forms of ideology,” “building blocks of ideology,” “instruments of political consciousness,” and “agents of political consciousness,” all comments from McGee’s 1980 article “The ‘ideograph’: A Link between Rhetoric and Ideology.”

Of course the term “ideology” itself has a very long and varied history. Wander writes that the term (possibly) originated with French revolutionaries during the eighteenth century as “the critical study of ideas” (Wander reported in Burghardt; 96) and that Karl Marx later used the term for his economic critique of capitalist society in reference to “the ruling ideas of the ruling class” (Wander reported in Burghardt; 97). This present project herein primarily uses the phrase “ideological criticism (or analysis) as inclusive of the specific “ideographic critique” of the terms <justice> and <equality>. McPhail defines this conception helpfully:

[Ideological criticism is] an approach to rhetorical analysis that focuses on how conflict, power, and material interests shape and influence social and symbolic interaction. ... [This method] believes criticism is a moral activity that should be

used to analyze and challenge hegemonic instruments and social structures. ...  
 [And that this approach] entails the isolation and analysis of ideographs ‘the one-term sums of an orientation that represents the discursive strategies used to defend political and material interests (McGee 6,7). (McPhail in Enos 340)

### *PURPOSE for rhetorical criticism*

Burghardt and Jones expansively explore in great detail what it is exactly that we pursue and study in rhetorical criticism. Chapter one of their exhaustive text *Readings in RHETORICAL CRITICISM* begins with two overarching questions for rhetorical studies, “What is rhetorical criticism,” and “what are its legitimate purposes?” (1). These editors/authors detail eight distinct purposes that most of us would agree upon; of course, there may be others. Of these offerings, this present project builds upon for foundational purposes six of these, as discussed.

The text authors begin by introducing the four classic rhetorical criticism essays (from Wichelns, Wrage, Black, and Wander) that discuss selected purposes for rhetorical criticism. Wichelns’s essay (“The Literary Criticism of Oratory”) reintroduces the initial objective for analyses of rhetoric, “... [Rhetorical criticism] is devoted to assessing the **persuasive effect** of situated oratory” (ibid.; emphasis added). Wrage’s essay (“Public Address: A Study in Social and Intellectual History”) advances Wichelns philosophically by noting, “[R]hetorical criticism can make important contributions to social and intellectual history. Thus, ideas should not be viewed primarily as disengaged concepts for scholars to ponder and appreciate in a vacuum. ... Specifically, the ideas, values, and beliefs of a culture are expressed in speeches” (ibid.). Black’s essay (“The Second Persona”) “argu[es] ... that rhetoric should be morally judged” (ibid.). And, Wander’s essay (“The Ideological Turn in Modern Criticism”) introduces a foundational precept:



“[P]olitical ideology ... [should be] a standard for judgment [and] ... critics [can] go beyond assessing the efficacy of political discourse, and instead, openly challenge rhetorical purposes if they are corrupt. ... [Because] real crises in the world, such as famine, war, racism, oppression, and environmental destruction [exist], ... critics [can] take ... activist role[s analyzing] ... public discourse” (2).

Burghardt and Jones continue this theme, presenting two additional purposes, from theorist essays, for rhetorical criticism. McKerrow’s essay (“Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis”) also provides insight, “[C]ritical rhetoric’ examines how public communication fosters ‘domination’ or ‘freedom’ in an uncertain world. ... [R]hetorical discourse is primarily about maintaining or challenging power, and the critic’s role is to reveal how discourse oppresses and silences” (ibid.). And finally, Ott and Burghardt in their essay (“On Critical-Rhetorical Pedagogy: Dialoging with *Shindler’s List*”) introduce their philosophy, **the** most important observation, “[T]eaching is a major purpose of rhetorical criticism” (3, emphasis added).

In teaching our first-year college composition classes, as we English teachers examine and analyze our student essays, too often in the past our initial responses, written in (“bloody”) red ink on student papers, has been primarily with regard to surface errors of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax; we have generally neglected comment concerning the efficacy of students’ ideas, considerations, and beliefs. For students, such analyses and criticism can be disconcerting and demoralizing. We educators have been in recent years, fortunately, learning from more enlightened theorists who offer that we educators can do much better for our students. Paulo Freire (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed; Education for Critical Consciousness*), Ira Shor (*Critical Teaching & Everyday Life; Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*), Peter Elbow (*Writing Without Teachers; Everyone Can Write: Essays Toward a*

*Hopeful Theory of Writing and Teaching Writing*) among others have inspired and enabled teachers to engage more effective critical teaching at all school levels. Rhetorical criticism too has advanced its theoretical practices.

Lopez (et al.) introduces this importance of rhetoric, especially for our students:

Rhetoric, or persuasive communication, happens all around us every day. In conversation at the grocery store, in blogs, on television, and in the classroom.

We Americans constantly air our opinions about almost everything. Sometimes it is to convince others to share our opinions, and sometimes the reason is to engage in a dialogue that will help us understand the world around us, and sometimes it is to persuade others to action . . . . Rhetoric provides a useful framework for looking at the world, as well as for evaluating and initiating communications.

[Today] ... writing, and communicating persuasively is a necessary skill. Those who can present effective arguments in writing are, in the business world, often the ones who are promoted. In addition, those ... able to evaluate the arguments presented to them, ... by politicians, advertisers, or even family members, are less likely to be swayed by logical fallacies or ill-supported research. (27)

With these critical observations under consideration, this present project herein theorizes that the polysemy encompassing the word <justice> is the clue that can lead the United States of America toward its eternal promise of providing “liberty and <justice><sup>1</sup> for all.” With regard to this most noble founding precept, investigative journalist Glenn Greenwald provides clarity:

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<sup>1</sup> This present project herein will use the customary double brackets < > symbol surrounding ideographs, words or phrases that connect rhetorical language to ideology. Ideographs generally are polysemous words, “A condition in which a single word, phrase, or concept has more than one meaning or connotation” ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)); other examples of ideographs include

One point is vital to acknowledge [about America]: like all of the other principles espoused by the founders, equality under the law has not always been observed in practice. Indeed, it was often violently breached from the very beginning of the Republic. Slavery, the dispossession of Native Americans, the denial of voting rights to women, and the granting of superior legal rights to property owners are a few of the most glaring deviations.

However, America's promise has remained, and over the course of centuries, through trial and error, a glimmer of hope remains. Greenwald continues,

But even when the principle of equal treatment was betrayed, American leaders in every era have emphatically affirmed it, not so much out of hypocrisy as **out of aspiration**. Indeed, for those who were devoted to **justice** the persistence of inequality was precisely what made equality before the law so imperative. Over time, this principle would provide the road map for eradicating injustice. It was the impetus for the abolition of slavery; the enactment of the Fourteenth Amendment, with its overarching guarantee of 'equal protection of the laws'; the enfranchisement and empowerment of women; the civil rights movement; enhanced protections for the poor in the criminal justice process; and numerous other legal and social reforms of the last two centuries. (Ibid., emphasis added)

We educators in rhetorical studies should also highlight and find this observation an obligation for the rhetor to recognize as we engage rhetorical analyses to include within our critiques a

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<liberty>, <equality>, <patriotism>, <law and order,>, <property rights>, <illegals>, <freedom>, <national security>, <privacy>, <rule of law>, <voting rights>,<voter suppression>, <voter fraud>, and so on. These ideographs, words and phrases, all have multiple meanings for—used and understood by—the many different and separate American constituencies.

demand for moral responsiveness with regard to the realities of life in our society. Again, there is no middle ground; a continuation of silent and evasive rhetorical communication with regard to the unequal and corrupt power dynamics in American society merely supports the ruling hegemony. Regardless of the careful precision of a writer's (rhetor's) writing in a given artifact or its clever usage of tropes and figures of speech or even its mellifluous quality of language use, without recognition of the inherent ideology of our culture and the realities of life for the masses, the artifact, viewed consciously and more critically, possibly should find the rhetorical artifact contains a wanting deficiency in quality.

Rhetorical analysis (called "rhetorical criticism" in our academic Communication departments) begins, of course, with the rhetorical "artifact" itself. This present project herein seeks consideration of the exact nature of "artifact." One capable definition, from [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) states, "[an artifact is] any feature that is not naturally present but is the product of an extrinsic agent, method, or the like." The nature of "rhetoric" in rhetorical analysis is of course an intensive examination and critique of the *persuasiveness* of the discourse; that is, the effectiveness thereof. For this present project herein, the nature of an artifact is viewed not unlike that of the observation of a social protest movement. Specifically, the notion of artifact is expansive toward that of an amorphous entity—"America's moves towards its promise"; actually, a collection of rhetorical artifacts—taken altogether and forming one inchoate massive understanding and undertaking. These *moves* would be inclusive of federal laws, Supreme Court (and other court) rulings, Constitutional Amendments, state laws, speeches, artwork, pictures, slogans, political editorials, political cartoons, poems, posters, placards, essays, literature, anthems, songs, books, architectural structures, and so on, and so forth. This present project

provides examination and analysis of some of these, individually but also altogether viewed as one massive nebulous (rhetorical) concept (artifact).

Foss also provides a productive consideration:

Rhetoric is not limited to written and spoken discourse; in fact, speaking and writing make up only a small part of our rhetorical environment. **Rhetoric**, then includes nondiscursive or nonverbal symbols as well as discursive or verbal ones. Speeches, essays, conversations, poetry, novels, stories, comic books, Web sites, television programs, films, art, architecture, plays, music, dance, advertisements, furniture, automobiles, and dress are all forms of **rhetoric**. (Emphasis added; 5)

And a Kuypers text first chapter, “Elements of Rhetorical Criticism: The Big Picture,” provides an additional consideration for rhetoric and rhetorical criticism:

“... [R]hetoric [is the] ... strategic, intentional communication designed to persuade or to achieve some identifiable objective. **Criticism** ... is a method particularly well suited to analyzing and interpreting how rhetorical communication works. Taken together, then, **rhetorical criticism** is the analysis and interpretation of the persuasive elements of communication. ... It allows for the creation of new knowledge about who we were, who we are, and who we might become. (Emphasis in original; 1)

## ***DISSERTATION RESEARCH QUESTIONS***

explored and analyzed in this present project

**ONE** — How does the rhetoric projecting America’s vision and promise for its people (citizens and other residents alike) actually lead to “liberty and justice for all”? What are America’s rhetorical moves towards this promise?

**TWO** — How does the rhetoric of America’s moves towards its promise actually *persuade* its audience (the citizens and residents of America) to follow suit (to acquiesce absolutely in America’s vision)? Professor Pullman provides a good definition: “Persuasion is any process that creates a new belief or changes ... [a person’s] level of commitment to an existing one ... [and further] any act that generates or modifies a belief is a form of persuasion (emphasis in text). Another accessible definition is provided at [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com): Persuasion is an umbrella term of influence. ... [It] can attempt to influence a person’s beliefs, attitudes, intentions, motivations, or behaviors. A third consideration, from Kuypers, also offers a helpful comment about our discipline’s study with regard to rhetoric and discourse that encompasses the overall assessment language of this present project herein: “Rhetoric represents *the entire experience of the complex social relationships* among speaker/speech and audience/occasion/change. Discourse is residue that is left behind” (220, *Rhetorical* 2016; emphasis added). Tyson provides an exemplary and astute definition of “discourse” as “ways of using language that are associated with particular ideologies, such as the discourse of liberal humanism, Christian fundamentalism, or white supremacy” (Tyson 424).

**THREE** — What rhetorical strategies can best be utilized to move America more towards its foundational promise of “Equal[ity:] ... Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness”; that is “freedom and justice for all”?

**FOUR** — Are those rhetorical strategies employed by women and peoples of color seeking redress for the injustices and unfairness these Americans continue to suffer today sufficiently persuasive, enough so as to effectively challenge the ignoble status quo ideological power dynamics in America and eventually move America closer towards its promise?

**FIVE** — What rhetorical strategies will most effectively “facilitate the normalization of” (Foss 11) America’s vision of promise and hope in abating the injustice and inequality so widely prevalent in America today?

**SIX** — Is the rhetoric concerning America’s actions toward fulfilling its promise sufficiently persuasive enough to eventually correct the continuing injustice and unfairness still suffered by women and peoples of color in the USA today?

**SEVEN** — Since <justice> is a polysemous word, what is its meaning from a government perspective. Furthermore, what is its meaning for women, for African Americans, for Asian-Americans, for Hispanic Americans, and for Native Americans, the indigenous peoples of America? What is its meaning for various constituencies among Anglo-Americans?

## **DISSERTATION THESIS**

*The United States of America—governmental bodies, community organizations, social protest groups, and individual citizens—has acted through rhetoric extended among these various constituencies performing in concert with assorted laws, Supreme Court decisions, and more enlightened and evolving cultural mores and norms to command for The United States of America universal fairness and equal opportunity for all of its citizens, yet the quandary of injustice persists, as women and peoples of color continue to suffer widespread disregard and disadvantage all because <justice> is polysemous and not a stable term—not clear or certain or definitive or obvious or unambiguous; appraising the polysemous nature of (the word) <justice> in America while also pursuing critique of those noble challenges against this continuing injustice and unfairness, (all) considered through the prism of ideological criticism, which includes ideographic critique, can provide a solution of sorts just as it would expand our academic discipline’s authority, increase our knowledge and understanding of rhetoric, and capably assert greater relevance and influence for rhetorical criticism in academia and beyond, making visible the invisible American hegemony of these—classism, racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, among other(s)—assorted ills of society, all of which are promulgated through rhetoric, thus is this query’s relevance as a pedagogical study. There is an innate will within all of us toward survival. So what?*

We educators of English Studies are first responders for our culture as we teach rhetoric, a noble art, which of necessity includes critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and civic responsibility. Both directly and indirectly within our pedagogy, whether each one of us English teachers is aware of this reality or not. Should we fail, our nation fails. A vibrant democracy is only as



strong as its voters, its citizens. Today our nation is being tested as our leaders appear to be failing at every level within each branch of our federal government to protect our democracy.

America has a conflicted attitude toward capitalist ideology, to the detriment of women and the Others of our society, most notably peoples of color, including African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, among other Others. Capitalist ideologies—competition, commodification, (societal obsession toward) the American Dream, rugged individualism<sup>2</sup>—in America are driven to extremes, to the detriment of our people. First and foremost, this notion of <justice> has different meanings among and also within these various constituencies of American society. Fortunately, America has still an opportunity to act more in line with its promise, but unfortunately the time for change is fleeting. This present project, rhetorical analyses of America’s moves toward its promise, is a pedagogical primer on rhetoric. This compendium, a collection of rhetorical analyses with regard to injustice and notions of <justice> within American society and culture, serves also as a concerted effort *about* rhetorical analysis.

The ideology that upholds the United States of America constructs life (in the USA) as a circumstance where “everyone” can expect to be treated fairly and equally, “with liberty and justice for all.” America’s consistent protestations about our nation’s commitment to its stance (America’s promise) is a ruse as this rendering masks a severe firmly entrenched capitalist ideology that reveres power above all else—money and profit over people and benevolence, a “dominant” race over the others (although race is merely a social construct), and adventurous militarism over peaceful coexistence—an obsession that seeks to dominate the world. This

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<sup>2</sup> These four considerations of capitalism are announced and discussed by Tyson, *Using Rhetorical Criticism: How to Read and Write About Literature*, second edition (114-116).

extreme capitalist/militarist ideology “legitimizes a [deleterious] cultural framework rooted in” (to paraphrase Foss [219] concerning a different consideration) America’s evils of sexism and patriarchy, competition and commodification, racism and discrimination, xenophobia and homophobia, fascism and oppression, and so on and so forth.

English teachers and communication instructors—can inform and empower the people (women and men of all classes, inclusive of peoples of color) to engage their obvious strengths (critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and civic responsibility), hitherto unknown and unexamined, to forcefully change and move America forward, toward its founding precepts that is *America’s promise*.

The realities of life and vagaries in the world today involve invisible ideologies that are hidden from public view, within all societies. Recognition of the certain words we use that are not monosemy, monosemous (having only one meaning) words provide a beginning for rhetorical critics acting toward performing more capable critical analyses of the persuasiveness of selected rhetorical artifacts. For example, we humans in our American society use ideographs <liberty>, <justice>, <equality> as if the words are monosemous; however, these words do not have just one clear and distinct singular meaning, each for everyone. There are disparate groups of Americans who together all encompass our nation’s quite diverse population. A notion of <justice> for these peoples is quite dissimilar.

The language we use, our words, have meanings that can lead us toward promising pathways. Cultural theorist and social activist Angela Davis writes eloquently about the value of language, specifically (from philosopher Herbert Marcuse) that “one of the great challenges of any social movement is to develop new vocabularies” (Davis 10). Davis has written fervently about her graduate studies advisor German-American philosopher Herbert Marcuse:

[W]e need to substitute a nostalgic attitude toward Marcuse with one that takes seriously his work as a philosopher and as a public intellectual. One of the great challenges of any social movement is to develop new vocabularies. As we attempt to develop these vocabularies today, we can find inspiration and direction in Marcuse's attempts to theorize the politics of language" (ibid).

Professor Davis next presents a compelling observation made by Marcuse about the critical station of language with regard to social movements that comes from Marcuse's "An Essay on Liberation":

If the radical opposition develops its own language, it protests spontaneously, subconsciously, against one of the most effective "secret weapons" of domination and defamation. The language of the prevailing Law and Order, validated by the courts and by the police, is not only the voice but also the deed of suppression. This language not only defines and condemns the Enemy, it also *creates* him. ... This linguistic universe, which incorporates the Enemy ... into the routine of everyday speech can be transcended only in action. (76ff, emphasis in text)<sup>3</sup>

For example, the American Revolution was forged by independence slogans "liberty and justice" and "we the people" and "liberty or death," just as in modern American history a number of catch-phrases ignited movements for progress and also as well, unfortunately, regression: "male chauvinism," "American patriarchy," "military industrial complex," "black power," "white supremacy," "post colonial struggle," "Affirmative Action," "voter suppression," "reverse racism," "busing," "reverse discrimination," "voter fraud," "mass incarceration," "prison

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<sup>3</sup> Marcuse, Herbert. *An Essay on Liberation*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1971.

industrial complex,” “marital rape,” “sexual predator,” “date rape,” “me too!,” “the one-percent,” “widening gap between the rich and the poor,” “the shrinking middle class,” “global warming,” “climate change,” and so on. Language can create, ignite, and transform revolutionary movements.

Most of a given culture’s silent ideology represents Gramsci’s assessment of hegemony. The invisible ruling power of a given society generally has a nefarious intent (what is best for her or his station in life) in its overarching hegemony, often failing to address the widespread suffering and unconscionable greed so widely prevalent in the society, to which America is no exception. Too often, we in academia, among other factions of our societies, simply ignore these realities of life. This present project herein seeks to bring to light some of these ideologies by engaging rhetorical studies of the stable rules that govern our society and those challenges exhibited by marginalized groups in response. This present project in pursuit of its stated objective performs critical analyses of assorted epochal discourses—speeches, laws, and other iconic items of Americana—that continue to move our nation toward its founding precepts—America’s promise. Rhetorical criticism, to be more completely effective, should include recognition of the realities of hegemony and ideology.

The United States of America still continues to have promise, and its obvious promise is clearly revealed in our nation’s iconic symbols. One preamble to the Declaration of Independence proclaims “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men [sic] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness” (1776). The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States provides succinctly, “We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice ... promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of

Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity ... (1787, emphasis added). The Statue of Liberty National Monument itself is a visual (rhetorical) artifact that symbolizes the most basic values for which our nation stands; in addition, the inscription on a plaque (1903) (taken from a sonnet “The New Colossus” [Emma Lazarus]) and engraved in a plaque, located inside the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty (1883), provides the Statue’s iconic declaration, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free ...” (emphasis added). The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States Equal Protection Clause (1868) provides that “No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws” (emphasis added). Today’s 31-word Pledge of Allegiance (1892, socialist minister Francis Bellamy) announces a reverent belief and aspiration: “... [The United States of America is] one Nation under God (1952), indivisible, with liberty and justice for all” (emphasis added). And, the civil rights anthem “We Shall Overcome” as repeated emphatically by President Lyndon Johnson before the United States Congress and a national television audience in his celebrated State of the Union Address (1965). And, last but not least, the eternal concept and amorphous vision, the thought that is “America,” neither a speech nor a writing or a visual—just the international idea, that is America, symbolism of the belief system or spirit that has evolved to represent something very special (coming to America!) and original, a sublime rhetorical artifact like no other. These are noble affirmations that clearly command for everyone to see, to hear, and to feel—*America’s promise*.

National symbols of America, individually and altogether, proclaim America’s purpose and promise plainly, proudly, and profoundly for all to see. Yet disrespect and disadvantage

continue to plague our American society. This present project looks to investigate further the commanding rhetoric of our society—“the good, the bad, and the ugly.” It seeks for rhetorical theory, a greater understanding of our discipline’s strengths and weaknesses, as we (mostly) educators also pursue opportunities toward rehabilitation of our American system of government.

Robert Paul Wolff’s essay states his thesis in regard to American hegemony as “The subject of [all of] these remarks is power and discourse—not how to control the power of discourse, or undermine the power of discourse, or apologize for the power of discourse, but how to recover the power of radical discourse, to make such discourse once again a weapon in the struggle against inequality and exploitation” (ibid.). Wolff’s YouTube lecture “Ideological Critique Lecture One” introduces a few notable examples of the effective use of ideological critique, including Marx and Engel’s *Capital (Volume 1): A Critique of Political Economy*, Said’s *Orientalism*, and Gates’s *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism*, among other examples.

Marx’s ideological critique in two iconic works, *Capital (Volume 1)* and *The Communist Manifesto* (with Friedrich Engels), gives a quite critical assessment of capitalism. Theorist Edward Said who engendered the academic field of postcolonial studies published “a groundbreaking text” *Orientalism*, which offers his ideographic analysis of Western academic culture, criticizing the West for consistently viewing Asian and African cultures as societies *less than*—provincial, irrational, rigid, undeveloped, exotic, and otherwise *inferior*—while announcing inferentially that the West is (for them [the West], most obviously) cosmopolitan, rational, learned, sophisticated, developed, and *superior*. American literature scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr., provides, in part, an Afrocentric (and ideological) critique of the established

Western *belles-lettres* tradition in literary criticism as practiced by Derrida, de Mann, Bloom, among many others.

The primary focus of this present project in rhetorical analysis is to assess the polysemous aspects of (the word) <justice> in America, a word that has a different meaning for different marginalized groups of Americans. The website [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) defines <justice> as “the quality of being ... guided by truth, reason, ... and fairness. The *Oxford American Desk Dictionary & Thesaurus* defines <justice> as “the quality of being fair and reasonable ... [in] behavior and treatment. The website [www.thesaurus.com](http://www.thesaurus.com) lists synonyms for <justice> to include authority, due process, honesty, integrity, law, right, and truth. *Roget’s International Thesaurus* lists synonyms for <justice> that include equity, evenhandedness, fairness, impartiality, dispassion, neutrality, right, righteousness, unbiased, disinterested.

And for marginalized groups in America seeking <justice> in America, the meaning of this word in their lives is actually not one and the same (objective). For women, <justice> would entail all women being treated *exactly* the same in society with regard to fairness and equality just as men are treated. For peoples of color, the <justice> being sought is clearly more complex and problematic, especially so within and among the certain marginalized groups.

For Asian-Americans whose history in America encompasses the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), the Philippine-American War (1899 to 1902), Asian Exclusion Act ( Immigration Act of 1924), Japanese internment camps (1942 to 1945), the Korean War (1950 to 1953), the Vietnam War (1955 to 1975), among a number of other Acts and endeavors, <justice> in America has been a moving target, lacking a clear quest or vision of a destination. For indigenous Native Americans, descendants of the original inhabitants of the Americas (including Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders and Native Alaskans), obviously what would be <just> is clearly

unavailable and unattainable—the complete return of their ancestral lands. However, more <just> treatment and responsiveness to their widespread illnesses, troubled addictions, and unimaginable poverty could place some semblance of recovery on sounder grounds.

For those men and women of Hispanic origin, Latina and Latino along with the Chicana and Chicano cultures, the <justice> being sought is not unlike (different from) that being sought within African American communities. That is, within these communities a complexity of wants and needs is clear. Some factions wish to be treated as Martin Luther King, Jr., prophesied during the late 1950s and early 1960s—equality of treatment with white Americans as brothers and sisters in American society while distinct minority factions within each racial grouping eschew such a desire, their only want for <justice> being an option for unimpaired separation, if desired, and basic economic evenhandedness, and of critical import, criminal justice fairness. While the exact boundaries for the different polysemous meanings for <justice> in America is distinctly unclear, this present project herein seeks to uncover and detail those considerations that can be illuminated, all with a goal toward repairing American society. And a second aspect of this project is that its completeness to serve as a pedagogical primer on rhetoric.



### ***RESEARCH PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE***

According to 2010 United States Census data, the population demographic for the USA was found to be as follows: whites 63.7% of the nation’s population, Latinas/Latinos and Chicanas/Chicanos 16.3%, African Americans 12.2%, Native Americans and Alaska Natives 0.7%, Asian-Americans 4.7%, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders 0.15%, multiracial groups 1.9%, and “some other ethnic race” 0.2%.<sup>4</sup> However, by the coming mid-century, the United States of America will have crossed the 400 million population milestone, with one result being that today’s notion of “minority” groupings of Americans will have ended. There will no longer be a majority population group in our country. Today (2019) in four states, there is a majority minority population—California, Texas, New Mexico, and Hawaii; children of color are now the majority population among *all* children within *all* the states of America. The projected demographic population by the year 2045 is estimated to represent the following demographic: 49.7% whites, 24.6% Latinas/Latinos and Chicanas/Chicanos, 13.1% African Americans, 7.9% Asian-Americans, and 3.8% multi-racial groupings.<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, only minuscule percentages would remain for descendants of our continent’s original indigenous populations of Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

One especially concise and effectively accurate definition of rhetorical criticism is the “analysis of a text’s purpose and the stylistic means by which it tries to achieve that purpose” (Tyson 297). Of necessity, however, somewhat indirectly such an analysis does encompass

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<sup>4</sup> Frey, William. “The US will become ‘minority white’ in 2045, Census projects: Youthful minorities are the engine of the future.” The Brookings Institution. [www.brookings.edu](http://www.brookings.edu). 14 March 2018. Web.

<sup>5</sup> The University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service Stat Ch@t [www.statchatva.org](http://www.statchatva.org). Web.

critical thinking and analytical reasoning in its orthodoxy because criticism, the particular view of this present project herein, to be of real and comprehensive importance, must also engage/entail a moral component inclusive also of civic responsibility for its analyses to have ultimate resonance and value. The United States today is in a state of continuing Constitutional crisis that our three branches of government appear incapable of resolving. For women and peoples of color, the obvious injustices continue to overwhelm these cultures within our society.

Approaching this midpoint of today's nascent twenty-first century, the USA will face unimaginable crises if the political power dynamics and today's "dominant perspective" (Foss 11) have not adjusted to these new demographic realities. How our nation's political leaders among the three branches of our American government continue to act in maintaining our democratic republic will determine our nation's future significance. Or, the result could be a bleak future of embattled misery and prolonged disastrous turmoil wherein considerations about how best to grade student essays will be the absolute least important of teachers' worries. Because local, state, and federal governments will no longer be able to continue their deleterious practices of attempting to just massively incarcerate peoples of color, including the social activists, and those very committed protesters.

### ***PROPOSED METHODOLOGY***

Interestingly, our academic discipline in rhetorical studies reveres the classical philosopher Plato who himself in his many writings, most especially *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*, condemns rhetoric through his spokesperson Socrates. Plato condemns "rhetoric" as a "baseless and unethical knack" used to spread "untruthful ideas" and deception<sup>6</sup>; and that it is "dangerously false"

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<sup>6</sup> Woode-Smith, Nicholas. "Plato's Condemnation of Rhetoric in *Gorgias*. [www.nicholaswoodesmith.com](http://www.nicholaswoodesmith.com). 3 March 2018. Web.

(Leitch 29). Plato's concern for his ideal republic was solely with regard to the elites, actually having no interest or inclination toward the lessers of his society—the women, the poor, the slaves or the people of other worlds. Plato championed speech only as he eschewed artistic pursuits or art or writing. Plato valued "... truth ... [,] goodness, and grace" (Leitch 36) above all else while his able student Aristotle had a more nuanced or balanced appreciation for rhetoric; his *Rhetoric* text prescribes a methodology for students of rhetoric.

In modern times, scholars and theorists have advanced Aristotle's foundational methods. It is the belief of this present project herein that these classical philosophers though correctly revered for their foundational study and framework expertise were obviously quite limited in their observations and assessments, since their studies focused solely on males, only on males of wealth, and only on males of wealth found in just their immediate (Greek) environs. Lee and Blood explain this deficiency,

Under ... classical theories ... if the speaker was found to follow the advice of Aristotle, then the speech must have been both worthy and successful. Not surprisingly, the discourse surrounding twentieth-century social upheavals, especially the anti-war, civil rights, and women's movements, did not resemble the speeches given by the ancients. The mediated age of celebrity and fifteen-second ads operates on different principles than addresses to the Athenian Assembly, the Roman Senate, or the British Parliament. (Lee and Blood in Kuypers 220)

While providing profound and substantial assistance, sustenance in promoting rhetorical methodology, still helpful for current rhetorical studies, the quite indisputably parochial views and mentality of these great men of the classical age (women were ignored) must be considered

with a recognition that their findings were limited in the scope of their research and observations. As but one example, Lu reports the traditional Chinese Confucian education system that predates Greek democracy, and adds a compelling, valid additional consideration for rhetorical study:

The traditional Confucian education system aimed at the cultivation of *junzi*, or gentleman [sic], who possessed the qualities of *ren* (benevolence), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (knowledge of rites), *zhi* (wisdom), and *xin* (trustworthiness). Traditional China was concerned not only about the knowledge a person possessed but also about the moral, human character of the individual. ... [The] Confucian education ... taught people to love others ... [,] to respect teachers and obey authority [and] ... be respectful of each other and follow the rules of etiquette. (195; emphasis added)

To further illuminate various Asian rhetorical and cultural essences, theorist Baotong Gu explains Asia's three primary systems of thought interestingly:

Let me try to summarize *Taoism* without doing it too much injustice. Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu's Tao can be understood as the way of life or the laws of nature. Tao ultimately leads to everything. Everything is made up of two opposites, which can transform into one another. The formation and transformation of everything represent the unity of being and non-being. ... Everything results from being, which, however, results from non-being. (17, emphasis added)

To more effectively navigate life, in all of its practices and complexities, one must achieve a (possibly perfect) *balance* of sorts in seeking a calming environment, for best results toward living one's life in harmony (peace). Both the positive and the negative aspects (energy) of our existence are not altogether independent forces but have a kind of give-and-take reciprocal

relationship each one to the other and to/within us. That relationship exists in tension within human existence and experience.

Gu continues even more helpfully by comparing Taoism with Confucianism,

While *Confucianism* emphasizes rational understanding, *Taoism* depends on feeling and intuition. Confucianism sees truth and knowledge as being out there whereas Taoism regards the nature of truth as uncertain and conceived knowledge and truth as products more of perception. Confucianism values clarity in speaking and was against sophistries and vagueness; in contrast Taoism sees perceived vagueness as a virtue and considers argumentation to be futile. (17-18, emphasis added)

And to these two systems of thought, Professor Gu names the third major ideology Buddhism, “[a religion which] finds its way in my discussion of ideologies ... is that it [a religion] has impacted the Chinese of all kinds, from the intellectual elite to the uneducated, from the government officials to laymen, from the wealthy to the poor” (19). Next, Gu explains Buddhist orthodoxy utilizing the scholarship of Chinese historian Wei Shou as reported in an Ebrey text:

According to *Buddhism*, the transcendence of the cycle of life and death (i.e., becoming a Buddha) is considered one’s highest, ultimate attainment. The path to this apex is one’s cultivation of the mind, which depends on endless good deeds and five prohibitions: no killing, no robbery, no adultery, no lie, and no alcohol, the meanings of which are compared by Wei Shou ... to the five Confucian virtues of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness. (20, emphasis added)

These Chinese systems of thought (ideologies) obviously predate but do add to the European classical theories about engagements in rhetoric and rhetorical practices. The Greek and Roman philosophers and educators had a different primary focus in their approach to education even as they too recognized the importance of some of these qualities revered in the Chinese Confucian educational system, the Taoist life objective, or the Buddhist religion. And in addition, ancient cultures in Africa and the early Americas had practices that might have also contributed to Greek and Roman tradition had the early European classical scholars been aware of these other peoples. Above all, education “is a journey, not a destination.”

However, many of these classical scholars were under another glaring misconception: that men (and women) were *innately* critical thinking and *already* logical beings. But of course, humans are clearly not so. While by and large, people (human beings) can be separated from the other animals co-inhabiting our planet Earth, by their greater intelligence, humans are *not* just innately born having these personal qualities of critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and civic responsibility. These values and skills must be taught.

Otherwise, how else, with regard to our own modern day democratic republic, might we explain our fellow Americans’ entertainment selections by choice: the television popularity of inane forgettable situation comedies and reality TV shows over current news programming and investigative world affairs programming on CSPAN, CNN, and cable *news* channels; the popularity of the entertainment, sports, and celebrity programming over world news event programming and Internet websites reporting current world realities of triumph and tragedy; the frightening lack of intellectual dialogue and debate among ourselves concerning the continuing efficacy of our capitalist economic system whereby the ever widening gap between the rich and poor may soon overwhelm us all; or about consideration of capitalism vs. socialism vs.

communism (regarding what political system is actually best for our twenty-first century American population) where Americans largely view *socialism* as a synonym for communism or terrorism or fascism (Marxist economist Richard Woolf).<sup>7</sup>

In politics, not long ago for the highest political office in the USA, how can we explain the choices of George Bush over Al Gore in 2000, and Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton in 2016, merely with regard to political experience, employment background, cognizance of critical societal and world issues, and executive responsiveness and temperament; and also, the lack of United Nations agreement(s) uniting the world powers in combat against famine, war, pestilence, and assorted violence throughout the world. Most unfortunately, the people—our children—must be taught critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and civic responsibility. These essential qualities must be learned.

The Ancient Greek, Roman, medieval, and early modern philosophers while providing an impressive and beneficial legacy and service in philosophy and rhetorical study were men (women were not considered) utterly ignorant, unconcerned, and uninformed about women and poor people and Asians and Africans and indigenous Americans. They had little concern or curiosity about the assorted world humanity co-inhabiting our continents. These are qualities (critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and civic responsibility) we indeed hope and need our citizens, and really everyone, throughout the world to utilize.

This present project will employ various methodologies and perspectives to provide analyses in assessing its thesis herein, including close textual analysis, critical rhetoric perspective, rhetorical situation analysis, feminist criticism, and critical race theory practice that

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<sup>7</sup> Professor Richard D. Woolf interviewed on *Real Time with Bill Maher*. July 25, 2014. [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). Web.

encompass diverse studies, including African American Cultural Criticism, Latina/Latino Studies along with Chicana/Chicano Studies, Native American Studies, and Asian-American Studies. However, the centerpiece methodology for this present project is ideological analysis, which includes ideographic critique of the polysemous aspects of the word <justice> with regard to what <justice> America's women and peoples of color (each grouping) seek as they navigate their daily lives of constant encounter and struggle against continuing injustice and unfairness in American society even still today.

With regard to rhetoric and rhetorical analysis, Professor Lopez (et al) informs us:

[R]hetoric refers to persuasion. Aristotle believed that what was true and just should naturally sway an audience more easily than what is untrue and unjust. Yet he recognized that truth and justice did not always win the day. What sometimes swayed listeners was the effectiveness of the communication, the ability of the speaker to persuade the audience that what he was presenting was true and just, even if it wasn't. In the tradition of Aristotle, rhetoric refers to the art of persuasion, how a message is shaped and delivered. (44)

For example, below in this volume, a visual rhetorical analysis is written about one of our most valued monuments to America, our Statue of Liberty (artifact), which has actually become universally known as representative of what America is (wants to be) known for, "liberty and justice for all." This later visual analysis will recognize the Statue's original visionary Édouard René de Laboulaye, French thinker, jurist, writer, human rights activist, and chair of the French Anti-slavery Society as he communicated his original idea to a friend and celebrated sculptor of large artifacts Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi. With any rhetorical analysis along with other concerns, the rhetorical situation is a proper area of consideration and analysis. In this regard, a



visual rhetorical analysis of the Statue of Liberty as viewed through the prism of ideological analysis to be effective, of necessity, must recognize the background considerations the rhetorical situation commands. The Statue of Liberty stands for equality, where all Americans value and support our country and our people. Yet today, military service seems to draw mostly the poor and peoples of color.

On 9 February 2020, the United States Department of Defense released the names of two soldiers killed in the Eastern Afghanistan Nangarhar province "... when an Afghan dressed in an Afghan uniform opened fire."<sup>8</sup> The two men killed are Sgt. Javier Jaguar Gutierrez, age 28, and Sgt. Antonio Rey Rodriguez, also age 28, both of whom just happen to be of Hispanic ancestry, the culture weekly demonized by our nation's current President Donald J. Trump who himself during the Vietnam War of the 1960s avoided service through his request of multiple deferments because of his poor health condition of bone spurs in his feet.<sup>9</sup> Neither did President Clinton<sup>10</sup> serve in Vietnam. And President George Bush, the younger, had a complicated<sup>11</sup> military service record.

Interesting. These two men of Hispanic ancestry just killed in war were "serving our country" although their death was not given the customary major highlighted mass media news coverage it so justly deserves. The War in Afghanistan, code named "Operation Enduring

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<sup>8</sup> Rahim Faiez and Kathy Gannon. "US says 2 soldiers killed, 6 wounded in Afghanistan attack." [Www.apnews.com](http://www.apnews.com). 9 February 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Shane Croucher. "DONALD TRUMP WHO AVOIDED SERVING IN VIETNAM THROUGH MULTIPLE DEFERMENTS, URGES YOUTHS TO JOIN MILITARY: "YOU SHOULD DO IT."" 5 July 2019. *Newsweek*. [Www.newsweek.com](http://www.newsweek.com).

<sup>10</sup> "Clinton's Draft Deferment." All Politics CNN TIME. [Www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com). Retrieved 18 February 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Andrew Glass. "George W. Bush suspended from Texas Air National Guard, Aug. 1, 1972." *Politico*. [Www.politico.com](http://www.politico.com). 1 August 2013.

Freedom” and “Operation Freedom Sentinel” began 7 October 2001 when the United States invaded the country—18 years, 4 months ago, and counting. With no end in sight. As of mid-2016, over 111,220 people have been killed and 116,000 have been injured in Afghanistan, over 31,000 of the dead have been Afghan civilians. The cost of the war based upon “direct appropriations to the State Department and the Department of Defense.”<sup>12</sup> This war is just one of at least seven (7) wars the United States is currently engaged.<sup>13</sup> Thus our nation is not currently upholding the image our Statue of Liberty projects, that being equality—“liberty and justice for all.” Certain classes, races, the other gender are not treated equally in our society. An able rhetorical analysis must include reference to these realities of life for these too easily dispatched persons (of color and of class). These are invisible wars the American public rarely see or hear debated on our major television and other national news coverage, all owned by men (and a few women) who encompass the 1%.

Regardless of how clearly written any visual rhetorical analysis may be; its use of grammar, syntax, and punctuation may be of superb quality, but if the rhetorical analysis of the Statue of Liberty avoids mention of these struggles continuing to be suffered by various peoples of color and class as the traditional perspectives proffer would find such analyses lacking, at least under one of the ideological criticism perspectives, which are more thorough and extensive in their requirements. Sheckels explains ideological criticism expansively:

[Ideological criticism approaches all] deal with critiquing power relations ...

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<sup>12</sup> Neta C. Crawford. “Update on the Human Costs of War for Afghanistan and Pakistan, 2001 to mid-2016.” Watson Institute, International and Public Affairs: Brown University.

[www.watson.brown.edu](http://www.watson.brown.edu). August 2016.

<sup>13</sup> F. Brinkley Briton. “U.S. Bombed Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Libya, Yemen, Somalia in 2016.” NBC News. [www.nbcnews.com](http://www.nbcnews.com). 9 January 2017.

[because] there is a prevailing order. It regulates who can speak and how, who can act and how. ... [T]he prevailing order is not neutral. It assigns positions within power structures: some are power-up, some are power-down. With that assignment come rights, privileges, opportunities, resources. ... You can be power-down and identify as low because of gender, because of race, because of immigrant status, because of sexual orientation, because of social class. ... Much of these dynamics are not immediately discerned. The ideological critic tries to bring them into the open. (179-180)

Sheckels explains the ideological criticism approaches as being multiple and varied, inclusive of Marxist approaches, post-colonial approaches, critical rhetoric approach, queer theory approach, and feminist theory approach. To introduce his discussion of ideological criticism, Sheckels offers critic Raymie McKerrow's explanation of his own rhetorical analysis concept "critical rhetoric approach," which Sheckels explains is similarly indicative of the ideological criticism approaches:

In practice, a critical rhetoric [and equally also "ideological criticism"] seeks to unmask or demystify the discourse of power. The aim is to understand the integration of power/knowledge in society—what possibilities for change the integration invites or inhibits and what intervention strategies might be considered appropriate to effect social change. (McKerrow quoted in Sheckels 180)

Sheckels ends his overview of ideological criticism by making the forthright comment: The ideological critic attempts to expose and explode the ideology or ideologies and to replace it with one that better serves humanity by eliminating some of [the] negative effects of the prevailing order" (ibid.). A visual rhetorical analysis, of necessity, to be complete and thorough must

recognize obvious untruths that attend to the Statue of Liberty as clearly indicated by early twentieth century critical theorist W. E. B. DuBois, revealed in his autobiography, as reported in a Vice website article<sup>14</sup>:

DuBois wrote in his autobiography that when he sailed past Lady Liberty on a trip returning home from Europe, he had a hard time feeling the hope that inspired so many European immigrants because as a black man, he didn't have access to the freedoms she promised.

The public Internet website explains more fully the nature and use of rhetorical analysis:

Rhetorical criticism analyzes the symbolic artifacts of discourse—the words, phrases, images, gestures, performances, texts, films, etc. that people use to communicate. Rhetorical analysis shows how the artifacts work, how well they work, and how the artifacts, as discourse, inform and instruct, entertain and arouse, and convince and persuade the audience; as such, discourse includes the possibility of morally improving the reader, the viewer, and the listener. The arts of Rhetorical criticism are an intellectual practice ... [,] an art, not a science.

([www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com))

Ideological criticism allows critics to more capably interrogate and assess given rhetorical artifacts and “to develop rhetorical theory in a way that is more comprehensive and inclusive” ([www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)).

We English teachers are responsible for the education of our future citizens and leaders. Our democratic republic will not survive if the United States of America does not have, and

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<sup>14</sup> Zachary Schwartz. “The Statue of Liberty Was Originally Intended to Celebrate the End to American Slavery.” Vice. 14 September 2016. [www.vice.com](http://www.vice.com) . =-06

produce, an educated populace accepting of their civic responsibility, which requires critical thinking and analytical reasoning, skills and values. Of course, rhetoric is persuasive discourse we all engage as we socialize and otherwise communicate with our fellow citizens. As rhetorical critics, we are best situated to educate and engage our students in these skills, for the health and welfare of our students, and for our nation. We teachers of English and rhetoric (especially) must recognize and more fully embrace this responsibility as we more forcefully implement our pedagogy. All to this end, the hope is that this endeavor in and about rhetoric, our most basic and valued academic discipline, can serve as a pedagogical primer (on rhetoric).

*The most sacred of the duties of a government ... [is] to do equal and impartial justice to all of its citizens.*<sup>15</sup>  
-Thomas Jefferson

## PROLOGUE

### *Introducing the Foundational Concept of <Justice> in America*

Our everyday lives are completely controlled, consumed, and contained by rhetoric. We educators in English and Communication Studies teach our students that *rhetoric* is the art of skillful communication whereby one communicates with others often with a purpose, such as to persuade an audience to follow some course of action (or dissuade the audience) or to convince the audience regarding the veracity of some idea or topic being discussed. What follows is an email that I mailed to my much younger brother (by fifteen years) earlier this morning:

Dear Alex,

When our family moved to California in August 1960, among the Great Migrations of African Americans moving away from the South to other parts of the country, we drove a 1954 Ford with a U-Haul trailer attached that contained ALL of our worldly possessions (a family of four). The drive took about 3 days, from Arkansas. I was twelve, Bernard ten, Mother 33, Dad 38.

Fortunately we had no car trouble on the way. But one very vivid memory I have of the trip was that we couldn't stop at a motel to sleep or at a restaurant to eat, and sometimes at some stops for gas we couldn't use the restroom. And believe it or not, some gas stations (though rare) did not allow blacks to even buy gas. Just as it was for us back in Pine Bluff when we would (rarely) go downtown with Mother to buy clothes or shoes, we couldn't try on the clothes or shoes.

All of these experiences come out in a movie I just saw yesterday. Bernard and I are going today at 1:30 PM or 3:20 PM, YOU SHOULD COME WITH US to see this movie—*Green Book*—that is based on a true story. During the 1930s until the early 1960s a booklet *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, a sort

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<sup>15</sup> Thomas Jefferson's Note for Destutt De Tracy's *Treatise On Political Economy* (ca. 6 April 1816) reported at [www.founders.archives.gov](http://www.founders.archives.gov).

of travel guide or travelog (like a detailed AAA Triptik) informed black travelers about diners where we could eat, gas stations where we could get gas or use the restroom (some did not even allow blacks as customers), and lodges where we could stay overnight, was circulated among African American communities for blacks planning to drive down South.<sup>16</sup>

-Ronald

And, later that morning at about 11:30 AM, I received my reply (a telephone call-back) from my brother Alex; he told me he was intrigued by my email about our family move, before he was born, to California in the summer of 1960, and that he and his wife would meet me and our other brother at the movie theater at 1:00 PM. My rhetorical communication was successful.

Too often, we rhetorical critics in our various analyses of the persuasiveness of communication efforts, too rigorously focus our scrutiny just on how well the communication adheres to some precepts of a chosen methodology or the mellifluous character of the rhetor's chosen words or its aptness in using tropes or figures of speech. We often neglect to comment about or even recognize or consider the one primary goal of any rhetorical communication—whether the communicator (rhetor) actually achieved success (or failure). In addition, a secondary goal of a rhetorical artifact, also important, but often overlooked is the communication's moral responsiveness with regard to a societal circumstance or reality. *All* rhetorical artifacts either promote, most often invisibly, the hegemony of society or otherwise visibly challenge, directly, the power dynamics of the society. There really is no middle ground. And a third consideration we educators too often neglect to contemplate is a recognition of the artifact's pedagogical potential. We rhetorical critics, in general, are primarily teachers and as

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<sup>16</sup> Green, Victor Hugo. *The Negro Motorist Green Book*. New York, NY: Victor H. Green publisher, 1940. Harris, Mark. "Who Was *Green Book* For?" *New York Vulture*: Hollywood Signs.

such we probably should consider our analyses and observations with this important consideration uppermost in our pedagogy.

As humans, some of our daily conversations are mere idyll chatter, but most of our talk with others involves rhetorical communication. We are constantly speaking about some truth we repeat or we attempt to persuade our fellow communicators to engage some action. As graduate students advancing our education in rhetoric and composition, we perform rhetorical analyses of a variety of rhetorical artifacts, all with a direct purpose in mind. We must always remain distinctly cognizant of what purposes we are serving in our rhetorical criticism practices.

*Ideological analysis, which includes ideographic critique*, is a form of rhetorical analysis that critiques the message and language of rhetorical artifacts inclusive of a specific consideration of ideology. In the United States of America, there are a plethora of artifacts exhibited and established initially by our nation's creators and since by our nation's peoples. Especially with regard to language, certain words display meanings that are not uniform, and this reality is the purview of ideological analysis and ideographic criticism. For this present project herein, the notion of *<justice> in America* is examined and rhetorically analyzed.

This (rhetorical) criticism effort (project) herein seeks to critique this notion of *<justice>* in America with regard to America's founding rhetorical artifacts established or created by both those in power and also by those having limited power. The USA is a nation having a complicated and too often disappointing history, as do many other nations, with regard to the *<justice>* received by our nation's disparate groupings of its peoples (groupings by economic status, by gender, by race, by religion, by immigration status, and so on). The discussion herein regarding *<justice>* will focus its concerns toward women, African American cultures, Asian-American cultures, Hispanic American cultures, and (the indigenous) Native American cultures.



Ideographic criticism, a kind of ideological analysis, is ably explained by Lee and Blood (in Kuypers):

It is ... [an exploration and examination of] the relationship among rhetoric, discourse, and ideology. ... [W]hen rhetoric and ideology are understood in particular ways ... ideographic criticism becomes compelling. ... [I]deographic criticism does not present any single set of *criteria for evaluation* [, but includes the following considerations:] (A) An ideographic criticism documents progressive or regressive ideological-rhetorical trends ... [;] (B) Ideographic criticism believes ideology is false consciousness ... [, specifically] ... public rhetoric often rationalizes political acts that help the powerful and disadvantage the powerless [; and] (C) Ideographic criticism reveals political irony ... [, which] lies in the incongruity between the actual result and the normal or expected result [, and] ... [b]y exposing inconsistencies among ideological warrants, it [ideographic criticism] opens up semantic space for resistance. (225 Kuypers 2016; italics in text)

This present project herein specifically analyzes *America's moves* toward more egalitarian <justice> including those capable challenges against the widespread injustices that continue to exist and are so widely prevalent today in 21<sup>st</sup> century America.

*Great men [and women] have done great things  
here and will again and we can make America  
what America must become.*

-James Baldwin, "A Letter to my Nephew"

## **PART ONE | AMERICA'S MOVES TOWARDS ITS PROMISE**

### **CHAPTER ONE**

#### ***We the People: A Rhetorical Analysis of America's Moves— Founding Documents, Constitutional Amendments, Iconic Symbols***

The spirit of America's promise existed long before its founding documents, iconic symbols, and celebrated inscriptions were created. Perhaps the beginning salvo was the signed Declaration of Independence. Most unfortunately, not included for consideration were a majority of the "new" land's populations: the indigenous Native American nations, hundreds of cultures representing perhaps *over one-hundred million* peoples; the African captives forced into generational free labor as slaves; the women of all factions, of course, were completely ignored and not included in these plans; and (landless) poor whites. But, over the course of centuries, federal laws would expand this notion of unity to actually include everyone—at least on paper.

In the beginning, impetus for the new nation was urged by *The Federalist* (Papers), a collection of essays all written under a common pseudonym "Publius," and published in local Northeast newspapers. The essays were written by a triumvirate from among America's Constitutional founders: Alexander Hamilton (first Secretary of the Treasury), James Madison (fourth president of the United States), and John Jay (second governor of New York and first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court). These men wrote the essays in an effort to unite the immigrant people of these nascent American colonies toward voting to ratify the newly proposed

United States Constitution. These and other rhetorical artifacts would establish the foundational spirit for the United States of America, commonly just called “America” by us and the world at large. This nascent country would be established perhaps as the world’s first democratic republic, a nation created by rhetoric as it continues to survive and evolve by rhetoric.

### *A Close Textual Analysis of the Declaration of Independence*

In 1776, on the first day of July, the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia. The next day Virginia delegate Richard Henry Lee offered a motion for independence. Representatives of twelve of the thirteen colonies voted in favor of this motion for independence, of which the Declaration of Independence is the result. This document was written on parchment that was rolled up as it was carried from place to place.

A small Committee of Five had been given the charge to prepare such a declaration, which would be submitted for approval when the Second Continental Congress would be expected to vote its decision in support of revolution. The Committee of Five assigned to prepare the document included men who would become patriotic heroes: John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert Livingston.

The second paragraph of the document provides the philosophical underpinnings of the entire Declaration: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men [sic] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” Other than the first word “We,” beginning the Declaration, five words are also capitalized, no doubt for emphasis: “Creator,” “Rights,” “Life,” “Liberty,” and “Happiness.” These are important words that probably, for these purposes, should be emphasized. The use of the word “Creator” as a replacement for a religious deity term

(“God” or “Lord”) is an appropriately neutral replacement term in keeping with the U. S. Constitution First Amendment admonition eschewing “... an establishment of religion.” Unfortunately, Jefferson’s eloquence, though rightly accurate in words, belied the actual realities of the times.

The words betrayed wholesale groups of America’s people, actually the very large *majority* of America’s peoples inhabiting the land—women, poor whites, (mostly white) indentured servants, captive Africans forced into slave labor, and the land’s original inhabitants—the innumerable cultures of Native American peoples. The word “woman” is conspicuously absent from this and other founding documents; perhaps the women were considered merely convenient helpmates for the men and caretakers for the children (of their men). Women would not be allowed to vote, and in some areas even prevented from owning property separately in their own names. So in fact, women were *not* equal in the eyes of these Founding Fathers or in their documents.

The treatment of poor whites as clearly indicated—those who did not own property—within the founding documents is also problematic in that poor whites are too literally *men* and actually white men, but again in most of the new states poor men also could not vote. In reality, men who could not vote were also not equal under these new proclamations. Africans, those forced into the daily generational drudgery of slave labor, of course, were only to be counted as *three-fifths persons*, chattel (slaves) actually, so obviously they were not considered “men” of equal standing. And finally, the original inhabitants of the land, the indigenous peoples, were of course not considered, only being mentioned in the United States Constitution as “savages.”

When these European immigrants arrived upon these continents of the Americas, the lands—North America and Central America along with South America—contained hundreds of

nations and possibly approaching *one hundred of million* Native American peoples—human beings. The land masses were open and expansive enough to allow everyone to live and co-exist more than comfortably, yet the European immigrants did not wish to share their presence with the peoples already living here. So the Native Americans, African slaves, women of all groups, and poor whites would altogether actually compose the overwhelming majority by a margin of multiples of the people living in this “new” land but thoroughly and completely ignored under these founding documents. So the philosophical eloquence of the words in these founding documents belie the ultimate realities of what would be life in this proposed new nation, also an extension from Europe, of unfairness and injustice.

Thomas Jefferson’s elegant eloquence, though severely accurate in its truths, was in reality at that time and place, a complete betrayal and a profound dishonesty. These mostly middle-age European immigrant *men* of great wealth would eventually vote in support of the new Constitution document, only after being forced (by the spirit of the other white people at large) to add a bill of rights; the Founding Fathers had rightly anticipated possible hesitation from the voting men among others of the colonies who were not as wealthy as these. And too, Jefferson’s passage decrying slavery and the slave trade was withdrawn at the behest of delegates from Georgia and South Carolina. Any responsible critique of these documents must include these realities of life.

As this same second paragraph of the *Declaration* continues with words of astute eloquence, many decades and almost a century and one-half later the omitted groups would use the words to support their own cause for inclusion:

That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government,

laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness, Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes.

Certainly, these are mere words written on parchment. However, words do have meaning and consequence; these words were composed just so as an ultimate attempt at rhetorical persuasiveness, to engage the American people (actually only *some* of them) and seek their agreement in those revolutionary efforts. The words of the Constitution that follow are, in fact, merely an economic document<sup>17</sup> that mostly applies to a certain population of these new “Americans.” The propertied white males were being persuaded to vote in support of revolution; however, enough other white males (and perhaps a very few females) recognized this new Constitution’s failings. For final passage, those people who could vote (by their disinterest and their words) demanded that the document include a bill of rights. The framers felt compelled to acquiesce, if the new Constitution were to be ultimately agreed upon, and a Bill of Rights was added, as the first ten Amendments to the Constitution would come to be called.

Probably the most important of these first ten amendments would be the First Amendment: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” These magnificent words would become, a century and some decades later, an inspiration for young people and others during the turbulent popular social activism of the 1960s,

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<sup>17</sup> See *An Economic Interpretation of the United States Constitution* (2004; Charles A. Beard).

to such a degree that these later activists would demand that American leaders follow these noble precepts of this founding document, or face consideration as "... [a] Form of Government [that] becomes destructive of these ends ..." and become witness to the wrath of some Americans.

### *A Close Textual Analysis of the Preamble to the United States Constitution*

The Preamble (specifically noted as such on the original parchment document) introductory portion of the newly approved United States Constitution is composed of three lines of impressive cursive writing text utilizing **anaphora**. The first three words "*We the People*" appears perhaps four times (by estimate) the size of the remaining text of the document; the three words are written in impressive bold cursive text, with the first word "*We*" and the third word "*People*" each beginning with capitalized first letters. The short introductory paragraph is one sentence in length, actually one very long simple sentence functioning as a declarative sentence. There are exactly fifty-two words in this one simple sentence, sixteen letters of which, almost one-third, are capitalized. The next four words, "*of the United States*" (not in bold) are also written in larger text though not as large as the first three words (We the People) but possibly twice (doubled; by estimate) the size of the remaining text of the document. Viewing an exact replica image of the U. S. Constitution document at the National Archives website ([www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)), one can see the parchment document as it appears oversize and covering four pages of text; the Bill of Rights can be seen on a fifth parchment page of text. This use is **anaphora** repetition, an effective rhetorical strategy of focused emphasis.

The next eight words clearly state the purpose for this document, introducing the governing approach for this new nation, "in Order to form a more perfect Union." The words "Order" and "Union" are capitalized; the second word "Union" is capitalized no doubt as an

indication of the pride and hopeful anticipation of the committee’s action as part of a group in founding this new nation; however, a reason for the capitalization of the first word “Order” is unclear. Authorship of the U. S. Constitution is generally attributed to a small committee including Thomas Jefferson (future president), James Madison (future president), Thomas Paine (author of the instrumental *Common Sense* public document), and John Adams (future president) although it remains unclear what person actually composed the Preamble.

The four verb phrases that follow next are written in parallel sequence, “establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence [sic], and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity” are impressive proclamations in anticipation for this new nation. The use of **parallelism** in a communication text (speech or writing) is a welcome addition as an audience aid. Audiences can more easily follow a communicator’s thoughts when composed in parallel (equal) chunks of language. These phrases are placed in the suggested order, for clarity and effectiveness as suggested in Fahnestock:

Readers of English also have default assumptions about how a well-formed series should be constructed. If there is no obvious reason to put the items in a certain order, they should be arranged so that the longest item comes last. This ordering by increasing syllable or word length preserves *the principle of end weight*, the preference for constructions to swell as they conclude. Order by length can produce an impression of finality, completeness, and equality among the items in the series. (245)

The first verb phrase (of the four) is two words, the second three words, the third five words, and the fourth ten words. Were the order reversed in “violation” of this suggested order “... for



longest item last, it can suggest some other purpose in ordering. Perhaps its items [might be] ... arranged to indicate the least to the most liked or to emphasize the final item” (ibid.). Either option could be open to confusion rather than reader focus upon the spirit of and the literal specificity of the language used.

However, a look beyond the words to the reality of life for the common people who would populate this “new” land is troubling. The Constitution did not mention who would be eligible to vote, a very clear intentional, quite important, consideration and a fallacious omission in the document; the newly formed states would decide voting rights where in most states only white male property owners were allowed to vote, so even *most white males* would not be allowed to vote. Thus, *most* of the voting age people populating this “new” nation would not be eligible to vote, including poor whites, women of all races, those of African ancestry including mixed-race persons whether free or slave, and of course the indigenous population nations of Native Americans, derisively called as one of the same group “Indians.” Although this Constitution did retain the authority to address voting eligibility in the future; something that surely should be revisited today, some 2.5 centuries later as state voter eligibility laws continue to reveal voter suppression efforts. The reality of these considerations is unfortunate because the words of this Preamble to the new legal document is otherwise impressive, were not so many of the citizens of this “new” nation not been allowed to vote.

So from the very beginning, these Founding Fathers clearly showed that their interests were not necessarily in concert with the common people. Obviously, these (mostly) men of wealth were, first and foremost, concerned with maintaining their own individual personal wealth, not necessarily benevolence for the commoners. However, the words of this Preamble

establish America's promise for then and for the future, particularly mentioning the words "to establish *justice*."

### *A Close Textual Analysis of the First Amendment*

The framers of the United States Constitution were concerned that their proposed document might not pass the required eleven states unless the document included a bill of rights. As a result, ten Amendments were added prior to the delegates seeking final approval from the states. Prominently positioned, the First Amendment is possibly the most important.

As written, the First Amendment is just one very long simple sentence: "Congress shall make no law." With regard to sentence purpose, this simple sentence is declarative, one that makes a request or issues a command. This is a command as coming from "We the People." What follows are five restrictions in **anaphora** implanted upon this proposed "new" country in five areas. The people will retain freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom to engage in peaceful assembly, and freedom to petition their government if there are grievances.

The third admonition "freedom of the press" may perhaps be the most important for the survival of any democracy because there can not be a true democracy without a free press, which has come to be called our Fourth Estate; even as our current President repeatedly calls our nation's press "the enemy of the people," echoing sentiments often voiced in totalitarian regimes. In one sense, as well as in practice, the press is our fourth branch of government. Unfortunately as seen over the course of our nation's 2.5 centuries, our government and political leaders have invariably spoken untruths (lied) to the American people time and time again with serious consequences of life and death. Just in more recent modern history, our leaders' explanation for

dropping two nuclear weapons remains clouded, atomic bombs upon the *civilian* populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki over Japan on 6 August and 9 August, 1945, killing over 150,000 Japanese people—mostly civilian women, old men, and children—in Hiroshima and 75,000 Japanese in Nagasaki with the injury toll uncountable<sup>18</sup> the waning days of World War II causing unimaginable death, destruction, and devastation; our secretive military engagements around the world<sup>19</sup>; our engagement in Korea; our escapades in Vietnam; our government explanation for our invasion and the subsequent Iraq War<sup>20</sup> resulting in a death toll of Iraqi civilians at over 100,000 (no weapons of mass destruction were ever found; the cause given for our nation’s military invasion) and at least 4,419 U.S. soldiers<sup>21</sup>; and so on and so forth.

Interestingly, the first concern as listed in this historic document is religion. Apparently, a number of the colonies had already begun to impose their own religion restrictions on everyone in their communities, and the more thoughtful and forward-thinking framers thought the country should not repeat the religious restrictions so widely prevalent in their home countries in Europe. The words are very clear in prohibiting the new Congress with regard to religion, “... respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” This prohibition remains problematic even today, as most of our national and local political leaders will readily proclaim that the United States is a *Christian* nation. Those citizens who worship other faiths who are not

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<sup>18</sup> See *Children of the Atomic Bomb: A UCLA Physician’s Eyewitness Report and Call to Save the World’s Children* ([www.aasc.ucla.edu](http://www.aasc.ucla.edu)).

<sup>19</sup> See *Overthrow: America’s Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* (Stephen Kinzer).

<sup>20</sup> See “There were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq” (Julian Borger, 7 October 2004; [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com)) and “The Iraq War 15 years later; Lies, deaths and lessons we still haven’t learned” (Rachel Leah, 20 March 2018; [www.salon.com](http://www.salon.com)).

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of Defense ([www.defense.gov](http://www.defense.gov); 30 December 2019)

Christian remain anathema in America along with those who are agnostic and those who are atheist; these Americans are generally ignored in public media and national politics.

The second concern actually addresses two areas and is possibly the most important; Congress is prevented from "... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." The freedom to speak as one wants, as long as such speech does not infringe upon the free speech of others or lead to violence, is of utmost importance. The freedom of the press, our fourth estate, should rightly be considered a fourth branch of government. The importance of our freedom of the press is most certainly exemplified by the happenings we are currently experiencing today involving our nation's current chief executive and our legislative branches of government. There can be no freely functioning democracy without our fourth estate—a fully functioning free press with its unimpeded investigating journalists. Within the penumbra of the totality of this detailed wording of the First Amendment is a clearly understood imprimatur dictating *justice* for all, everyone in America. Yet <justice> remains clearly a moving target still today unavailable to all.

#### ***A Close Textual Analysis of the Equal Protection Clause and Due Process Clause***

Under Article 1, section 2 of the United States Constitution, each African, forced into slave labor, was to be counted as *three-fifths* of a person. Of course, African slaves would not be allowed to vote, nor were they considered to have even some basic rights as human beings. Their population number was just being used as part of a counting measure for purposes of apportionment representation for slave states in the new Congress. Not even three-fifths of a human right, the African slaves were merely human chattel in America. However with the end of the Civil War, these freed African Americans would *also* be considered as full human beings, though solely in name only. Of course, the American South remained resistant to such an idea.

Following its 1866 initial proposal in Congress, the Fourteenth Amendment was ratified by the states in 1868, and the Amendment became law. The Amendment as written contains five sections; only the first section will be analyzed here. Section 1 contains only two sentences but four clauses altogether, three independent clauses and one dependent clause that ends this first section. The sentence structure appears disjointed, yet the meaning has full clarity. These two clauses are gravely important for citizens of the USA. The first clause, a twenty-eight word declarative sentence, a simple sentence, firmly states that all persons either born in the USA or naturalized herein are citizens of both the USA and of the state in which they reside. The clauses lack clarity with regard to the indigenous peoples, but of course, they are probably expected *not* to be so considered. The Constitution is also not clear with regard to women and also poor whites; neither are mentioned by name. For most of the states, only white males who owned property (land) were allowed to vote. Of course, women would not be allowed to vote until almost a century and one-half later (Nineteenth Amendment, 1920). As written, the Constitution is *intentionally* vague, the implication being that women and poor whites would be considered citizens, but women probably also would be generally understood to have only limited rights. Interestingly, there appears to be no consideration for women who did not have husbands (“to take care of them”) or women whose husbands had died or left (moved away from their homes) or even married women who had no children or women who had no desire to marry or have children. These such considerations were *not* considered by the male Founding Fathers and would be completely ignored by this document.

The American Reconstruction period (1865-1877) where United States military troops were stationed in the South to protect the newly freed African Americans and to oversee the faithful execution of these laws of the United States, unfortunately, only lasted twelve years.

Following the Compromise of 1877 (the Hayes-Tilden Affair) all hell broke loose for African Americans in the South. The Presidential election of 1876 between Rutherford B. Hayes (Republican) and Samuel J. Tilden (Democrat) was close and in dispute. Republican Party officials and Democratic Party officials agreed in secret to this unwritten and informal agreement that the federal troops would be removed from the South if the Democrats would not contest the Electoral Commission decision that Hayes would be President. Then President Ulysses S. Grant (Republican) and later President Hayes removed the final U. S. military troops from the South and within months the Southern Democrats began their violent harassment campaign of disenfranchisement, racial discrimination, violence, and terror against the black citizens of the South.

The second sentence, a lengthy compound-complex sentence contains two independent clauses and one dependent clause. The “privileges and immunities of citizenship” are protected from state action, as stated in the second sentence of Section 1. The third clause, separated from the the second and third clauses by semicolons: “nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” This is a wonderful statement for the newly freed men, women, and children—if the United States government could have enforced the measure in the states of the old Confederacy.

However over the decades of United States history, the courts and the American people have finally come to accept this notion. Of course, we now live at a time approaching over two centuries removed from that initial passage of this Amendment.

*“The Gettysburg Address”—A Rhetorical Analysis*

The American Civil War battles extended from 12 April 1861 until 9 April 1865, just under four years. Over 618,222 Americans died (including both North and South troops) in that war although modern researchers estimate that a far greater number would probably be more accurate. More Americans died in that war, by far, than in any other war in which the United States has been engaged. The Battle of Gettysburg alone during the Civil War resulted in over 7,000 casualties along with over 5,000 horses and mules; makeshift burials on the battlefield made the area unfathomable. Fortunately a new burial ground was established in that town, and a new cemetery was commissioned: the Soldiers’ National Cemetery was dedicated on Thursday afternoon 19 November 1863. The occasion’s keynote address was given by the well known speaker Edward Everett (1794-1865), former Congressman, Senator, Governor, Harvard University professor and president, minister, and diplomat; who himself would die less than two years later.

Everett’s speech lasted over two hours while President Lincoln’s speech was less than ten minutes. Everett would later send President Lincoln a congratulatory letter that included these gracious comments: “[The speech was] eloquent ...[with] simplicity & appropriateness ... . I should be glad, if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion, in two hours, as you did in two minutes.”<sup>22</sup> President Lincoln would send a thank-you reply letter dated 20 November 1863, that included a bit of mild **understatement**:

Hon. Edward Everett. My dear Sir: Your kind note of to-day is received. In our respective parts yesterday, you could not have been excused to make a short

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<sup>22</sup> [www.abrahamlincolnonline.com](http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.com). Retrieved 27 February 2020.

address, nor I a long one. I am pleased to know that, in your judgment, the little I did say was not entirely a failure. Of course I knew Mr. Everett would not fail; and yet, while the whole discourse was eminently satisfactory, and will be of great value, there were passages in it which transcended my expectation. ... Our sick boy, for whom you kindly inquire, we hope is past the worst. Your Obt. Serve. [signed] A. Lincoln.

President Lincoln's thank-you letter allows readers to gain some insight into his character; this man, a national hero. His son at that time was suffering a grave illness, and President Lincoln himself was also suffering, possibly from smallpox. Yet, he found time to write in response to this thoughtful and courteous letter he had just received. In addition, the words in the letter itself speak volumes about the personal character of President Lincoln the man—humble, gracious, and kind.

The National Constitution Center conducted a survey of public speaking and political scholars and selected “10 great speeches in American history.”<sup>23</sup> The final listing included inaugural addresses of Presidents (George Washington, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and John F. Kennedy), iconic speeches by Frederick Douglass and Martin Luther King, Jr., and President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. The most concise of all the speeches considered, this was a succinct and brief compendium of rhetoric and rhetorical devices. There are **allusions** and multiple efforts of repetition, expressive **imagery**, and collections of carefully worded syntax.

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<sup>23</sup> NCC Staff. “Looking at 10 great speeches in American history.” National Constitution Center. <https://www.constitutioncenter.org>. 28 August 2017.



Beginning at the beginning, President Lincoln opens with an **allusion** to the Bible, a reference to Psalm 90 wherein a standard “four score and seven”<sup>24</sup> is mentioned for the human life: “Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.” And the introductory clause is immediately followed by an **allusion** to the Declaration of Independence. The sentiment is well stated; however, the content is a prevarication by the framers, which Lincoln is here merely passing along. The Constitution framers did not include women (who could not vote) in their sentiment; did not include poor whites (in several colonies, only landowners could vote while the framers could have made a national commitment to allow universal voting but chose otherwise); did not include indentured servants, most of whom were also Caucasian; did not include the indigenous peoples whom the framers in the Constitution call “savages”; and did not include the abducted African Americans compelled to live in abysmal forced generational labor for the colonists (as slaves).

President Lincoln continues his graceful opening: “Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testimony’s whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.” This is an accurate comment concerning the then current status of the nation. The third sentence contains two collections of *anaphora*, using the word “we” and the word “that”: “**We are met** on a great battlefield of **that** war. **We have come** to dedicate a portion of **that** field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives **that that** nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper **that** we should do **this**” (emphasis added). Used for emphasis, “[e]ven the repetition of a single word can be powerful” (Toye 47). The repetition of the word

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<sup>24</sup> Course Hero. “The Gettysburg Address Study Guide.” Course Hero. 3 November 2017. Wednesday 27 February 2020. <https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Gettysburg-Address/>.

“we” that begins clauses is *anaphora*; repetition that ends clauses is *epiphora/epistrophe* (Toye 48). The word “that” is repeated as the first word of successive dependent clauses; with its use mostly mid-sentence level, perhaps neither rhetorical device term is pertinent. The final two repetitions of “that” has a definite alliterative quality; just a sense of *quality* and not actual alliteration because most reference sources appear to require two words: “**Alliteration** [is] ... repetition of initial or medial consonants in two or more adjacent words” (Corbett and Connors 388); “**alliteration**” [is] ... the use of two or more words beginning with the same letter” (Toye 46); and “**alliteration**: Repetition of the same initial consonant sounds in words near each other” (Barnes 355).

The third and final section of this very short speech begins with more repetition: “But, in a larger sense, **we can not** dedicate—**we can not** consecrate—**we can not** hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract” (emphasis added). This is more *anaphora*, which allows a speaker to also build toward a **climax** (Moliken [et al.]). President Lincoln continues his comments approaching **climax** with the iconic sentence that has come to symbolize this great speech altogether, by one of our nation’s great Presidents: “The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.” This comment is clear understatement although use of this figure of speech may not have been President Lincoln’s intention. After all he was not the keynote speaker, and he knew he would only be speaking just a few minutes. President Lincoln seems (based upon his thank-you letter remarks to the keynote speaker) to be a person of unassuming character. Generally, understatement is a figure of speech used when the speaker *intentionally* makes a statement that is obviously (to everyone) false, a comment where the meaning is less than what listeners might expect (Moliken [et al.]). The

follow-up sentence includes a short example of more *anaphora*, with the final sentence, a long complex sentence, exhibiting two separate instances of repetition:

It **is for us** the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. **It is rather for us** to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—**that from these** honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—**that we here** highly resolve **that these** dead shall not have died in vain—**that this nation**, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and **that** government **of the people, by the people, for the people**, shall not perish from the earth.

The closing of the ending sentence is an **allusion** to the United States Constitution whereas the opening sentence President Lincoln provides an **allusion** to the Declaration of Independence (Course). The form and formatting reveals the overall meticulousness with which President Lincoln approached even his most mundane (not the event's importance but his speaking responsibilities) requirement.

Though a superb and meticulous public speaker, interestingly, President Lincoln's voice was more "high pitched tenor" than "resonate baritone" (less Paul Robeson [renaissance man/entertainer/activist] or Barry White or James Earle Jones and more like falsetto singers Smoky Robinson or Frankie Valli or boxer Mike Tyson) as reported by news reports of the day.

His voice was variously described as “a thin tenor, or ... falsetto ... high-pitched” (journalist Horace White), and also “shrill and unpleasant sound” (*New York Herald*)<sup>25</sup>:

Mr. Lincoln is a tall, thin man, dark complexioned and apparently quick in his perceptions. He is rather unsteady in his gait, and there is an involuntary comical awkwardness which marks his movements while speaking. His voice, though sharp and powerful at times, has a frequent tendency to dwindle into a shrill and unpleasant sound. His enunciation is slow and emphatic, and peculiar characteristic of his delivery was a remarkable mobility of his features, the frequent contortions of which excited the merriment which his words alone could not well have produced.

Regardless of these comments about President Lincoln’s oratorical voice, he most obviously saved the Union. Were it not for him and his resolute focus, our nation would not exist today as the country we have. His determined eloquence and steadfast involvement embodying selfless action is sorely absent among our political leaders today.

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<sup>25</sup> “The Presidential Campaign.” *New York Herald*. 28 February 1860. Reported in Maloney, Wendi. “Hearing Abraham Lincoln’s Voice.” Library of Congress. 3 January 2018. [Http: www.blogs.loc.gov](http://www.blogs.loc.gov).

*General Sherman's Special Field Order No. 15*  
*"Forty Acres and a Mule"—A Rhetorical Analysis*

The newly consolidated Republican Party, nicknamed today as the GOP (Grand Old Party), our oldest political party, chose for its Presidential candidate in 1860, a former member of the United States House of Representatives who was actually a moderate in political temperament. Standing 6'4" tall with a slim body type and who spoke with a high squeaky voice that all belied his immense rhetorical eloquence, Abraham Lincoln was, to make an extreme political understatement, an interesting political figure. The 1860 Presidential election held on 6 November 1860, from among four candidates, made Abraham Lincoln and his running mate Hannibal Hamlin (Maine) the first President and vice-president Republican candidates to serve in office. The South and its white citizens as a whole became apoplectic following Lincoln's election.

The newly installed President Lincoln was gracious and conciliatory in his inaugural address, but the slavery-obsessed people of the South were not having any of it. Actually, both sides were obviously delusional. The North by and large thought their size, almost double the population of the South, and also the fact that they held almost all of the major industry resources would make any just war a mere inconvenience. The South fighting on their home territory, having the more accomplished generals, and also an intense belief in a "states rights" cause—

actually an obsessive desire in their ruthless and demonic oversight over millions of human beings of African origin compelled to live and work in the grueling forced labor camps of generational repressive bondage—also assumed the war would not last long. Both sides were delusional. Interestingly, had the war actually been a short occurrence as both the North and the South believed, the institution of slavery would have continued whether the North or the South had achieved victory. As the war became drawn out, President Lincoln was eventually forced to make a commitment toward ending the institution of slavery and to follow through in an effort to save the union.

The beginning of the Civil War resulted in a few Confederate military victories, and President Lincoln began to understand that the war would be a continuing devastation for both sides as the war dragged on. One of President Lincoln's most able generals was William T. Sherman who held no particular affinity for the confined African American captives. As he exercised his total devastation and destruction battle strategy, newly liberated African Americans began to tag along within view of his Union troops. In a move to address this growing circumstance, a continuing annoyance to General Sherman, he enacted within his general battlefield authority, Special Field Order No. 15. For the newly liberated African Americans, this document was a godsend. Actually this was a truly remarkable meticulously crafted document of some eloquence though workmanlike in its focus:

On January 16, 1865, [the] Union General William T. Sherman [issued a field order] ... which confiscated as Federal property a strip of coastal land and extending about 30 miles inland from the Atlantic and stretching from Charleston, South Carolina 245 miles south to Jacksonville, Florida. The order gave most of the roughly 400,000 acres to newly emancipated slaves in forty-acre sections.

Those lands became the basis for the slogan “forty acres and a mule” based on the belief that ex-slaves throughout the old Confederacy would be given the confiscated lands of former plantation owners. ([1865] General)

The field order document as written uses Roman numerals to designate five sections in fully detailed language. Visually appealing in its formality, both an *ethos* and also a *logos* appeal seems obvious. “Section I” specifies the location and the people to which the document is to be engaged: “[The selected coastal lands designated] ... are reserved and set apart for the settlement of the [N]egroes now made free by the acts of war and the proclamation of the President of the United States.” The first letter “n” of the term Negro is not capitalized, as was the custom in American correspondence, to further demean these human beings. Otherwise the document is straightforward and clearly worded.

“Section II” in further detailed specificity of a subdued philosophical quality provides three newly installed freedoms for the freed slaves:

[T]he blacks may remain in their chosen or accustomed vocations—but on the islands, and in the settlements hereafter to be established, no white person whatever, unless military officers and soldiers detailed for duty, will be permitted to reside; and the sole and exclusive management of affairs will be left to the freed people themselves, subject only to the United States military authority and the acts of Congress. **By the laws of war, and orders of the President of the United States, the [N]egro is free and must be dealt with as such.** (Emphasis added)

The final sentence, an emphatic acclamation, moderate in length, simple sentence written in philosophical language states the obvious. To the newly liberated African Americans, a *pathos*

appeal would have been beyond measurement. To the whites the language would have been an outrageous summary assault upon their chosen way of life.

To follow-up that language, Sherman provides another no less important command: “He [the African American people] cannot be subjected to conscription or forced military service, save by the written orders of the highest military authority of the Department, under such regulations as the President or Congress may prescribe” (ibid.). Sherman’s language is clearly written in its expansive fluency. Further, the language is not over-authoritarian as Sherman makes obvious that he is not the sole authority for this command. Section II has two parts, a beginning major part and a lesser second part. The ending sentence of the first part is somewhat problematic in that Sherman’s implication is that “the blacks” may be reluctant to engage in warfare. All the while this Civil War had been engaged, Frederick Douglass and William Wells Brown among notable others asked repeatedly that black men be allowed to serve. General Sherman, a graduate of West Point and an attorney by trade, must have been aware of these realities, yet he states the following, although the first clause would have been welcomed language:

Domestic servants, blacksmiths, carpenters and other mechanics, will be free to select their own work and residence, but the young and able-bodied [N]egroes must be encouraged to enlist as soldiers in the service of the United States, to contribute their share towards maintaining their own freedom, and securing their rights as citizens of the United States. (Ibid.)

The second part of this Section II is thorough and actually quite considerate and courteous. General Sherman had been born into a prominent family, but his family circumstance had involved some tragedy that probably influenced his consideration: his father was a successful



lawyer who served on the Ohio Supreme Court, his family included eleven children, his father suddenly died when young William was nine years old, and he was raised by a family friend, also a man of prominence, US Senator and first Secretary of the Interior Thomas Ewing, Sr. General Sherman in this section provides further details for those black men who so chose to enlist:

Negroes so enlisted will be organized into companies, battalions and regiments, under the orders of the United States military authorities, and will be paid, fed and clothed according to law. The bounties paid on enlistment may, with the consent of the recruit, go to assist his family and settlement in procuring agricultural implements, seed, tools, boots, clothing, and other articles necessary for their livelihood. (Ibid.)

General Sherman, born in Ohio, was no fiery abolitionist, but his affecting wording and attentive graciousness is emblematic of America's promise being discharged in a most unexpected situation. His primary audience appears to be Southern whites, who unfortunately in their vile and corrupt belligerent contempt, as exhibited by their later actions (enforced terroristic killings, mutilations, and rapes following Reconstruction and beyond; forced sharecropping; mass incarceration in work on chain gangs; denial of voting rights for decades; and even today, voter suppression, mass incarceration, stop-and-frisk, police brutality, and so on) never actually heard these words of America's promise. Even so, the words of General Sherman did allow for massive hope for the African American people in the 1860s. So for his primary audience, there was a severe disconnect; as a rhetor in this matter, General Sherman did fulfill his requirements as he saw them to be—his message was clear and consistent; his *ethos* authority had been firmly

established by America's Commander in Chief, President Lincoln, who chose him to replace General Grant as lead of the "Western Theater" Mississippi forces; both Grant and Sherman were native men of Ohio. The lack or failure of rhetorical communication was in the audience itself, people who refused to yield to America's promise.

"Section III" provides the important details that would become an endearing slogan for African Americana:

[The aforementioned named parties] will subdivide the land, under the supervision of the Inspector, among themselves and such others as may choose to settle near them, so that each [African American] **family shall have a plot of not more than (40) forty acres of tillable ground**, and when it borders on some water channel, with not more than 800 feet water front, in the possession of which land the military authorities will afford them protections, until such time as they can protect themselves, or until Congress shall regulate their title. (Ibid., emphasis added)

Though not an anti-slavery abolitionist himself, General Sherman's words could easily be confused as words written by one such advocate. General Sherman should be commended more in United States history as one person of some authority who acted in the best interests of American citizens who just happened to have been newly freed African Americans.

Sherman's conscientious thoughtfulness even continues by his final sentence comment, a lengthy sixty-five word simple sentence of scrupulous and precise construction:

The Quartermaster may, on the requisition of the Inspector or Settlements and Plantations, the disposal of the Inspector, one or more of the captured steamers, **to ply between the settlements and one or more of the commercial points**

**heretofore named in orders, to afford the settlers the opportunity to supply their necessary wants, and to sell the products of their land and labor.** (Ibid., emphasis added)

“Section V” details with the document and other minutiae for the carrying out of this Field Order. A *logos* appeal is clearly established for those in his audience of an unbiased mindset. And “Section VI” names an “appointed Inspector of Settlements and Plantations” (Brigadier General R. Sexton). The final sentence as it reads is interesting but forceful in its comment: “No change is intended or desired in the settlement now on Beaufort [Port Royal] Island, nor will any rights to property heretofore acquired be affected thereby.” Lopez (et. al) comments that “[t]he elements of the rhetorical triangle—author, audience, and message—work together to make communication meaningful, and additional components such as genre, context, medium, and exigence also influence meaning. The rhetorical appeals of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* constitute the different ways an author might attempt to make an argument” (68-69). Any determination of the success of a rhetorical message (of its persuasiveness) would be in error to not recognize the obvious inadequacies and impassioned disconnect of his primary audience, with regard to General Sherman’s Special Field Order No. 15. Of the three prongs of the rhetorical triangle, only the audience element is problematic. The message supports our nation America’s promise. The messenger (rhetor Sherman) is clearly in place formally authorized to present such a message. Only his primary audience is defective. A secondary audience—the African American freed captives—would have glowingly accepted the message’s *pathos* appeal with unmeasurable passion.

With regard to a rhetorical communication and its effectiveness, Lopez (et. al) provides clear and succinct description:

One helpful way to visualize the elements of the **rhetorical situation** is to imagine it as a triangle with each of the three points labeled with the necessary components for persuasive communication to occur: author, message, audience. Alternate names abound, such as the *creator* instead of author, and *purpose* instead of message, but the effects are the same. Rhetoric relies on the interrelationship between these three fundamentals. (44-45)

In addition a *kairos* element, the opportune moment, was also evident as Union forces were clearly on the advance, and President Lincoln along with his two most capable generals Grant and Sherman understood that a comprehensive ground game of complete devastation and ruin would be necessary to end the war, utilizing all measures of attack.

### *Statue of Liberty /*

#### *Liberty Enlightening the World—A Rhetorical Analysis*

Humans create monuments to celebrate and commemorate their history and also to memorialize their cultural beliefs. Artistic skill along with engineering advancement and technological progress have advanced the building quality of our magnificent cultural structures, buildings, and statues. Today's various listings of iconic world structures often include the Olmec Heads (Veracruz and Tabasco, states in Mexico), Stonehenge (Avebury and associated sites, United Kingdom), Michelangelo's David (Florence, Italy), the Great Sphinx (Giza Plateau near Cairo, Egypt), *Christ the Redeemer* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), *The Little Mermaid* (Copenhagen, Denmark), the Moai monoliths (Easter Island in the Pacific Ocean), the Great Wall of China,

among others.<sup>26</sup> Invariably among the many listings of these iconic monuments throughout the world today, another universal inclusion is America's Statue of Liberty, the given name of which is instructive: *Liberty Enlightening the World*. The **symbolism** is significant and impressive.

Last week Thursday evening on 6 February, the 2020 Hellen Ingram Plummer Lecture was held at Georgia State University Law School. The speaker was philosophy professor Jason Stanley who spoke on the topic of his recent book *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*. For the USA at this current moment in its history, what Professor Stanley spoke of was eerily prophetic with regard to a few interesting parallels between the Weimar Republic (1919 to 1933) of pre-Hitler Nazi Germany and today's current moment in U.S. history, with regard to our current President. Professor Stanley's book "Introduction" section includes a passage detailing the importance of our Statue of Liberty and its meaning for immigrants approaching Ellis Island in New York Harbor. Professor Stanley's father as a child six-years-old had escaped Nazi Germany with his mother, and Professor Stanley thoughtfully describes the ship carrying his father and grandmother as they entered the United States Harbor: "He arrived in New York City on August 3, 1939, his ship sailing past the Statue of Liberty on its way to dock. We have a family album from the 1920s and '30s. The last page has six different pictures of the Statue of Liberty gradually coming into view" (xii). So is the severe reverence for which immigrant families hold the Statue of Liberty. But for Others, the emotions are not clear and distinct.

The Statue of Liberty as seen from a distance appears as a massive, quite impressive structure, the figure of a Roman goddess, *Libertas*. The word is Latin for "liberty," and the human figure is a supposed representation in human form for liberty, "freedom from arbitrary or

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<sup>26</sup> Touropia. "10 World Famous Statues." [www.touropia.com](http://www.touropia.com). 30 October 2019. Web.

despotic government or control” ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)). Interestingly, the entire statue project injects a classical Roman theme—in form: the Roman goddess statue, the flowing drapery garment the statue wears, her clutching a *tabula ansata*, an ancient scroll with handles (evoking law) in her left arm, as she holds aloft a torchlight flame in her right hand decidedly pointing high above. Lady Liberty, as she has come to be called, wears sandals; at her feet is a broken shackle and chains, her head is adorned with a Phrygian cap (*bonnet Phrygian*), also known in France as a Liberty Cap (*bonnet de la Liberté*) often worn in depictions of the goddess *Libertas*; this hat was also popularly worn during the French Revolution (1789-1799):

... [T]he Liberty Cap or Phrygian Cap is the name given to a brimless, limp, conical cap fitting snugly around the head. It is supposed to have been worn by the inhabitants of Phrygia, a region of central Anatolia [modern-day Turkey] in antiquity. The book *Iconologia* by Cesare Ripa (first edition 1593) and other works from the sixteenth centuries describe and depict the cap. As these works state the Phrygian cap was worn by liberated slaves in Ancient Rome and Greece. (National Symbol)<sup>27</sup>

A symbolic use of the Liberty Cap seems to have spread to other parts of the world. It also became used in other revolutions including the American Revolution:

**The Liberty Cap in North America.** In the American colonies, the Liberty Cap had been used, perhaps a little melodramatically, by the Sons of Liberty in 1765. During the American Revolution some soldiers who fought for the rebel cause

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<sup>27</sup> “National Symbol in France: The Phrygian Cap or Liberty Cap.” [Www.languedoc-france.info](http://www.languedoc-france.info). Retrieved 12 February 2020.

wore liberty stocking caps of red. Sometimes they had the motto ‘Liberty’ or ‘Liberty or Death’ knitted into the band. (Ibid., bold in original text)

There are other interpretations, but in any regard, the sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi’s use of this covering for his statue is entirely symbolic. Some have interpreted Liberty’s headdress as a crown having a symbolic seven rays extending outward while some other theorists believe the adornment could possibly be a halo. The rays could be symbolic for the seven oceans or even perhaps an **allusion** to the often publicized seven wonders of the ancient world as popularly compiled by ancient Greeks. The Statue of Liberty today is administered by the National Park Service, and its Internet website provides the full quite interesting details about how the initial project came to fruition.

According to the National Park Service website, the initial idea for the project comes from Édouard René de Laboulaye, who later came to be “known as the ‘Father of the Statue of Liberty.’” Widely known in France for his advocacy for human rights and of freedom and independence from overbearing government restriction, de Laboulaye had founded the French Anti-Slavery Society<sup>28</sup> (Khan 40), serving as the organization[’s]” president. He was a student of history and a great admirer of the still maturing United States of America. During America’s Civil War, de Laboulaye supported the Union cause and the Presidency of Abraham Lincoln. And when the Union troops won the Civil War, de Laboulaye was overjoyed. He wanted to express his celebration by offering some state gift from France to America and its people; an undercurrent was his desire to inspire the French people to become more aggressive in

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<sup>28</sup> Khan, Yasmin Sabina. *Enlightening the World: the Creation of the Statue of Liberty*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010.

challenging their overbearing and oppressive French monarchy. Just as America had shorn its colonial overseer the British Empire, de Laboulaye wanted the French people to also rise up.

To the world, America came to represent freedom, democracy, and <justice>; themes de Laboulaye wanted for the French people. So following the Union victory in 1865 with its end to slavery in America (partially in 1863 [Emancipation Proclamation]; more thoroughly and completely in 1865 [Thirteenth Amendment]), de Laboulaye's idea became that of a gift to the American people from the French people in the form of a statue of the Roman goddess of liberty, *Libertas*. About a decade later with the assistance of a friend and sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, the idea was formerly consummated:

In September 1875, he announced the project and the formation of the Franco-American Union as its fundraising arm. With the announcement, the statue was given a name, *Liberty Enlightening the World*. The French people would finance the statue; the American people would be expected to pay for the pedestal. De Laboulaye's love for democracy and freedom was channeled into the iconographic Statue of Liberty in hopes that the Statue would ... inspire the French people to call for democracy. He wanted France to learn from the United States' struggles, defeats, and triumphs. ([www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov))

The French sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi had studied art, architecture, and sculpture, and over the course of his professional career, he developed an interest and “passion for large-scale public monuments and colossal sculptures” (ibid.). His interests and thoughts with regard to government were in line with his friend de Laboulaye, and in 1870 he began his design for the Statue of Liberty. He visited the United States on several occasions and soon discovered his favorite location for placement of the Statue, in New York Harbor at Bedlow's



Island. A placement at that location would allow Lady Liberty to face southeast, directly toward ships carrying new immigrants “coming to America.” The statue could then exhibit its message to all world travelers and new immigrants as they entered American waters.

He became elated to learn that the state of New York had already donated Bedlow’s Island in New York Harbor to the federal government. Nearby is another island, Ellis Island, that also became a celebrated iconic space, which would become the assigned gathering location as millions of new immigrants were accepted into America. The completed statue that sits atop its pedestal was a massive creation. As seen from a distance, the first impression most observers probably feel is the statue’s enormous size. It measures 305 feet in height, including the pedestal from the pedestal base to the tip of the “flaming” torch in Liberty’s right hand, held high. Lady Liberty is actually “moving forward” and “walking” in a determined steadfast gait. The **symbolism** is obvious and clear; Liberty is lighting the way, leading all the people living under oppression who seek freedom; moving forward toward their independence.

The *Pocket Oxford American Dictionary* defines “tyranny” as “cruel and oppressive government or rule. The website [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) defines the term as “arbitrary or unrestrained exercise of power; despotic abuse of authority.” It defines “fascism” as “a governmental system led by a dictator having complete power, forcibly suppressing opposition and criticism, regimenting all industry, commerce, etc., and emphasizing an aggressive nationalism and often racism.” The website [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com) defines the term “fascism” as “a form of far-right, authoritarian ultranationalism characterized by dictatorial power, forcible suppression of opposition, and strong regimentation of society and of the economy.” The late mid-nineteenth century in France had an authoritarian monarchy in control of its government.

French thinker, human rights activist, jurist, and writer de Laboulaye became inspired by the American Union forces and their defeat of the Confederacy in 1865.

The figure of *Libertas* was a popular emblem featured on coins in the Late Roman period during the reign of Julius Caesar (100-44 BC) and still decades later during the reign of Nero (37-68 AD). The statue's **symbolism** is extensive. The broken shackle and chains at the statue's feet obviously symbolize Liberty's breaking away and apart from her bondage, demonstrating to other peoples that they too can also overcome the tyrannies they suffer. The sandals, the flowing dress, and the crown all on the Roman goddess symbolize an obvious classical Roman theme. Greece and Rome were early great civilizations of the ancient world; classical antiquity, the period variously encompassing "c. 1000 BCE to 450 CE, near the fall of the Roman Empire 410 CE."<sup>29</sup> Liberty clutches a *tabula ansata* to her body and holds aloft a torch and flame symbolizing this human vision—lighting the way for others who would follow. The facial expression Liberty has is one of determined optimism; the goddess was decidedly female, but the statue's facial makeup could easily be interpreted as male, possibly symbolic of a notion that all humans, male *and* female, could rise up and bust loose from their shackles and chains of oppression. Within the pedestal is a mounted plaque containing the Emma Lazarus sonnet "The New Colossus."

The original agreement between the nations France and the USA was that France would cover the cost of building the *Libertas* statue and the USA would cover the cost of building a pedestal upon which the the statue would be placed. A granite pedestal 89 feet in height was built. Fundraising efforts began in France and in the USA. As part of the effort in America,

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<sup>29</sup> "The Fall of the Roman Empire." [Www.ushistory.org](http://www.ushistory.org). Retrieved 17 February 2020.

almost two decades following the dedication of the Statue of Liberty, writer Emma Lazarus was persuaded to write a poem. Emma Lazarus herself was an immigration activist particularly concerned about “the plight of Russian Jews.”<sup>30</sup> She wrote this poem in 1883 to help in raising funds for financing the building of a pedestal for the Statue of Liberty. Decades later in 1903, the poem was engraved on a bronze plaque and mounted on a wall inside the pedestal. The poem has itself become symbolic: for the Statue, for America, and also for the Statue’s message, “Give me your tired, your poor,/ Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,/ The wretched refuge of your teeming shore/...”

Interestingly, the version of the poem as engraved on a plaque is printed in all capital letters; no doubt to embolden its words, an action that goes completely against the spirit of Lazarus’s message “... welcome, her **mild** eye / command /” (emphasis added). The poem speaks against conspicuous action and pretentious display; Lady Liberty silently speaks with “her **mild** eyes” and “With **silent** lips” (emphasis added). Her actions speak more so than her words. The decision to use all capital letters engraved on the plaque was not the best result because, obviously, this decision comes from those in charge at the Statue of Liberty venue who in reality are more in tune with those conquistadors Lady Liberty condemns. The message from the originator (de Laboulaye) of the Statue idea and of the sculptor (Bartholdi) was that this liberty protest would be calmly progressive, not a call for violent overthrow of governmental authorities. These two men were not bold obstreperous revolutionaries. Both the idea originator (and jurist) and his friend/sculptor were progressive men who wanted to work within the system to inspire the people to act. (More Martin Luther King, Jr., and less Malcolm X, in thought.) The

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<sup>30</sup> “The New Colossus Summary and Analysis.” LitCharts. [www.litcharts.com](http://www.litcharts.com). Retrieved 13 February 2020.

poem as originally conceived and composed by immigration activist and writer Emma Lazarus should have been engraved on the mounted plaque inside the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty as it was originally written. Lazarus uses just two exclamation points for the emphasis she wished to “shout-out” in this sonnet, her fourteen-line poem. Often calmness (simplicity) is the more forceful (greater) combatant. “It is the unemotional, reserved, calm, detached warrior who wins, not the hothead seeking vengeance and not the ambitious seeker of fortune.”<sup>31</sup>

The message is that America will welcome the displaced and “The wretched refuse of your teeming shore/” people of the world and give them the opportunity for freedom. The use of “refuse” is unclear; the word “refuge” is “a place of shelter, protection, or safety” and also “anything to which one has recourse for aid, relief, or escape” ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)) and seems a more likely fit for this poem although the word is rarely applied to humans. Lazarus here has her reasons for using the word “refuse,” which are not clear. In any regard, this vision of America was not then nor is it now today the reality (too) many Americans face in their daily lives because injustice has *always* reigned supreme in the Americas. For Native Americans, for African Americans, for Asian Americans, for Hispanic Americans, and for others, America’s true history has always been gender-based, class-based, and race-based. However, the Statue of Liberty is (presents) another opportunity for America to fulfill its shining promise, as detailed in this Lazarus sonnet. These fourteen lines of poem thoughtfully and genuinely tell a story of hope and benevolence. If only America could move rightly and forthrightly out of this quandary.

The first line of the poem is an **allusion** to the Colossus of Rhodes, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. “NOT LIKE THE BRAZEN GIANT OF GREEK FAME, /

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<sup>31</sup> Tzu, Sun. *The Art of War*. New York, NY: Filiquarian Publishing LLC, 2007.

WITH CONQUERING LIMBS ASTRIDE FROM LAND TO LAND /. That statue was of the Greek sun-god Helios in 280 BC in celebration of a wartime victory. This Lazarus poem is clear in stating that this Statue of Liberty is not one of military conquest where endless combat spreads a sea of violence and bloodshed. For on America's shore here, this statue "HERE AT OUR SEA-WASHED, SUNSET GATES SHALL STAND / A MIGHTY WOMAN WITH A TORCH" is providing the light for people to escape their oppression. "[HER NAME / MOTHER OF EXILES. FROM HER BEACON-HAND / GLOWS WORLD-WIDE WELCOME]" introduces the Statue's leader whose eyes evoke care and compassion as she is savior of people in conflict. "HER MILD EYES COMMAND / THE AIR-BRIDGED HARBOR THAT TWIN CITIES FRAME" is symbolic in that the Statue holds aloft a flaming torch as she is to be a guide for all who seek freedom from tyranny, lighting the way forward. The **imagery** is masterful. Lady Liberty is both a capable commander and a resolute leader who leads by will without the braggadocio common among boisterous male combatants. Lady Liberty, this giant essence, makes her awesome gaze upon a celebrated harbor. When the poem was written the separate cities were probably Brooklyn on one side of the Statue and New York (Manhattan) on the other; Brooklyn became a borough of New York City on 1 January 1898,<sup>32</sup> but when the poem was written Brooklyn and New York (Manhattan) were separate cities. "KEEP ANCIENT LANDS YOUR STORIED POMP!'/ CRIES SHE/ WITH SILENT LIPS." This Statue, Lady Liberty, speaks. And her countenance, this goddess, is not one for showy display or ostentatious delights.

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<sup>32</sup> "Brooklyn, Borough, New York City, New York, United States." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. [www.britanica.com](http://www.britanica.com). Retrieved 13 February 2020.

This next passage is often seen and heard as symbolic for what the Statue and our country (the USA) stand(s): “GIVE ME YOUR TIRED, YOUR / POOR, / YOUR HUDDLED MASSES YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE. THE WRETCHED REFUSE OF YOUR TEEMING SHORE.” Lady Liberty announces that she will lead them, the poor and desperate masses who want only to live free. “SEND THESE, THE HOMELESS, TEMPEST-TOST TO ME.” She can help them all. This is a bold broadcast that is symbolically convincing. “I LIFT MY LAMP BESIDE THE GOLDEN DOOR!” Of course the golden door is the USA, and her lamp is the flaming torch she holds aloft. Metaphorically, Lady Liberty is calling out the people to come to her and also perhaps the nations to send these desolate peoples (that obviously the oppressive nations do not respect or care for) to her, and she will guide them through the portals of America and into pursuit of the opportunities America can offer. Lakoff and Johnson define metaphor clearly, “Metaphor ... is a fundamental mechanism of mind, one that allows us to use what we know about our physical and social experience to provide understanding of countless other subjects (back cover). But, this description is not the reality, because in America injustice and inequality are not just secluded occurrences. However fortunately, America still even now holds promise. But our window of opportunity is regrettably closing.

Among just a few luminaries at the formal dedication ceremony were the architect Bartholdi and the nation’s then president Grover Cleveland. His dedication speech is reported at various outlets, including the *New York Times*. Interestingly, President Cleveland’s words of dedication were prophetically inspirational, as the entire project’s original author de Laboulaye had hopefully envisioned:

... We are not here to-day to bow before the representation of a fierce and warlike god, filled with wrath and vengeance, but we joyously contemplate instead our

own deity keeping watch and ward before the open gates of America . . . . Instead of grasping in her hand thunderbolts of terror and of death, she holds aloft the light which allumines the way to man's enfranchisement. . . . We [here in America] . . . will constantly keep alive its fires . . . . Reflected thence, and joined with answering rays, a stream of light shall pierce the darkness of ignorance and man's oppression, until liberty enlightens the world.<sup>33</sup>

All was not as celebratory as has been generally reported. There were protests, and some constituencies expressed indifference.

Also present in attendance was a boat having aboard a group of suffragists, although newspaper coverage of the event at the time used a colloquially popular yet offensive term "suffragettes."<sup>34</sup> This boat encircled the Statue in protest. The Women's Suffrage Association reported that of the (approximately) 600 formal guests at Bedlow's Island (prior name for Liberty Island), only two women were among the invited guests.<sup>35</sup> The New York chapter of the Women's Suffrage Association was not allowed to get tickets to the events, according to the National Park Service website chronology surrounding the Statue of Liberty:

October 28<sup>th</sup> – New York City holds the first Ticker-Tape Parade in honor of the dedication of the statue of 'Liberty Enlightening the World' which over one million people attend [in 1886]. . . . The New York State Woman Suffrage Association, unable to obtain tickets to the dedication as they were

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<sup>33</sup> "Full text of 'Inauguration of the Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World.'" Internet Archive. [Www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org). Retrieved 11 February 2020.

<sup>34</sup> "Did you Know? Suffragist vs Suffragette." National Park Service. [Www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov). Retrieved 11 February 2020.

<sup>35</sup> "Inauguration of the Statue of Liberty." Wonders of the World. [Www.wonders-of-the-world.net](http://www.wonders-of-the-world.net). Retrieved 11 February 2020.

unaccompanied woman [sic], charters a boat to view the island ceremonies from the water.<sup>36</sup>

One of the protesters on their boat, Matilda Joslyn Gage commented, “It is the **sarcasm** of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to represent liberty as a woman, while not one single woman throughout the length and breadth of the land is as yet in possession of political liberty.”<sup>37</sup> American media too often avoids the more complete rhetorical situation (context) as America’s history is told. Widespread injustice continues to remain an intricate aspect of the America narrative.

Even today, women are still disadvantaged. Women on average earn just a percentage of the income men earn for the same work,<sup>38</sup> continue to be absent in our nation’s highest political offices,<sup>39</sup> and the right of women to have and maintain full autonomy over their bodies is clearly eroding.<sup>40</sup> However. Clearly sometime during the human gestation cycle—from sperm-to-egg-to-gamete-to-zygote-to-embryo-to-fetus—the living collection of cells (the entity, the fetus<sup>41</sup>) should gain its own right to survive. But, some facts of life are just beyond the purview of human males to regulate. What humans can do is educate our juveniles and young adults, and

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<sup>36</sup> Statue of Liberty: Liberty Island Chronology. National Park Service. [Www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov). Retrieved 11 February 2020.

<sup>37</sup> Little, Becky. “The Statue of Liberty Has Long Been a Magnet for Protest: Dissent at or inside the statue began with its unveiling in 1886.” H:History. [Www.history.com](http://www.history.com). 23 August 2018.

<sup>38</sup> Sheth, Sonam, Shayanne Gal, Andy Kiersz. “7 charts that show the glaring gap between men and women’s salary in the US.” *Business Insider*. [Www.businessinsider.com](http://www.businessinsider.com). 26 August 2019.

<sup>39</sup> Kurtzleben, Danielle. Politics: Almost 1 in 5 Congress Members Are Women. Here’s How Other Jobs Compare.” NPR. [Www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org). 11 June 2016.

<sup>40</sup> “Federal and State Bans and Restrictions on Abortion.” Planned Parenthood: Planned Parenthood Action Fund. [Www.plannedparenthoodaction.org](http://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org). Retrieved 11 February 2020.

<sup>41</sup> Nierenberg, Carl. Live Science. 30 August 2017. [Www.livescience.com](http://www.livescience.com).



even older adults more fully and repeatedly “the facts of life” about human sexuality and reproduction so that abortion can become “safe, legal, and rare.”<sup>42</sup>

Asian Americans were also not altogether overjoyed or thrilled about the existence and dedication ceremony of the Statue of Liberty as evidenced by a published letter in *The American Missionary* publication dated January 1885, from Saum Song Bo. The agreement between France and the USA was that France would build the statue and America would build the pedestal, and both France and America were challenged in their ability to obtain funding. This letter from Saum Song Bo was a response to a publicized request for donations. His letter in part comments:

SIR: A paper was presented to me yesterday for inspection, and I found it to be specially drawn up for subscription among my countrymen toward the Pedestal Fund of the Bartholdi Statue of Liberty. Seeing that the heading is an appeal to American citizens, to their love of country and liberty, I feel that my countrymen and myself are honored in being thus appealed to as citizens in the cause of liberty. But the word liberty makes me think of the fact that this country is the land of liberty for men of all nations except the Chinese. I consider it an insult to us Chinese to call on us to contribute to building in this land a pedestal for a statue of Liberty. That statue represents Liberty holding a torch which lights the passage of those of all nations who come into this country. But are the Chinese allowed to come? As for the Chinese who are here, are they allowed to enjoy liberty as men of all other nationalities enjoy it? Are they allowed to go about

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<sup>42</sup> Cohen, Susan A. “A Message to the President: Abortion can be Safe, Legal, and *Still* Rare.” Guttmacher Institute. [www.guttmacher.org](http://www.guttmacher.org). Retrieved 11 February 2020.

everywhere free from the insults, abuse, assaults, wrongs and injuries from which men of other nationalities are free?<sup>43</sup>

Neither were the African American communities so elated about the Statue of Liberty unveiling as highlighted by one black newspaper of the period, the *Cleveland Gazette*:

Let's push the statue of Bartholdi, torch and the rest in the ocean until the freedom in the country is such as to allow a colored man, industrious and harmless, living in the south [sic], earn a decent living and that of her [sic] family, without being from Ku Klux Kan [sic], possibly murdered, her [sic] wife and daughter outraged, and destroyed property. The idea of "freedom" of this country "illuminating the world" or even Patagonia, is quite ridiculous. (Ibid.)

However, there was no formalized protest by the black community of the period. "This ticket [newspaper insertion comment] appeared in the *Gazette* a month after her [?] inauguration. But the vast majority of black Americans did not make waves during the inauguration, they were content to ignore it, feeling little concerned by the statue" (ibid.).

And even still today protests do continue at the statue's sight. On Independence Day 4 July 2018, a woman attempted to climb the Statue of Liberty, and the Island was evacuated.<sup>44</sup> Patricia Okoumou made the effort to protest the incarceration and separation from their families of the children of undocumented entrants who crossed USA borders. Actions by our government, impossible to believe. The United Nations defines the term clearly: "A refugee is

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<sup>43</sup> "A Chinese View of the Statue of Liberty." [Www.ftrain.com](http://www.ftrain.com). 12 August 2003. Originally from *The American Missionary*, January 1885. Retrieved 11 February 2020.

<sup>44</sup> Aguilera, Jasmine. "This Woman Climbed the Statue of Liberty to Protest Family Separation. One Year Later, She's Wondering What's Really Changed." *Time*. [Www.time.com](http://www.time.com). 2 July 2019.

someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group. ... Most likely, they cannot return home, or are afraid to do so.”<sup>45</sup> The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (also commonly called the 1951 Refugee Convention or the Geneva Convention of 28 July 1951) is a multi-lateral treaty that defines refugee status, the responsibilities of nations with regard to refugees, and the rights of individuals who are seeking asylum; originally, there was a time limit placed. However, a 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (commonly called the 1967 Protocol) removed the geographic restrictions and also the time limit. Interestingly, the USA **was not** a signatory to the Geneva Convention document but did sign on to the Protocol in 1968. Thus, the United States of America has a very troubled and troubling history with regard to all those fantastic qualities seen embedded in the Statue of Liberty. The rhetorical evidence of USA involvement in those wonderful qualities for which the Statue of Liberty stands, too often in reality, seem only to be a façade.

The United States of America refuses to allow refugees to enter in 2019. Okoumou’s protest lasted three hours, and she was arrested. Her conviction brought a sentence of 200 hours of community service (community service?) and *five* years of probation. This *Time* article interestingly reports that Ms. Okoumou is an immigrant from Republic of the Congo when she was 23 (age 45 in 2019). She reported that she became a human rights activist when Donald Trump became President. The article reports that at one interview the following context:

When Okoumou sat down with *TIME* to discuss ... the events leading up to the

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<sup>45</sup> “What is a refugee?” USA for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. [Www.unrefugees.org](http://www.unrefugees.org). Retrieved 17 February 2020.

July 4 protest, she wore a white dress with the words “I care,” written in black on the front—an outfit she refers to as her uniform and a clear reference to the ‘I really don’t care’ jacket First Lady Melania Trump wore when she visited the border in July 2018.”

At the time of Okoumou’s protest action, there was national and international news reportage for a short while. Later the storied event became invisible. A visual rhetorical analysis of our iconic Statue of Liberty—*Liberty Enlightening the World (La Liberté éclairant le monde)*—that avoids mention of such life realities of this, complex in its simplicity, rhetorical situation (context) we educators must inform our students is a fact and reality of rhetorical discourse. This information is representative of the surrounding context that truly engaged and knowledgeable rhetorical analysts would report, certainly ideological (rhetorical) critics most certainly would. This is but one injustice of the many, too often too many, traditional rhetorical critics continue to ignore.

America’s long and eternal history of class distinction and discrimination, xenophobia and discrimination, sex and gender discrimination, racial prejudice and discrimination continue to be written. It existed before the nation’s founding and not surprisingly continues strong today (21<sup>st</sup> century). Legal theorist Derrick Bell has written an interesting and quite plausible theory in this regard, explaining expansively his “interest conversion theory”<sup>46</sup> and “racial realism” theory in his books *And We Are Not Saved: The Elusive Quest for Racial Justice* (1987) and *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism* (1992). Bell first explained his “interest conversion” legal theory in his Harvard Law Review article “*Brown v. Board of Education* and

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<sup>46</sup> Lee, Cynthia. “Cultural Convergence: Interest Convergence Theory Meets the Cultural Defense.” GW Law Faculty Publications & Other Works. 2007.  
[www.scholarship.law.gwu.edu](http://www.scholarship.law.gwu.edu).

the Interest-Convergence Dilemma.”<sup>47</sup> The interests of African Americans go through a legal and political cycle of gains followed by losses, and as a result, Bell argues that “[t]he interest of blacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it converges with the interests of whites.” And Bell’s later racial realism theory he explains expansively:

That the litigation and legislation based on the belief in eventual racial justice have always been dependent on the ability of believers both to remain faithful to the creed of racial equality and to reject the contrary message of discrimination. That, despite our best efforts to control or eliminate it, oppression on the basis of race returns time after time—in different guises, but it always returns. That all the formal or aspirational structure in the world can’t mask the racial reality of the last three centuries. (Bell, *Faces*, 98)

He continues the discussion by announcing “Racial realism has four major themes” (ibid.) as the book index notes “Racial realism theory, 93-108” for the full discussion of this theory. At first glance, the theory is somewhat depressing, but he explains that such a realization would allow African Americans and other noble supporters of human rights to locate and gain new avenues for success. These theories are explored more fully in the sections that follow.

America’s Statue of Liberty is iconic splendor both physically and metaphorically. The vision presents all that is America’s promise. The reality does not exist today, but the promise itself has meaning. America can continue its struggle toward becoming more close to its metaphysical aspirations. To the world at large the Statue is a universal symbol, that of fairness, <justice>, and equality, equal opportunity for all. America’s promise.

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<sup>47</sup> Bell, Derrick. “*Brown v. Board of Education* and the Interest-Convergence Dilemma.” 93 Harv. L. Rev. 518 (1980).

*The Flag and The Pledge of Allegiance, including  
Manner of Delivery—An Ideological Analysis*

The 1950s in America was a time of trauma and turmoil although our public memory too often writes a mythical picture of the period as one of halcyon days of peace and tranquility. “Make America Great Again.” Native Americans, our nation’s indigenous populations, were and unfortunately still remain a complete afterthought in our American conscience. Women continued to be mere fawning helpmates to their men, having only limited restricted rights; they were still new to voting in this country (the Nineteenth Amendment had only passed in 1920). Yet in many states, women still could not even obtain credit in their own names, divorce without their husbands’ consent, or exert full control over their bodies (reproductive rights; abortion was illegal). Hispanic laborers, especially those not having legal residence documents, lived at the mercy of their overseers. Even today in twenty-first century America, women must remain vigilant in maintaining a right to full control over their personal physical reproductive autonomy. To belabor an observation: some areas of human existence are just beyond the capability of human control. Women of means will always have abortion as an option; the place of men with

regard to abortion is to join women in educating young people about matters of sex and reproduction, and to make certain that abortion is safe and rare.

African Americans in much of the old Confederate South were denied voting rights (Grandfather Clause, literacy tests, poll taxes, sundown laws) and worse—lynching was not uncommon, the condemnable practice “ending” in this form only in the very late 1950s, at the dawn of the 1960s and the burgeoning civil rights movement. Sharecropping would become a common practice in the American South. Public schools, colleges, and professional schools were still rigidly segregated in the 1950s or largely nonexistent for blacks in the South and much of the North, but still these states proffered the claim that facilities existed for blacks, only “separate and ‘equal.’” Sundown laws requiring blacks to be off the streets “before sundown” were in force in many community towns. Blacks were obligated to work in rural areas as sharecroppers or otherwise largely menial jobs for minimum wages and were regularly denied service at public establishments, including lunch counters, restaurants, public restrooms, hotels, gas stations, and so on, being required to sit (or stand) in the back of public transportation and even required to use separate public water fountains. The 1950s and before were anything but calm and peaceful for women and peoples of color. Injustice reigned everywhere.

Yet young children and older students were required each new school day to stand facing the American flag while placing their right hands over their hearts and in unison repeat a pledge of allegiance: “*I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands ....*” Of course these young children were merely performing mimicking recitations as they had been instructed to perform, many of them (most?) not really knowing of what they were speaking. And those older children who might challenge the veracity of the

pledge would be summarily disciplined if the student refused to shout the pledge in unison, as ordered, “for such impertinent behavior.”

The Pledge was an unfortunately false symbol, “... *one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.*” Really? The phrase “under God” is also problematic because supposedly the nation formed was one having a “freedom of religion” from the First Amendment, which of necessity would include a freedom to not be religious. Yet perhaps a majority of political leaders would aggressively announce that “America is a Christian nation.” And of course the next phrase “with liberty and justice for all” would be laughable were it not such a serious prevarication. Even today in the early years of a new century, the USA incarcerates more of its citizens than any other single nation in the world, and most for nonviolent drug offenses. After all, caffeine is a drug; nicotine is a drug; alcohol is a drug. Yet these drugs remain legal. All drugs are probably harmful to the human body, and outlawing just some harmful drugs only creates a “illegal” criminal industry for that drug. Prison should not be a place for people who prefer and use certain drugs instead of other drugs. Comedian Dick Gregory during the 1960s would often comment that if caffeine were ruled illegal, our grandmothers would become subject to arrest as criminals.

Life for the better for women and peoples of color in America did begin to change in the 1960s, mostly as a result of peaceful nonviolent demonstrations and protests as widely seen through the cleansing lens of public television. The USA has always been in a position through its stable government of laws, for the most part, and societal norms to actually begin providing this “liberty and justice for all.” However, the (mostly all) men of power in government had neither the critical will nor the humanity to act and make the country move more rapidly towards



this promise. Men (again, mostly) of ill will seemed to flourish in their harsh consideration and treatment of women and peoples of color.

Our criminal justice system still remains clearly in a state of crisis, yet federal and state government officials and political leaders neglect to act as they mask this distressing reality of life in the USA today. Unfortunately, our local and national media also neglect coverage of this distressing travesty of justice in America; clearly documented in Bryan Stevenson's book *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*. Of all the countries of the world today, the USA has the highest percentage of its population confined to prisons.<sup>48</sup> The USA, according to a BBC website, has a total prison population that is more than the next two nations—China (#2) and Russia (#3)—combined. Yet our governmental officials and political leaders lend a blind eye to this unfortunate reality. This statistic is important because, obviously, not all of these prisoners are guilty of the crime(s) for which they are charged; nothing in life is 100% perfect—ever. So, how many of our incarcerated American citizens are actually innocent of the crimes for which they are charged? When would it become a *real* problem: if it were just 1% or 5% or 10% or some larger percentage? With regard to women, the statistics are even more dire. According to a published report by the Prison Policy Initiative, the USA incarcerates 133 women per 100,000 total residents, which is the highest, by far, incarceration rate for women in the world:

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<sup>48</sup> “Half of the world’s prison population of about nine million is held in the US, China, or Russia.” BBC NEWS: World Prison Populations. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk). Web. And see also “Countries with the largest number of prisoners per 100,000 of the national population, as of July 2018.” Statistics: The Statistics Portal, Statistics and Studies, from more than 22,500 Sources. [www.statista.com](http://www.statista.com). Web. See also (Wytsma) US Department of Justice. “Correctional Populations in the United States, 2014.” December 2015. [www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus14.pdf](http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus14.pdf). Web.

Only **4% of the world's female population** lives in the U.S., but the U.S. accounts for **over 30% of the world's incarcerated women**. ... The true scale of U.S. over-incarceration becomes even more apparent when we look to our closest allies, the fellow founding countries of the North American Treaty Organization (NATO). Nearly half of our states ... including the state of Georgia [, the 13<sup>th</sup> highest state in women's incarceration rates yet incarcerating a higher number of its women than any other NATO ally country individually,] continue to incarcerate women at least 10 times the rates of our closest international allies.<sup>49</sup>

Our United States criminal justice system is in a continuing state of crisis.

**FIRST INTERLUDE ... SELECTED SONGS OF SOCIAL PROTEST—  
RHETORICAL ANALYSES OF FOUR SONGS OF BOB DYLAN**

***“Blowin’ In The Wind” (1963, 2:46 minutes)***

This song is seemingly filled with *erotema*, the rhetorical question, a popular and quite effective public speaking strategy. The song begins, “How many roads must a man walk down / Before you call him a man/.” In the South, more often than not, black men were called “boy” or worse when they are called. The South was notorious with their ceaseless pressure placed upon the black community, to always “keep them in their place.” By asking questions, the speaker draws in an audience, and once drawn in, the audience is automatically more committed to following the speaker's argument. Corbett and Connors comment, “[A]sking a question, not for the

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<sup>49</sup> Kajstura, Aleks. “States of Women Incarceration: The Global Context 2018.” [www.prisonpolicy.org](http://www.prisonpolicy.org). June 2018. Web.

purpose of eliciting an answer but for the purpose of asserting or denying something obliquely [is generally an effective public speaking strategy] ... . (404)

The next lyric presents two **metaphors** followed by Dylan's oblique answer, "Yes, 'n' how many seas must a white dove sail / Before she sleeps in the sand? / Yes, 'n' how many times must the cannonballs fly / Before they're forever banned?" *Hypophora* is a form of *erotema*, a question followed immediately by an answer from the speaker (Moliken [et al.] 30). Since Dylan's answer is cloaked in mystery as he asks the rhetorical question in the form of a metaphor and follows up with an answer that is also a metaphor, perhaps this stanza can be considered either *erotema* or *hypophora*, there being no conclusive answer: "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind ... ." Also interesting is that the first stanza ends without punctuation; in fact, the only sentence ending punctuation is the question mark, nine in all. Even the last line of the song also ends without punctuation. Perhaps Dylan felt that omitting the full stop period, ending independent clauses, would enhance the moving haunt of the lyrics.

The second stanza also begins with *hypophora* and *erotema* (at least with this lyric, which seems to have greater clarity), again Dylan asks the rhetorical question in the form of a **metaphor**, followed by his answer, also in the form of a different metaphor: "How many years can a mountain exist / Before it's washed to the sea? / Yes, 'n' how many years can some people exist / Before they're allowed to be free? /" A very clear response to the first inquiry is "eternity, if at all"; however, the second question could draw the conclusion "never, not ever," as legal theorist Derrick Bell asserts. Dylan continues, "Yes, 'n' how many times can a man turn his head / Pretending he just doesn't see? / The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind / The answer is blowin' in the wind /". Again, no sentence (independent clause) ending punctuation. Here Dylan utilizes *anaphora* repetition and **allusion**, "an incidental mention of something,

either directly or **by implication**” ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com), emphasis added). The American Rhetoric website defines “allusion” as “figure of explication using a brief or casual reference to famous person, group, historical event, place, or work of art. It is important to stress that the referent of an allusion generally be well known ([www.americanrhetoric.com](http://www.americanrhetoric.com), emphasis added). The lyric is obviously referring to African Americans, especially when the earlier lyrics obviously referred to black people.

The third and final stanza closes the song with three rhetorical questions in succession: “How many times must a man look up / Before he can see the sky? / Yes, ‘n’ how many ears must one man have / Before he can hear people cry? Yes, ‘n’ how many deaths will it take till he knows / That too many people have died? /. More questions, more *anaphora*, more metaphors. Dylan’s method early on in his career was to rely primarily on inspiration for his writing. He reports that this song was actually written in just ten minutes in a coffee shop on 16 April 1962 (Margotin and Guesdon 50). Margotin and Guesdon provide some insight as they report his words about the song:

“‘There ain’t too much I can say about this song except that the answer is blowing in the wind.’ ‘Blowin’ in the Wind’ poses a series of rhetorical questions: three stanzas of eight lines each, each line asking a question for which the answer (always the same) is contained in the chorus. Dylan discusses the archetypal images of protest songs: equality, persecution, racism, violence, indifference, selfishness—universal themes that resonated in 1962 amid the Cold War and the struggle for the recognition of civil rights. But he only asks questions and gives no answers. As an artist, his mission is to raise awareness, not to reassure his audience by serving them ready-made truths on a silver platter.” (Ibid.)

This song would become very popular as performed by other noteworthy singers, including Peter, Paul and Mary (1963), “Joan Baez (1963), Sam Cooke (1964), and Stevie Wonder (who reached tenth place on the charts),” among a number of notable others (ibid.).

***“With God On Our Side” (1964, 7:08 minutes)***

The first stanza is of a young man, perhaps Bob Dylan, in contemplation about his country, the USA, and its place and actions within the world community: “Oh my name it is nothin’ / My age it means less / The country I come from / Is called the Midwest / I’s taught and brought up there / The laws to abide / And that the land that I live in / Has God on its side ... .” Interesting, there is no independent clause closing punctuation and actually no punctuation at all within the opening lines of this song, except one sole use of a single quotation mark. Maybe Bob Dylan is in idle thought as he indirectly introduces himself to his audience. His Midwest heritage, almost representative of a separate country, is a community of strict patriotic beliefs. And the important message of the stanza is that he does not consider himself anyone especially different from other people and that he along with other Americans learned in school that, as compared to other countries, we Americans are the good guys; that the Christian God shines His light on us. This is an interesting opening because whether listening to the song or reading the words of the lyrics, one anticipates that something important, a confusing quandary in thought for him is approaching, a **climax** that is, which is an effective rhetorical strategy.

“Oh the history books tell it / They tell it so well / The cavalaries charged / The Indians fell / The cavalaries charge / The Indians died / Oh the country was young / With God on its side / . The speaker Bob Dylan, symbolic for all of us Americans, is retelling the story all of us raised in the USA know well, what we all have been taught in our schools. He uses *anaphora* repetition to highlight certain thoughts. The message in our history classes has been that the

USA has an honorable past and present with regard to the wars that we negotiate. However Dylan's speaker who is symbolic for the everyman/everywoman is beginning to question the veracity of what he has learned in school. The truth of America's actions is actually quite different from what we have learned in school. As Dylan's speaker is beginning to realize, America from our nation's very founding as those in power signed treaties that they too often ignored exerted a devastating annihilation upon the Native inhabitants of this land the framers appropriated. The problem of these realities is that such actions, of course, would not meet the approval of a truly loving Christian God, who so many Americans worship.

The early European settlers did not want to just share the land with the indigenous peoples whom they viewed as "savages." They devastated the indigenous peoples, took their lands, forcing the Native inhabitants to move themselves "out of sight and out of mind." The deplorable reality of their actions was that there was more than enough land to serve the Native populations and the incoming intruders, but the intruders did not want to share the Native peoples' land with the Native peoples.

"Oh the Spanish-American / War had its day / And the Civil War too / Was soon laid away / And the names of the heroes / I's made to memorize / With guns in their hands / And God on their side / . The speaker is acknowledging that confusion surrounded the reasons why there was a World War I and all these other wars and what was so noble about it and why actually did the USA even enter it. But as always, we kids never questioned our leaders or our teachers, we just accepted that we entered these wars and that we won. And as expected, we continued to be proud that our country had won, never questioning what exactly we were fighting for.

"Oh the First World War, boys / It closed our its fate / The reason for fighting / I never got straight / But I learned to accept it / Accept it with pride / For you don't count the dead /

When God's on your side / . A modest dose of **alliteration** is of interest, but Dylan continues his thoughts, specifically that we had never questioned the causes of these wars as we continued to believe and accept what our leaders were telling us. We never focused on our dead or our injured; our only concern was that we had won. And we Americans just accepted that result with a "proud to be an American" mindset. Dylan continues his contemplation, growing in his urgency: "When the Second World War / Came to an end / We forgave the Germans / And we were friends / Though they murdered six million / In the ovens they fried / The Germans now too / Have God on Their side." Because we now accepted them as friends too. Dylan's everyman/everywoman is coming to terms with the horrific nature of war; how enemy combatants can kiss and make-up even after causing such total devastation and mayhem toward each other and others. But a realization is setting in that possibly "God is [*not*] on our side." If we (our countrymen/countrywomen) can become friends with a combatant who actually acted to incinerate other human beings—men, women, and children—in gas ovens, maybe God is not as pleased and forgiving as we Americans might like to think, or hope.

"I've learned to hate Russians / All through my whole life / If another war starts / It's them we must fight / to hate them and fear them / To run and to hide / And accept it all bravely / With God on my side / ." Dylan anticipates a future, giving thought to the emerging idea among Americans that perhaps America and its efforts in war may not be so noble and deserving of "God's love," especially since now a new enemy is afoot that we, people of America, are supposed to now hate. The closing remarks of the lyric appears as sarcasm, an often risk-filled tactic for rhetors. Corbett and Connors comment, "*Sarcasm* is another mode of humor that requires a master hand, for it can easily go wrong. Sarcasm seems to succeed best when it is directed at an individual; it is risky when it is directed at nationalities, classes, ranks, or

vocations” (282). Dylan’s use herein is more self-deprecating satire, not offensive, of which he includes himself as one among other Americans.

“But now we got weapons / Of the chemical dust / If fire them we’re forced to / Then fire them we must / One push of the button / And a shot the world wide / And you never ask questions / When God’s on your side / .” The first comment is an **allusion** to nuclear war and an indirect consideration about the what that might (would?) happen with regard to nuclear annihilation. This passage is made clearly visible by a pithy comment from Carl Sagan, “The nuclear arms race is like two sworn enemies standing waist deep in gasoline, one with three matches, the other with five.” As the saying goes, “a picture is worth a thousand words.” Moliken (et al.) writes affectingly about this rhetorical device, “*Allusions* can be used to help your reader see a broader picture, to evoke a negative or positive feeling, or to add credibility to your writing” (72). Dylan’s use herein is effective in causing listeners to rethink the idea of nuclear action; especially so since we are indirectly influenced to “never ask questions.” There would actually be no winners, and it would be inconceivable that God would still be on our side.

“Through many dark hour / I’ve been thinkin’ about this / That Jesus Christ / Was betrayed by a kiss / But I can’t think for you / you’ll have to decide / Whether Judas Iscariot / Had God on his side / .” Dylan’s speaker has now come to a logical conclusion as he asks his audience about conclusions they may draw. According to biblical legend (the four Gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John) Judas Iscariot was one of the originals among the Twelve Disciples of Jesus Christ. Judas betrayed Jesus before a council and audience in the Garden of Gethsemane who had come to arrest Him. The betrayal was in the form of a kiss planted upon Jesus, which indicated the person to whom the council had come to arrest. Dylan asks a rhetorical question by indirection; that maybe we Americans are being incurious when we



continue to merely believe what we are being told in the media and in our schools about America's actions and deeds. The closing comment provides symbolism in that America's (our) actions were not dissimilar to those of Judas Iscariot and the question Dylan puts forth to his audience is "whether Judas Iscariot had Jesus on his side." If no, then perhaps, God is not on our side.

The final passage of the lyrics brings all this contemplation to an end, "So now as I'm leavin' / I'm weary as Hell / The confusion I'm feelin' / Ain't no tongue can tell / The words fill my head / and fall to the floor / If God's on our side / He'll stop the next war / ." A reality sets in. So, this continuing inner battle of contemplation is exhausting, but a conclusion has been reached for himself (Dylan). He only asks his audience to consider and reconsider their thoughts and beliefs about America's actions and whether God is actually supportive of them all. But in the end, Dylan's conclusion he has reached for himself is that if God is indeed on our side rather than support America He would actually end war altogether.

Dylan's convincing plot is his conscious effort to get the American people to actually think for themselves about what they are being told by our America's leaders. His lyrics suggest by implication that if there is a God being, He or She most certainly would not be a supporter of war—destruction and devastation, the often hidden consequences thereof. And if there is this God figure, He or She would not just be on our side because He or She would just not allow war to occur.

Our American history books, unfortunately have erased the actual history and devastation America has caused, such that our children are too often ignorant of our nation's past. For America to reach its promise, it must come to terms with its past—the ethnic cleansing against the indigenous peoples, the brutality and injustices heaped upon African Americans, and the

assorted mischief caused to Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, among other Others of American society. Dylan does not detail these realities; only by implication does he indirectly pose a question, what we all have (not) learned in school.

***“The Lonesome Death Of Hattie Carroll” (1964, 5:47 minutes)***

On the day of 28 August 1963, many citizens among America’s population watched a seminal event in modern twentieth century America—The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, where the esteemed civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his iconic “I Have A Dream” speech. On **that same day** just down the road in a Baltimore, Maryland, courthouse, William Devereaux “Billy” Zantzing, a twenty-four-year-old white man from a wealthy Maryland family was sentenced in a Maryland courthouse to six months at Washington county jail (instead of state prison where he would be susceptible to a prisoner form of justice) plus a fine of \$500 for the assault and killing death of Hattie Carroll, a black Baltimore hotel barmaid.<sup>50</sup> Hattie Carroll was fifty-one-years-old and the mother of ten children; the killing happened at about 1:00 AM. Bob Dylan felt compelled to write about this injustice. Zantzing himself would go on to live a long life; he died in January 2009.

Dylan opens the song with a matter-of-fact retelling of the events that happened:

“William Zantzing killed poor Hattie Carroll / With a cane that he twirled around his diamond ring finger / At a Baltimore hotel society gath’rin’ / And the cops were called in and his weapon

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<sup>50</sup> “William Zantzing ... [was convicted and] served six months and was fined \$500 for manslaughter in 1963 for striking the 51-year-old barmaid with his cane for taking too long to serve him a drink” (*San Diego Union-Tribune*. 11 January 2009.

[www.sandiegouniontribune.com](http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com).

took from him / .” Hattie Carroll would die in a hospital about eight hours later. “As they rode him in custody down to the station / And booked William Zantzinger for first-degree murder / But you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears / Take the rag away from your face / Now ain’t the time for your tears.” See no evil; Hear no evil; Speak no evil: The history of America’s actions and (mis)adventures (around the world).

“William Zantzinger, who at twenty-four years / Owns a tobacco farm of six hundred acres / With rich wealthy parents who provide and protect him / And high office relations in the politics of Maryland / Reacted to his deed with a shrug of his shoulders /.” That a black woman was killed by an act of violence was of little concern or consequence to the authorities. Dylan in his pace and his words is revealing the matter-of-fact lack of concern that authorities exhibited where African Americans were victimized by whites. A matter of style, the use of the **epithet** rhetorical device is useful as the rhetor seeks to evoke a deeper response from an audience. Here Dylan uses redundant descriptive adjectives (“rich” followed by “wealthy”) applied to the noun (“parents”) for a purpose, described well by Moliken (et al.): “**Epithet** is a common stylistic device, although it can be easily overused. It involves attaching a descriptive adjective to a noun to bring a scene to life or evoke a particular idea or emotion. ... By connecting an unexpected adjective to a noun, the writer brings the subject alive in the reader’s mind” (155).

“And swear words and sneering, and his tongue it was snarling / In a matter of minutes on bail was out walking / But you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears / Take the rag away from your face / Now ain’t the time for your tears / .” More *anaphora* repetition as the final three lines of the stanza serve as a chorus, “the part of a song that recurs at intervals, usually following each verse; also called the refrain” ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)). These three lines are

repeated in each of the first three stanzas of the song. The comment is directed to those who feign concern but do nothing to redress the injustice, merely “talking loud and saying nothing.”<sup>51</sup>

The third stanza provides a description of Hattie Carroll and the work she did: “Hattie Carroll was a maid of the kitchen / She was fifty-one years old and gave birth to ten children / Who carried the dishes and took out the garbage And never sat once at the head of the table / And didn’t even talk to the people at the table / Who just cleaned up all the food from the table / And emptied the ashtrays on a whole other level / .” Dylan’s effort here utilizing modest **symbolism** shows clearly the kind of person she was and the kind of persons the patrons were; she was just a hardworking diligent employee who the hotel guests probably never even saw, even while they might be looking directly at her. Dylan’s effort here is to more adequately humanize Hattie Carroll, and some listeners might begin to actually *see* her for the person she was for the very first time.

The third stanza continues with Dylan’s description of the horrible crime Zantzinger committed: “[Hattie Carroll] Got killed by a blow, lay slain by a cane / That sailed through the air and came down through the room / Doomed and determined to destroy all the gentle / And she never done nothing to William Zantzinger / .” The lyrics inform listeners that Hattie Carroll did nothing at all to warrant such an evil act, and perhaps the undercurrent of evil committed by the others of his kind were almost as bad. The wealthy parents who by their actions condoned their son’s behavior, the three-judge panel who allowed this travesty of (in)justice—reducing the criminal charges from murder to manslaughter, and the entire criminal justice system that processed this criminal trial. Though generally of little consequence, Dylan’s song does have a

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<sup>51</sup> The title of a song recorded by soul singer James Brown.

few factual errors pointed out in a decade 2020 follow-up news report: the killer Zantzingers surname is misspelled in the published lyrics, and Hattie Carroll had eleven children, not ten.<sup>52</sup> Again, the final three lines of the stanza repeat the same.

The final stanza begins by introducing the trial action:

**In the courtroom of honor, the judge pounded his gavel / To show that all's equal and that the courts are on the level / And that the strings in the books ain't pulled and persuaded. And that even the nobles get properly handled / Once that the cops have chased after and caught 'em / And that the ladder of law has no top and no bottom / Stared at the person who killed for no reason / Who just happened to be feelin' that way without warnin' / .** (Emphasis added)

A splendid summation of the sequence of events. The courtroom description of eight lines is clearly **sarcasm** used by Dylan. He refers to the courtroom using the word “honor”; Dylan states indirectly that the courts are just treating all defendants equally, a statement of course that is obviously not true; that court officials do not “pull strings” for wealthy or powerful defendants, also an untruth; and even the upper-class defendants are treated the same as poor defendants, also more untruth:

... [A] tribunal of judges ... [reduced] Zantzingers homicide charge to manslaughter, and Zantzingers ended up serving six months in a county jail. The judges were wary of imposing a longer sentence, as that would have required Zantzingers to serve time in a state prison. They feared he would be a prime target

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<sup>52</sup> Marco Margaritoff. “The Tragic True Story Behind Bob Dylons ‘The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll.’ All That’s Interesting. [www.allthatsinteresting.com](http://www.allthatsinteresting.com). 1 January 2020.

for the prison's largely black population. What's more, they delayed his sentence by a couple of weeks so he could collect his tobacco crops. (Ibid.)

The use of **sarcasm** carries risks for the rhetor, but here Dylan's use is most appropriate.

**Sarcasm** is a form of humor, specifically satirical wit; it does require a careful use to be accepted by audiences (Corbett and Connors 282).

The final six lines bring the song to a conclusion: "And he spoke through his cloak, most deep and distinguished / And handed out strongly, for penalty and repentance / William Zantinger with a six-month sentence / Oh, but you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears / Bury the rag deep in your face / For now's the time for your tears/ ." Dylan provides a response to his ongoing refrain. The judges all appeared distinguished as they went ahead and handed down "a six-month sentence" for the defendant's action in committing a killing, the killing of another human being. Had the racial roles been reversed, how might <justice> have been served.

The closing two lines offer a response to the final two lines of the first three stanzas as Dylan is now, after completing his retelling of the full story, telling the audience that the court has ruled and that nothing further can be done, so "now's the time for your tears." Dylan here is using an organizational rhetorical device called **climax**, where the rhetor builds a narrative by ordering his sequence of events from those of lesser importance to an ending conclusion, one of the most important ideas. Moliken (et al.) explains the concept of **climax** as follows:

[**Climax** is] a way of organizing ideas in ... [the] writing so that they proceed from the least to the most important. It is one of the basic principles of structure—you slowly build your reader up to a state of excitement, then deliver your crowning statements. Anything can be ordered climatically: from single

words, to short clauses, to longer sentences, to entire paragraphs in a paper. ...  
 Ideally, you want your reader to be drawn in immediately and dragged along,  
 enthralled until the ultimate *climax*. (101)

***“The Times They Are A-Changin’” (1964, 3:14 minutes)***

Folk music has a popular cultural tradition that is set apart from traditional commercial productions of music. One definition places its meaning to “music that originates in traditional popular culture or that is written in such a style. Folk music is typically of unknown authorship and is transmitted orally from generation to generation” ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)). Another definition offers more detail: “music, usually of simple character and anonymous authorship, handed down among the common people by oral tradition” ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)).

This music gained a resurgence in the early 1960s, where many community artists grew their following as they became commercially popular with nationally known singers and groups of singers performing in concerts and on records. Bob Dylan wrote this anthem in the very early 1960s as it would prophetically introduce an emerging (to young adulthood) baby boom generation to American society. The song’s genesis is explained competently by Margotin and Guesdon:

Bob Dylan wrote ‘The Times They Are A-Changin’ in the fall of 1963, inspired by old Irish and British ballads. Contrary to “Masters of War” and “A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall,” “The Times They Are A-Changin’” did not deal with any specific topic. The song instead expressed a feeling, a shared hope that the sixties would transform society [for the better]. (87)

That they did. And the 1960s did change American culture, for the better. A similar view explains the song (and popular album title) as “a call to action ... [as it] became an anthem for frustrated youth. It summed up the anti-establishment feelings of people [called beatniks in the 1950s] who would be later known [in the 1960s] as hippies. Many of the lyrics are based on the Civil Rights movement in the US.”<sup>53</sup>

The song has five stanzas with each stanza ending with an identical refrain “For the times they are a-changin’” that highlights the simple unconvoluted message. Each of the first four stanzas is addressed to a different segment of our American society as announced by the stanza’s first line: the opening stanza addressed to everyone everywhere; the second stanza to “writers and critics”; the third stanza to “senators and congressmen”; and the fourth stanza to “mothers and fathers.” The fifth stanza serves as a conclusion for the previous catalogue of audience factions: “Come gather ‘round people / Wherever you roam / And admit that the waters / Around you have grown / And accept it that soon / You’ll be drenched to the bone / If your time to you is worth savin’ / Then you better start swimmin’ or you’ll sink like a stone / For the times they are a-changin’ / .” These ending multiples of the refrain repetition, *epistrophe*, follow clauses and complete sentences.

This opening salvo is a shout-out from the baby boom generation to their elders that change is coming. The popularly pictured bucolic vision of 1950s America—which was anything but for women and peoples of color, most especially for African Americans—would be now open for change. The youthful generation is reaching young adulthood and will be engineering a change. Perhaps most prominently the burgeoning civil rights movement of black

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<sup>53</sup> “‘The Times They Are A-Changin’ by Bob Dylan.” Songfacts. [www.songfacts.com](http://www.songfacts.com). Retrieved 24 February 2020.



people in the South and more aggressively by their young. This first stanza has Bob Dylan as the voice of this coming-of-age generation announcing to everyone everywhere that change is coming.

The first stanza opens thoughtfully with assorted **symbolism**. The growing advent of television becoming more available to middle class families and even working class families would bring America's unjust treatment of blacks in the South and others of color there and elsewhere who began to speak out to the general public in all areas of the country. Only to be deluged by police authorities with unnecessary and cruel violent reaction, the discord and turmoil only grew worse. There is **symbolism** in this passage as "the waters / Around you have grown / And accept it that soon / You'll be drenched to the bone / " appears to inform everyone that change is afoot in society and advice is offered that everyone should adjust to the changes or they could be overcome by the change. The world of the past will not be the world of the future. **Symbolism** is used by writers to more carefully present an argument using comparisons (analogy, metaphor, simile, or other) in presenting ideas and explanations. Here the everyman/everywoman is announcing that those who do not adjust may not survive the times.

The second stanza is directed to "writers and critics" as the song's voice of reason begins to now speak to various segments of the population: "Come writers and critics / Who prophesize with your pen / And keep your eyes wide / The chance won't come again / And don't speak too soon / For the wheel's still in spin / And there's no tellin' who that it's namin' / For the loser now will be later to win / For the times they are a-changin' / ." To the people who record the present (journalists) and the past (historians), Dylan requests they be patient and observe, because the society is moving forward rapidly in a state of constant (possibly evolutionary) change. That the recorders should not begin the recording too soon, because the "times they are

a-changin'” quite rapidly. Those Others of society (women and peoples of color) were beginning to rise up in challenge against the former status quo.

The third stanza speaks to political leaders using **metaphor**, “Come senators, congressmen / Please heed the call / Don’t stand in the doorway. Don’t block up the hall / For he that gets hurt / Will be he who has stalled / There’s a battle outside and it is ragin’ / it’ll soon shake your windows and rattle your walls / For the times they are a-changin’ / .” Political leaders are too often reluctant to engage with the progress of society. Dylan, as the voice of the young generation, is calling the politicians to account, asking them to make arrangements to accede to the rapidly growing change or face deleterious consequences. Honesty in communication engenders a thoughtful *ethos* appeal to audiences. Listeners appreciate what they intuit as serious authentic guidance and instruction (advice). Of course, the times were changing even more rapidly than even Dylan had imagined, “[I]t was a poetic invitation to gather ‘writers and critics,’ ‘senators and congressmen,’ ‘mothers and fathers,’ ... hoping his call would be heard.” We know, however, that Bob Dylan was not heard: less than one month after the recording, John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, and soon afterward large numbers of GIs left for Vietnam” (Margotin and Guesdon 87). (Three future Presidents—Clinton, Bush, and Trump—all age sixteen, would not ever be among them. Symbolic of something dire in America.). To elect to our highest office a political leader who himself (a woman has never been elected president) was reluctant to serve when it mattered most is demonstrably symbolic of a rot in our nation’s core.

The fourth stanza next speaks to family, “Come mothers and fathers / Throughout the land / And don’t criticize / What you can’t understand / Your sons and your daughters / Are beyond your command / Your old road is rapidly agin’ / Please get out of the new one if you

can't lend your hand / For the times they are a-changin' / ." Mildly disrespectful but impassioned in delivery, Dylan asks (commands?) the parents to move with the change or at least "get out of the road [of change]." True, the children are becoming young adults, but here Dylan seems overly and unnecessarily harsh with the moms and dads, except for the penultimate line of the stanza, "Please get out of the new one if you can't lend your hand"; but if the parents "get out of the new one," where would they go? Here Dylan may not be speaking for everyone of this generation.

The final stanza draws a conclusion for this everyman/everywoman talk to the(ir) elders using **symbolism** and **metaphor**: "The line it is drawn / The curse it is cast / The slow one now / Will later be fast / As the present now / Will later be past / The order is rapidly fadin' / And the first one now will later be last / For the times they are a-changin' / ." Lyrically, the language is consistent to each of its audiences, perhaps to the public at large, to the writers and critics, and to the politicians, the very serious harsh tone is warranted; but to the parents the sentiment seems unnecessarily harsh and uncaring. Most teenagers often rebel at times, but as they begin to enter college age, a more subtle consciousness pleasantly begins to emerge. Here Dylan's everyman is probably not as authentic in his tone as most young people treat and accept their mostly loving parents. Dylan possibly ventures elsewhere here as he vents about some personal individual consequence. But overall, there was a message here in general that needed to be heard.

**PART TWO | WOMEN SEEKING <JUSTICE>**

Genetically, sex and gender have separate and independent meanings, which some cultures readily recognize while others do not. Actually, there can be assigned additional labels beyond the designations *female* and *male*. The USA, possibly the world's most technologically and militarily advanced nation in the history of the world, has itself a quite parochial attitude toward sex and gender that does not comport with the facts and realities of genetics:

Chromosomes are thread-like molecules that carry hereditary information for everything from height to eye-color. They are made of protein and one molecule of DNA, which contains a [sic] organism's genetic instructions, passed down by parents. In humans, other animals, and plants, most chromosomes are arranged in pairs within the nucleus of a cell. Humans have 22 of these chromosome pairs, called autosomes . . . . Humans have an additional pair of sex chromosomes for a

total of 46 chromosomes. The sex chromosomes are referred to as X and Y.

Typically human females have two X chromosomes while males have an XY pairing.<sup>54</sup>

Interestingly, the DNA in the Y chromosome represents only about 2% of the DNA to be found in human cells while the X chromosome represents about 5%.<sup>55</sup> In addition, there is much less variation in Y chromosome DNA than other types of DNA, which means there is less complexity in male (Y chromosome) DNA (ibid.). Thus, in a very real sense, male genetic DNA is deficient when compared to female genetic DNA. Yet throughout the history of humankind, because of their larger size and their more ferocious behavior and aggressive attitude, males have traditionally exerted domineering authority over human communities. In stringently religious societies and communities both here in the USA and abroad, females have restrictions placed upon them and their life paths—restrictive education practices, restrictive clothing practices, and restrictive public behavior allowances. Fortunately in the USA, over the course of centuries and decades, the people have become more enlightened as women have achieved greater levels of equality, but still not total equality or full <justice> in society. Real equity and <justice> for women is still needed in America even today.

The United States Supreme Court ruled in *Roe v. Wade* (1973) that abortion would become legal. The Court's rationale in this case is of secondary import because should abortion again become illegal, it would only just cause the occurrence of more victims; abortion would not end as it would only go underground returning to the back alleys of America. Some aspects

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<sup>54</sup> Szalay, Jessie. "Chromosomes: Definition & Structure." LiveScience. 8 December 2017. [www.livescience.com](http://www.livescience.com). Retrieved 21 January 2019. Web.

<sup>55</sup> Ghose, Tia. "Guys, Your Y Chromosome is an Evolutionary Marvel." 12 November 2012. [www.livescience.com](http://www.livescience.com). Retrieved 21 January 2019. Web.

of life are just beyond the capability of (male) humans to control. However currently almost fifty years later, many political and religious factions continue to denounce this ruling as, unfortunately, some states continue to restrict women's access to abortion, especially for poor women—women of means have always and will always have access. A few states are even restricting women and female minors access where they have become impregnated by rape or incest.

Admittedly, it cannot be denied that at some point during the period of gestation development, from the conception cells to gametes to zygote to embryo to fetus all while still inside the mother's womb, a human life does begin and that human life should be protected by government. That is, at some point during gestation, the state does have an interest in the protection of a human life. *However* in practice, some matters are just beyond the purview of mankind/humankind (men still exert the greatest authority over women's bodies) to control or manipulate. By restricting women's access to safe and reasonable abortion, society is allowed to place restrictions upon the lives of women. Perhaps during much of this gestation cycle, only the woman should have the sole responsibility and final authority to make decisions with regard to how she might best protect and care for her personal physical body. And for situations such as instances of rape and incest and the health of the woman's body and whether to bring to term a fetus having some physical defect are all situations that involve philosophical arenas *beyond* the capacity of males or of society itself to navigate, oversee, or control. Perhaps these are situations where the final decision with regard to abortion is best left to the mother and her physician; with society's interest being best served by focusing its efforts on educating young people—girls *and*

boys—about sexuality, sexual relations, contraception, and conception toward making abortion in America “safe, legal, and rare.”<sup>56</sup>

The lack of acceptance of women in the granting of full citizenship rights in the United States government has a very long history of denial. From the beginning during the Continental Congress meetings of 1776 and prior to the Constitutional Convention of the 1880s, the wealthy males who have come to be called the nation’s Founding Fathers, first and foremost were protecting their own personal pecuniary interests and only *secondarily* the interests of the people. Abigail Adams, wife of Founding Father John Adams, wrote a letter to her husband who was then in meetings at the Constitutional Convention of 1776, where she gave mention of a concern she had:

... and by the way in the new Code of Laws which suppose it will be necessary for you to make I desire you would **Remember the Ladies**, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power in the hands of the Husbands. Remember that all men would be tyrants if they could. If perticular [sic] care and attention is not paid to the Laidies [sic] we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or Representation. That your Sex are Naturally Tyrannical is a Truth is so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute ...

Mrs. Adams obviously had very serious concerns about the ongoings of the men at our nation’s Constitutional Convention. And right she should have been. The Founding Fathers were serving

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<sup>56</sup> Susan A. Cohen. “A Message to the President: Abortion Can Be Safe, Legal and *Still* Rare.” Guttmacher Institute: Issues & Implications. [www.guttmacher.org](http://www.guttmacher.org). Retrieved 3 March 2019. Web.

multiple interests; however, first and foremost were obviously those personal pecuniary interests of their own. A commentary by future president James Madison in a speech in 1787 before the Constitutional Convention is instructive:

The right of suffrage is a fundamental Article in Republican Constitutions. The Regulation of it is, at the same time, a task of peculiar delicacy. Allow the right [to vote] exclusively to property [owners], and the rights of persons may be oppressed ... . Extend it equally to all, and the rights of property [owners, like ourselves] ... may be overruled by a majority without property ...<sup>57</sup>

And so, not surprisingly the Founding Fathers chose the latter option. Interestingly just over a decade later at the Constitutional Convention, the Founding Fathers decided that the new United States Constitution should not make a decision about voting, leaving the States as the final authority. The Constitution states the following at Article 1 Section 4: “The times, places and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each state by the legislature thereof, **but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations.**” These men did not want to make a commitment themselves to widespread suffrage with free and open elections, but they did wish to exert their authority to, at some later date, oversee any and all decisions of the states that may in effect impede in some way their own personal interests. Thus, the United States Constitution would, in effect, continue the ongoing practice of allowing the vote *only* to men who held property rights. Generally for decades, the only persons who could vote in the United States were men who held property, “But African

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<sup>57</sup> “Elections ... the American Way ‘The Founders and the Vote.’” Library of Congress. [Www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov). Retrieved 8 December 2019.



Americans, women, Native Americans, non-English speakers, and citizens between ages 18 and 21 had to fight for the right to vote in America” (ibid.).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

First Wave Feminism (19<sup>th</sup> Century to Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century)<sup>58</sup>

### *Susan B. Anthony | “On Women’s Right to Vote”—A Rhetorical Analysis*

Women in most of United States history were denied their equal rights. Specifically with regard to a citizen’s right to vote, women were not allowed. In 1872, in her hometown of Richmond, New York, Susan B. Anthony did, illegally it seems, vote in the Presidential election. She was

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<sup>58</sup> Drucker, Sally Ann. “Betty Friedan: The Three Waves of Feminism.” Ohio Humanities. [www.ohiohumanities.org](http://www.ohiohumanities.org). 27 April 2018.

later arrested, charged, and convicted of *illegally* voting in an election. Her sentence was to pay a fine of \$100; she refused. The prosecutors decided not to act further.

Thereafter, Susan B. Anthony, *teacher*, lifelong social activist, anti-slavery activist, and women's suffrage activist, gave speeches often. Versions of this speech<sup>59</sup> were given at many venues. On this occasion, Anthony begins her speech clearly, succinctly, and competently: "Friends and Fellow Citizens: I stand before you tonight under indictment for the alleged crime of having voted at the last presidential election, without having a lawful right to vote." She does not deny her guilt for this charge. She merely restates the facts that she will examine, critically. *Brevitas* is a valued rhetorical device used, possibly, too infrequently. By using concise language, a communicator allows listeners to fill in the blanks with their own imagination, which can go to elaborate ends. Of course such a rhetorical strategy may fail, but often the strategy can prove to be quite successful. "*Brevitas* is defined in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* as the expressing of an idea by the very minimum of essential words. *S#@t* happens and *c'est la vie* are examples . . . . By implying more than is said, *brevitas* is distinguished from tautology and understatement . . . [and] often contains elements of aphorism, parataxis, sprezzatura, and elliptic linguistic style."<sup>60</sup>

Next comes a quite lengthy simple sentence of forty-eight words where she informs listeners her precise rationale for committing the "crime," which she contends is actually not a crime. "It shall be my work this evening to prove to you that in thus voting, I not only committed no crime, but instead, simply exercised my citizen's rights, guaranteed to me and all

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<sup>59</sup> "Susan B. Anthony on Women's Right to Vote." The History Place: Great Speeches Collection. [www.historyplace.com](http://www.historyplace.com). Retrieved 18 February 2020.

<sup>60</sup> "What is *brevitas*." Word Finder. [www.findwords.info](http://www.findwords.info). Retrieved 18 February 2020.

United States citizens by the National Constitution, beyond the power of any State to deny.”

*Apodioxis* is “an [e]mphatic rejection or dismissal of an opponent or an opposing proposition.”<sup>61</sup>

Lanham defines the term similarly, “Rejecting an argument indignantly as impertinent or absurdly false. Humans often eagerly follow others who aggressively seem to know where they are going. In a sense, this appears Anthony’s strategy or perhaps just her true belief. Either way, these comments so spoken usually draw in listeners to the speaker’s beliefs.

To offer proof (explanation) of her position, she repeats verbatim the Preamble to the United States Constitution:

We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

One very long simple sentence covering one paragraph of fifty-two words, introducing a list of five objectives, the first named being “establish Justice,” possibly the most important; the word “Justice” is capitalized for emphasis (importance).<sup>62</sup> Anthony immediately begins asserting a *logos* appeal making the counter-argument to her criminal charges. Communicators making a *logos* appeal to an audience emphasize a logical consistency, appeal to common sense. The audience is expected to agree and accept comments that are reasonable and logically consistent with common sense:

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<sup>61</sup> “What is *apodioxis*.” Word Finder. [www.findwords.info](http://www.findwords.info). Retrieved 18 February 2020.

<sup>62</sup> “The US Constitution: Preamble.” United States Courts. [www.uscourts.gov](http://www.uscourts.gov). Retrieved 18 February 2020.

It was we, the people; not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens; but we, the whole people, who formed the Union. And we formed it, not to give the blessings of liberty, but to secure them; not to the half of ourselves and the half of our posterity, but to the whole people—women as well as men.

Her counter-argument is reasonable, precise, and makes complete common sense. Because if women are not to be considered, then why would the framers use the more inclusive term “people” as opposed to the restrictive term “men.”

Anthony continues her precise critique, not unlike a surgeon using her scalpel: “And it is a downright mockery to talk to women of their enjoyment of the blessings of liberty while they are denied the use of the only means of securing them provided by this democratic-republican government—the ballot.” A capable *logos* appeal rebuttal to Anthony’s counter-argument would be difficult to envision.

Anthony next presents her assessment of two legal terms used in the US Constitution: “bill of attainder” and “ex post facto law.” A “bill of attainder” is a law prescribed by some legislature asserting that a person or group of persons have committed a particular crime and as a result are guilty and are to be punished, summarily without a criminal trial.<sup>63</sup> An ex post-facto law is one providing criminal punishment for a person or group for an act that was not criminal when performed.<sup>64</sup> The US Constitution specifically provides in Article 1, Section 9, paragraph 3 “No bill of attainder or ex-post facto law will be passed. Anthony continues her surgical precision effortlessly:

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<sup>63</sup> “Bill of Attainder.” Tech Law Journal. [www.techlawjournal.com](http://www.techlawjournal.com). Retrieved 18 February 2020.

<sup>64</sup> “Ex post facto laws.” [www.encyclopedia.com](http://www.encyclopedia.com). Retrieved 18 February 2020.

For any State to make sex a qualification that must ever result in the disenfranchisement of one entire half of the people is to pass a bill of attainder, or an ex post facto law, and is therefore a violation of the supreme law of the land. By it **the blessings of liberty** are for ever withheld from women and their female posterity. **To them** this government has no **just powers** derived from **the concept of the governed. To them this government is not a democracy. It is not a republic.** (Emphasis added)

With these comments beginning with a complex sentence followed by a collection of simple sentences, Anthony utilizes two preferred rhetorical devices: making detailed reference to a revered document and the always popular repetition technique, a form of *anaphora*. Anthony first uses **allusion** by referring, here indirectly, to the Preamble of our United States Constitution. Secondly, she uses well, with subtlety, the repetition rhetorical device although just twice, the words “to them.” Both devices are popular with public speakers, especially because they are often successful in capturing audience agreement with the speaker’s message.

Anthony then ends this portion of her speech with a collection of sentences that is somewhat convoluted and difficult to follow:

It is not a republic. It is an odious aristocracy; a hateful oligarchy of sex; the most hateful aristocracy ever established on the face of the globe; **an oligarchy of** wealth, where the rich govern the poor. **An oligarchy of** learning, where the educated govern the ignorant, or even **an oligarchy of** race, where the Saxon rules the African, might be endured; but this **oligarchy of** sex, which makes father, brothers, husband, sons, the oligarchs over the mother and sisters, the wife and daughters of every household—which ordains all men sovereigns, all women

subjects, carries dissension, discord and rebellion into every home of the nation.

(Emphasis added)

But the strategic use of repetition does drive home the essence of Anthony's message, that women and girls are not being treated fairly. Anthony next comments: "Webster, Worcester and Bouvier all define a citizen to be a person in the United States, entitled to vote and hold office. Anthony's audiences in 1873 would be quite familiar with these surnames. The three names were titular for then well-known dictionaries although only the first is still commonly known today: *Webster's Dictionary* (in many forms), *Worcester Dictionary of the English Language*,<sup>65</sup> and *Bouvier's Law Dictionary*. And all three define "citizen" similarly. And if so, women can not be denied the right to vote. A *logos* appeal without peer.

The rhetorical question or *erotesis* is a rhetorical device often used where the rhetor "implies an answer but does not give or lead us to expect one" (Lanham 71). Here in this speech nearing her conclusion, Anthony uses the device to great effect as she asks, "The only question left to be settled now is: Are women persons? And I hardly believe any of our opponents will have the hardihood to say they are not. This *logos* appeal actually needs no answer because it is so obvious. But then, Anthony does answer: "Being persons, then, women are citizens; and no State has a right to make any law, or to enforce any old law, that shall abridge their **privileges or immunities**. Hence, every discrimination against women in the constitutions and laws of the several States is today null and void, precisely as it was against Negroes" (emphasis added).

There is again a very slight **allusion** to the United States Constitution, Article IV Section 2

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<sup>65</sup> "Joseph Emerson Worcester was an American lexicographer who was the chief competitor of Noah Webster of *Webster's Dictionary* in the nineteenth century. Their rivalry became known as the 'dictionary wars'" ([www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)). However, for this Anthony's topic, please see "Teacher's Guide: Are Women Persons?" Books That Grow. [www.booksthatgrow.com](http://www.booksthatgrow.com).

clause 1, sometimes called the Comity Clause. It states as follows: “The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all **Privileges and Immunities** of Citizens in the Several States” (emphasis added). Four words are capitalized for emphasis, “Citizen (twice),” “State (twice),” “Privileges,” and “Immunities.” Anthony’s terse speech though short still packs a punch in that she focuses her attention on specific details as clearly stated in the United States Constitution, and critical terms that mostly needed little definition. Her abundantly recognized speech, today some 147 years hence, is still recognized and studied.

Ending a speech with a rhetorical question is a clever act: “**Close Five: Ask A Rhetorical Question:** You can ask a rhetorical question at any point throughout your speech, but asking one at the end is particularly powerful, since members of the audience will leave your talk with your question still lingering in their minds.”<sup>66</sup> Looking back in hindsight, that women were not allowed to vote when the nation was originally founded seems harsh, cruel, and obviously unnecessary. Yet it was so. The framers of the nation and our Constitution were first and foremost concerned with maintaining their own individual personal power position—mostly wealth—in the new nation, and only secondarily was their concern “freedom and justice for all.”

### *Sojourner Truth, “Ar’n’t I A Woman”—A Rhetorical Analysis*

Born a slave in Ulster County, New York, and separated from her parents while still a child, young Isabella (1797-1883) never learned to read or write. She was able to eventually flee slavery only after she reached adulthood—29 or 30 years of slavery/hard labor—at age twenty-nine or thirty: “She bore at least five children in slavery and took one of them with her when she

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<sup>66</sup> Brad Phillips. Seven Great Ways To Close A Speech (Part Two).” Throughline: The Throughline Blog. 12 September 2012. [www.throughlinegroup.com](http://www.throughlinegroup.com).

left her final master in 1826, seizing her freedom a year before she was emancipated by New York law in 1827. Two years later she sued successfully for the return of her son Peter from enslavement in Alabama” (Gates 196). She worked mostly as a domestic but eventually became a preacher, which allowed her to meet anti-slavery activists, most notably Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison. Gates reports that Sojourner Truth gained a level of celebrity when in 1863, novelist Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote a tribute to her in an *Atlantic Monthly* “Sojourner Truth, the Libyan Sibyl” article: “I do not recollect ever to have been conversant with any one who had more of that silent and subtle power which we call personal presence than this woman” (Gates 197).

Olive Gilbert, a white woman, consulted with Truth in writing her biography *Narrative of Sojourner Truth* (1850). During the summer of 1851, a women’s rights convention was held in Akron, Ohio, and Sojourner Truth was present. She decided to speak herself, and this event would later become memorialized in print. The follow-up printing of her biography in 1878, some twenty-seven years after the date of her convention speech, included an additional section: “... her *Book of Life*, which included personal correspondence, newspaper accounts of her activities, and tributes from her friends” (ibid.). This 1878 printing had an expanded *Book of Life* section that included a reprint of the speech Truth gave at the Akron women’s rights convention. In this reprinting, the words of a rhetorical question “ar’n’t I a woman?” were first used and repeated several times in the speech, words not listed in the *Anti-Slavery Bugle* printing (21 June 1851) of her speech just weeks after the speech was actually given. In addition, the language used by Truth in this decades later *Book of Life* reprint was “less direct and more dialectal” (Gates 198). There has been some controversy about the *Book of Life* version (Gates 197). The speech is very short, only a few hundred words.



Truth begins respectfully by asking, “May I say a few words?” After gaining permission, “[Sojourner] Truth took the podium to defend the dignity of women against theological attacks from a group of ministers. The president of the convention, Frances Gage, recalled some years later the pressure applied by white women to keep Truth from speaking lest she antagonize the ministers’ racial as well as gender prejudices. ... Her extemporaneous oration, scarcely more than three hundred words punctuated by homely metaphors and a deceptively simple argument for women’s unique role in the liberation struggles of the day, was admirably reported in the *Anti-Slavery Bugle*.” (ibid.)

This would seem the more accurate account of the speech; this version does not include the words of the rhetorical question refrain “Ar’n’t I a woman” that made her famous.

Truth begins her extemporaneous speech innocently and uneventfully: “I want to say a few words about this matter. I am a woman’s rights. I have as much muscle as any man, and can do as much work as any man. I have plowed and reaped and husked and chopped and mowed, and can any man do more than that?” The second sentence **metaphor** is Truth’s stating she is the example for women’s rights since she can perform and has performed the physical labor in fields that men ordinarily perform, the implication being that women should also have the same rights as men. She is defending womanhood earnestly and compellingly. Her comments would be obvious to those well intentioned; others may ignore the veracity of Truth’s claims.

The next words are in somewhat convoluted **metaphor**, lacking some clarity:

I have heard much about the sexes being equal. I can carry as much as any man, and can eat as much too, if I can get it. I am as strong as any man that is now. As

for intellect, all I can say is, if woman have a pint, and man a quart—why can't she have her little pint full? You need not be afraid to give us our rights for fear we will take too much,—for we can't take more than our pint'll hold.

The “woman have a pint” **metaphor** speaks to a common **allusion** that men can do more than women and are also more intelligent than women. However, Truth is asserting here that even if this belief were accurate, still women can do more to reach their full (lesser) measure. And further, men should not be afraid that women would infringe upon the men's purview because women will only take their full measure to fill the pint, and not farther.

Truth next performs a psychological assessment: “The poor men seem to be all in confusion, and don't know what to do. Why children, if you have woman's rights, give it to her and you will feel better. You will have your own rights, and they won't be so much trouble.” Truth is suggesting to the men indirectly that they seem over anxious because they are too concerned with the activity women are engaged in. She is saying, indirectly, to the men that they will feel better if they just treat women fairly, they will find they can live their lives in peace. Often rhetorical honesty relays a *logos* appeal because the comments are reasonable and fair. There is also a mild *pathos* appeal because the men must realize that continuing to impede women as they conduct their lives is morally wrong.

Truth continues her extemporaneous speech advisedly: “I can't read, but I can hear. I have heard the bible [sic], and have learned that Eve caused man to sin. Well if woman upset the world, do give her a chance to set it right side up again.” These words are interesting rhetorically, and quite prophetic. Here a middle age black woman, a former slave, is offering quite reasonable sympathetic advice to the men in the audience. Ordinarily, her state in life would cause this audience inclusive of men, who are of reasonable minds, to have pity for her

plight; however, Sojourner Truth is speaking to them as if she must console them as she exudes a sympathetic tone and concern for their wellbeing. Somewhat pleadingly, she asks that the men who are agitated and upset about the women's actions, consider allowing the women an opportunity to set things right, to return their relationship to its former state.

“The lady has spoken about Jesus, how he never spurned woman from him, and she was right. When Lazarus died, Mary and Martha came to him with faith and love and besought him [sic] to raise their brother. And Jesus wept and Lazarus came forth.”<sup>67</sup> Truth's folksy approach appears genuine as she also herein enhances an *ethos* appeal as she displays to the audience her knowledge of the Bible, reminding audience members of the benevolence of Jesus Christ; the implication being that the men should also become more benevolent to the women as they seek to improve their lot in life. During the late nineteenth century it would be commonplace for an audience of this kind to include a large number, if not a majority, of audience members who were Christians. And especially so, those Christians would have understood and appreciated Truth's inclusion of these Biblical references.

To end her speech, Truth again becomes philosophical, “And how came Jesus into the world? Through God who created him and a woman who bore him. Man, where is your part? But the women are coming up blessed be [sic] God and a few of the men are coming up with them.” Her appeal to the men is that they have forgotten that it was a woman who bore Jesus and as such, women should be respected. In addition she asks the men, with regard to the real matters of life, to consider what their place is. Here they (the men) are being, the implication

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<sup>67</sup> Gates informs that this reference is to a specific Bible passage: “John 11:1-44 records the story of Jesus' raising of Lazarus, the brother of the disciples Mary and Martha, from the dead” (198).

Truth is projecting, overly concerned about the women's actions when woman has been critical and indispensable in bringing life to Jesus. Truth informs the men in her audience that, of course, God has blessed the women and that He has also blessed the men who have likewise respected women. The rhetorical appeals (*logos* and *pathos*) of these comments would have emphatically influenced those thoughtful religious men in this audience. Truth's argument is logical and reasonable; religious men of a kind would have been emotionally moved by Truth's words.

The closing comment of Truth presents a **metaphor**: "But man is in a tight place, the poor slave is on him, woman is coming on him, he is surely between a hawk and a buzzard." Truth's words are explaining to the men that their agitation, should it continue, places them at odds between God's plan and their own personal demons (hypocrisy). That women are attempting to better their lives as they move forward while the men have become overly concerned with the actions of the women rather than with what is right by God. This birds of prey imagery is succinct and clear—that men, should they continue on this dangerous path of antipathy toward women, their indecision makes them vulnerable to attack while still alive from the hawk or at the other end of the spectrum, the men will have died and are being all consumed by buzzards, birds that feed on dead flesh. Ending her speech with a crescendo. This reprint of Truth's speech in *The Anti-slavery Bugle* (21 June 1851) does not mention the audience response. However, a mere reading of these words would expect that a good number of the men in the audience might have reconsidered their actions, which was the central message of Sojourner Truth's speech.

*"A Moral Necessity for Birth Control" (1921-1922) –*

*A Rhetorical Analysis of the Margaret Sanger Speech*

Abortion was an accepted part of medical practice in much of American history until the nineteenth century, not being ruled illegal until the very late 1860s.<sup>68</sup> The American Medical Association of physicians along with religious zealots largely participated in making abortion illegal mostly for economic reasons (because of competition with midwives and other local caregivers) and because of religious myths, the thought that more access to abortion would lead women to promiscuity and interfere with women's lives in the conduct of their wifely duties.

However, societal norms and mores were undergoing dramatic change in America. And by the 1960s, "... [m]oderate reforms had already been tried: twelve states permitted abortion in instances of rape, incest, danger to physical or mental health, or fetal defect, but since most women, as always, sought abortion for economic, social, or otherwise personal reasons, illegal abortion continued to thrive [something to consider for those who advocate once again restricting legal abortion in this way]."<sup>69</sup> Regardless of whether abortion is legal or illegal, desperate women who feel a need to have an abortion *will* get an abortion. Just as women of means have always had and will continue to have the option, regardless of its legality. Women and men were becoming more demanding in seeking birth control information and more medical access with regard to reproduction rights.

Margaret Sanger (1879-1966) was a nurse and educator in matters of sex and reproduction, ultimately becoming a writer and activist. She wrote a sixteen page pamphlet

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<sup>68</sup> Leslie J. Reagon. *When Abortion Was a Crime: Women, Medicine, and Law in the United States, 1867-1973*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998. Print.

<sup>69</sup> Katha Pollitt. "Abortion in American History." *The Atlantic*. May 1997.  
[www.theatlantic.com](http://www.theatlantic.com). Web.

*Family Limitation* (1914) that provided readers detailed information about contraception, including methods and illustrations with instructions detailing ingredients to use, including douches, sponges, condoms, and other vaginal suppositories. As a nurse, she had the medical and caregiver background to be meticulous in her descriptions. She popularized the words “**birth control**” as a descriptive for her advocacy and actually opened the first birth control clinic in the United States in the Brownsville neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York. Sanger’s goals were several. She felt that the obscenity laws along with the actions of men themselves in executing these laws were exerting an inordinate control over the lives of women, especially middle class, working class, and poor women; women of means have always had safe and clear access to abortion. She believed the obscenity laws were largely too extreme and were being used to restrict the lives of women. She wanted women to become informed so that they could have greater control over their bodies (Jensen 548). However, the Comstock Act, a collection of federal laws duplicated in various states, had initially been passed by Congress in 1873, and these laws criminalized the dissemination of birth control information through the postal services, forbidding dissemination of “obscene” literature and articles used for contraception or abortion.

William Sanger’s arrest for disseminating his wife’s pamphlet in 1914 gained widespread notoriety and seemingly inspired a burgeoning American birth control movement. As a result of his arrest, another women’s suffrage and birth control activist Mary Coffin Ware Dennett formed two subsequent organizations, the National Birth Control League (1915) and later the Voluntary Parenthood League (1919), which became a rival to Margaret Sanger’s organization, American Birth Control League (1921); however, Sanger’s organization and Dennett’s organization would

later merge in 1925. Dennett also published her own twenty-four page pamphlet, *The Sex Side of Life*.

Between 1921 and 1922, Sanger delivered her speech “The Morality of Birth Control” for the American Birth Control League at several venues. On 13 November 1921, at the Hotel Plaza, Sanger opens her presentation by informing her audience that a prior attempt to give this speech had been interrupted by the police a week earlier. She continues by explaining that she would be talking about birth control, the formulation she is often credited with naming. She explains that the event was a call out to scientists, educators, medical personnel, and theologians of different denominations to all together discuss and assess the morality of the subject of birth control.

Sanger begins her speech with *erotema* rhetorical questions; Corbett and Connors would consider the survey she conducted as figures of speech that Sanger intends to elaborate upon in this speech,

[E]rotema [, the rhetorical question entails] ... asking a question, not for the purpose of eliciting an answer but for the purpose of asserting or denying something obliquely. ... The *rhetorical question* is a common device in impassioned speeches, but it can be used too in written prose. It can be an effective persuasive device, subtly influencing the kind of response one wants to get from an audience. By inducing the audience to make the appropriate response, the rhetorical question can often be more effective as a persuasive device than a direct assertion would be. (404-405).

She continues her speech by explanation to the audience that these personal letters of her survey were sent to opponents and supporters alike. She goes on to explain that most recipients did

reply and did provide thoughtful responses, with the exception of only one opponent. Sanger neglects to inform her audience about the mechanism in place for the survey, including how the names were selected. This information about the one negative letter though understandably presented to the audience would seem unnecessary. She may have been better served to just focus on the thoughtful replies she did receive rather than giving voice to and to belabor the action of this sole opponent, “I believed that the discussion of the moral issue was one which did not solely belong to theologians and to scientists, but belonged to the people. And because I believed that the people of this country may and can discuss this subject with dignity and with intelligence I desired to bring them together, and to discuss it in the open.”

Sanger next effectively reminds her listeners that past advances in the lives of women seemingly draw opponent protest that immorality would result,

When women fought for higher education, it was said that this would cause her to become immoral and she would lose her place in the sanctity of the home. When women asked for the franchise it was said that this would lower her standard of morals, that it was not fit that she should meet and mix with the members of the opposite sex, but we notice that there was no object[ion] to her meeting with the same members of the opposite sex when she went to church.

She ends her comment with mild **sarcasm**, which can be a difficult technique to navigate. The use of sarcasm by a rhetor can lessen the formality of the presentation’s tone. Here the quite mild use is very slight and possibly appropriate. This was a credible strategy toward ingratiating herself toward her audience.

Modest cynicism is not a suggested strategy for good writing or effective public speaking because those who might agree with the rhetor’s theme and values are already convinced while



readers who disagree will immediately be put-off and possibly end their reading (of the item) at that place in the article; here the very first paragraph. Neither *On Writing Well* (Zinsser) nor *The Elements of Style* (Strunk Jr. and White) have sections covering use of cynicism or sarcasm. Zinsser does write about humor and does have an entire chapter 3 entitled “Clutter” where he writes of good writing, “The game is won or lost on hundreds of small details. Writing improves in direct ratio to the number of things we can keep out of it that shouldn’t be there. ... To write clean English you must examine every word you put on paper. You’ll find a surprising number of words that don’t serve any purpose” (14).

And Strunk Jr. and White have an “APPROACH TO STYLE” section that lists a #9 item *Do not affect a breezy manner*, which in part provides “The breezy style is often the work of an egocentric, the person who imagines that everything that pops into his [sic] head is of general interest and that uninhibited prose creates high spirits and carries the day. ... [H]e [sic] is showing off and directing the attention of the reader to himself [sic] ...” If Strunk Jr. and White do consider this bit of sarcasm as “breezy style,” perhaps some might disagree in part with this comment because writing what is good is writing that engages a reader, regardless of how that goal is accomplished. Sanger’s use of sarcastic cynicism here is effective. The celebrated textbook *Classical Rhetoric for Modern Students* (Edward P. J. Corbett and Robert J. Connors) notes the following:

*Sarcasm* is another mode of humor that requires a master hand, for it can easily go wrong. Sarcasm seems to succeed best when it is directed at an individual; it is risky when it is directed at nationalities, classes, ranks, or vocations. That this should be so is rather curious, for of all modes of satirical wit, sarcasm is the one that most closely borders an uncharitableness. (282)

These cautions are valid and reasonable, but Sanger's use in this speech is appropriate. Corbett and Connors also provide a comment from the classical period,

Quintilian once said (*Instit. Orat.*, VI, iii, 26<sup>70</sup>) that 'there are no jests so insipid as those which parade the fact that they are intended to be witty.' We might very well take these words as a general caution about the use of humor for rhetorical purposes. Humor that merely calls attention to our desire to be 'funny' or to be 'one of the boys' will alienate more people than it will win. Humor is an extremely difficult art, and if students do not have a natural gift or an acquired skill for humor, they would do best to avoid the use of this available means of persuasion. (282-283)

However none of these cautions detract from the fact that there is still a place, though very limited, for cynicism, a form of **sarcasm** in good writing. Interestingly, Corbett and Connors also explain: "We round back finally to that cardinal principle of rhetoric: the subject, the occasion, the audience, and the personality of the speaker or writer will dictate the means we should employ to effect our purpose" (*ibid.*). Sanger's comment would seem to use to an advantage this rhetorical device.

Next, Sanger offers blame to the church, whom she implores to reconsider its opposing actions,

The church has ever opposed the progress of woman on the ground that her freedom would lead to immorality. We ask the church to have more confidence in women. We ask the opponents of this movement to reverse the methods of the

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<sup>70</sup> Quintilian. *Institutio Oratoria*. Trans. H. E. Butler. 4 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920-22.

church which aims to keep women moral by keeping them in fear and in ignorance.

Rarely if ever are there religious concerns expressed with regard to actions of men and their own alleged lack of morality.

Mrs. Sanger is making a rhetorical argument that she wants her audience to deeply consider. Elizabeth Sanders Lopez (et al.) provides a good definition for the kind of thinking Sanger is asking of her audience, “A *rhetorical argument* ... is the carefully crafted presentation of a viewpoint or position on a topic and the giving of thoughts, ideas, and opinions along with reasons for their support. The persuasive strength of an argument rests upon the rhetorical skill of the rhetor ...” (11, emphasis in text). Sanger would seem to be that most able tactician.

Mrs. Sanger’s message is heartfelt and an accurate assessment as she continues her speech by asking the church to allow education and knowledge “... to inculcate in them [women] a higher and truer morality based upon knowledge. And ours is the morality of knowledge.” Sanger ends this section of her address with a thought-provoking insightful comment, “If we cannot trust women with the knowledge of her own body, then I claim that two thousand years of Christian teaching has proved to be a failure.” Here Mrs. Sanger in her argument is asking her audience to engage their logical reasoning. George Pullman instructively defines the accurate parameters of the term: “*Logic in its most basic sense means rule-based reasoning, where you accurately infer something from something else*” (9; emphasis in text). Mrs. Sanger wants her audience to make the connection that women have the intelligence to make good decisions when those decisions are informed specifically about the issues involved.

Her next paragraph provides a detailed recitation of the exact aims of her advocacy as she uses capital letters for her newly coined phrase for her advocacy,

We stand on the principle that Birth Control should be available to every adult man and woman. We believe that every adult man and woman should be taught the responsibility and the right use of knowledge. We claim that woman should have the right over her own body and to say if she shall or if she shall not be a mother, as she sees fit.

Sanger next announces that these reasons were the “principles [of] ... the Birth Control movement in America.” Another activist, Mary Ware Dennett, had also written about her own lack of understanding about birth control, writing that her personal ignorance about these sexual matters was probably a factor in her marriage eventually ending in divorce: “I was utterly ignorant of the control of conception, as was my husband also. We had never had anything like normal relations, having approximated almost complete abstinence in the endeavor to space our babies” (Chen 56). Men were probably even more ignorant—and often unconcerned—about conception and sexuality (most especially about female sexuality) than were their sexual partners. Dennett explains in her own writings that one primary reason she wrote her pamphlet was to make certain her sons would be informed and educated about sex and contraception. Here in this speech, Sanger is asking her audience to consider these matters of sexuality and contraception. And specifically though not in detailed language, she is asking her audience to consider the immorality of being forced to remain ignorant about these matters. Not only was abortion a crime, but just the dissemination of birth control *information* was also a crime.

Sanger in this speech next reports that she is prevented from disclosing the methods of birth control because of the prevailing laws, state and federal, in force in America. But, she is vehemently opposed to these laws, and she feels that women in America should be able to obtain this information more easily in clinics and other medical establishments from “registered nurses

and registered midwives,” without fear of arrest. Then she explains using clever formulations of language,

Our first step is to have the backing of the medical profession so that our laws may be changed, so that motherhood may become **the function of dignity and choice rather than one of ignorance and chance**. ... In the second place, ... it is right to control the size of the family for by this control and adjustment we can raise the level and the standards of the human race. (Emphasis added)

The alliterative phrasing highlighted conveys to her audience a cleverly emphasized profundity. Her concern is that people no longer resort to, “infanticide, exposure of infants, the abandonment of children and by [unsafe] abortion.” Her concern is that with education and the dissemination of scientific information, humans would be in a better position to control and determine the size of their families. She is making a determined plea to those men who can determine the fate of women, “We must ... control the beginnings of life. We must control conception. ... This ... is a more civilized method, for it involves not only greater forethought for others, but finally a higher sanction for the value of life itself.

### **Second Wave Feminism |**

Women’s Liberation Movement (1960s to 1980s)

***“American Women,” Final Report of the President’s Commission  
on the Status of Women (1963)—A Rhetorical Analysis***

The status of women in American society was exceedingly problematic in 1960, when John Fitzgerald Kennedy was elected President of the United States in the second closest election in

American history. Problems of equality and justice for women continue even today in the early twenty-first century. The five closest Presidential elections in United States history include the following: first, Bush v. Gore in 2000, 47.9% - 48.4% (Bush, the younger, lost the popular vote by over one-half million votes); second, Hayes v. Tilden in 1876, 47.9% - 50.9% (Hayes lost the popular vote by 3%); third, Garfield v. Hancock in 1880, 48.27% - 48.25% (win by 1,898 more votes of 9.2 million votes cast); fourth, Trump v. Clinton in 2016, 47.5% - 47.7% (Trump lost the popular vote by 0.2%); and five, Kennedy v. Nixon in 1960, 49.7% - 49.6% (Kennedy won the popular vote by 112,000 of 68 million votes cast).<sup>71</sup> President Kennedy was first and foremost a politician, and his approach to the Presidency was an attempt to appease all demographic groups. However, there was a growing discontent among American women.

There was also considerable interest among women and others in support of a constitutional amendment to grant equality, and <justice> for women. Yet organized labor among others preferred that more attention be given toward strengthening the current laws then supporting women, rather than enacting a new Constitutional amendment. President Kennedy's decision was to sign Executive Order 10980 on 14 December 1961. The Order formed a President's Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) to be chaired by former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. During the Presidential primary in 1960, Senator Kennedy had sought Mrs. Roosevelt's support (she supported Adlai Stevenson II), but she declined to endorse his nomination because in 1956, "she thought he avoided taking a stand on the Senate censure of

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<sup>71</sup> Fienberg, Michael. "In Politics: The 12 Closest Presidential Elections in United States History." [www.3percentmilk.com](http://www.3percentmilk.com). 16 July 2017.

Joseph McCarthy, and also on enforcing civil rights legislation and court decrees.”<sup>72</sup> This comment is interesting because Kennedy is listed as author of a 1956 bestseller *Profiles in Courage*, where Kennedy won a Pulitzer Prize for Biography, although it has been widely reported that the book was mostly the work of a ghostwriter, Ted Sorensen, Kennedy’s speechwriter. The title of the book and Kennedy’s reputation as a Senator is the matter of interest. Following Kennedy’s election, Mrs. Roosevelt did agree to chair this new President’s Commission. The PCSW issued its final report entitled “American Women” on 11 October 1963, making recommendations and documenting the then status of women in American society.

The report begins with an open letter to President Kennedy, announcing first that the report’s date is symbolic, Eleanor Roosevelt’s birthday, “... we are mindful first of all that we transmit it bereft of our Chairman [sic].” Old habits and political custom seem to never leave us; Mrs. Roosevelt was a great First Lady, possibly the most celebrated in American history. She was certainly not a *Chairman*. “Today is Eleanor Roosevelt’s birthday.” Mrs. Roosevelt had died on 7 November 1962. This open letter to begin the “American Women” report was well-placed; Eleanor Roosevelt was an American treasure who as First Lady and also throughout her life had spoken up for those Americans society had forgotten, especially for all women and for African Americans, among others.

The final report of 86 pages is replete with charts and graphs and diagrams all representing the status of women in American society. The page prior to the open letter is a one-page layout of a large photograph of President Kennedy, to the left, and a quotation from

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<sup>72</sup> “Eleanor Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, and the Election of 1960.” *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project*, The George Washington University. [Www2.gwu.edu](http://www2.gwu.edu). Retrieved 15 March 2019. Web.

President Kennedy, bottom to the right: “We are at the beginning of an era when the end roads of poverty, hunger and disease will be lessened and when men and women everywhere will have it in their power to develop their potential capacities to the maximum.” The open letter covers five pages, stating in its concluding paragraph “... we are honored to submit to you this *unanimous* report” (emphasis added) and is signed by Executive Vice President Esther Peterson and Vice President Richard A. Lester. Then follows an almost full page photograph of Eleanor Roosevelt and below her photograph the dates of her life **1884 – 1962** in bold print and inserted the full length of the photograph. Often thought and heard among the many Others of American society the comment, “She was a great lady,” and this respectful and courteous opening is a good beginning for the report.

The very next page provides an apt quotation from 1962, selected from Eleanor Roosevelt’s voluminous writings:

Because I anticipate success in achieving full employment and full use of America’s magnificent potential, I feel confident in the years ahead that many of the remaining outmoded barriers to women’s aspirations will disappear. Within a rapidly growing economy, with appropriate manpower planning, all Americans will have a better chance to develop their individual capacities, to earn a good livelihood, and to strengthen family life.

We of that bygone era actually believed in America’s promise. The full composition of this report seems primarily of a boilerplate quality. While the graphs and charts provide helpful detailed statistical information about the status of women, what is missing from this “American Women” *final* report of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women is detailed planned action that would begin on or by a date certain. The statistics reveal the obvious inequality



suffered by women as the report “call(s) for action” from others to implement direct action although there are included some suggested invitations to action. The volume is primarily a basic detailed report of the status of women in American culture and the many problems women faced in their daily lives.

One researcher provides an introduction to President Kennedy’s new Commission, “Eleanor Roosevelt stressed that the Commission report should have concrete recommendations for action” (O’Farrell: 2010, 201).<sup>73</sup>

### *Casey Hayden and Mary King Essay*

#### *“History is a Weapon, Sex and Caste: A Kind of Memo” (1965)*

This essay written by two civil rights workers and activists Casey Cason Hayden and Mary King in 1965 would become one of several documents that ignited or sustained a second-wave feminism movement (1960s and 1970s). A shorter version of this essay, published anonymously, was handed out a year earlier. These essays sought to expose the gender inequities then existing in the civil rights movement, specifically within the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). These women and some others felt their contributions were

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<sup>73</sup> O’Farrell, Brigid. *She Was One of Us: Eleanor Roosevelt and the American Worker*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010. See also Brigid O’Farrell. “*American Women: Looking Back, Moving Ahead—The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The President’s Commission Report on the Status of Women Report.*” Cornell University ILR School—Digital Commons @ ILR. March 2015. [www.digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu](http://www.digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu).

not respected as were those of the men and that they were limited in what and how they might contribute.

Although still a young woman, Casey Hayden had already lived an almost full life of civil rights activism in 1965, even as a young white woman dedicating her life toward helping black people gain their Constitutional rights. She had written of her activism in a third-person autobiographical format:

Attending the University of Texas in Austin as an undergraduate, she was a national leader in one wing of the **Student Christian Movement** ... She joined the successful **Austin Movement** in actions against segregated downtown restaurants in the spring of 1960 while a teaching assistant and graduate student in English and philosophy. The Following fall she initiated **Students for Direct Action**, which integrated college area movie theaters.

Casey worked with and for **SNCC** from 1960 until the fall of 1965. She attended **SNCC's second organizing conferences** in 1960 and worked for Ella Baker out of Atlanta as a **campus traveler** for a human relations project across the South, taking minutes at staff meetings, helping out in the SNCC office, and riding on the **Albany Freedom Ride** on her off days in 1961-1962. She joined **Friends of SNCC**, an independent organization in Michigan and returned to Atlanta as **SNCC's first northern coordinator** in early 1963. She staffed a **literacy project in Mississippi**, where she also helped administer the **Freedom Votes** and the **MFDP** [Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party], and strategized, researched, and wrote organizing materials for the challenge to the starting of the Mississippi delegation to the Democratic National Convention in 1964. In 1965

she **initiated a Mississippi photo project** and **organized poor white welfare women in Chicago**. (Emphasis added; Holsaert et al. 381)

Mary King, also a young woman civil rights activist who just happened to be white, met and worked with Casey Hayden at SNCC, where she was a four-year staff member. King later wrote a well-recognized book detailing her experiences *Freedom Song: A Personal Story of the 1960s civil rights movement* (1987). Prior to her graduation from Ohio Wesleyan College, she participated in a **Study tour of the South**, wherein black and white students visited black colleges and white colleges. King would later write in her book that the experience would fundamentally change the course of her life. Upon returning to college, she created a college organization **The Student Committee on Race Relations** (SCORR) to implement a change in restrictive dorm policies with regard to black students. Following graduation, she returned to the South and worked at SNCC under civil rights icon Ella Baker and Spelman College history professor Howard Zinn in a **human relations project**. King and another worker, Roberta “Bobbi” Yanci, were assigned to **write and distribute a newsletter “Notes from the South,”** that communicated to the public SNCC student activism and accomplishments. (King’s activism and civil rights work emphasized in bold.). Together, Casey Hayden and Mary King wrote and distributed this essay.

The first paragraph introduction is fairly bland as Hayden and King comment in three paragraphs that they had previously discussed the “recurrent ideas or themes” mentioned in this essay. The paragraph that follows states what appear to be parallels regarding “the treatment of Negroes and the treatment of women in our society.” This treatment is very similar to “a common-law caste system” that excludes women, like African Americans, from “hierarchical structures of power” that excludes them: “Women seem to be placed in the same position of

assumed subordination in personal situations. ... It is a caste system which, at its worst, uses and exploits women.”

Next, the essay states three (of several) facts that complicate the lives of women: (1) the caste system is not set by law since women can vote and sue for divorce, and so on; (2) women are firmly entrenched within the system and cannot withdraw; and (3) the biological differences as between women and men. Lists, *enumeratio*, are often effective persuasive strategies in rhetorical communications (speech and writing) because they reinforce a message, and here this list does not appear to overwhelm. Paragraph four focuses on a problem of relationships: “Within the movement, questions arise in situations ranging from relationships of women organizers to men in the community, to who cleans the freedom house, to who holds leadership positions, to who does secretarial work, and who acts as spokesman [sic] for groups.” These items in a series might have been more effectively presented if the essay had provided details and examples to elaborate upon their grievances. As written, the complaints are so overly general that they possibly could have been easily dismissed by less than careful readers.

The paragraph continues with additional complaints: “Other problems arise between women with varying degrees of awareness of themselves as being as capable as men but held back from full participation, or between women who see themselves as needing more control over their work than other women demand. And there are other problems with relationships between white women and black women.” As written, the lack of specificity is a hindrance to the essay’s persuasiveness in being taken seriously by the men. The additional commentary about the stated friction among the women—blacks against whites—is probably misplaced. Certainly, the men would be unable to referee interactions between these two groups. This uneasiness was probably real but is misplaced in this essay to males about how females, whites

and blacks, were being (mis)treated. Another problem with the essay is that only the two women authors are named, and the letter is unclear whether the two are speaking for all women or just for the white women. This aspect of the essay is unclear, and there is no comment other than this broad generalization. The message in the letter was probably accurate, but the presentation not effectively channeled.

Michelle Moravec of Rosemont College published a March 2017 follow-up report about this essay. Her report is entitled “Revisiting ‘A Kind of Memo’ from Casey Hayden and Mary King (1965),” and she includes a footnote of an email reply from Casey Hayden: “Casey Hayden engaged in a generous correspondence with me as I researched the Memo. Her interpretation is different than mine and I want to acknowledge that by including her words here ....”<sup>74</sup> Of special note, the email from Casey Hayden explains her own reason for sending out the Memo essay:

‘I do want to be clear, again, however, that my rationale for writing this memo was to strengthen women inside the radical movements of which we were a part. It was an organizing document, organizing by first eliciting the conversations we’d had before, and building on that. It was occasioned by the difficulty of organizing women inside the SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] project, which was aimed at men who were oppressing the women I was organizing. ... Mary and I both came from the early SNCC nonviolent era. Mary was more interested in the Women’s Movement than I, but went on to make her career in

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<sup>74</sup> Michelle Moravec. “Revisiting ‘A Kind of Memo’ from Casey Hayden and Mary King (1965).” Women and Social Movements. [www.womhist.alexanderstreet.com](http://www.womhist.alexanderstreet.com). Retrieved 18 March 2019. Web.

nonviolence .... I remained a devotee of the nonviolence as a way of life ....’

Casey Hayden, email message to author, October 18, 2016. (Ibid.)

From Hayden’s email to Moravec, it appears the theme of the Memo was a message to all activist groups as a whole and not just to SNCC. Moravec’s research discovered that the original draft of the Memo included a list of recipients: “The original Memo’s list of recipients, omitted from the published version, indicate that the document was meant to be read by a small group of SNCC insiders. A closing section, also omitted from the published version, illuminates the authors’ intentions to promote discussion of women’s issues within the freedom movement” (ibid.).

Unfortunately, a primary failing of this Memo essay is a failure to properly understand its audience. Under a section headed “Analyzing the Audience, Professor Lopez (et al.) notes, “When writing in a new situation, one of the first questions you want to ask is ‘Who am I writing to?’ ... [I]t’s not enough to simply name the audience. You have to develop a fuller understanding of the audience by asking such questions as ‘What are the audience’s expectations? What is their level of expertise on this subject? What are their needs and biases?’” (45-46). Especially important to understand is the fourth question regarding the audience “biases.” Herein Hayden and King obviously did not understand the male audience biases. Hayden and King do not clearly indicate a distinct audience. Is the audience restricted just to the male leadership? Or, is the intended audience all males in the civil rights movement? Does the audience include women also? A secondary omission in the Memo is the exact nature of the request. Is there to be a meeting for purposes of discussion? If so, who should attend this meeting?

Paragraph five is used to provide additional discussion and explanation for a growing uneasiness among the women, “Each of us occasioned by trying to break out of the various results, and of the internal struggle occasioned by trying to break out of very deeply learned fears, needs, and self? [sic] perceptions, and of what happens when we try to replace with the concepts of people and freedom learned from the movement and organizing” (ibid.). Paragraph six is a continuance of this explanation of the difficulty women in the movement are having. Paragraph seven discusses how Hayden and King view the men’s reactions; the women find the men are not seriously considering the essay’s central message. Hayden and King find that men do not seem to understand the criticisms since they are often defensive and reluctant to express their feelings:

... [V]ery few men can respond non-defensively, since The Who idea is either beyond their comprehension or threatens and exposes them. The usual response is laughter. That inability to see the whole issue as serious, as the straitjacketing of both sexes, and as societally determined often shapes our own response so that we learn to think in their terms about ourselves and to feel silly rather than trust our inner feelings.

Writing this essay, possibly, may not have been the best approach to address this very real and serious issue. Hayden and King left SNCC shortly after the essay was sent to its named recipients (Moravec). Next, the two authors include a quote they repeat from *The Nation* publication that reinforces the idea that women should be satisfied with life fulfillment as wife and mother—the writer of the *Nation* article does not consider women who are not wives or mothers. What would be life fulfillment for them? Hayden and King selected this *Nation* publication quote as representative of societal (that of men) opinion of women having full lives

outside of the home. Looking back from our current twenty-first century perspective, male chauvinism appears very real.

Paragraph nine is used by Hayden and King to discuss why a dialogue among men and women is important (to women, probably; to men, probably not); obviously, such a dialogue was not especially important to the men. The authors here believed a dialogue wherein the men and women could conference and openly discuss the women's concerns would allow the group and movement to develop into more of "a community of support for each other so we can deal with ourselves and others with integrity and can therefore keep working." Of course, the men would have had to be ready to consume such a suggested meeting, which they were not. The group was doing good work, and it is unfortunate that the men were more fixed in their status than with the welfare of the organization, and that of its women. The women were doing good work, which was not easily replaced when many of the women left the organization.

Elizabeth Sanders Lopez (et al.) details the rhetorical triangle for a rhetorical event. The three points of the event are each important and must be addressed if the rhetorical event is to become successful: the writer (or speaker), an intended audience, and of course the *subject-matter*. To be effective the rhetor (writer here) must forge an impression on its intended audience and "create common ground with the audience" (67). The rhetor must have an *intended audience* for the rhetorical event and consider several questions. Is the appeal being made logical, ethical, and/or emotional? "What is the extent of their knowledge about the subject, and do they have prejudices or preferences?" (ibid.). And the third point of the rhetorical triangle is the subject-matter or purpose: "What is the *purpose* of the communication? In the case of an argument, the purpose is to persuade. Is that the case with this reading? Is it



clear what the writer wants to persuade the audience to believe or to do?" (emphasis added; *ibid.*). This essay does not adequately address several of these questions.

George Pullman writes comprehensively about persuasion as he reports that audience is one of "*the two most important elements of persuasion ...*" (emphasis in original; 60); the other is "a theory of mind," which is a description of "the human capacity to infer from people's behavior and statements and actions what they are thinking and feeling." For this Memo, the authors clearly did not understand their intended audience. The uneasiness the women experienced was real; however, these men in 1965 had an inability to comprehend this message, especially in the manner in which it was presented. Men then (perhaps still today) did not understand the world women lived, lives of firmly entrenched secondary status in American society. The authors may have been better served to provide advice to the men in a more detailed way rather than engaging in a somewhat esoteric lecture the men were incapable of comprehending. The plight of women continues to be restricted even today in twenty-first century America, as it most definitely was worse during our previous century, almost two decades following that century's mid-point. Professor Pullman states emphatically:

*The most important part of learning how to be persuasive ... [is] audience analysis.* To persuade people you have to understand them, who they are, how they think, what they need, and what they think they need. If you start with yourself then you won't be successful unless you are exactly like them. And if you start with the product or the idea you are selling, then your success will depend on the existence of a preexisting connection between them and what you are talking about. On the other hand, if you begin the persuasion process with a

clear understanding of to whom you are talking, you have a much better chance of tailoring your message to them. (Emphasis in original; 71)

There was certainly no “preexisting connection” between the men and the plight of these women; it was later discovered that there was only a limited connection even between the white women with black women within the movement.

Without women in the movement, there would have been no movement. So, certainly Hayden and King were right to attempt a dialogue. However, their effort needed more audience evaluation. The Pullman text provides clear guidelines:

“... [T]here are stock questions you can ask to get a sense of who you might be dealing with. ... [T]he primary questions are, What’s in it for each segment of your audience? Why do they care, or why should they care if they don’t yet?

These questions are the foundation of your persuasive efforts. If you don’t have a clear answer to these questions, you have a serious rhetorical problem.

Hayden and King in their thoughtful essay covering important and serious concerns do have a serious problem.

Professor Pullman provides an almost exhaustive list of questions covering seven areas, including “Values” (seven questions), “Knowledge (five questions),” “Way of life” (thirteen questions),” “Consumer information” (four questions), “Media interfaces” (four questions), “Work life” (four questions), and “Contextual considerations” (four questions), so tremendous planning must be engaged beforehand for the rhetor to achieve success for a message of this kind.

This memo just does not adequately engage its intended audience. First, the impression these writers are providing its audience is not well articulated. The authors appear to readers as

just two women complaining about something, not clearly articulated. Perhaps, the audience was still not mature enough or lacked the necessary empathy to clearly consume the message; the terms “male chauvinism” and “sexual harassment” (not relative to this essay) were not part of the customary American vernacular in 1965; thus, audience understanding would have been clearly lacking.

Second, the intended audience is only somewhat clear, in that the original document included a listing of certain named recipients, and only later was the essay distributed to others, and eventually published openly as an essay. However in that spirit, there is a full lack of clarity as to whether the audience was actually expanded to include other women (those not acquainted with the authors) and also whether these authors were also speaking for them; further, black women in the movement were not altogether appreciative of the Memo effort (it does not appear that they were consulted beforehand); and it is not clear whether just the men in leadership positions or all men in general was the intended audience. The essay does lack some clarity with regard to who the intended audience actually is.

Third, the purpose of the Memo also does lack full clarity. Is the purpose to have a meeting to air out these issues regarding how women are allowed to participate in the movement? Or, is the purpose to just have a round table sort of gathering discussion where everyone (men included) is asked to speak out about male-female relationships (in the movement) and governing hierarchy? There is a question about what the authors are asking of the recipients of the Memo (the purpose); that is, what are the authors attempting to persuade the Memo recipients to actually do. This essay was unsuccessful in its efforts to help SNCC (both Hayden and King did leave the organization shortly after the essay Memo had been distributed),

but the Memo essay did prove to become influential with regard to the burgeoning women's liberation movement (second-wave feminism) of the 1960s.

*A Statement of Purpose for NOW (1966)—A Rhetorical Analysis*

Neatly organized and double spaced within twenty-one detailed paragraphs, the written draft prepared by the National Organization for Women was agreed upon as its formal Statement of Purpose. The very first word “We” proclaims that this new organization would include a dedicated group of committed women that would also include men. (Possibly secondarily, use of the first word “We” might reflect an **allusion** toward the United States Constitution Preamble that was also the creation of a new body.)

This first paragraph is just one lengthy sentence covering 3½ lines. Responsible and thoughtful men want and recognize that their daughters, sisters, mothers, and female friends also want to lead fulfilling lives that are not limited to just caring for their children, keeping the home, and accommodating their husbands. Interestingly, the name for the organization is not just one “of” women but an organization “for” the benefit of women; the use of the preposition “for” is an apt addition to more clearly delineate the organization's purpose. The organization would welcome like-minded men to also become a part. Finally, the first paragraph adeptly ties in the efforts of these women and men toward equality to the world community where in the 1960s these efforts were arising in other countries in Asia,<sup>75</sup> and elsewhere in the world.

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<sup>75</sup> Johns, Diane M. “Nationalism and Women's Liberation: The Cases of India and China.” *The History Teacher* 29.2 (1996): 145-154. Web. See also Ching, Miriam, and Yoon Louie. “Minjung Feminism: Korean women's movement for gender and class liberation” in Smith, Bonnie G. *Global Feminisms Since 1945*. London, England: Routledge, 2000. 119-138. Print. See also Chiang, Lan-Hung Nora, and Ying-chun Liu. “Feminist Geography in Taiwan and Hong Kong.” *Gender, Place, & Culture* 18.4 (July 2011): 557-569. Web.

The second paragraph, also just one lengthy sentence, states the purpose for the organization and again reinforces their commitment to include men in the organization. The brevity of the comment adheres to a preferred stylistic design as enumerated by Strunk and White as number “**16. Use definite, specific, concrete language.** Prefer the specific to the general, the definite to the value, the concrete to the abstract. ... The surest way to arouse and hold the attention of the reader is by being specific, definite, and concrete” (21, bold in text). *Brevitas* is a rhetorical device mentioned in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* as the use of brief concise language for effect. This persuasive strategy provides reinforcement to the women themselves as it does also to others who will read this founding document. The third paragraph, another single sentence paragraph, begins the philosophical explanation for the organization’s commitment toward the betterment of women as it expresses their growing discontent with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and Presidential Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW):

“We believe the time has come to move beyond the abstract argument, discussion and symposia over the status and special nature of women, which has raged in America in recent years; the time has come to confront, with concrete action, the conditions that now prevent women from enjoying the equality of opportunity and freedom of choice, which is their right, as individual Americans, and as human beings.” This comment appears to be a direct condemnation of the Kennedy administration policy in consultation with organized labor and other interests who had claimed support for women but who effectively neglected to act more forcefully in the interests of women. Interestingly, the Republican Party candidates prior to 1968

generally garnered a majority of the women's vote in Presidential elections, for several reasons.<sup>76</sup> There is some obvious disappointment with the Kennedy administration's limited efforts in support of women's issues; the Democratic National Committee still reluctantly disputed the idea that there was a women's vote demographic in elections, especially Presidential elections (ibid.).

Many of these women continue to support the idea of an Equal Rights Amendment being passed while organized labor and the Kennedy administration had some reservations and preferred working within the laws and policies already in force. And of course the Kennedy administration, as always with politicians, wanted to satisfy and please everyone and not offend either the women or organized labor. These words appear to speak directly to the Kennedys and organized labor; the President's Executive Order 10980 (Presidential Commission on the Status of Women) appeared to have seemingly endless "discussion and symposia" with very little resulting action or accomplishment.

Written by Betty Friedan and Pauli Murray, the Statement of Purpose acronym NOW representing the name for this new organization is cleverly placed as the first word of a philosophical paragraph four connecting women to all human beings (men),

NOW is dedicated to the proposition that women, first and foremost, are human beings, who, like all other people in our society, must have the chance to develop their fullest human potential. We believe that women can achieve such equality only by accepting to the full the challenges and responsibilities they share with all

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<sup>76</sup> Freeman, Jo. "Gender Gaps in Presidential Elections." P.S.: Political Science and Politics. 32.2. June 1999. 191-192. [www.jofreeman.com](http://www.jofreeman.com).

other people in our society, as part of the decision-making mainstream of American political, economic, and social life.

Eleven of the twenty-one paragraphs of this “Statement of Purpose” document begin with the pronoun “We” and appear to define these women as being determined to proclaim their unity and resolve. Paragraph five, beginning with the word “We,” begins with the Statement’s underlying purpose, to combat “the silken curtain of prejudice and discrimination against women in government, industry, the professions, the churches, the political parties, the judiciary, the labor unions, in education, science, medicine, law, religion and every other field of importance in American society.” This rhetorical device, *anaphora*, “... involves the repetition of the same word or words at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences, often using climax and parallelism” (Harris 103). The problem exists still today 2020 some forty-four years later. However, life is better today for women (and peoples of color, to a degree) and this organization was instrumental in this improvement even as injustice and inequality continue to reign even today.

Paragraph six responds directly to the often repeated notion that “child-bearing” and “child-rearing” should be the primary responsibilities of women—as determined by middle age males—opponents of equality for women continually argue. Yet, these same “responsibilities” are used to prevent women from achieving advancement in their chosen careers and jobs outside of the home or the pursuit of other, additional life aspirations. After all, often neglected in discussions by others is the fact that *fathers* should also be assumed and expected to nurture (love and care for) their children and their wives, although this notion is seldom if ever heard from politicians or theologians or the general public. Interestingly, the wording of this paragraph would appear to demonstrate that these women are still a bit defensive themselves about wanting

more out of life apart from being the primary caregivers for their children, "... [Women are] no longer either [needed] to devote the greater part of their lives to child-rearing; **yet childbearing and rearing which continues to be the most important part of most women's lives**—still is used to justify barring women from equal professional and economic participation and advances" (emphasis added). Although technically accurate, this statement obliquely or surreptitiously implies that an overwhelming majority of women just want to mother their children. Actually, many women view children as men in general view them—acceptably but not a predominant want in their lives.

Paragraph seven is a clever addition to explain in detail some reasons why women are not needed in the home twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week,

Today's technology has reduced most of the productive chores which women once performed in the home and in mass-production industries based upon routine unskilled labor. This same technology has virtually eliminated the quality of muscular strength as a criterion for filling most jobs, while intensifying American industry's need for creative intelligence. In view of this new industrial revolution created by automation in the mid-twentieth century, women can and must participate in old and new fields of society in full equality—or become permanent outsiders.

Women homemakers during and before the 1950s still washed and ironed clothes by hand, washing machines were still in a process of becoming staples of modern American family life along with the television and the automobile. But from the mid-to-late 1950s, these modern conveniences made preparation of meals and sustaining home life less a time-intensive drudgery. Meals no longer had to always be prepared from scratch; for example, there were TV dinners.



Children did not have to always be entertained; there was television. Short travel trips to the store or market or to visit the homes of friends could be made by convenient private automobile access rather than buses, often requiring lengthy waiting at a bus stop. Women were seeking to obtain more in their life paths. Rebecca Traister has written a remarkable history that encompasses much about the lives of women throughout American history, *All the Single Ladies: Unmarried Women and the Rise of an Independent Nation* (2016), a triumphant tribute to the invisible women who have been completely ignored by our history records, by our politicians, and by the religion purists.

The demographic trend was then and still today continues toward less marriage and more single adult life. Regarding a continuing trend in population, three American demographic statistics are compelling:

[The United States Census Bureau reports that] 110.6 million adults [was the] number of unmarried people in America age 18 and older in 2016. This group made up 45.2 percent of all U.S. residents age 18 and older [and] 53.2 percent [as the] percentage of U.S. residents age 18 and older who were women in 2016; 46.8 percent were men [and] 63.5 percent [as the] percentage of unmarried U.S. residents age 18 and older in 2016 who had never been married. Another 23.1 percent were divorced and 13.4 percent were widowed.

A majority of the adult population were not married. Laws and American societal trends that attempted to maintain an idea of the woman's place as being solely in the home completely ignored these single women who did not have or otherwise did not want husbands to care for. Paragraph seven of the NOW Statement of Purpose encapsulates the essence of this new

organization's focus—desires, needs, and wants of—all—women. These women wanted their <justice> and equal treatment as the men already have.

Paragraphs eight, nine, and ten assertively present many alarming statistics about women in the workplace, in the business world, in the professions, and in higher education. Some of the statistics have shown improvement today, over forty years later; however, some situations have grown even worse for women. Betty Friedan and Pauli Murray, writers of this NOW Purpose document have not provided source data for these statistics, which could have been accomplished by a short comment that source information would be provided upon request. But to leave the numbers presented as they are without a source reference raises questions about their veracity.

Paragraphs eleven through seventeen begin with the unifying personal pronoun “We”; more *anaphora*. Paragraph twelve with the first two words in all capital letters speaks to equality for women, “Negroes and other deprived groups,” which expands their activism to the broader American population at large, which actually is (represents) a majority of the American people,

WE BELIEVE that the power of American law, and the protection guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution to the civil rights of all individuals, must be effectively applied and enforced to isolate and remove patterns of sex discrimination, to ensure equality of opportunity in employment and education, and equality of civil and political rights and responsibilities on behalf of women, as well as for Negroes and other deprived groups.

Paragraph thirteen connects women's problems to social justice and human rights, a theme receiving further elaboration almost thirty years later in 1995 when First Lady Hillary

Rodham Clinton presents her address before the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (her topic: “Women’s Rights are Human Rights”). Paragraph fourteen begins, for emphasis, with the first four words printed in all capital letters “WE DO NOT ACCEPT” with reference to a continuing status quo in “government and industry,” the message being that these women and men of this new organization will be rejecting any continuation of delay and stall tactic by officials. One useful figure of speech in oral presentation or writing is *anaphora*, “repetition of the same word or group of words at the beginnings of successive clauses ... [and] is usually reserved for those passages where the author wants to produce a strong emotional effect” (Corbett and Connors 390-391). Fahnestock also details the importance of strategic repetition for value, “Orators since antiquity have drawn on the power of repetition for emphasis and emotional heightening ... [, one example of which is] repeating the openings of successive clauses” (230-231).

Fahnestock explains the value of *anaphora* as four results that create emphasis for readers or listeners,

Such repetition creates sets of related terms, phrases, clauses, and therefore related meanings in a text, and these sets have persuasive consequences. First, they serve passage construction and arrangement. When listeners hear or readers see that a succession of clauses ... opens with repeated phrasing, they will tend to group these segments in their minds. ... Second, repetition establishes a pattern and so creates expectancy in the listener or reader, who is primed for another instance. Third, the partial repetition created ... produces parallel sentences implicating the argument forms ... comparison, induction, and eduction [sic].

Finally, all these devices ... derive power from their *sound* effects. (Emphasis added)

Paragraph fifteen begins with the first two words in all, printed in capital letters, “WE BELIEVE,” interjecting a hopeful mindset, moving forward. There still appears a defensiveness in the document that women must desire childcare and child-rearing as a matter of choice. This might be one failing of this document. What of the millions of women who do not have children and those women who have no desire for having children, whether they are married or not? The document appears to neglect these women. And of course some women do not marry, some women are lesbian and may or may not wish to have children, and some women without children are either not ready for children or past their child-bearing age or their children have become adults and have left the home. What of these women? All of these women are discriminated against in American society, yet the document seems reluctant to speak of this inequality without immediately announcing a comment implying that “all” women are desirous of staying at home raising children, evidently throughout their mature adult lives, and beyond. Obviously, this comment is inaccurate. An aside: do many men desire staying at home to help their wives or girlfriends raise the children? Friedan and Murray should not have been so fearful as to make this unnecessary comment.

Commentary devoted to young girls, paragraph sixteen again begins with two words, all caps “WE BELIEVE that it is as essential for every girl to be educated to her full potential of human ability as it is for every boy—with the knowledge that such education is the key to effective participation in today’s economy and that, for a girl as for a boy, education can only be serious where there is expectation that it will be used in society.” Paragraph seventeen begins with two words in all caps “WE REJECT” attacks the prevailing concept that the sole role of

husband is provider and that of wife is the caretaker, “We believe that a true partnership between the sexes demands a different concept of marriage, an equitable sharing of the responsibilities of home and children and of the economic burdens of their support.” The goal here is to force a change in America’s view of marriage from that of the male as the superior (authority figure) with the woman being his second in command for the family, and having no other position in the marriage than that of caregiver. This cleverly composed comment is reasonable and logical; an argument that would be very difficult for careful thinking adults to reject.

This document projects that American society view the state of marriage in a distinctly different way—to consider marriage a partnership of *equals*. This has been, in fact, a tremendous burden to overcome but advances have been made in the intervening 49+ years: “A different concept of marriage, an equitable sharing of the responsibilities of home and children and of the economic burdens of their support [is the goal]. We believe that proper recognition should be given to the economic and social value of homemaking and child-care.” The penultimate sentence of this paragraph is profound and goes at the critical issue facing women in America, “We believe that proper recognition should be given to the economic and social value of homemaking and child-care.” In reality, America does not truly value this very responsible work, primarily performed by the women of society. The final sentence of the paragraph delineates some action this organization plans to perform, “To these ends, we will seek to open a reexamination of laws and mores governing marriage and divorce, for we believe that the current state of ‘half-equity’ between the sexes discriminates against both men and women, and is the cause of much unnecessary hostility between the sexes.” This is a valuable and interesting observation that possibly most men had not considered.

Paragraph eighteen continues this same theme of direct action the group plans to perform as members of this new organization. Paragraph nineteen begins, for emphasis, nine words all *capitalized*, “IN THE INTERESTS OF THE HUMAN DIGNITY OF WOMEN ...” The paragraph continues by addressing the false images of women promoted in American society that “... perpetuate contempt for women by society and by women for themselves.” This and the ending sentence correctly diagnose the problem for women in American society:

We are similarly opposed to all policies and practices—in church, state, college, factory, or office—which, in the guise of protectiveness, not only deny opportunities but also foster in women self-denigration, dependence, and evasion of responsibility, undermine their confidence in their own abilities and foster contempt for women.

Paragraph twenty also begins with multiple words in all caps, “NOW WILL HOLD ITSELF INDEPENDENT OF ANY POLITICAL PARTY” detailing the group’s objective, to mobilize themselves and supporters toward the ultimate goal for America of “full equality between the sexes [as] our cause, in order to win for women the final right to be fully free and equal human beings, we so commit ourselves.” The very first word of the paragraph is possibly symbolic in restating the acronym for this new organization, NOW.

The final paragraph (twenty-one) of this Statement of Purpose document for this new organization “for” women begins again with all caps “WE BELIEVE THAT” is an able and carefully crafted conclusion for this Statement of three full pages in length that encapsulates the full mission of the group providing an assurance that the organization will not be demonizing men and will not be asking for special privileges. The group’s only goal is concerted action toward full equality and <justice> from the responsible leadership in America:

WE BELIEVE THAT women will do most to create a new image of women by acting now, and by speaking out in behalf of their own equality, freedom, and human dignity—not in pleas for special privilege, nor in enmity toward men, who are also victims of the current, half-equality between the sexes—but in an active, self-respecting partnership with men.

The closing sentence offers a comment that carefully and deftly exhorts a commendable byproduct of equality and <justice> for women in America, “By so doing, women will develop confidence in their own ability to determine actively, in partnership with men, the conditions of their lives, their choices, their future, and their society.” The document ends with a sole signature writ large “Betty Friedan,” her 1963 book *The Feminine Mystique* being one of the primary inspirations for the formation of this new organization.

*Rhetorical Analysis of Betty Friedan’s Testimony*

*Before the Senate Judicial Committee in Opposition*

*to Supreme Court Nominee Judge Carswell (29 January 1970)*

Abe Fortas resigned as Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court on 14 May 1969. He had been a stalwart of the progressive Earl Warren Court. President Richard Nixon first nominated Clement Haynsworth of South Carolina to replace Justice Fortas; however, Haynsworth was rejected by the United States Senate. Next, President Nixon nominated United States District Court Judge George Carswell. Southern Senators supported his nomination, but

others were highly opposed. Moderate Senators were troubled by his high reversal rate (58%). Civil rights groups criticized his support of white supremacy and racial segregation, which he espoused years earlier in his campaign for the Georgia legislature; he lost in that election. And women's groups were opposed to his nomination because of his rulings with regard to women's rights. On 29 January 1970, women's rights advocate Betty Friedan, co-founder of the National Organization of Women (NOW) made her testimony before the Senate Judicial Committee.

Mrs. Friedan began her presentation cordially with *brevitas* as she moved immediately to her message, with a lengthy complex sentence of fifty-seven words:

I am here to testify before the committee to oppose Judge Carswell's appointment to Supreme Court Justice on the basis of his proven insensitivity to the problems of the 53% of United States citizens who are women, and specifically on the basis of his explicit discrimination in a circuit court decision in 1969 against working mothers.

Her succeeding paragraphs explain who she is and who she represents, "I speak in my capacity as national president of the National Organization for women." Her presentation moves rather rapidly from point to point with very limited superfluous commentary offered. Next Mrs. Friedan provides details of the indefensible, admittedly awful circuit court ruling the judge had authored:

On October 13, 1969, in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, Judge Carswell was a party to a most unusual judiciary action which would permit employers, in defiance of the law of the land as embodied in Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, to refuse to hire women who have children. The case involved Mrs. Ida Phillips, who was refused employment by Martin Marietta Corporation as an



aircraft assembler because she had pre-school aged children, although the company said it would hire a man with pre-school aged children.

Mrs. Friedan's detailed recount of the decision was precise and without emotion, direct and focused *brevitas*. Just a rehash of the facts of the case was obviously sufficient for any reasonable listener to mentally ask for some explanation for this ruling. Mrs. Friedan continues, "Judge Carswell voted to deny a rehearing of the case, an action which in effect would have permitted employers to fire the 4.1 million working mothers in the U.S. today who have children under six. They comprise 38.9% of the nearly 10.6 million mothers in the labor force today." Mrs. Friedan does not provide a source for these statistics, but as spoken here before this august body such information is not needed. Listeners to Mrs. Friedan could easily fill in the omitted detail because everyone would understand that a massive number of working women have children and especially very young children. This information is rather obvious.

Mrs. Friedan continues her offensive presentation by informing her audience of the details of the Chief Judge Brown dissent, "The case is simple. A woman with pre-school aged children may not be employed, a man with pre-school children may. The distinguishing factor seems to be motherhood versus fatherhood." Just stating the obvious and leaving it to her audience to consider the details was the perfect approach for her testimony. Judge Carswell's embarrassing lack of empathy is inexplicable. Mrs. Friedan continues with her discussion of this case, "It is important for this committee to understand the dangerous insensitivity of Judge Carswell to sex discrimination ..." Mrs. Friedan provides additional statistics about the female workforce, "According to government figures, over 25 percent of mothers who have children under six are in the labor force today. Over 85 percent of them work for economic reasons.

Over half a million are widowed, divorced or separated. Their incomes are vitally important to their children.”

Mrs. Friedan next provides Judge Carswell’s explanation for this decision; the explanation seems nonsensical, “Judge Carswell justified discrimination against such women by a peculiar doctrine of ‘sex plus,’ which claimed that discrimination which did not apply to all women but only to women who did not meet special standards—standards not applied to men—[and] was not sex discrimination.” Mrs. Friedan repeats from Chief Judge Brown’s dissent as a response to Judge Carswell’s “peculiar ‘sex plus’ doctrine” that

The ‘sex plus’ doctrine would ... penalize the very women who most need jobs ... [and] would deal a serious blow to objectives of Title VII. If the law against sex discrimination means anything, it must protect employment opportunities for those groups of women who most need jobs because of economic necessity. ... Sixty-Eight percent of working women do not have husbands present in the household, and two-thirds of these women are raising children in poverty. Moreover, a barrier to jobs for mothers of pre-schoolers tends to harm non-white mothers more than [sic] white mothers.

Mrs. Friedan concludes her revelation of Chief Judge Brown’s dissent with her plausible explanation for Judge Carswell’s position by stating “... that only outright sex discrimination or sexism, as we new feminists call it, can explain Judge Carswell’s ruling.” Mrs. Friedan speaks calmly in a reasoned voice as she slowly and methodically critiques this ruling of Judge Carswell and his potential fitness for the Supreme Court. Without waisting time with customary niceties, Mrs. Friedan is adamant and unrestrained as she is impressively focused,

Human rights are indivisible, and I, and those for whom I speak, would oppose equally the appointment to the Supreme Court of a racist judge who had been totally blind to the humanity of black men and women since 1948, as the appointment of a sexist judge totally blind to the humanity of women in 1969.

Mrs. Friedan next calls out the Senators on the committee, “I trust that you gentlemen of the committee do not share Judge Carswell’s inability to see women as human beings, too. I will however put these questions to you.” She continues with *erotema* as she asks three insightful rhetorical questions of the Senators on the committee. Mrs. Friedan’s testimony was being given before a Senatorial committee, but her entire audience was much larger; there were of course visitors in the audience there where the committee was meeting, and there was media coverage that extended this testimony to a massive extensive additional number of viewers. Fahnestock writes about the tactic of speaking only to a small portion—here a select group of Senators of Congress—of a large audience:

The tactic of singling out segments of a larger audience has a benign version in a popular gathering when a speaker asks the veterans, or the moms, or the union members in the audience to stand up and receive a round of applause. It has other potential effects when audience members are asked to vote *yes* or *no* by raising their hands in the presence of the entire assembly, thereby actively placing themselves in one camp or the other. And of course this singling out can have positive or negative effects when audience members can be visibly separated from each other and the speaker can draw the attention of the rest of the audience to them. The result can be public accolades or that public shaming considered by Aristotle one of the strongest emotions in the rhetor’s arsenal.

Mrs. Friedan is here utilizing *erotema* (the rhetorical question) approach to force the Senators and her greater audience (not present there) to place themselves in the place of women, to consciously consider the meaning and consequences of their answers, to her three posed rhetorical questions:

How would you feel if in the event you were not reelected, you applied for a job at some company or law firm or university, and were told you weren't eligible because you had a child? How would you feel if your sons were told explicitly or implicitly that they could not get or keep certain jobs if they had children? Then how do you feel about appointing to the Supreme Court a man who has said your daughters may not hold a job if they have children?

She elaborates by again avoiding the customary niceties and stating with clarity and specificity that “The economic misery and psychological conflicts entailed for untold numbers of American women, and their children and husbands, by Judge Carswell’s denial of the protection of a law that was enacted for their benefit suggests only a faint hint of the harm that would be done in appointing such a **sexually backward judge** to the Supreme Court” (emphasis added).

Mrs. Friedan’s testimony has been succinct and detailed as she has satisfied a *logos* appeal to her audiences in listing her complaints, anticipating any defenses Judge Carswell might offer to explain his reasoning, and effectively refuting those explanations. Her testimony concludes with a seeming avalanche of crescendo,

The Honorable Shirley Chisholm, a national board member of NOW, has summed it all up in her statement that she has been more discriminated against as a woman than as a black. It would show enormous contempt for every woman of this

country and every black American, as well contempt for the Supreme Court itself, if you confirm Judge Carswell's appointment.

*Brevitas* can be a shrewdly resourceful rhetorical device when used properly, as Mrs. Friedan does in this presentation. The relative brevity of Mrs. Friedan's testimony providing a detailed specification of her arguments against the appointment without emotion, the careful opening introduction of her testimony, and the rousing emphatic conclusion with a concise carefully worded closing statement makes her presentation a successful one. As a result of testimony and letters by many in opposition to Judge Carswell's proposed appointment, including that of Mrs. Friedan, the Senate did not confirm Judge Carswell's nomination on 8 April 1970 by a vote of 45-51. President Nixon's *third* nomination for this Supreme Court opening was Minnesota Judge Harry Blackman, who would be confirmed by a unanimous Senate vote of 94-0. Interestingly, Justice Blackman would later write the majority opinion in *Roe v. Wade* (1973), the landmark Supreme Court case that gave women a right for access to abortion.

### *Equal Rights Amendment—A Rhetorical Analysis*

Section 1. No political, civil, or legal disabilities or inequalities on account of sex or on account of marriage, unless applying equally to both sexes, shall exist within the United States or any territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof.

The election of John F. Kennedy over Vice President Richard M. Nixon was the second closest presidential election in the history of the United States of America. Senator Kennedy was heavily supported by organized labor. Whereas first wave feminism focused on women's suffrage and gender equality issues, such as property rights, a second wave feminism focused on a number of other women's rights issues, such as reproductive rights, sexuality, official illegalities, domestic violence, marital rape, among other issues. The second wave followed publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* and growing disappointment with the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW). Friedan's book provided a critical examination of the lives of adult women in American society and found their lives wanting.

Whereas most women, perhaps, did want husbands and children, they also wanted life fulfillment too in other areas of their lives just as did the men in society. Women had interests other than the home, their husbands, and their children. The religious dogma and religious community (primarily Christianity) used their holy book (the Bible) to infer that women need only devote themselves to their husbands, their children, and their households to find full life satisfaction and enjoyment, without regard to the women who did not have husbands or children. Friedan's book found otherwise, specifically a problem or uneasiness "that has no name." Besides there was no consideration for the tens of millions of women who did not have husbands, nor for the women who felt trapped in failing marriages. And the legal impediments for women to act on their own to protect their children from abusive relationships were daunting; legally in some states women had restrictions placed upon them with regard to securing credit in their own names. In addition, many women did not want or prefer to be tied to a man for the entirety of their adult lives. Grown women had interests and desires for themselves separate and

apart from children or husbands. And women also wanted to have a voice in their federal, state, and local government elections.

The PCSW did not seem to effectively address the status of women in society. Women felt they should also have an opportunity to help lead their country toward its conduct of world involvement. And, women wanted their government to act in more and different ways to better help their families and their children and their lives. Fortunately, women did finally get the right to vote in 1920 through a Constitutional Amendment, but women wanted still more. They wanted a direct voice in selecting the people who would operate their government. While women number just over one-half of our country's population (53%, U.S. Census), there has never been elected a woman as President of the United States. Our Congress even today has only 25 (of 100 total) women serve in the United States Senate and only 102 (of 435 total) women serve in the House of Representatives. Currently today (2019) Angela Merkel is the Chancellor of Germany, Theresa May is the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Tsai-Ing wen is the President of Taiwan, Sheikh Hasina is the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Halimah Binti Yacob is the President of Singapore, Jacinda Ardern is the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Ana Brnabic is the Prime Minister of Serbia, Bidhya Devi Bhandari is the President of Nepal, Erna Solberg is the Prime Minister of Norway, Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhela is the Prime Minister of Namibia, among some others.<sup>77</sup>

There was increasing demand by women in support of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA); however, organized labor preferred additional Congressional legislation instead. President Kennedy signed Executive Order 10980 (Presidential Commission on the Status of

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<sup>77</sup> Trends Desk. "These are just 10 of the women who rule the world today." The Indian Express. [www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com). 30 May 2018. Web.

Women) on 14 December 1961 partly in an effort to appease labor and mollify growing women's support for the ERA. Many women continue to believe that the USA still needs a Congressional Amendment to secure their full and equal Constitutional rights in America today—they still want their <justice>.

Succinctly detailed, the proposed Equal Rights Amendment as written is just one rather lengthy simple sentence containing thirty-seven words. The obvious brevity of the demand speaks volumes with its elegance. First approved in the House of Representatives (1971) and the Senate (1972) and supported by three successive Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter, the proposed Amendment needed formal passage by two-thirds—38—of the state legislatures. There are now today only three states still needed. Two deadlines have now passed, and should three additional states vote to ratify the ERA, the legal status of the ERA remains unclear. An additional impediment is that four states have rescinded their initial ratification. Also of interest is the fact that deadlines were placed on passage where the U. S. Constitution does not require a deadline for proposed Constitutional Amendments.

At the Third National Conference of Commissions on the Status of Women, there was growing sentiment of dissatisfaction that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was not effectively supporting its mandate to end employment discrimination based upon sex, and too, the EEOC had voted in 1965 to permit continued sex segregation in job advertising. Betty Friedan, Dr. Pauli Murray (a Yale law professor and member of the PCSW), and other women agreed to form a new organization to support women's rights matters, the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. They formalized their new organization with agreement on a Statement of Purpose.



*A Rhetorical Analysis of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm's Speech*  
*"For the Equal Rights Amendment (10 August 1970)"*

A native New Yorker, Shirley Chisholm in 1968 became the first African American woman elected to Congress. She would later become a founding member of both the Congressional Black Caucus and the National Women's Political Caucus. She would also later in 1972 become the first African American (woman or man) major party candidate to run for the office of President of the United States. On 10 August 1970, Congresswoman Chisholm spoke before the House of Representatives in support of the Equal Rights Amendment in her quite familiar New York Caribbean brogue.

Her demeanor was stern though cordial and respectful of the House of Representatives body as she spoke and immediately proffered her detailed support for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. This proposed amendment to the United States Constitution would provide legal rights of equality for women; it was first introduced before Congress in 1921, and subsequently would actually pass both houses of Congress in 1972; however, the proposed amendment only received thirty-five of the required thirty-eight state ratification votes for approval, "Mr. Speaker, House Joint Resolution 2764, before us today, which provides for equality under the law for both men and women, represents one of the most clear-cut opportunities we are likely to have to declare our faith in the principles that shaped our Constitution." Congresswoman Chisholm in this speech adheres to an important element of good writing, *brevitas*, that also applies to good oral presentations—simplicity—as William Zinsser recommends in his important text *On Writing Well*, "Clutter is the disease of American writing. ... But the secret of good writing is to strip every sentence to its cleanest components.

... With each rewrite I try to make what I have written tighter, stronger and more precise, eliminating every element that is not doing useful work” (7 and 11).

Her next two sentences make an aggressive statement and direct attack upon the unfairness and injustices faced daily by women in American culture, “It provides a legal basis for attack on the most subtle, most pervasive, and most institutionalized form of prejudice that exists. Discrimination against women, solely on the basis of their sex, is so widespread that it seems to many persons normal, natural and right.” Her first paragraph ending in **alliteration** makes a fully engaged colossal onslaught upon the constant discrimination suffered by women in the America of that day, and unfortunately still today. The second paragraph anticipates a common argument urged by opponents against passage of the ERA that the measure would not actually solve this problem of sex discrimination, “But that is no reason to allow prejudice to continue to be enshrined in our laws—to perpetuate injustice through inaction.” Chisholm provides a correct and able response to refute this notion.

Paragraph three provides some of her reasons in support of the passage of the measure, including “ambiguities and inconsistencies in our legal system,” the exclusion of women “from some state colleges and universities,” and “restrictions ... placed on ... [married] women [working in] business.” Paragraph four begins with a question set up, which she immediately answers, “What would the legal effects of the Equal Rights Amendment really be? Beginning this paragraph with *anthypophora* (or *hypophora*), a question that the speaker does plan to answer, unlike *erotema* (the rhetorical question, one the rhetor does not answer), “... is useful for managing issue construction and flow of support in arguments and for arranging the subtopics in expository texts. ... A dynamic, challenging speaker, one who means to engage boldly with an audience, will make strategic use of the question form” (Fahnestock 299), which

Congresswoman Chisholm uses skillfully, “The Equal Rights Amendment would govern only the relationship between the State and its citizens—not relationships between private citizens.” Paragraph five is used by Shirley Chisholm to discuss its application, “The amendment would be largely self-executing; that is, any Federal or State laws in conflict would be ineffective one year after date of ratification without further action by the Congress or State legislatures.” Her instruction about these intricate aspects of the ERA is purposeful and effective. There seems to be no clutter as **brevitas** commands her presentation.

Paragraphs six and seven are used by Congresswoman Chisholm to address another common opposition argument, that the various state labor laws would be in conflict and result in turmoil because of the federal changes, which could result in considerable litigation. She capably refutes this argument,

State labor laws applying only to women, such as those limiting hours of work and weights to be lifted, would become inoperative unless the legislature amended them to apply to men. ... [In addition,] changes are being made so rapidly as a result of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it is likely that by the time the equal rights amendment would become effective, no conflicting State laws would remain.

She continues in paragraph eight to question the value of those laws and whether they were actually of benefit to women, “There has never been any doubt that they worked a hardship on women who need or want to work overtime and on women who need or want better paying jobs, and there has been no persuasive evidence as to how many women benefit from the archaic policy of the laws.” And Chisholm further notes, “After the Delaware hours law was repealed in 1966, there were no complaints from women to any of the State agencies that might have been

approached.” She anticipates audience concerns and immediately refutes them, another sign of a carefully crafted oral presentation.

Congresswoman Chisholm next in paragraphs nine and ten comments about jury service laws and selective service laws to acknowledge that those laws would change, noting that with regard to the selective service laws, “... men who did not meet the normal mental or physical requirements have been given opportunities for training and correcting physical problems. There is a value to frank and open honesty in public speaking. This opportunity is not open to their sisters.” She then correctly adds, “Only girls who have completed high school and meet high standards on the educational test can volunteer. Ratification of the amendment would not permit application of a higher standard to women.” She uses paragraphs eleven, twelve, and thirteen to acknowledge some of the changes that would be necessary with this change for equality, concluding in paragraph fourteen that “Federal, State, and other governmental bodies would be obligated to follow non discriminatory practices in all aspects of employment, including public school teachers and State university and college faculties.” Her speech is detailed and without excess emotion; she is just steadfastly presenting the facts as she understands them to be.

Paragraph fifteen begins with more *hypophora*, a question “What would be the economic effects of the equal rights amendment?” Congresswoman Chisholm continues, answering her rhetorical question by noting that “Direct economic effects would be minor,” and if any labor laws remained that specifically targeted women, they would be changed, which would benefit women by providing more opportunities for them. And specifically, “More opportunities in public vocational and graduate schools for women would also tend to open up opportunities in better jobs for women.” Next in paragraph sixteen, She again acknowledges that “[I]ndirect effects could be much greater.” There would be considerable changes affecting the society;

however, those changes would be warranted because then at that present time, women were being restricted by those laws. And equal opportunity for women and for men would be good for everyone, including American society as a whole.

“Sex prejudice cuts both ways. Men are oppressed by the requirements of the Selective Service Act, by enforced legal guardianship of minors, and by alimony laws. Each sex, I believe, should be liable when necessary to serve and defend this country. Each has a responsibility for the support of children.” Stating this obvious observation in paragraphs seventeen and eighteen adds to the *logos* appeal of Chisholm’s offering. Her speech details the reasons to support passage of the ERA while she also capably refutes in detail the counterarguments against passage. A well crafted argument essay (or speech) raises and refutes valid opposing arguments against the rhetor’s position. She explains effectively, “Working conditions and hours that are harmful to women are harmful to men. Laws setting employment limitations on the basis of sex are irrational, and the proof of this is their inconsistency from State to State.” She ends paragraph nineteen with an emphatic appeal that is difficult to contradict, “The choice of occupation would be determined by individual capabilities, and the rewards for equal work should be equal.” The infusion of a speech with occasional *paroemia*, insertion of a proverbial comment, is generally a welcome addition.

Paragraph twenty provides a competent conclusion, “Legal discrimination between the sexes is, in almost every instance, founded on outmoded views of society and the pre-scientific beliefs about psychology and physiology. It is time to sweep away these relics of the past and set future generations free of them.” In paragraph twenty-one, Chisholm details in no uncertain terms the great problem with the *status quo*, noting that the then current federal mechanisms and machinations addressing the employment-gender inequities—the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the

Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission—had all failed to fully address sex discrimination and that “... the Justice Department has been even less effective.” The specificity in Chisholm’s language undeniably forced those opposing passage to reconsider their opposition. She closes paragraph twenty-two with a bit of mild **sarcasm**, “The time is clearly now, to put this House on record for the fullest expression of that equality of opportunity which **our** founding fathers professed. They professed it, but they did not assure it to their daughters, as they tried to do for their sons” (emphasis added). Chisholm’s use, though understandable, is somewhat problematic for an African American woman to use because to the Founding Fathers Chisholm would not be an “our” because she would have been the Other, a “them” and of no consequence. Additionally, the use of **sarcasm** is not recommended primarily because the informality of its tone reduces the preferred professional and serious demeanor and resonance of the speaker, reduces the speaker’s tone to a lower level venturing towards informality and pettiness.

Chisholm again states the obvious with regard to the framers of the Constitution in paragraph twenty-four, “The Constitution they wrote was designed to protect the rights of white, male citizens. As there were no black founding Fathers, there were no founding mothers—a great pity, on both counts. It is not too late to complete the work they left undone. Today, here, we should start to do so.” These obvious comments are rarely expressed by our Congressmen and Congresswomen or our Senators and other political leaders. The United States Constitution is not a perfect document, actually far from it; the document has strengths but also many weaknesses. The framers were in effect compelled (forced “kicking and screaming”) to add a Bill of Rights because the framers were fearful that the masses of Americans living among the colonies might not support this new constitution since the initial document was too obviously

related to the economic interests to be preserved for these primarily wealthy white males.<sup>78</sup> Many if not most of the “fathers” and “founders” owned slaves—actually *owned* other human beings—and had no thought about the indigenous peoples who had, before the arrival of European colonists, lived on the lands for centuries. For example, Benjamin Franklin owned slaves although “late in life he became an early abolitionist.” James Madison owned at least 100 slaves. Thomas Jefferson owned thousands of acres of land and “150 to 200 slaves,” whom he never granted freedom. George Washington owned “hundreds of slaves and thousands of acres of land. Based upon “income, wealth, education, and social standing,” (ibid) the 55 delegates to the Constitutional Convention were “... the elite of the day, involved in the highest level of society.”<sup>79</sup> And as such, these wealthy men were, first and foremost, protective of their individual personal economic standing more so than protecting the rights of the commoners. Congresswoman Chisholm effectively ends her speech with a quote suggesting that “... the social and psychological effects will be initially more important than legal or economic results.”

Shirley Chisholm’s robust and heartfelt appeal was an orderly and scrupulously detailed offering. The speech began with a gracious but informative opening, the middle offering consisted of detailed instruction that provided reasons in support as it capably raised the opposing arguments, which she reasonably refuted, and the ending responsibly provided a philosophical comment that fully addressed the critical issues involved. The persuasiveness of

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<sup>78</sup> Please see Charles A. Beard, *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States* and also Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. Please see also Tom Kertscher. “Were the founding fathers ‘ordinary people’?” Politifact Wisconsin. 2 July 2015. [www.politifact.com](http://www.politifact.com). Web.

<sup>79</sup> Gordon Wood. *Revolutionary Characters: What Made the Founders Different*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2006. Print. See also Dahl, Robert A. *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001.

Chisholm's appeal would appear obvious since the measure did pass a vote in the House of Representatives the following October of 1971. However, the Equal Rights Amendment did not become law then because only thirty-five of the required thirty-eight states voted to ratify. Article V of the United States Constitution provides in part, "The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this constitution ... shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution when ratified by the state legislatures by three-fourths of the several states ..." The speech was a success while the object of the offering was a failure, at least at that time.

The proposed Equal Rights Amendment is currently worded, "Equality of Rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." There are still today continued efforts being made in support of the ERA becoming law. The one move would entail a concerted effort to again achieve the required vote of support in the House of Representatives and the Senate and then seek reapproval by thirty-eight states; once so approved, the ERA would become law. The alternative strategy is for interested parties to reassert a finding that the already passed thirty-five states remain and to argue that still only three states are needed for passage. The Constitution does not mention a time limit for passage of a measure put to the states; however for this amendment, Congress artificially imposed a seven-year requirement for state approval. The state of Arizona could play a role in this revival of interest in the Equal Rights Amendment.<sup>80</sup> This measure would lead to considerable litigation, so the traditional option would appear to be the more favorable strategy to pursue for those who support the ERA.

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<sup>80</sup> Dustin Gardiner. *Arizona Republic*. "Will Arizona be crucial 38<sup>th</sup> state to ratify Equal Rights Amendment?" 19 January 2019. Web. [www.azcentral.com](http://www.azcentral.com). Web.



*“A Left-Handed Commencement Address”*

*by Novelist Ursula Le Guin: A Rhetorical Analysis (22 May 1983)*

Mills College traces its founding to 1852 as the Young Ladies Seminary located in Benicia, California. The institution moved about thirty miles south to Oakland, California, in 1871, when it became Mills College, the first college for women west of the Colorado Rockies. Its proud tradition continues even today as a private liberal arts and sciences college for women although graduate programs do welcome men as students. On 22 May 1983, the Mills College Commencement Address was given by celebrated novelist Ursula LeGuin (1929-2018), a writer in several genre but most widely celebrated for her fantasy and science fiction novels. The Address graduates and audience members would hear on this date would become historic; the speech was determined to be one of the 100 best public speeches of the twentieth century from a joint study by the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Texas A. & M. University.<sup>81</sup>

Thoughtfully, Ursula LeGuin made her speech freely available for reprint at her website. The title “A Left-Handed Commencement Address” is appropriate for the speech. This address was a shoutout to women, especially young women just entering the world of work and adulthood. Her opening comment is interesting, “I want to thank the Mills College Class of ’83 for offering me a rare chance: to speak aloud in public in the language of women. The speech is interesting because she informs her audience that she has only this rare opportunity to speak, and she provides no elaboration. She is a celebrated novelist, having won the Hugo Award (the

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<sup>81</sup> A poll of 137 scholars in public address were surveyed in 1999.

highest honor in several categories for fantasy and science fiction), Nebula Award (best works of fantasy and science fiction published in the United States), Locus Award (best novels in fantasy and science fiction), and World Fantasy Award (fantasy fiction), each award more than once. Her opening comment is an apt introduction for her address because she will be informing her audience while she also speaks using “the language of women.”

Le Guin is respectful toward men as she speaks, unlike how men are often disrespectful toward women in their speeches and business meetings: “I know there are men graduating, and I don’t mean to exclude them, far from it.” The closing adverb phrase is her unstated message to the men that although she is speaking in “the language of women” and giving a message primarily for women, what she will say will also be of benefit to the men in her audience. Just following the closing adverb phrase, Le Guin tells a joke that may require listeners to take a moment to grasp the joke’s full meaning, “There is a Greek tragedy where the Greek says to the foreigner, ‘If you don’t understand Greek, please signify by nodding.’” Perhaps her meaning is that while her message will be for women and even so the message will also be of benefit for men, Le Guin is basically not as concerned about whether the men can understand the message or not. Perhaps.

Le Guin’s address provides a masterful challenge and attack upon the status quo in society where everyone, women and men, are expected to conduct their daily lives from the male perspective. Males in general conduct their lives in daily “combat,” where there are usually winners and losers with very little concern for the wellbeing of the “losers,” within communities at large:

Anyhow, commencements are usually operated under the unspoken agreement that everybody graduating is either male **or ought to be**. ... Intellectual tradition

is male. Public speaking is done in the public tongue, the national or tribal language; and the language of our tribe is the men's language. Of course women learn it. (Emphasis added)

Women are forced to see the world and act in accordance with men. Laura Mulvey provides an interesting psychoanalytical perspective of the "male gaze" (her word) with regard to how males in particular and audiences in general view women on film in her essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema."

Le Guin provides examples, such as the conservative prime minister of Great Britain, Margaret Thatcher, in her talks and action that was not dissimilar from American president Ronald Reagan, and Indira Gandhi, the prime minister of India, who suspended civil liberties and censored the national press for a period, as also utilizing actions not dissimilar to what a man might have done. For example, General Anastasio Somoza, president of Nicaragua was notorious for human rights abuses and corruption. Le Guin's comment is that these women world leaders in fact acted just as the men would have acted, and Le Guin's address is a plea to the young women graduates that they conduct their lives in a much different way, the more natural way, one that is of women.

"This is a man's world, so it talks a man's language. The words are all words of power. *You've come a long way, baby*, but no way is long enough. You can't even get there by selling yourself out: because there is theirs, not yours" (emphasis added). This independent clause opening the third sentence is a reference to the popular Virginia Slims professional women's tennis tour theme of the 1970s. Tobacco giant Phillip Morris began marketing a slim cigarette for women in 1968, and began sponsoring women's professional tennis in 1970. The women tennis professionals broke away from the men because "The prize money for the major

events on the men's tour was eight to ten times as much as the pool for the women" and leading women tennis players broke away.<sup>82</sup> Le Guin is telling the young women—and men—to not become "sell-outs," to be true to who they are.

Man's language of which she is speaking is to be bold, aggressive, selfish, insensitive and unconcerned about the weak of society. Le Guin is suggesting that the true nature of women is different; women are care-givers, generally display empathy, concern, warmth toward others, and ordinarily conduct their daily lives not in battle contests. Of course, these are all stereotypes. The final adverb clause "... because there is theirs, not yours" is also very true; in other words, women trying to perform like men still will not allow women to be accepted by the men as women (as themselves, so why bother?). Le Guin's message to her audience is for the graduates to become true to themselves, "I hope you and ... [your children, if you so desire to have children] have enough to eat, and a place to be warm and clean in, and friends, and work you like doing." In the man's world young people go to college to become successful in life, "Well, is that what you went to college for? Is that all? What about success?" These are profound philosophical questions students sometimes never take time to consider, about their future.

Next, Le Guin makes a profound observation, "Success is somebody else's failure." Not always, but usually this is true; it fits the male pattern of daily life of competing and games of winners and losers. Le Guin is urging her audience to consider following a different path. Time and again, Le Guin offers comments usually the public media avoids, the daily lives of drudgery that the millions of Americans who are poor face in their *everyday* lives, "Success is the American Dream we can keep dreaming because most people in most places, including thirty

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<sup>82</sup> "You've come a long way, baby." *Business World*. [www.bworldonline.com](http://www.bworldonline.com). 8 December 2017. Web.

million of ourselves, live wide awake in the terrible reality of poverty. No, I do not wish you success. I don't even want to talk about it. I want to talk about failure.” Certainly at this point in her speech, Le Guin has won over her audience as they are in rapt attention. There is a poverty threshold set by the United States government currently of \$25,100 annual income (2019) for a family of four, which gives us some very distressing statistics: (1) 40 million Americans live below the poverty line (about 12% of U.S. population); (2) the US has the highest poverty among the wealthy nations of the world; (3) just three men (Bezos of Amazon, Gates of Microsoft, and Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway) own more wealth than the bottom *half* (164 million) of the U.S. population—just three men; (4) more than one-fifth of Native Americans (21.9%) and one-fifth of African Americans (21.2%) live in poverty while 8.7% of whites live in poverty; and (5) the wealth gap between the rich and poor is widening.<sup>83</sup>

Le Guin next says she wishes to not talk of success, to move away from this customary topic at graduation exercises; she wants to talk about failure, “Because you are human beings you are going to meet failure. You are going to meet disappointment, injustice, betrayal, and irreparable loss.” Her message is that failure is a natural part of life, but failure can often helpfully direct our lives as of course failure can be overcome. Le Guin continues her message of tough love with *paroemia*, profound observations telling her audience a truth rarely heard at graduation events such as this, “You will find you're weak where you thought yourself strong. You'll work for possessions and then find they possess you. You will find yourself—as I know you already have—in dark places, alone, and afraid.” This is a sobering message, but eventually her central theme will come through loud and clear, that the young women can survive, and the

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<sup>83</sup> “Mapping Poverty in America.” *The Economist*. [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). 16 October 2018. Web.

message Le Guin is presenting is being made just to prepare these young graduates for the future, a very promising future.

Le Guin continues, “What I hope for you, for all my sisters and daughters, brothers and sons, is that you will be able to live there, in the dark place. To live in the place that our rationalizing culture of success denies, calling it a place of exile, uninhabitable, foreign.” So very true. Our public media rarely speaks or writes about the people inhabiting those “dark places” instead leaving them invisible in our society. The prevailing thought of our society, “theirs, not yours” is that *they* of the “dark places” are the losers in our society. However, to Le Guin these are just people, our sisters and our brothers, being neither winners nor losers. The people living out their everyday lives of triumph and tragedy, success and failure, are just our neighbors who are living their daily lives under the dominant male parlance of society—the “losers.” Le Guin believes this mindset is not natural to women.

Le Guin next provides a very clear reason for her motif, “Well, we’re already foreigners. Women as women are largely excluded from, alien to, the self-declared male norms of this society, where human beings are called Man, the only respectable god is male, the only direction is up.” As she commented upon earlier, women attempting to join in with men to act as they would act, in the bigger picture, will never be accepted as the men accept each other. This understanding draws echos of Derrick Bell’s Racial Realism Theory (discussed below). A somewhat similar state of affairs would apply to peoples of color as they attempt to navigate the systems of American society. One example of this reality explained vividly is the 1895 poem by the African American poet Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906) “We Wear the Mask.”

Le Guin would appear to be attempting to educate the graduating women that continuing to live their lives as the men live, would not be the happy lives these women truly want. Many

(most?) women do want husbands and children, but they also want to have fulfilling goals for more, just as young men do. A later African American writer Ralph Ellison (1914-1994) wrote in a similar vein of wearing a mask to get by in society with his open letter published essay “Change the Joke and Slip the Yoke” (1958). Le Guin continues,

So that’s their country; let’s explore our own. ... I’m talking about society, the so-called man’s world of institutionalized competition, aggression, violence, authority, and power. If we want to live as women, some separatism is forced upon us. ... The war-games world was not made by us or for us; we can’t even breathe the air there without masks. And if you put the mask on you’ll have a hard time getting it off. So how about going on doing things our own way, as to some extent you did here at Mills?

Le Guin is presenting to the women something perhaps the women had not considered, until now, that they have been largely engaging American society by utilizing Dunbar’s and Ellison’s masks, an able metaphor. The masks probably have been helpful to women for their survival, until now; LeGuin is suggesting that women now try to navigate their future lives in a different way—unmasked.

“Not for men and the male power hierarchy—that’s their game. Not against men, either—that’s still playing by their rules. But with any men who are with us: that’s our game. Why should a free woman with a college education either fight Machoman or serve him? Why should she live her life on his terms?” One’s life is personal and permanent, and Le Guin appears to be asking her young women (and young men) whether that life should be of their own choosing or a life as others (the males in society) might have them lead.

Le Guin continues by pointing out some of those characteristics of male society expectations, which are altogether different from how women probably would lead their lives, without male interference:

Machoman is afraid of our terms, which are not all rational, positive, competitive, etc. And so he has taught us to despise and deny them. In our society, women have lived, and have been despised for living, the whole side of life that includes and takes responsibility for helplessness, weakness, and illness, for the irrational and the irreparable, for all that is obscure, passive, uncontrolled, animal, unclean—the valley of the shadow, the deep, the depths of life. That is, the patriarchal way of life has expectations that we disregard and ignore the helpless and the dependent because they are “unworthy” of our concern and besides others can take care of those ‘losers.’

That is, our time is too valuable as we persevere toward becoming successful in life, “All that the Warrior denies and refuses is left to us (we women) and the men who share it with us and therefore, like us, can’t play doctor, only nurse, can’t be warriors, only civilians, can’t be chiefs, only indians [sic]. Well so that is our country. The night side of our country.” Le Guin believes that regardless of how well the woman may fit in, she will always still be considered the outsider with the glass ceiling firmly in tact. Le Guin is informing her audience that young women who wear the mask and attempt to become accepted in this male concept of society will ultimately not be accepted and will only be denying themselves of the lives they would like to live.

Le Guin explains further, “If there is a day side to it, high sierras, prairies of bright grass, we only know pioneers’ tales about it, we haven’t got there yet. We’re never going to get there by imitating Machoman.” For women to go where they want and need to go, they must be



authentic to themselves. “We are only going to get there by going our own way, by living there, by living through the night in our own country.” She is imploring the young women to be themselves, not what patriarchal society expects women to be. “Our country” to Le Guin is the real world among the real people. Their needs are what really matters because they are in the real world, the world where women live. Le Guin wants to convince the young women that what they want of their lives is not of less importance; in fact, what the women want is all that should matter for them, and it is of greater importance (to themselves and to society as a whole).

“So what I hope for you is that you live there not as prisoners, ashamed of being women, consenting captives of a psychopathic social system, but as natives. That you will be at home there, keep house there, be your own mistress, **with a room of your own**” (emphasis added). This ending prepositional phrase is a curt **allusion** to Virginia Woolf’s lengthy essay “A Room for One’s Own” (1929), a compilation of two lectures she delivered, also at two women’s colleges, again about this theme of women outsiders who try to navigate their worlds living within the patriarchal world; Woolf’s theme was about the woman as writer. Novelist Alice Walker extends this concern by expanding its message, “Virginia Woolf, in her book *A Room for One’s Own*, wrote that in order for a woman to write fiction, she must have two things, certainly: a room of her own (with key and lock) and enough money to support herself. What then are we to make of Phillis Wheatley, a slave, who owned not even herself?”<sup>84</sup> Walker is expanding this notion to what she calls “womanist prose,” an effort to tie together all women writers wherever and whenever they are situated through time and place.

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<sup>84</sup> Alice Walker. *In Search of Our Mother’s Gardens: Womanist Prose*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 2004. Print. Page 235.

Le Guin continues, “That you will do your work there, whatever you’re good at, art or science or tech or running a company or sweeping under the beds, and when they tell you that it’s second-class work because a woman is doing it, I hope you will tell them to go to hell and while [sic] they’re going to give you equal pay for equal time.” Le Guin is asking the young women to “rebel,” to not merely accept others questioning their choices in life and to not allow others to denigrate what it is that they (the women) want to do (in their lives). The ending noun phrase is an **allusion** reference to a continuing problem we have in American society even today, the gender pay gap for women, who perform the same jobs yet receive less pay than their male counterparts, but also those kinds of jobs (nurse, teacher, social worker, and so on) traditionally filled by women whose work is often of greater importance to the smooth flow of society, yet the pay is less than that of jobs traditionally filled by men.<sup>85</sup>

Le Guin in her closing proclaims what she specifically wants of the young women (for themselves and for their well-being),

I hope you will live without the need to dominate, and without the need to be dominated. I hope you are never victims, but I hope you have no power over other people. And when you fail, and are defeated, and in pain, and in the dark, then I hope you will remember that darkness is your country, where you live, where no wars are fought and no wars are won, but where the future is.

This is the real world, not the world that patriarchal society would have everyone believe to be true. Le Guin is adamant that the real world is much different from the world society asks of

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<sup>85</sup> Sonam Seth, Shyanne Gal, and Skye Gould. “6 charts show how much more men make than women.” Business Insider. [www.businessinsider.com](http://www.businessinsider.com). 27 August 2018. Web.

women, to their detriment, a world (for women) not dominated by competition and war, winners and losers. It is actually, a better world, the real world, that is.

Le Guin in closing attempts to lead the young women to their better future, “Our roots are in the dark; the earth is our country. ... What hope we have lives there. Not in the sky full of orbiting spy-eyes and weaponry, but in the earth we have looked down on. Not from above, but from below.” This Le Guin address is really a masterpiece for young women (and actually for young men also), especially those young graduates holding new credentials that society has asked them to matriculate through college to secure. But now they must forge ahead toward their future, many not realizing that they are not obligated to live their lives how society expects them to behave. And as Le Guin announced in opening her address, this advice is just as beneficial for the young men in her audience; actually for everyone who listens or reads this, her message.

Women can achieve their <justice> if America begins to listen and treat women as they deserve to be treated. Because “women’s work” is not what males in power prefer for their own work does not mean that the work is less valuable; actually society would not exist or continue to exist without “women’s work.” The message in this Le Guin address is that women should live their lives doing their kinds of work regardless of how little society values their contributions.

*Audre Lorde’s “The Master’s Tools Will Never*

*Dismantle the Master’s House” (1984)—A Rhetorical Analysis*

American society is one primarily of difference; the diversity of its populace is its strength, yet those in power consider diversity to be their America's greatest threat. For centuries, women and peoples of color have tolerated the extreme marginalization and disadvantage; however during the late decades of the twentieth century, these groups began speaking out and demanding <justice>. Where we go from here, the very early decades of the twenty-*first* century will depend upon the toleration exhibited by men and women, whites and blacks, and members of each and every demographic group. Audre Lorde (1934-1992) had a full and hopefully fulfilling life as poet, educator, activist, librarian, "Black lesbian feminist [her words]," among a few other diverse labels.

Within her 1984 collection *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* was the short essay "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House,"<sup>86</sup> a profound and thought-provoking essay that forced upon women, and other marginalized groups, a very clear factual about life in America for women and peoples of color and other marginalized groups.

Rather than attempting to gain greater recognition—equality and <justice>—these groups might reconsider that accepting as standard the strictures of elitist American patriarchal society to define themselves and their plight might be the fool's errand. The title for her essay compactly expresses the full sentiment of the essay and serves as a perfect embodiment of a

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<sup>86</sup>Audre Lorde. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. New York, NY: Ten Speed Press, 1984. Print. See also Lorde, Audre. "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House." *This Bridge Called My Back*, edited by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldua. Albany, NY: State University of New York, Albany Press, 1984. Print. See also Gloria Anzaldua. *Borderlands/La Fronteria: The New Mestizo*. New York, NY: Spinsters/Aunt Lute Books, 1987. Print.

captive title that almost fully expresses the speaker/writer's message theme. Her essay begins at the beginning where she introduces her appearance on stage at this Humanities academic event:

I agreed to take part in a New York University Institute for the Humanities Conference a year ago with the understanding that I would be commenting upon papers dealing with the role of difference in the lives of American women: differences of race, sexuality, class, and age. The absence of these considerations weakens any feminist discussion of the personal and the political.

The closing prepositional phrase was an **allusion** to a popular feminist comment in the 1960s with regard to business and politics. This ending sentence is a reference to the popular feminist slogan (and also student movements slogan) “the personal is political,” meaning that personal lives are directly affected by political acts and strictures. The opening is complex with attentive listeners awaiting further elaboration for a fuller understanding of this proposed message. The use of question, whether rhetorical or otherwise, is an effective, proven rhetorical strategy capable rhetors use to engage audiences. Here there is an unstated question that speaks for elaboration.

The following paragraph she uses to introduce a particular theme for this essay, that these academic women if seriously interested in achieving equality and <justice> must first expand their acceptance of the full landscape of women in America and become more accepting of difference. That is, women who wish to change American society, for the better, must first themselves recognize and accept the differences that exist among all women—poor women, women of color, lesbian women, and women outside of academia. Lorde presents a mild chastisement of these organizers of this academic feminist event because the forum had chosen to only invite black women just to this one panel discussion,

It is a particular academic arrogance to assume any discussion of feminists theory without examining our many differences, and without a significant input from poor women, Black and Third World women, and lesbians. And yet, I stand here as a Black lesbian feminist, having been invited to comment within the only panel at this conference where the input of Black feminists and lesbians is represented.

Assuming this was an actual gathering as Lorde describes in her essay, there are no clues with regard to how the audience present at the venue accepted her criticism. There are multiple audiences for her since this essay is published in her book, a collection of thoughtful essays. Her primary audience appears to be feminist women organizers wherever situated and secondarily, the organizers of the New York University Institute for the Humanities conference.

Lorde continues her critique emphatically with *erotema*, a rhetorical question, and *anthypophora* (*hypophora*), a question that the rhetor answers:

What this says about the vision of this conference is sad, in a country where racism, sexism, and homophobia are inseparable. ... And what does it mean in personal and political terms when even the two Black women who did present here were literally found at the last hour? What does it mean when the tools of a racist patriarchy are used to examine the fruits of that same patriarchy? It means that only the most narrow [parameters of change are possible and allowable].

Capable rhetors ask questions to more closely draw in the attention of audiences. It is an effective rhetorical strategy that herein, perhaps, serious feminists who are sincere in their desire for change in American culture would become more circumspect about their activities and consider these issues that Lorde raises. Lorde suggests that to do otherwise would certainly be problematic: “The absence of any consideration of lesbian consciousness or the consciousness

of Third World women leaves a serious gap within this conference and within the papers presented here.”

She cites one example she found in a paper presented at the conference,

In this paper there was no examination of mutuality between women, no systems of shared support, no interdependence as exists between lesbians and women-identified women. Yet it is only in the patriarchal model of nurturant that women ‘who attempt to emancipate themselves pay perhaps too high a price for the results,’ as this paper states.

Lorde continues by explaining that a nurturing among women exists that is totally different from the nurturing (of children) understood by men; this is an unexamined power of women that they neglect to appreciate themselves. Lorde suggests that whatever inkling men may have implicitly of this power among women, they (the men) belittle as something less, something to be diminished. Lorde’s thesis is that women should not allow men to dictate meanings and that women should appreciate from their vantage, their personal strengths and weaknesses:

For women, the need and desire to nurture each other is not pathological but redemptive, and it is within that knowledge that our real power I rediscovered. It is this real connection which is so feared by a patriarchal world. Only within a patriarchal structure is maternity the only social power open to women.

Profundity is customarily a helpful aid for persuasion. Asking audiences to think, by direction or by indirection, causes an audience to more deeply consider and consume the ideas being offered. Paragraph one is one such example by Lorde, “Interdependency between women is the way to a freedom which allows the I to be, not in order to be used, but in order to be creative. This is a difference between the passive be and the active being.” These two compact sentences admonish

women to revere their capacity for compassion (nurturing), especially among themselves with other women. Such an adventure should lead women toward creativity and a more engaged life relishing the moment, just as they wish to live their lives, as women not as men.

Lorde discounts “tolerance of difference between women” as being something benign and different, unimportant:

Difference must not be merely tolerated, but seen as a fund of necessary polarities between which our creativity can spark like a dialectic. Only then does the necessity for interdependency become unthreatening. Only within that interdependency of difference strengths, acknowledged and equal, can the power to seek new ways of being in the world generate, as well as the courage and sustenance to act where there are no charters.

Lorde offers her ideas about the benefits to be gained by women should they accept and explore difference, specifically here as among women as they interact with other women. She suggests that both power and security can be gained by these interactions, “Difference is that raw and powerful connection from which our personal power is forged.”

Lorde’s next paragraph offers a rationale for her assertions: “As women, we have been taught either to ignore our differences, or to view them as causes for separation and suspicion rather than as forces for change. ... But community USA does not mean a shedding of our differences, nor the pathetic pretense that these differences do not exist.” Women must assert themselves, not by following the established order as already set by the elite’s patriarchal society; women should find themselves and forge their own paths and be accepting of difference in the community of women.



Repetition and listing, *anaphora* and *enumeratio*, are strategies used by Lorde in paragraph nine. She repeats “those of us” three times in succession, all in one sentence. Rhetors enlist repetition to intensify the message for a more engaged audience reaction (Fahnestock 52). Within the same paragraph, Lorde follows up the repetition with a short list as she draws to a philosophical conclusion:

... [Those of us who are outsiders,] who are poor, who are lesbians, who are Black, who are older—know that survival is not an academic skill. It is learning how to take our differences and make them strengths. *For the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.* They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. And this fact is only threatening to those women who still define the master’s house as their only source of support. (Emphasis added)

This is again, another echo of Derrick Bell’s Racial Realism Theory discussed below.

Paragraph ten introduces a name phrase, “racist feminism,” for the implications being made in this essay about those women who are reluctant to accept the difference collectives of women.

The paragraph ends with two rhetorical questions to more ably reinforce her message. Paragraph eleven ends with an indirect response to those rhetorical questions just mentioned, “The failure of academic feminists to recognize difference as a crucial strength is a failure to reach beyond the first patriarchal lesson. In our world, divide and conquer must become define and empower.”

This closing statement is quite profound.

Paragraph twelve is a collection of *erotema*, four additional rhetorical questions that direct attention to what Lorde sees as the problem her essay is exploring. Lorde then responds in the next paragraph, “In academic feminist circles, the answer to these questions is often, ‘We do

not know who to ask.’ But that is the same evasion of responsibility, the same cop-out, that keeps Black women’s art out of women’s exhibitions, Black women’s work out of most feminist publications except for the occasional ‘Special Third World Women’s Issue,’ and Black women’s texts off your reading lists.” Enlisting the three “Black women’s” repetition of “art,” “work,” and “texts” is an effective strategy that emphasizes Lorde’s (the rhetor’s) message.

Lorde provides elaboration in paragraph fourteen, “Women of today are still being called upon to stretch across the gap of male ignorance and to educate men as to our existence and our needs. This is an old and primary tool of all oppressors **to keep the oppressed occupied with the master’s concerns**” (emphasis added). The second sentence here provides some basic education for the audience. Paragraph sixteen ends the essay as Lorde makes a profound observation, “Racism and homophobia are real conditions of all our lives in this place and time. I urge each one of us here to reach down into that deep place of knowledge inside herself and touch that terror and loathing of any difference that lives there. See whose face it wears. Then *the personal as the political* can begin to illuminate all our choices” (emphasis added). An **allusion** to a then popular feminist slogan, that personal and social experiences are often governed by the political norm is again referenced by Lorde here. Should these academic women feminists embrace their sisters from different demographic groups, Lorde asserts, they (these academic feminists) put into practice the full meaning espoused by this widely voiced late 1960s protest slogan, “the personal is political.” She concludes with an **allusion** to Shakespeare, a short passage of Caliban speaking as quoted from Aimé Cesairé’s play *A Tempest*, which is the author’s reworking of Shakespeare’s play utilizing a postcolonial perspective.

### *CHAPTER Three*

Third Wave Feminism (1990s) Today and Beyond

*“Women’s Rights are Human Rights,” Hillary Rodham Clinton Address*

*Before the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women*

*(5 September 1995)—A Rhetorical Analysis*

During the political campaign of Hillary Rodham Clinton in 2016, President Barack Obama said of the former First Lady, “There has never been a man or a woman, not me, not Bill, nobody more qualified than Hillary Clinton to serve as president of the United States of America. ... [an aside to Bill Clinton] I hope you don’t mind Bill, but I was just telling the truth, man.”<sup>87</sup>

Certainly among our modern day Presidents, at least since the Great Depression era when Franklin Delano Roosevelt defeated Herbert Hoover in 1932, this Obama assessment is apt and seems warranted. Hillary Clinton lived and worked in the White House eight years as First Lady, and perhaps unlike other First Ladies she, like her idol First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Hillary Clinton was actively involved in the Presidential matters of her husband. For example, President Clinton chose his wife to lead his healthcare reform effort. Mrs. Clinton later served eight years as the New York junior Senator, then next ran for President herself against Barack Obama. Once in office, President Obama asked her to become his Secretary of State; she served in President Obama’s Cabinet (as Secretary of State) for four years. While First Lady, she spoke

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<sup>87</sup> Libby Nelson. “Is Hillary Clinton really the most qualified candidate ever? An investigation.” Vox. [www.vox.com](http://www.vox.com). 1 August 2016. Web.

before the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women and made this celebrated<sup>88</sup> and widely admired address.

She begins her speech with a cordial greeting. Her delivery is unemotional and dignified befitting the audience and the occasion. This was the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women and was held in Beijing, China. She calls this meeting a celebration, "... a celebration of the contributions women make in every aspect of life: in the home, on the job, in the community, as mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, learners, workers, citizens, and leaders." She continues her opening by reminding her audience of the inestimable role that women play in the everyday lives of families. Her strategy in this speech here is **symploce**, a kind of parallelism repetition that combines *anaphora* and *epistrophe*, "repeating words at both the beginning and the ending of phrases, clauses, or sentences" (Harris 107)

It is also a **coming together**, much the way women **come together** every day in every country. **We come together** in fields and factories, in village markets and supermarkets, in living rooms and board rooms ... [and] while playing with our children, or washing clothes in a river, or taking a break at the office water cooler, **we come together** and talk about our aspirations and concern (emphasis added).

Very early in this speech First Lady Clinton, makes a profound observation, "And time and again, our talk turns to our children and our families. However different we may appear, there is far more that unites us than divides us." Next, she mentions the issues this assembly will consider, "By gathering in Beijing, we are focusing world attention on issues that matter most in

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<sup>88</sup> This "Women's Rights are Human Rights" speech was selected #35 in a poll of American Public Address scholars in a University of Wisconsin-Madison/Texas A & M University 1999 study to determine the 100 best political speeches of the twentieth century.

our lives—the lives of women and their families: access to education, health care, jobs and credit, the chance to enjoy basic legal and human rights and to participate fully in the political life of our countries.” We often fail to realize that how well the women of our communities are able to pursue their needs and aspirations will determine how well our communities operate for everyone. This address is well organized as Mrs. Clinton clearly follows a definite theme she has prepared for this occasion.

Next, Mrs. Clinton continues her use of *symploce* to observe rightfully that “[t]here are some who question” the need for this conference, and “[t]here are some who wonder” about the importance for everyone else of this talk about the lives of women and girls with regard to economics and world politics. She uses *anthyphora* (*hypophora*), raising two questions that she answers forthrightly, “Let them look at the women gathered here and at Huairou—the homemakers and nurses, the teachers and lawyers, the policy makers and women who run their own businesses. It is conferences like this that compel governments and peoples everywhere to listen, look, and face the world’s most pressing problems.” She completes this thought by reminding her audience with *erotema*, a rhetorical question providing an implied and obvious answer, “Wasn’t it after the women’s conference in Nairobi ten years ago that the world focused for the first time on the crisis of domestic violence?”

Mrs. Clinton next informs the audience about different meetings she is involved with during the summit: World Health Organization forum “working to address the health problems of women and girls,” the United Nations Development Fund for Women for giving “women access to credit ... [to] improve their own lives and the lives of their families.” She then uses the rhetorical strategy of *diacope*, repetition after an intervening word or phrase, words that are as important as they are so obvious,

What we are learning around the world is that if women are healthy and educated, **their families will flourish**. If women are free from violence, **their families will flourish**. If women have a chance to work and earn as full and equal partners in society, **their families will flourish**. And when **families flourish**, communities and nations will do well. (Emphasis added)

The use of series language "... often constructed so that their items [*enumeratio*] increase in some way toward a **climax**" (Fahnestock 239) provides greater emphasis for a message the rhetor is giving. Fahnestock gives a capable definition of the persuasiveness value of repeating items in a series,

A series can be defined as a listing of three or more sentence elements in a row that, as a result become 'residents' of the same grammatical position in a sentence—three or more subjects, verbs, or modifiers. ... A series can be composed of any grammatical unit—words, phrases, clauses, etc.—as long as there are more than two of them and as long as they inhabit the same grammatical slot within a longer unit. (240)

That is, using repetition in this manner allows a speaker to reinforce the message by guiding the audience toward the artifact's conclusion. Mrs. Clinton's repetition is strategic and effective.

The next use of *anaphora* repetition by Mrs. Clinton is a repeat of the phrase "I have met ..." six times in succession, all within one paragraph with her reference to "new mothers in Indonesia," "working parents in Denmark," "Women in South Africa," "the leading women of my own hemisphere," "women in India and Bangladesh," and "the doctors and nurses in Belarus and Ukraine" with all of the people she met being persons involved in improving the health of their communities. Her message herein is to encourage other women to become involved in their

own communities. This repetition series allows Mrs. Clinton to introduce to her audience these common efforts of women and men improving their communities throughout the world.

What follows next is an important paragraph offering her observation, given added emphasis with her use again of repetition,

The great challenge of this conference is to give voice to women everywhere whose experiences go unnoticed, whose words go unheard. Women comprise more than half the world's population, 70% of the world's poor, and two-thirds of those who are **not taught to** read and write. We are the primary caretakers for most of the world's children and elderly. Yet much of the work we do is **not valued—not by** economists, **not by** historians, **not by** popular culture, **not by** government leaders” (emphasis added).

Patriarchal society along with religious orthodoxy and also religious zealots speak to keep women in their “rightful” place solely as caregivers in the home, yet such work as maintaining the home, caring for the children, and devoting their lives to their husbands are not valued in the American marketplace. And what of the women who do not have children? What of women who do not have husbands? What of women whose husbands leave the home, choosing another wife? What of these women once the children become adults and leave the home? What rights do these women have for themselves? These hundreds of *millions* of women in America are limited in their choices for employment and aspirations, even though they have neither children nor husbands to provide care for.

Mrs. Clinton continues her thorough indictment of the world's treatment of women:

At this very moment, as we sit here, women around the world are giving birth, raising children, cooking meals, washing clothes, cleaning houses, planting crops,

working on assembly lines, running companies, and running countries. Women also are dying from diseases that should have been prevented or treated. **They are** watching their children succumb to malnutrition caused by poverty and economic deprivation. **They are** being denied the right to go to school by their own fathers and brothers. **They are** being forced into prostitution, and **they are** being barred from the bank lending offices and banned from the ballot box.

This “benevolent concern” for the welfare of women by their male family members and by religious orthodoxy that restricts their lives to that of service in their homes blatantly stifles any and all personal growth and development for women. At the 1988 Democratic National Convention, Governor Ann Richards of Texas during her keynote address, made an off-hand comment illustrating the value and skill of women when she said of the popular 1930s motion picture dance duo of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, “If you give us the chance, we can perform. After all, Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did. She just did it backwards and in high heels.” The realities of life for women would indicate that rather than *value* the women, males appear to have the greater desire to *control* the lives of women.

Mrs. Clinton speaks of her personal responsibility and that of other women who are also in a position to support and help improve the lives of women, that they have a duty to speak for those women who cannot speak for themselves,

Those of us who have the opportunity to be here have the responsibility to speak for those who could not. As an American, I want to speak for those women in my own country, **women who** are raising children on the minimum wage, **women who** can't afford health care or child care, **women whose** lives are threatened by violence, including violence in their own homes. (Emphasis added)



She masterfully uses *diacope* repetition effortlessly to provide more emphasis for her words.

Mrs. Clinton next speaks about those who want to maintain women as they too typically are already situated in society: “The truth is that most women around the world [already] work both inside and outside the home, usually by necessity.” She is asking men, typically the leaders in world communities, to respect women, their work, their life goals, and their lives: “... [W]e must respect the choices that each woman makes for herself and her family. Every woman deserves the chance to realize her own God-given potential. But we must recognize that women will never gain full dignity until their human rights are respected and protected.” She then expands the import of her message to human rights and the central theme for this address:

Our goals for this conference, to strengthen families and societies by empowering women to take greater control over their own destinies, cannot be fully achieved unless all governments ... accept their responsibility to protect and promote internationally recognized human rights. The international community has long acknowledged ... that both women and men are entitled to a range of protections and personal freedoms, from the right of personal security to the right to determine freely the number and spacing of the children they bear.

Mrs. Clinton connects her detailed discussion of the plight of women in the world to the discussion of basic human rights,

Tragically, women are most often the ones whose human rights are violated, ... the rape of women continues to be used as an instrument of armed conflict. Women and children make up a large majority of the world’s refugees. ... I believe that now, on the eve of a new millennium, it is time to break the silence.

It is time for us to say here in Beijing, and for the world to hear, that it is no longer acceptable to discuss women's rights as separate from human rights.

Next Mrs. Clinton provides a gut-wrenching litany, *enumeratio* and *anaphora*, of just eight common abuses women and young girls suffer, three of which are highlighted strikingly by her use of stirring repetition:

**It is a violation** of human rights when a leading cause of death worldwide among women ages 14-44 is the violence they are subjected to in their own homes by their own relatives. **It is a violation** of human rights when young girls are brutalized by the painful and degrading practice of genital mutilation. **It is a violation of** human rights when women are denied the right to plan their own families, and that includes being forced to have abortions or being sterilized against their will. (Emphasis)

After providing these detailed instances of abuse suffered by women and young girls, Mrs. Clinton offers the appropriate comment to conclude this listing, "If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights, once and for all." Actually, this litany and concluding sentence may have been an effective ending for this speech had Mrs. Clinton chosen to end her address at this point. However, Mrs. Clinton has additional commentary to provide her audience as she continues with a rather lengthy conclusion that summarizes her mention of the abuses suffered by women and the efforts gained at this United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women.

Making her final observations, Mrs. Clinton revisits the use of repetition for emphasis:

Now it is the time to act on behalf of women everywhere. If we take bold steps to better the lives of women, we will be taking bold steps to better the lives of

children and families too. **Families rely on mothers and wives** for emotional support and care. **Families rely on women** for labor in the home. And increasingly, everywhere, **families rely on women** for income needed to raise healthy children and care for other relatives. (Emphasis added)

Mrs. Clinton ends her tremendous address with a crescendo, **climax** in two separate paragraphs, As long as discrimination and inequities remain so commonplace everywhere in the world, as long as girls and women are valued less, fed less, fed last, overworked, underpaid, not schooled, subjected to violence in and outside their homes—the potential of the human family to create a peaceful, prosperous world will not be realized.

And the other,

Let this conference be our—and the world’s—Call to action. Let us heed that call so we can create a world in which every woman is treated with respect and dignity, every boy and girl is loved and cared for equally, and every family has the hope of a strong and stable future. This is the work before you. That is the work before all of us who have a vision of the world we want to see—for our children and our grandchildren.

How well or ill the woman is treated, in fact, determines the overall wellbeing of the entire family, and actually the whole of American society.

A feature-length film documentary of this “largest international gathering of women in history,” *MAKERS: Once And For ALL*, had its world premiere in New York City at the School of Visual Arts Theater on Thursday 19 November 2015. Hillary Clinton was the special guest at the event.

**SECOND INTERLUDE**  
**ONE SOLUTION—RHETORICAL ANALYSES OF TWO DERRICK BELL**  
**THEOREMS:**  
**INTEREST CONVERSION THESIS AND RACIAL REALISM THEORY**

Since before the founding of the United States of America, those interests having power obviously acted primarily in furtherance their own personal financial gain. This reality was readily displayed as this new nation installed various policies and practices, including a failure to accept women as their equals, the (mis)treatment and extermination of the indigenous Native American nations of human beings who had lived on these lands for centuries before the arrival of callous Europeans and abducted Africans, continuing abhorrent treatment of forced laborer Africans and other non-European peoples; notorious practices that would be very difficult to dispute. As our nation today approaches *2½ centuries* since its founding, the journey toward America's promise has been an arduous one. In modern times, the accepted notion has been that there was continuing progress in human rights and civil rights, all following a positive trajectory. Law professor Derrick Bell, however, provides two theorems that perhaps dispute this accepted notion of human rights progress.

Law professors Delgado and Stefancic detail the Critical Race Theory (CRT) movement:

... a collection of activists and scholars engaged in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power. ... Unlike traditional civil rights discourse, which stresses incrementalism and step-by-step progress, critical race theory questions the very foundations of the liberal order, including equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism, and neutral principles of constitutional law. (3)

These theorists interestingly recognize six “basic tenets of critical race theory.” One, a view that racism is not an aberration but merely a customary and ordinary fact of life behavior in America as practiced by European immigrants and their descendants. Two, maintaining the status quo in race relations benefits “the dominant group” in America as much as if not more so than it benefits peoples of color. Three, “[a] third theme of critical race theory, the ‘social construction’ thesis, holds that race and races are products of social thought and relations. Not objective, inherent, or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather, races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient” (9); race is solely a social construction, a determination not different than if people were grouped by hair color or eye color or hair texture or body morphology and so on. There are no genetic markers for a race grouping of human beings.

Four, “differential racialization and its consequences ... [where] the dominant society racializes different minority groups at different times, in response to shifting needs such as the labor market” (9-10). Five, “the notion of intersectionality and antiessentialism [sic] ... that each race has its own origins and ever-evolving history” (10). And six, “the voice-of-color thesis holds that because of their different histories and experiences with oppression, black, American Indian, Asian, and Latino writers and thinkers may be able to communicate with their white counterparts matters that the whites are unlikely to know” (11). From the second of these basic tenets of critical race theory, Delgado and Stefancic introduce Bell’s “interest conversion” thesis, also called “interest materialism”: “Because racism advances the interests of both white elites (materially) and working-class whites (psychically), large segments of society have little incentive to eradicate it” (ibid.).

In support of Professor Bell's interest conversion thesis, Delgado and Stefancic report his writings about the monumental unanimous Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) that is almost universally celebrated as an American victory of selflessness in United States jurisprudence. Bell writes that, perhaps, this decision was not one of mere benevolence in American history. Bell suggests the decision "... [,] considered a great triumph of civil rights litigation ... may have resulted more from the self interest of elite whites than from a desire to help blacks" (9). That is, following the Second World War (1945), the emergence of the USA and USSR as superpowers, and their engagement in Cold War back-and-forth practices following the war (around 1947), and to better secure their stature in world affairs, American hegemony would obviously find it difficult to defend continued blatant racism, segregation, lynching and other atrocities directed against African Americans and other peoples of color to the growing world community of nations; thus, America's interest was more world affairs than internal benevolence.

The second observation theory from Bell—racial realism theory—is a novel, thought-provoking consideration with regard to human rights and civil rights for peoples of color in America. Bell does not claim this theory as solely his own creation; commenting that he is merely among a few other legal scholars who developed its principles. Bell defines racial realism theory in his book *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism* (1992): "... civil rights advocates continue to assume [that Constitutional amendments] ... will eventually result in racial justice [but] ... racism is permanent" (98). He continues the definition with his list of "four major themes." One is that, Bell asserts, the accepted notion of racial progress is a fallacy. Bell describes this accepted notion of racial progress would be more accurately defined as a series of ups and downs, "a pattern of cyclical progress and cyclical

regression” (ibid.). Two, “In our battles with racism, we need less discussion of ethics and more discussion of economics—much more” (ibid.). Three, black people (and concerned others) will find satisfaction itself in this struggle for <justice> and equality, and the people should proudly accept this thought as a reality. That is, finding glory in the struggle is warranted.

Four, Bell lists as a number of what he calls “imperatives”: to look at racism as a permanent reality of life in America; that the USA “has promised democracy and delivered discrimination and delusions”; that “racial realism insists on both justice and truth ... truth and honesty with ourselves”; and finally “we ... insist on the possibility for justice, requiring that we shed reactionary attachments to myths that derive their destructive and legitimating power from our belief in them” (ibid.). To these four, a fifth can clearly be added, that if peoples of color must continue to demand and request this thing called <justice> and equality, such a thing is nebulous and fleeting. That is, if someone (the dominant culture in America) can give it, they can also take it away; for example, the incarceration (euphemistically called “internment”) of Japanese-Americans during World War II or the continuing battles women engage over abortion, thought to be already settled law from the *Roe v. Wade* (1973) decision. But today in the year 2019, possibly not so.

The Purdue Owl website ([www.owl.purdue](http://www.owl.purdue)) defines critical race theory (CRT) as “a theoretical and interpretive mode that examines the appearance of race and racism across dominant modes of cultural expression. ... CRT scholars attempt to understand how victims of systemic racism are affected by cultural perceptions of race and how they are able to represent themselves to counter prejudice.”

Tyson also explains critical race theory using these six tenets as she introduces the terms “white privilege,” “racial idealism,” and “racial realism,” as among “kinds of issues that ...

engage ... critical race theorists,” clearly defining each phrase: “White privilege is a form of everyday racism because the whole notion of privilege rests on the concept of disadvantage. That is, one can be privileged only in contrast with someone else ... not privileged. ... The unconscious nature of white privilege ... makes it so difficult for whites to spot ...” (362).

Tyson defines racial idealism clearly as a “conviction”:

that racial equality can be achieved by changing people’s (often unconscious) racist attitudes through such means as education, campus codes against racist speech, positive media representations of minority groups (Delgado and Stefancic 20), and the use of the law (Bell, ‘Racial Realism’ 308). ... [I]f our attitudes toward race are constructed by society ... [that] society can reconstruct. (365)

And by comparison, Tyson defines racial realism as “the conviction that racial equality will never be achieved in the United States and that African Americans should, therefore, stop believing that it will” (ibid.). African Americans would then be able to focus their energies in other areas of which they have greater control. Tyson immediately acknowledges, as does Derrick Bell in his writings, that such a position seems “shocking” and “pessimistic” and “illogical” and “self-defeating.” But Tyson, like Bell, cautions patience and offers that such a position releases time and energy for those in support of <justice> and equality for peoples of color, that such a position has no effect upon any other reality that might evolve otherwise, that such a position merely states a fact of life, and that such a position enables people of color to exert a greater measure of control over their lives and moves them from a victimhood mindset to a mindset of authority and confidence over their lives. To paraphrase a logically accepted truism, “to continue the same identical habit, belief, or behavior, while expecting a different result is the height of ignorance and stupidity.”



Tyson also elaborates upon Bell's concept by explaining that over the course of over three hundred years in America, the current position of blacks with regard to quality of life remains shocking, "The appallingly higher rate of mortality, unemployment, poverty, job discrimination, and the like for African Americans than for white Americans has been documented by reputable sources many times over. ... [With regard to changes in federal policy over the centuries, African Americans were faced with] lynching, black disenfranchisement (being deprived of the vote), humiliating racial segregation laws, and impoverishing racial discrimination that followed [every gain that seemed to be made in American society] (ibid.). Even today, peoples of color, especially blacks and Latinx peoples, continue to suffer from police brutality, voter suppression, mass incarceration policies, deleterious effects of private prison growth, and so on, and so forth.

Glasgow and Woodward in the *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* define and name their concept of "Basic Racial Realism" by explaining:

... [T]he thesis of debate ... [have been engaged, concerning race practices in developed countries] over ... the past thirty years, but we argue here that this debate contains a lacuna: there is a fourth, mostly neglected, position that we call 'basic racial realism.' **Basic racial realism** says that though race is neither biologically real nor socially real, it is real all the same. Our goal is to establish this theory's credentials and provide it with initial support. (Emphasis added, 449)

Delgado and Stefancic define this theory succinctly as the "[v]iew that racial progress is sporadic [nonlinear] and that people of color are doomed to experience only infrequent peaks followed by regressions"(183). They explain the theory: "For realists, racism is a means by which society

allocates privilege and status. Racial hierarchies determine who gets tangible benefits, including the best jobs, the best schools, and invitations to parties in people's homes" (ibid.).

### **PART THREE**

Peoples of Color Seeking <Justice>

#### **CHAPTER FOUR ... AFRICAN AMERICANS SEEKING<JUSTICE>**

B I R M I N G H A M, A L A B A M A (1963)

The city of Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963 had a population of about 350,000 with the citizenship demographic of 60% white and 40% black. Unfortunately for the African Americans, the city was rigidly segregated in ways we today would find unimaginable. Of course blacks paid equal amounts in taxes as did their white counterparts, but what African American citizens received for their taxes was negligible by comparison. There were no African American elected officials. Blacks could not work as police officers or firefighters; store sales clerks or bus drivers or store cashiers. Blacks could not work as secretaries for white businesses, nor could they work as bank tellers. They could not use the public parks, and when blacks began to protest, city officials closed all of the public parks rather than desegregate. Of course, schools continued to also be rigidly segregated even though the Supreme Court case of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) had been decided almost a *decade* earlier; segregation had been ruled illegal. City officials in Birmingham and most other cities of the South simply ignored this ruling. And of course African American school teachers and other employees of the African American schools of Birmingham were paid only a percentage of what whites in similar jobs at the white schools.

Only about 10% of African Americans living in Birmingham were registered to vote. In addition to these fundamental injustices, blacks faced daily indignities that made life in

Birmingham and most of the South a tremendous burden. Local citizens in Birmingham began the Birmingham Movement as a local protest to challenge and make known their grievances with goals: to end segregation downtown and to open up employment to blacks. The campaign began with local boycotts, which proved to be unsuccessful. Local movement leader Fred Shuttlesworth decided to write a letter to Martin Luther King, Jr., who was then engaged in the final throes of the Albany (Georgia) Movement, which was then at a troubling stalemate.

The powerful local leader in the police department, Eugene “Bull” Connor, was the Commissioner of Public Safety in Birmingham. He would later gain lasting national ignoble celebrity for ordering the use of water hoses and attack dogs to challenge the African American protesters, most of whom were small children and young students. Local activist Fred Shuttlesworth along with Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) officials James Bevel and Wyatt T. Walker led the movement effort. Shuttlesworth penned his letter to Martin Luther King to invite him and SCLC to Birmingham to assist in the protest movement. Shuttlesworth’s letter to King implored him to become active in Birmingham as another opportunity to reassert his national standing in civil rights protests. King and SCLC did travel to Birmingham to become involved in the movement there. However, King was arrested on April 12, 1963, for his efforts. But Birmingham, Alabama, was not unlike other mid-size Southern towns.

***A Poem Becomes the Negro National Anthem:***

***A Rhetorical Analysis of “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing”***

In his autobiography *Along This Way*, the first autobiography written by a person of color to be reviewed in the *New York Times*, Johnson’s biographer refers to Johnson as “a renaissance man of the Harlem Renaissance.” His accomplishments were extensive: Johnson became Florida’s

first African American lawyer when he passed the state bar examination in 1898; he succeeded Walter White as the Executive Secretary of the NAACP in 1920.

Growing up in a middle class African American family in Jacksonville, Florida, James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) in his autobiography *Along This Way* (1933) discusses his beginning of what would become a full-time teaching experience. That beginning occurred in rural Georgia as he taught children of former slaves in the summer of 1891; he was himself just a freshman student attending Atlanta University in that city. And though he traveled from a different world than the world his students lived, he recognized intimately his soulful connection to them. “It was this [teaching experience] ... that marked the beginning of my psychological change from boyhood to manhood. It was this period which marked also the beginning of my knowledge of my own people” (Johnson reported in Gates and McKay 766).

Johnson was an early day renaissance man, not unlike his predecessors (men and renaissance women) William Wells Brown (1814?-1884),<sup>89</sup> Frances Ellen Watkins-Harper (1825-1911),<sup>90</sup> Ida B. Wells-Barnett (1862-1931),<sup>91</sup> and a precursor of the future Paul Robeson

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<sup>89</sup> Novelist, playwright, historian, international anti-slavery lecturer, Underground Railroad conductor (Gates and McKay 245-247).

<sup>90</sup> Educator, poet, novelist, minister, abolitionist lecturer, Underground Railroad conductor, newspaper columnist, namesake for African American women’s organizations (ibid. 408-411)

<sup>91</sup> Teacher, investigative journalist, newspaper editor, political candidate for state senate, anti-lynching crusader, women’s suffrage organizer, co-founding member of the NAACP (ibid. 595-596)

(1898-1976),<sup>92</sup> Gordon Parks (1912-2006),<sup>93</sup> and Maya Angelou (1928-2014),<sup>94</sup> and others.

Johnson would advance forward from this initial teaching experience to become a public school principal, later a college educator, poet and novelist of the Harlem Renaissance, songwriter, literary critic, foreign service politico, newspaper journalist, and future leader of the NAACP. The song today continues to be sung in graduation ceremonies and other school assemblies at HBCU (historically black colleges and universities) colleges and other majority African American schools in the South.

The title of the poem is a call to arms for all black people wherever they live. The title “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing” as composed in an African American dialect is also the first line of the President Lincoln commemoration program poem. This first line combined with the second and third lines, “Till earth and heaven right, / Ring with the harmonies of Liberty; /” form an independent clause ending with a semicolon. Johnson’s strategic use of the semicolon and other punctuation is effective. The third line of each of the song’s (and poem’s) three stanzas ends with a semicolon: “... the harmonies of Liberty; / ... the days when hope unborn had died; / ... brought us thus far on the way; ... (emphasis added).” A semicolon is used to separate closely related independent clauses that a writer feels it best to connect within just one sentence as

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<sup>92</sup> Rutgers University class valedictorian, All-American college athlete, lawyer, international concert singer, stage and film actor, international human rights activist, civil rights activist; Bogle, Donald. *Toms, Coons, Mulattos, Mammies, and Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films*, updated and expanded 5<sup>th</sup> edition. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing, Inc., 2016. Print. And see also Robeson, Paul. *Here I Stand*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1958. Print.

<sup>93</sup> Photographer, musician, writer, composer, film director, editorial director, co-founder of *Essence* magazine; Parks, Gordon. *A Choice of Weapons*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Saint Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2010. Print. See also Parks, Gordon. *Voices in the Mirror: An Autobiography*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1990. Print.

<sup>94</sup> Dancer, singer, producer, composer, writer, newspaper editor, college professor (ibid. 2037-2039)

opposed to separating the two clauses into separate sentences; it is a determination the writer utilizes for special effect. The song version's refrain contains four lines; the second line of which also ends with a semicolon. The final four lines of the first stanza of the poem serves as the song's four line refrain (the repeated interludes of a song or poem).

Johnson utilizes punctuation to enhance the literary and emotive quality of the song, encouraging a building emotion. Both the song and the poem contain four semicolons, but one semicolon is differently placed, as between the song and the poem. For the poem, semicolons are found at line three of each of the three stanzas; a fourth semicolon is also placed at line eight of the third stanza. For the song, semicolons interspaced again at line three of each of the three stanzas; however, a fourth semicolon is placed at line seven of the first stanza, the last four lines of which will serve as the song's refrain, its repeating four lines placed between the three stanzas. Altogether for the song, there are twenty-nine punctuation marks: one question mark, twenty-two commas, three periods, and four semicolons. For the poem, there are thirty-two punctuation marks: one question mark, twenty commas, seven periods, and four semicolons. The Johnson brothers were quite liberal in their use of punctuation.

Line eight (of ten) of the first stanza of the poem ends with a period (a full stop): "... Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us." The song, interestingly, ends this line with a semicolon instead of a period. The melody and harmony are magnificently uplifting, especially so with a large audience of voices singing together. Lines twenty-seven (six of the third stanza), twenty-eight (seven of the third stanza), and twenty-nine (eight of the third stanza) also contain commas placed prior to the paragraph's ending clause; otherwise, all other punctuation only appears at the end of lines. Of further interest is that Johnson, perhaps, uses semicolons to bring an emphatic sense to the respective ending clauses, as a sort of shout of

jubilant. The emphatic sense of how Johnson uses punctuation provides the song with the emotion and persuasiveness the hymn delivers. African Americans as they sing this song at their assemblies cannot help but recall the burdens and survival of their chattel slave ancestors, as these modern day descendants view a hopeful future.

The message is a celebratory shoutout to the heavens with everyone in the present rejoicing with their ancestors in remembrance of their liberation from slavery. This is 1900, just thirty-five years post-slavery; there is a rejoicing about the journey of a people who had traveled from less than zero (the practice in the USA was of *chattel* slavery; the African American people having no rights, not even over their own persons). Yet the people find themselves there in a school, optimistic and hopeful about their coming future lives. The word “Liberty” is capitalized, for emphasis. The second part of this opening clause is a compound sentence that contains three additional lines, “Let our rejoicing rise / High as the list’ning skies, / Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.” A very long compound sentence of six lines begins the poem. The words are representative of a jubilation as the writer, Johnson, looks back over from whence his people came. The suggestion here is that the people will remember those past trials and use those remembrances to motivate themselves toward future growth, development, and advancement. Educator James Weldon Johnson was first and foremost a teacher.

The next four lines, which is also a compound sentence containing two “comma splice errors” completes the first stanza of the poem, “Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us, / Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us; / Facing the rising sun of our new day begun, / Let us march on till victory is won.” The song’s lyrics and melody while inspirational are not easy to master. These four lines will serve in the later musical transference of the poem to song as the song’s refrain to be repeated following the first two stanzas. These

words serve as continuing motivation as the people make way on their separate eventful journeys toward full <equality> and <justice> in America. Remembering the dreadful past while looking toward a hopeful future is the continuing central theme of this poem, this song (anthem).

The second stanza of the poem will become the second verse of the anthem. Its three lines begin, “Stony the road we trod, / Bitter the chast’ning rod, / Felt in the days when hope unborn had died[.]” The three lines form the first clause of a compound sentence reintroducing that dire past under the living conditions of chattel slavery; conditions where there was to many no hope of survival. The second clause that completes the compound sentence asks a profound question of the (African American) people, “Yet with a steady beat, / Have not our weary feet / Come to the place for which our fathers sighed? In other words, the African American people may be tired, but their exhaustion does not compare to that suffered by their ancestors during slavery. The rhetorical detail of this masterpiece of song is invigorating for everyone who has a connection to a slavery past. Repetition is a generous rhetorical strategy for the resourceful rhetor, whether it be “... [l]etters, syllables, ... [or] sounds” (Lanham 189).

The next five lines complete the second stanza, “We have come over a way that with tears have been watered, / We have come, treading our path through the blood of the / slaughtered, / Out from the gloomy past, / Till now we stand at last / Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast. /.” This very long compound-complex sentence (containing two comma splice “errors”) recounts the suffering their slave ancestors experienced, unimaginably. Whatever the trials and tribulations the African American people may suffer now is no comparison to the suffering of the ancestors, too many of them “slaughtered” in blood that made possible the living descendants who then existed in that time and today. And to reach this point



in African American history and culture is something the people must be grateful for and realize the hopeful potential for these students. This anthem captures the essence of this reality.

The first three lines of the third and final stanza begins with a not-so-silent prayer, “God of our weary years, / God of our silent tears, / Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way [.]” The prayer is to the same God who watched over the people during slavery days, the God who witnessed the silent tears of the people as slaves. The tears were silent because many were reluctant to demonstrate their misery to the overseers. To the people, this same God did lead the people out from slavery and continues to oversee the people on this continuing path, which has still not reached its destination. That continuous path included lynchings, police brutality, discrimination, racism, and Jim Crow laws the people knew would continue to be treacherous, as it exists even today in early twenty-*first* century America. The next three lines complete the prayer ending that portion of the poem, “Thou who hast by Thy might, / Led us into the light, / Keep us forever in the path, we pray.” There is a recognition that God has led the people out of slavery and into a new <freedom>, and the people now ask that God continue to watch over the people as they continue on their journey.

The next two lines present a cautionary request within the prayer, “Lest our feet stray from the places our God, where we met Thee, / Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee” that completes a thought from the prior line that the people are still in prayer requesting continuing support from their God, just in case the people might forget their true journey, after becoming overcome by their newfound freedom and venture into ways not of a religious calling. The wording of this poem and song strikes a chord that thoroughly captures the fortunes and misfortunes these people have experienced.

The final four lines complete the prayer that also completes the poem, “Shadowed beneath Thy hand, / May we forever stand, / True to our God, / True to our native land.” The plea is that God continue to help the people remain on the solemn path toward fulfillment, on their journey. The persuasiveness of the poem is demonstrated by the full complement of all three Aristotle audience appeals. The audience would be aware that Johnson, the principal of the school, is the author of the poem, so an *ethos* appeal is established. The poem itself proffers a message in two-parts: first, there is a reminder to the (African American) survivors of their ancestors’ ordeal under the throes of grievous generational slavery and also their (everyone’s) gratitude for being released from that dreadful existence their ancestors suffered, and two, a prayer to whom this audience believes is most responsible for what has come to pass. The prayer also serves as a reminder to the people that they should be grateful and not just take for granted their newfound station in life. A *logos* appeal is set because the message revealed in the poem is logically consistent. A *pathos* appeal is obviously clear as their daily lives, African Americans surviving during the nadir<sup>95</sup> of the African (American) existence in America, is never far from thought. After Johnson’s brother converted the poem into song, it became a national anthem for African Americans, especially those living in the states of the former Confederacy. Interest in the song mushroomed. The anthem became a staple at school events, especially graduation ceremonies at African American schools and colleges.

### *A Rhetorical Analysis of “We Shall Overcome,”*

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<sup>95</sup> Logan, Rayford. *The Negro in American Life and Thought: 1877-1901*. New York, NY: Dial Press, 1954. Print.

### **Anthem of the Civil Rights Movement—Introducing the Highlander Folk School**

There is no clear individual songwriter for “We Shall Overcome”; however, the song originated as an “old Negro spiritual.”<sup>96</sup> Decades later after the Civil War, the song had been borrowed in labor activism protests. There are records showing that the song was used by tobacco workers on strike in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1945.<sup>97</sup> A very early publication of the song lyrics in 1963 lists the authorship to Silphia Horton and Guy Carawan (both of the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee), and folk music icon Pete Seeger.

The Highlander Folk School (Tennessee) was a social justice training school founded in 1932 as a school to educate emerging activists and social movement leaders. It had been prominent in providing education and training for Rosa Parks before the Montgomery Bus Boycott, SNCC activists before the Freedom Rides, Martin Luther King, Jr., Ralph Abernathy, John Lewis, and numerous others. Its music director Guy Carawan, folk musician and musicologist, had been present at the organizational meeting, proposed by Ella Baker, that became SNCC; Carawan introduced his arrangement (as written with Pete Seeger and two others) of an old African American spiritual song transformed into a labor movement activist song that would become (as suggested by the NAACP) a civil rights anthem.

There are different published versions of this song’s lyrics although they are all close in similarity. For this project, the above noted 1963 copyright version is used. Using this published version of “We Shall Overcome,” there are ten stanzas, each containing three lines.

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<sup>96</sup> Martin Luther King, Jr., during his iconic March on Washington address used this term for century old church spirituals prominent in the African American churches of the slavery era.

<sup>97</sup> The Library of Congress website is one source ([www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)).

The first stanza of three lines repeats the emphatic title, except that the last line (of this first stanza) adds the phrase “some day” following a comma. These words paint a determined picture of longing and hope. The second stanza’s first two lines are different, but the third line repeats the third line of the first stanza. Lines four “Oh, deep in my heart,” and five “I do believe” both continue the theme of longing with a sense of perseverance; hopelessness seems absent, nowhere to be found. This is a song of melancholic dreaming with a positive affirmation.

The third stanza’s three lines each contain the same four words, except that line nine adds two additional words. Each line of the third stanza says “We’ll walk hand in hand” adding to the song’s theme a sense of togetherness for the people, the group for which the lament is directed. Line nine adds a comma and a phrase “some day,” such that the third line of these first three stanzas and actually all stanzas, except stanza seven, end with the same phrase “some day.” This connective phase of ending repetition stretches this continuing theme of a present longing but seeing a hopeful future. The rhetorical device is *epistrophe*, “... the counterpart to *anaphora* [; *epistrophe* is the] ... repetition of words or phrases [that] comes at the end of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences ...” (Harris 105). Stanzas two, four, six, eight, and ten offer a continuous refrain; they are identical. The other stanzas, the verses of the song, are provided in stanzas one, three, five, seven, and nine. The continuous injection of this refrain is projecting a promising and hopeful future.

Stanza five provides three identical lines of five words “we shall live in peace,” except that line fifteen following a comma adds the same continuing two-word phrase “some day” that ends nine of the ten stanzas. Again this phrase highlights a hopeful future for the people “we.” The stanza for verse seven has three identical lines and offers a defiant tone “we are not afraid,” except that line twenty-one following a comma adds one word in all-capital letters “TODAY.”

This word stands in stark contrast to the ending phrase “some day” found in the nine other stanzas. This addition captures an immediacy that is characteristic of the then civil rights movement, where the people are proclaiming that the time for patience and waiting has ended.

Stanza nine has the identical three line verse “the whole wide world around us captures the immediacy of the moment and anticipates the future use of the anthem around the world:

In the decades since, the song has circled the globe and has been embraced by civil rights and pro-democracy movements in dozens of nations worldwide. From Northern Ireland to Eastern Europe, from Berlin to Beijing, and from South Africa to South America, its message of solidarity and hope has been sung in dozens of languages, in presidential palaces and in dark prisons, and it continues to lend its strength to all people struggling to be free.<sup>98</sup>

The last stanza repeats the refrain highlighting the entire essence of the song. Actually, the verses are few, as the song merely repeats a sort of continuous aggressive chant that looks forward to a hopeful future. The music is of a solemn continuing melody.

*Sandra Cason Speaks*

*to the NSA Congress—A Rhetorical Analysis*

The United States National Student Association (NSA) was a national alliance of various college student government leaders that was in operation from 1947 until 1978. Young people of college

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<sup>98</sup> The Library of Congress website ([www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)) “We Shall Overcome: Historical Period Postwar United States, 1945-1968.

age in the 1960s were beginning to become active with regard to their concerns about life in their country, the United States of America. Many young people by and large seem to have a benevolent concern for the well-being of all people in the society. This organization became a growing presence for young college students as the assumed complacency of 1950s encountered the growing student activism that emerged in the early 1960s. Young men at age eighteen were required to register for the military draft, so an increased awareness and concern about world affairs became more obvious. And possibly the most pressing national issue was the growing civil rights struggles that with the advent of television became increasingly more available to be seen in middle class homes; the national public was forced to view these struggles, all about race in America.

One very active student leader was Sandra Cason, a graduate English student who attended college and graduate school at the University of Texas at Austin. Social activist Tom Hayden would become her future husband as they both continued their young adult lives even as young white Americans devoted to the civil rights struggle. A national conference of these student leaders was held on the campus of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, where Tom Hayden was a student and also a writer for the college newspaper the *Michigan Daily*. Recalling their first meeting, Hayden introduces Cason in his memoir *Tom Hayden Rebel: A Personal History of the 1960s*:

One of them [students at the summer 1960 national conference] in particular drew my attention. A philosophy graduate student at the University of Texas and a leader of the sit-ins in Austin, her name was Sandra Cason, but everybody called her Casey. She was beautiful, tall and blond with deep questioning eyes, and she held a position of great authority within the group because of her ability to think

morally, express herself poetically, and have practical effects. A teaching assistant in English literature and a counselor at one of the huge dormitories on the Texas campus ... [where] she lived in the only integrated housing on campus. (36-37)

Hayden reports that “The most memorable moment of the whole week was the debate on whether to endorse civil disobedience against southern segregation, and Casey’s speech mobbed the convention” (37). Tom Hayden reprints the full text of Casey Cason’s speech in his memoir.

Casey begins her speech with *erotema*, a rhetorical question where an answer is implied and not given, always a clever public speaking strategy: “An ethical question is always both utterly simple and confusingly complex. On this particular question I only hope we do not lose its essential simplicity in the complexity. I would touch on the first point first—its simplicity” (ibid.). Her academic English credentials are clearly evident as she begins her talk. Her clever wordplay dexterity is intoxicating. An *ethos* rhetorical appeal is clearly evident as her use of the English language is obviously that of an academic English major. “When an individual human being is not allowed by the legal system and the social mores of his community to be a human being, does he have the right to peaceably protest? ... Perhaps in this situation protest is the only way to maintain his humanity. ...” Here the philosophical Casey asks the logical question.

In the South, the people who protest were being arrested and brutalized by Southern authorities and others. And for over a century, since the end of the Civil War and slavery, by and large African Americans had borne their burden complacently. On this summer day in 1960, this very young white woman here is asking a critical question, one not even considered by the masses of black people, especially in the South, until much later in the decade. More aggressive militancy by burgeoning civil rights activists, such as US organization in 1965 (California,

Maulana Karenga), the Black Panther Party for Self Defense in 1966 (California, Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton), a changed Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) founded in 1960, evolved in 1966 (North Carolina; from John Lewis to Stokely Carmichael), among a few notable others, would not appear until later during the mid-1960s. Casey's use of the *erotema* rhetorical question form to open her talk is interesting.

The rhetorical question rhetorical device is sometimes used sloppily, though not here by Cason, because it is such an easy and lazy way to engage an audience as Moliken (et al.) instructs:

[A] *rhetorical question* is one in which the answer is merely implied ... [as it] gives the writer [or speaker] an opportunity to highlight something ... [the audience already] ... know[s]. While every strategic device runs the risk of being used in a lazy or inappropriate way, the *rhetorical question* is especially tempting. ... [However, w]hen used correctly, ... a *rhetorical question* should make the reader [or listener] pause for thought or it should drive your point home with gusto. (30)

Interestingly, Casey closes her speech with another, though well placed, rhetorical question. While Moliken (et al.) cautions students about its overuse (ibid.), Casey's use in this short speech is well placed. Immediately in the second paragraph of her speech, Casey asks two additional questions, "Should fear of violence keep a person from nonviolent protest of an injustice? Should a person who does not strike back be blamed because he is struck?" These questions may be considered a related though different rhetorical device, *hypophora*, a rhetorical question that is asked but then immediately answered by the speaker (rhetor). Although here, Casey only indirectly provides a response, "I simply fail to understand why, if the presence of Negro



students sitting quietly or white and Negro students sitting together is so infuriating to a mob that they resort to violence, the students should be blamed for the sickness of the mob. ...”

Moliken (et al.) explains the difference helpfully: “*Hypophora* offers the writer [or speaker] an opportunity to tell readers something they *don’t* know; a *rhetorical question* gives the writer [or speaker] an opportunity to highlight something readers *do* know” (ibid.).

In the third paragraph, Casey becomes gracefully philosophical as she comments, “... [Even] I [as a white person] am not free as long as [racists and segregationists] ... keep ... me from going where I please with whom I please, and I do not think that fear of him should keep me and others from trying to right the wrong for which he stands.” These comments are actually an aside as she explains her position on a question that has not been asked. Her *logos* appeal is logical and reasonable, also very difficult to oppose. The gifted orator generally teaches her or his audience something of value, which Casey does here philosophically.

Casey next begins a discussion about how black people under oppression, especially in the South, can or should respond to the injustice. Her premise is that their organization, the NSA, should begin supporting black people in their growing peaceful nonviolent civil rights protests, lest black people be left with no other options but violence. It is a somewhat appealing strategy that is difficult to gauge. Casey offers a series of details as she outlines a strategy:

As I see it, a person suffering under an unjust law has several choices: He can do nothing; we have never advocated this in a democracy. He can use legal means; this has been done and will be done. However, if he sees the slowness of the legal means and realizes he is a human being *now* and the law is unjust *now*, he has other choices: **He can revolt—I think we should all be proud and glad that this has not been the course of the southern Negro**—or he can protest actively,

as southern students have chosen to do, and he must take the consequences.

(Emphasis added)

Her comment made in the last sentence is reminiscent of a similar comment made by Malcolm X later in the decade in one of his many speeches, “the white man should be glad that [our people have] not resorted to [similar] violence” in the mid-1960s. Though Casey’s speech on this day is mild by comparison, for that period her words are quite harsh and refreshingly realistic. What is so refreshing and surprising is that she seems completely undeterred from speaking the message she is going to present. After all, this was a day in the year 1960, not in 1967 or 1968 or 1969.

Casey continues her philosophical vein, “I do not see the law as immutable, but rather as an agreed-upon pattern for relations between people. If the pattern is unjust or a person does not agree with the relations a person must at times choose to do the right rather than the legal. I do not consider this anarchy, but responsibility. These comments are reminiscent of similar quotes from philosopher Henry David Thoreau in his classic essay “Civil Disobedience” (1849; published as “Resistance to Civil Government” and “On the Duty of Civil Disobedience”), wherein he commented:

Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? ... Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison.

As a graduate student in English, it would be reasonable to assume that Casey had read Thoreau.

What follows is the often used rhetorical strategy of repetition:

**I cannot say** to a person who suffers injustice, ‘Wait.’ Perhaps you can. **I can’t.**

And having decided that **I cannot urge** caution, I must stand with him. **If I had**

**known** that not a single lunch counter would open as a result of my action, **I could not have done differently than I did. If I had known** violence would result, **I could not have done differently than I did.** (Emphasis added)

The repetition rhetorical strategies of *anaphora* and *epanalepsis* are popularly used by speakers because they both allow speakers to draw in an audience gracefully and more emphatically. As an audience becomes more engaged in a speech, the members of the audience will more readily accept the speaker's message. *Epanalepsis* is "repetition at the end of a clause of the word that occurred at the beginning of the clause" (Corbett and Connors 392) while *anaphora* is "repetition of the same word or group of words at the beginnings of successive clauses" (Corbett and Connors 390). Casey's words here are examples of both *anaphora* and also modest **epanalepsis**.

As Casey approaches her closing, she comments thoughtfully: "I am thankful for the sit-ins, if for no other reason, that [sic] they provided me with an opportunity for making a slogan into a reality, by making a decision into an action. It seems to me that this is what life is all about." Somewhat unclear here is the slogan she is thankful for; perhaps it's the civil rights anthem "We Shall Overcome," the timeless chant. Casey prepares her audience for the closing by again waxing philosophical: "While I hope that the NSA congress will pass a strong sit-in resolution, I am more concerned that all of us, Negro and white, realize the possibility of becoming less inhuman humans through commitment and action, with all their frightening complexities." Her nimbleness in words and phrases only enhances her *ethos* appeal; an audience could not help but join Tom Hayden in full admiration of her. Generally, we respect more comfortably those of us who are more eloquent with language.

Interestingly, Casey uses her closing to acknowledge that she is, in fact, familiar with Thoreau: “When Thoreau was jailed for refusing to pay taxes to a government which supported slavery, Emerson went to visit him, ‘Henry David,’ said Emerson, ‘what are you doing in there?’ Thoreau looked at him and replied, ‘Ralph Waldo, what are *you* doing out *there*’? And Casey closes with *erotema*, her own rhetorical question repeating Thoreau’s same question, “What are *you* doing out there?” speaking to her own audience. Ending a speech with a question is a wise strategy for the speaker to reduce the speech to its most concise kernel. Casey Cason is quite the skilled orator rhetor.

### *A Rhetorical Analysis of Two Civil Rights Protest Movements—*

#### *The Greensboro Four Sit-In (Success) and the Albany Movement (Failure)*

Two very similar social protest movements occurring approximately one year apart incurred drastically different historical results. The Greensboro Four sit-in protest movement was a resounding success while the Albany Movement suffered a disastrous defeat. Through the use of traditional (new-Aristotelian) criticism, an interrogation of the actors and analysis of the rhetorical situation as Bitzer describes can be instructive, but a focus more toward the Richard E. Vatz challenge and the Scott Consigny challenge can be even more illuminating. In addition Kenneth Burke offers a discussion (“The Rhetorical Situation.” *Communication: Ethical and Moral Issues*), which will also provide some additional insight.

#### *Greensboro Four Lunch-Counter Sit-In Event*

The city of Greensboro, North Carolina, is a typical mid-size American city located in the South, somewhat atypical among Southern towns is the fact that several colleges are located there.

African Americans in 1960 were allowed to attend their own college at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University (then known as Agricultural & Technical College of North Carolina) as well as a small African American women's college, Bennett College; the other public colleges and universities in North Carolina had only small and notably limited black student enrollment. Public eateries in downtown Greensboro were off-limits to blacks. On 1 February 1960, one Monday morning, an event—a rhetorical act—occurred that disrupted life in downtown Greensboro forever as it eventually changed life for all of Greensboro's citizens; for the better. Unbelievably, the event was created/caused by four college *freshmen* students. The very pronounced statement of their visual rhetoric event to the city was one of profound change.

Peaceful nonviolent protest in this form—a lunch counter sit-in—is analogous to Aristotle's deliberative discourse form of persuasive speech. The goal of deliberative discourse is to persuade an audience to take (or not to take) some action, which in effect will be good for the society or prevent some action that would be harmful. Corbett and Connors explain the rhetorical act by way of a descriptive communication triangle where the two ends at the base (of the triangle) represent a speaker/writer on one end—here, the four college freshmen students—and at the other end at its base a listener/reader—here, different audiences—while at the apex of the “communications triangle” is (termed) the message; the entire triangle containing the three points is considered the overall “text” of this rhetorical act (Corbett and Connors 2).

There are at least five audiences, perhaps others, “spoken to” from this rhetorical act: the immediate audience of customers in the Woolworth's store, a secondary audience of the other Greensboro white townspeople, working class black townspeople, African American college

youth, and perhaps a fifth audience that includes American society in the South and elsewhere in the country. The unfortunate custom in the South was that African American people, then called “Negroes” or “colored” were not allowed to receive service in most public establishments: no eating in restaurants or at lunch counters, no using public restrooms, except where reserved restrooms for “the Colored” were available, among other such indignities. An obvious violation of the spirit of the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights—*America’s promise*.

David Richmond, Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair, Jr. (Jibreel Kazan), and Joseph McNeill were college *freshmen* students attending A & T, this local HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities). On 1 February 1960, the four freshmen students walked (approximately 1.6 miles) from their campus, also located in downtown Greensboro, to the Woolworth’s department store, which also had a public lunch counter. The well dressed young men wisely purchased a few items at the *desegregated* counter, but then proceeded to the segregated “Whites Only” lunch counter. They were immediately denied service and asked to leave; the young men refused to leave as they remained at the lunch counter until the store closed, about one-hour and thirty minutes in total. The very next day, the four young men returned to the Woolworth store lunch counter, but this time a small group of other black students joined them in the sit-in protest. As the young men continued to revisit the Woolworth store lunch counter each day in succession, a growing number of African American students joined in the protest. The publicity of the occurrence spread locally and statewide; eventually there was widespread national press coverage. Surprisingly, a number of white students subsequently joined in the protest. Even though police were called to the scene the first week, there were no arrests and fortunately no violence. North Carolina is not considered the Deep South, where Southern sensibilities would have been much different although North Carolina itself had also been a scene of immense

horrors for black people. Even today voter suppression remains<sup>99</sup> a continuing reality for African Americans in the South.

Aristotle's commentary regarding three persuasive appeals—*ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*—is instructive for this event in explaining the ultimate success of this rhetorical artifact. The four young men were well-dressed, calm in demeanor, quiet and respectful. Shrewdly, they were paying customers at the Woolworth store (items had been purchased in the store at a separate counter just beforehand). The young men had not been boisterous, nor had they made any boastful demands or individual proclamations; they only respectfully asked for lunch counter service as other paying customers had done. Their entire rhetorical action was actually impeccable. Another consideration Aristotle explains in *On Rhetoric* that is appropriate for this rhetorical event is the concept of *kairos*, the opportune moment (time) for this entire sequence to take place. Perhaps at an earlier period in United States history or in another part of the South (for example, the *Deep South*), such an act by these four freshmen students would probably have been met with a violent reaction from its audience, both the white clerks at the lunch counter and local police. The Deep South included those states that had been most dependent on the slave/cotton culture, usually recalled as South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana; but other states were also invariably included. However, North Carolina was not.

The reassuring *ethos* exhibited by the four young men was obvious. The immediate audience—salespersons and other customers in the store—probably saw the four well-dressed young men who were well-mannered and respectful as being of (obvious) good character and

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<sup>99</sup> Philip, Elliott. "Allegations of GOP Election Fraud Leave North Carolina Race in Limbo." [www.time.com](http://www.time.com). 6 December 2018. Web. And see also Reynolds, Molly E. "Understanding the Election Scandal in North Carolina's 9<sup>th</sup> District." [www.brookings.edu](http://www.brookings.edu). 7 December 2018.

trustworthiness. Even though a person is not in agreement with an “opponent,” certain qualities are obvious and lead to a consideration of the opponent as a worthy adversary. These four rhetors were credible actors who (like the audiences for this rhetorical act) are knowledgeable about the rightness of this endeavor (the lunch counter sit-in), especially since large portions of the South included people who were practicing the religion of Christianity and its dictates they revered in the Bible, including the faithful concept of “what would Jesus do.” The justness of their rhetorical act would clearly satisfy Aristotle’s concept of *ethos*. Aristotle’s concept of *pathos*, the quality of a persuasive event that appeals to audience emotion, would have been different depending upon the particular audience considered. Fair-minded and non-racist white persons would no doubt respect the actions of the four students while racist whites would view the young men with contempt, hate, and ridicule; those not of either of these camps (considerations) might have been somewhat sympathetic or possibly even compassionate especially because the men’s rhetorical act was courageous, deserved, and legal while it was still illegal (with regard to local laws and customs). *Logos* is clear since the act is logical and makes sense; these young men were paying customers inside this Woolworth’s store; they were Americans of good will; and they were merely asking that they be treated so. In hindsight, their action led to an eventual desired outcome—basic fairness (justice?)—that African Americans be treated fairly and equally as other Americans who happen to patronize this public venue.

Theirs was not the first lunch counter sit-in by African Americans in America, but it was the first to gain widespread national publicity, which led to similar sit-ins at other venues of the city, other cities in the state, and in other segregated cities in the South. This Woolworth’s lunch counter sit-in began to build; other protests in other areas of Greensboro and other cities also



began to occur. David Richmond would later leave college without a degree; however, his three fellow classmates all graduated, another comment about the character, *ethos*, of the young men.

These four freshmen students engaged a rhetorical event, making a demand that eventually transformed the city of Greensboro. Fortunately, there were no injuries or widespread violence, while the volume of picketing began to increase at other downtown Greensboro stores, other North Carolina venues, and in other cities in the South. Eventually this Woolworth's store and other establishments in the city relented and the public facilities in Greensboro became integrated. A not dissimilar civil rights community protest would occur about one year later in Albany, Georgia; however, drastically different results would occur in that city.

#### *The Albany Movement*

The Albany Movement began less than a year following the Greensboro Four sit-ins as celebrated historian Howard Zinn documents in his chronicle "Albany: A Study in National Responsibility." A coalition effort to desegregate Albany, Georgia, was formed 17 November 1961, involving representatives of four national organizations (NAACP, CORE, SNCC, and later SCLC) and two local organizations (African-American Ministerial Alliance and African-American Federated Women's Clubs affiliate) and involved *thousands* of local Albany residents. Their planned attempt was a comprehensive effort to desegregate the entire city: bus stations, lunch counters, libraries, and so on. Zinn writes "Negroes make up 40 per cent of its population (23,000 out of 56,000), and zero per cent of its political officials" (1). His essay describes the conditions under which African Americans were forced to live,

An Albany Negro is born in a segregated hospital, grows up in a segregated neighborhood, goes to a segregated school, is buried in a segregated cemetery.

Restaurants, hotels, parks, public libraries, playgrounds, taxicabs, theaters, filling-

station restrooms, water fountains—all possible aspects of daily life—all designated according to the color of one's ancestors. (2)

Such conditions for blacks had always existed. But this rhetorical intervention (protest actions) would seek to bring change to daily life in Albany for its African American citizens.

Howard Zinn makes a profound comment early in his essay, “No Negro in Albany can grasp a door-handle or cross a threshold without first thinking of his [sic] color.” Yet this well-organized highly coordinated effort involving multiple national and local organizations, widespread media attention, and involving *thousands* of demonstrators still failed to desegregate the city. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would later write in chapter 16 “The Albany Movement” of Clayborne Carson’s *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, that the movement failed for a variety of reasons. He would go on to state that the errors of the Albany Movement would be used constructively as a learning experience for future endeavors, such as the upcoming Birmingham effort. Zinn who also participated in the Albany Movement (he held a continuing role like Ella Baker as a SNCC adviser) offers a somewhat different assessment in his autobiography *You Can’t Be Neutral on a Moving Train: A Personal History of Our Times* in his book’s chapter 4 “‘My Name is Freedom’: Albany, Georgia.” He says of the widespread finding by journalists and scholars that the movement action was a defeat because the city did not achieve integration, “That always seemed to me a superficial assessment, a mistake often made in evaluating protest movements. Social movements may have many ‘defeats’—failing to achieve objectives in the short run—but in the course of the struggle the ... [people’s spirits become lifted, heartened, by their ability to fight back]” (54).

According to the *New Georgia Encyclopedia* ([www.georgiaencyclopedia.org](http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org)), “... [beginning in the fall of 1961 and ending] in summer 1962 [, it] was the first mass movement in

the modern civil rights era [,] the desegregation of an entire community, and it resulted in the jailing of more than 1,000 African Americans in Albany and surrounding rural counties. ...

Martin Luther King, Jr., was drawn into the movement in December 1961 ... [and] was arrested ...” Eight months later King left, admitting failure, but later commenting that he learned from this failure, which would prove useful in the upcoming Birmingham efforts.

While the Albany Movement has generally been assessed a failure by historians and social scientists, viewing the one-year effort within a continuum as part of a larger statewide endeavor, it was merely a setback for the larger effort—the desegregation of the USA at large. Perhaps there were too many organizations involved in this desegregation effort. And maybe, the goals were overly ambitious. Albany is clearly located in the Deep South, unlike North Carolina, which is a very different opponent for civil rights activists. And fourth, the sheriff of police in Albany was shrewd in his opposition: he commanded his men to avoid violent arrests; he devised a system of using jails in neighboring counties for the arrested black citizens; and, he was seemingly respectful and calm in his interactions with the protesters. These and a few other considerations, such as the considerable negative press from the two local papers and the absence of physical assaults that could be shown on television, and so on, may also explain the unfavorable result for this social protest effort. This was possibly a failure of *kairos* in that the early 1960s small town location in the Deep South was perhaps too premature and the location too parochial for the city to become respectful of its African American citizens. And too a *logos* failure may have been evident as the civil rights protest leadership might have been overly ambitious in their planning. The whites of the time could still not *hear* the voices of blacks.

*Failing the Kairos of the Moment, A Rhetorical Analysis:*

*Eight Alabama Clergymen Waist An Opportunity in their “Call for Unity”*

Daily newspapers in Birmingham, Alabama, published an open letter on 12 April 1963, directed toward the Birmingham community and calling out “outsiders” such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who was then confined in a local Birmingham jail. The open letter was meant to be a public response from “concerned” clergy to address the pressing civil rights activities then occurring in their mid-sized American city. Dr. King had been arrested because of his activities in the movement for engaging in protest actions without a permit. The clergymen asked in their letter for “A Call for Unity,” interestingly without mention of the “political issues” that ignited the protest. Their use of the word “unity” is interesting because, of course, the African American community was not accepted within their concept of community as their equals, as citizens of Birmingham even though blacks as well as whites make up the Birmingham community.

Aristotle taught his students about three classic appeals that can be used to reach an audience—*ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*. A rhetor establishes credibility with an audience by her stature in the community, personal intelligence, and knowledge of the facts surrounding the issues involved. Of course, Aristotle’s students were males. Fortunately today, women are (mostly) considered equals under our laws and our culture. The eight clergymen herein certainly had stature since all were local ministers of apparently good standing. Persons serving in such positions would obviously be considered intelligent professionals. And certainly all residents of the city in the early 1960s would have been aware of the prominent activities occurring downtown in this utterly restrictive segregated city. Blacks, like children, were to be seen and not heard in the downtown community of Birmingham. The eight ministers can be considered to

have established their *ethos* appeal to its sole audience, and perhaps indirectly to its secondary audience, the “outsiders” like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The 1960s period has now become widely understood and acknowledged to be a time of widespread civic activism. The young people of the period—black, white, brown, red, and other—actually believed in America; they believed they could change America for the better. And, they did. The early 1960s in such a medium-sized city in the South, like Birmingham, actually the largest city in the state of Alabama, would find local news almost immediately known by the town’s citizens, by word of mouth community gossip and local newspapers.

These eight ministers can be expected to know of the events but not necessarily of the gravity of the situation for African Americans. Anyone from our present 2018 reality, whether black or white or otherwise, who did not live during the 1960s could not possibly comprehend or even understand at some level the frustrating reality of life for blacks living in the South during that period. Blacks could not try on clothes or shoes before purchasing these items in stores in much of the South. They could neither rent rooms in hotels nor eat in public (white) restaurants. African Americans could not use restroom facilities at gas stations or seek service at lunch counters. And of course, black employment was restricted to manual labor minimum wage jobs, where such jobs could be found. And more importantly, blacks could neither vote or even register to vote in much of the South all the while, unfortunately, the federal government remained impotent and otherwise disinterested. So although the eight clergymen would certainly *know* of the events, they did not appreciate the critical nature of the grievances the black citizens felt. Their suffering, unknown to the clergymen, had reached its limits. And the African American citizens of Birmingham had reached their boiling point. Fortunately their

tactic was restraint in the form of prayerful and peaceful nonviolence in their public protest efforts.

This “public statement” letter of these eight clergymen focused its concern by manner of its understated attempted *pathos* appeal. Their foremost appeal was to local black citizens to ask them to reject “the outsiders” while the local courts and city officials engage in negotiations. The first paragraph of their open letter makes an amalgam of utterly confusing *alogism* commentary,

We the undersigned clergymen are among those who, in January, issued ‘An Appeal for Law and Order and Common Sense’ in dealing with racial problems in Alabama. We expressed understanding that honest convictions in racial matters could properly be pursued in the courts, but urged that decisions of those courts should in the meantime be peacefully obeyed.

Occasionally listed among rhetorical devices, *alogism* is variously defined as “an illogical or irrational statement or notion” ([www.lexico.com](http://www.lexico.com)) or “an irrational statement or line of argument; a logical error; an inconsistency or arbitrary situation that follows no logical pattern” ([www.en.m.wiktionary.org](http://www.en.m.wiktionary.org)); “anything that is contrary or indifferent to logic; specifically an irrational statement or piece of reasoning” ([www.merriam-Webster.com](http://www.merriam-Webster.com)). These men obviously “didn’t have a clue,” to use a recent colloquialism; these holymen did not fully understand or care to understand the extreme solemnity of the deleterious circumstances surrounding the event for African Americans living in Birmingham. The daily indignities they were forced to navigate would no longer be tolerated, which would present a striking change of life for ordinary white citizens of the community.

The particular assertions by these concerned clergy are ill-informed and problematic. The United States Supreme Court had already ruled in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case that segregation in schools was unlawful, yet the cities and towns of the South, especially Birmingham, almost universally had ignored the Court's ruling, and the Court's involvement in other matters of segregation and racial discrimination were obviously on the horizon. Therefore in reality, there was really nothing legally to be "negotiated." And it was in fact the white power structure in the South who were not respecting rulings from the nation's highest court. Nor had these "concerned" clergymen put forward any similar effort directed toward the white townspeople asking that *they* respect the Supreme Court's decision and the rule of law. So, this comment is also confusing because the (white) courts and (white) police authorities and local (white) establishments are the ones who were violating the laws of the United States of America, by restricting the direct access of African American citizens. After all, the town was 40% African American.

The African American citizens of Birmingham were required to continue paying equal dollar amounts in taxes while forced to endure less than equal services and access, which the ministers fail to provide comment. Local African American citizens were not allowed to use the public parks and other public facilities; they were relegated to second-rate separate but *unequal* living conditions when they did have access. The Emancipation Proclamation was written and signed into law by President Lincoln in 1863. And, here 100 years later, African Americans still were "second-class" citizens not allowed to use public facilities, as Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and other black leaders regularly noted in their speeches. These eight clergymen remained completely silent about these inequities and injustices.

The second paragraph of this “Call for Unity” editorial continues to imply that the African Americans were somehow *also* to be blamed for the continuing discrimination and prejudice the black community faced, “Responsible citizens have undertaken to work on various problems which cause racial friction and unrest.” There was actually only *one* problem that was the cause, blatant racism by the white population. The clergymen were moral cowards to their faith as they were too afraid to name—racial discrimination and racial prejudice—the problem as it was.

The third paragraph contains a very interesting sentence, “We recognize the natural **impatience of people who feel** that their hopes are slow in being realized. But we are convinced that these demonstrations are unwise and untimely” (emphasis added). Really? Of course, *just* 100 years had (already) passed (to be very sarcastic about this comment). The fourth paragraph contains a phrase, “honest and open negotiations of **racial issues** in our area” that still avoids a clear statement of the very obvious problem while still implying that the blacks themselves are contributing to the “problem” for which the black community is protesting. Rhetorically, this editorial has serious flaws in logic because the clergymen are not serious brokers. If they had been, the editorial might have first and foremost fully stated the truthful facts about the occasion and the cause of the protests while also offering serious mediation ideas that might forestall the protest effort or otherwise appease the African American citizens. The ministers’ rhetorical artifact was completely ineffective in that it asked nothing of the white citizens of Birmingham while asking everything (to end the civil rights protest) of the city’s black citizens. The editorial was merely a regurgitation of numbing platitudes; there was no real insight offered or careful observation or suggestion made. The essay was of no value to either the protagonist protesters or the antagonist racist whites of Birmingham.



The fourth paragraph of the clergymen's letter is clearly incoherent, just more *alogism*:

We agree rather with certain local Negro leadership which has called for honest and open negotiation of racial issues in our area. And we believe this kind of facing of issues can best be accomplished by citizens of our own metropolitan area, white and **Negro**, meeting with their knowledge and experience of the local situation. All of us need to face that responsibility and find proper channels for its accomplishment. (Carpenter; emphasis added)

First, there actually are no (Constitutional) rights that need to be negotiated. There are really only two alternatives: either the city and community leaders respect their God, their religious faith ("Love thy neighbor"), and the United States Constitution; that is, agree to respect the rights of its African American citizens of Birmingham, or they just continue to demean and discriminate against these citizens; and suffer the consequences. Second, the second sentence is obviously irrelevant to the matter since the town leaders are clearly planning to ignore the rights of the African American citizens. The letter "N" of the word "Negro" is printed in bold to indicate the clergymen have offered a minor semblance of respect toward the African American community by capitalizing the word "Negro." The prevailing custom by many (most?) whites in the South was to write the word using a lower case "n," which would be in keeping with the local custom of communities in the South of denigrating *all* things related to black people. The third and final sentence of the paragraph is a non sequitur because these "issues" to be "negotiated" will be determined solely by the (white) leaders and (white) citizens of the city. Actually, there was really nothing to negotiate. The law was the law, and the town would either respect the civil rights of its African American citizens, or it would choose to disobey the laws of the United States and the civil rights of its fellow Birmingham African American neighbors.

The fifth paragraph opens with still more *alogism*, a suggestion that the peaceful and prayerful protests by the African American citizens will be responsible should violence by whites occur, which is ridiculous because adult citizens are, of course, responsible for their own actions. And the comment regarding “days of hope” is merely simplistic and imaginary fodder for readers of this open letter, to allow the ministers to appear (to community whites of goodwill) hopeful and reasonable. Clearly, these ministers are aware that the white leaders of Birmingham are not planning to change the living conditions as they had always existed there in Birmingham.

Paragraph six provides praise for the community (of whites), the “local news media,” and “law enforcement in particular” as a sincere effort to avoid violent reprisals. The ministers’ concern appears to be a sincere groveling before the city’s white establishment. The final sentence seems almost a pleading, “We urge the (white) public to continue to show restraint should the demonstrations continue, and the law enforcement officials to remain calm and continue to protect our city from violence.” The letter is evasive and insincere since the only ones who could be expected to resort to violence would be the white townspeople and the white police authorities. Yet, the implication is that blacks may also engage in violence, a claim unsupported by evidence of prior civil rights protest demonstrations.

The seventh and final paragraph is directed toward the African American (separate) community with an effort to seed division by separating the Birmingham African American citizens apart from the dedicated African American “outsiders” who had traveled to Birmingham to assist the black citizens in their protest efforts. There is also in the last paragraph an insincere request that the white citizens of Birmingham can work together for “a better Birmingham”; again, the white citizens have the power, and they can make right the wrongs they have inflicted upon the black citizens of Birmingham. The rhetorical appeal to <law and order> to the effect

that the courts can help in this matter is false since this ideograph has different meanings for the different groups of people in the community. Certainly, the African American citizens are not treated equally or fairly by law enforcement or the courts. The laws are already on the books, but the city of Birmingham continues to ignore the laws of the United States.

Nowhere in this open letter is there an admission that the African American citizens are being treated unfairly. These white ministers are not honest brokers of peace. And these are religious leaders, yet they are obviously and absolutely unconcerned about the injustices being inflicted upon African American citizens of Birmingham. There is no mention of the total segregation within the city, the rampant racial discrimination, and the daily indignities that African Americans of the city must suffer. If the clergymen wanted truly to assist in mediating the crisis, they would first appeal to their own white congregations. Of course, blacks were not allowed to worship in most of their churches. What would Jesus do?

In addition to the three audience appeals—*ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*—the ancient Greeks also taught students about *kairos* or the opportune moment for the rhetorical event. This open letter by the eight clergymen has clearly not recognized this aspect of a rhetorical act. Here in 1963, over 100 years following the end of slavery, African American citizens had come to realize that their silence and complacency could no longer continue if they were ever to gain their Constitutional rights. The ministers were obviously clueless about the realities of the moment. Racist whites would continue to discriminate while whites of goodwill would continue to remain silent and do nothing, but blacks would no longer just “know their place” in the affairs of the Birmingham community. Exactly who if anyone this open letter actually influenced is unclear. The letter was not an honest effort to address the rampant injustices of the city, and in reality it was too little too late to actually make a difference in Birmingham, all of which was

unfortunate. Had the ministers made an honest and concerned effort in this highly Christianized city of the South by providing clarification, suggestions, and proposals, they could have made a positive contribution toward the advancement of race relations in Birmingham, as did the heroes they worshipped in their Christian Bible.

Dr. King while incarcerated in a Birmingham jail cell would prepare a written response that has received national renown for its thoughtful and sincere eloquence, to which the eight clergymen never bothered to respond.

*Dr. King Stays His Course:*

*A Rhetorical Analysis of "Letter from Birmingham Jail"*

Peaceful nonviolent protests had been engaged with an ongoing civil rights campaign in Birmingham, Alabama, by the Atlanta Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR). A local official of ACMHR who was also a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Dr. King's organization, was Fred Shuttlesworth. The Birmingham Campaign was progressing very slowly when Shuttlesworth wrote a letter to Dr. King, asking that he join African American citizens in local protests. Dr. King acquiesced and traveled to Birmingham. During one of the protests, Dr. King was arrested and while he was incarcerated, a visitor brought him a local newspaper containing the open letter editorial entitled "A Call for Unity," composed by the eight local clergymen.

In the open letter, Dr. King was not mentioned by name, but he was called out subtly as an "outsider." Dr. King did travel to Birmingham from elsewhere to help those African American citizens, but it really didn't matter. Because Dr. King knew only too well, just as other

African Americans there in Birmingham and elsewhere also knew, that all black people were just as (un)welcomed in Birmingham wherever they lived. This was part of the protest message the black people were sending out. So, Dr. King was automatically an *insider* because he received the same treatment all black people in Birmingham were receiving, as outsider “second-class” citizens. These protests would affect African American people throughout the South, and actually throughout America at large.

Dr. King made a decision to respond to the “Call for Unity” letter of the the local white clergymen. In effect, Dr. King is a rhetorical critic engaging in ideological critique through *his* responsive letter to the eight named clergymen. Actually his response is directed toward multiple audiences: most directly the eight named ministers, but also the local and national white populations, the local and national black populations (for encouragement), and the nation at large. Dr. King is a rhetorical analyst because he offers a critical examination of the persuasive efforts presented in the ministers’ “Call for Unity” letter all while responding in his letter to them. As a rhetorical critic, Dr. King opens his response letter with a greeting, “My Dear Fellow Clergymen.” The greeting appears genuine and sincere to readers of goodwill, but perhaps sarcastic to others. “*Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.*” The letter would become accepted by the national public and eventually published in a plethora of publications nationwide. The version used herein is among the King Papers project currently housed at Stanford University.

The first paragraph informs readers that he has received an overabundance of written criticism for his work and that he rarely finds time to respond. However, he states forthrightly his reasons for responding to this particular open letter from the eight clergymen, “But since I feel that you are men of genuine goodwill and your criticisms are sincerely set forth, I would like to answer your statement in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms.” Perhaps, mild

**sarcasm.** Dr. King is incorrect and overly generous and gracious in his assessment of the ministers' motives. Dr. King's letter is respectful and direct, qualities totally absent in the open letter the clergymen submitted to newspapers. The clergymen did not mention Dr. King's name only giving snide indirect reference to him as "outsider" even though he was the national figure, clearly the focus of local and national media attention. The ministers did not display an understanding of the critical issues involved in the protests—the daily discriminatory treatment the African American community suffered—very blatant institutional racism, personal and public racism, racial discrimination, police brutality, disrespectful racial segregation, and as always the daily threats of violence from local white citizens and public authorities. The ministers did not respect Dr. King as a committed and concerned human being—citizen of the USA. And, unlike Dr. King's response letter, the ministers did not exhibit a patience or reasonableness concerning the issues about which the people were protesting. If the ministers felt the African American protesters were wrong, they should have stated their detailed objections and to be helpful, they would have offered solutions or suggested plausible avenues of agreement. There was a lot the ministers could have done and could have said to de-escalate the situation, but they offered none of this.

Dr. King writes paragraph two to explain to the ministers the reasons why he and his organization were joining the African American citizens in the Birmingham Campaign effort conducted by the local ACMHR organization, an affiliate of Dr. King's organization, SCLC. Dr. King continues his explanation by noting that he was invited to Birmingham to assist in the local "nonviolent direct action program." Dr. King provides the clergymen with the names of the organizations and information concerning their work in civil rights. His response is courteous and forthright, respectful and precise while he meticulously provides detailed information to

fully expose his reasons to the clergymen for his participation, something the clergymen did not do. He ends the paragraph succinctly: “I am here because I have basic organizational ties here.” As a rhetorical critic, Dr. King is possibly overly respectful and tactful in his direct letter, but then perhaps, unlike the clergymen, Dr. King is in his personal essence a careful respectful minister of his Christian faith and immensely more committed and dedicated to his religion than are the eight clergymen.

McPhail speaks of Wander’s report of a “‘Third Persona,’ ... which represents those marginalized by hegemonic, social and discursive structures, ‘categorized according to race, religion, age, gender, sexual preference, and nationality,’ and acted upon in ways consistent with their status as nonsubjects” (341). McPhail continues, “The critic ... can participate in the emancipation of those characterized by the Third Persona by taking the ideological turn or become complicit in their oppression by invoking [ a host of] analytical abstractions and objective approaches ... (ibid.)” A reading of King’s letter indirectly compels the ministers to take a stance, by doing their God’s work or remaining a part of the continuing discriminatory problem. The clergymen by their open and detailed words chose to avoid the problem—racial discrimination and racial animus.

Paragraph four begins with a conjunctive adverb “Moreover” customarily used within a given paragraph, but here acts to indicate a continuation of the main idea thrust presented in paragraph three, why King “the outsider” is engaged in Birmingham: “... I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham.” Next follows is a sentence that has widely become a nationally recognized and profound proverb for life, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Amen. One **metaphor** “... an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a

single garment of destiny” followed by **alliteration**, a proverb of life, “Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly” are comments the rhetorical critic King uses to educate his less thoughtful, more *unenlightened* fellow reverends. Dr. King’s use of **metaphor** as always is masterful. He closes again with a succinct and profound call to arms, “Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere in their country.”

Dr. King’s response is a very long letter. Paragraph five chastises the clergymen for expressing their irritation at the Birmingham Campaign protests yet exhibiting no real concern for the discriminatory treatment nor about the callous inequities blacks in Birmingham suffer daily, which precipitated the protest campaign initially. Dr. King then calls out the clergymen with a taunt, “I am sure that each of you would want to go beyond the superficial analyst who looks merely at effects, and does not grapple with underlying causes.” Dr. King knows full well that the clergymen, as clearly stated in their open letter, are totally *unconcerned* about the welfare of the black citizens of Birmingham. Actually, it is not clear at all what their real motive (for the letter) or general concern actually is. Because if the ministers were really troubled about the welfare of the citizens of Birmingham or for Birmingham itself, they would have provided proposals or made some proactive pronouncement. But alas, they did neither.

Paragraph six educates the clergymen about the intricacies of active social protests by detailing four specific steps Dr. King and some other organizations follow in preparation for civil rights protests, which he concludes by informing the clergymen that African Americans in Birmingham have correctly addressed all four steps. With no success in sight, Dr. King explains that blacks of Birmingham are left with no other options. He states the problem clearly and succinctly: “Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States.” Whether this comment is fact or fiction, or just mild **hyperbole** is irrelevant because



Birmingham is clearly a strictly segregated city in the difficult-to-change Jim Crow South. Dr. King continues his letter with *enumeratio*, by listing the (then) problems for blacks living in the city of Birmingham: “strict segregation,” “police brutality,” “unjust treatment . . . in the courts,” and unsolved bombings of Negro homes.”

Paragraph eight highlights these efforts by the protest leaders. Paragraph nine explains why the volunteers are engaging in direct action sit-ins and marches. Dr. King is offering a reasonable explanation. The goal is to engage “nonviolent direct action” to create a crisis such that city leaders and local businesses will feel compelled to speak with the African American leaders. Dr. King is “giving away the plan” although honesty and forthrightness are generally appealing (*ethos*) attributes, especially in a rhetorical proffer. Prior to the protests, these city leaders refused to even consider the deleterious effects the city’s widespread discriminatory behavior was having on blacks in the community. The whites of Birmingham exhibited the same behavior that had existed between blacks and whites during the days of slavery, and later sharecropping, namely that blacks were not their equals. Dr. King introduces history of the Ancient Greek philosopher Plato’s spokesperson Socrates to further explain the protest methods. Dr. King’s rhetoric in his use of words and overall language use exemplify his civility, respectfulness, humility, and grace, clearly establishing his *ethos* appeal in this attempt at persuasion. Unfortunately Dr. King’s immediate audience, the clergymen, obviously could not comprehend these African American citizens as their equals. And these ministers were supposedly men of a Christian God. Dr. King’s use of the word “gadflies” seems most appropriate, meaning annoying persons who provoke others to action. Dr. King’s use of language—careful, thoughtful, strategic—should obviously indicate to the clergymen that he is a

man of sublime confidence, character, and intelligence. A more than worthy adversary is Dr. King and his supreme use of metaphor:

Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, we must see the need of having nonviolent **gadflies** to create the kind of tension in society that will help men to rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood. (Emphasis added).

Dr. King uses paragraph ten to address the question raised by the clergymen about timeliness of the protests and to educate the ministers about how change is achieved in the South. Dr. King suggests by implication that time is irrelevant because the city officials will not act without being prodded beforehand: "My friends, I must say to you that we have not made a single gain in civil rights without determined legal and nonviolent pressure. History is the long and tragic story of the fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily." This passage of Dr. King's letter is reminiscent of an iconic quote from Frederick Douglass:

Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will submit to, and you have found out the exact amount of **injustice** and wrong which will be imposed upon them; and these will continue until they are resisted either with words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress. (Emphasis added; West India Emancipation Speech, 1857)

Dr. King continues, "We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have never

yet engaged in a direct action movement that was ‘well timed,’ according to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation” is the opening statement of paragraph eleven. He continues, “For years now I have heard the words ‘Wait!’ ... [; however,] ‘Wait’ has almost always meant ‘Never.’” Dr. King presents his precise assessment to the clergymen, with his comments, a reality that the ministers already know to be true. Dr. King has a well known mastery in his use of metaphor; however, the metaphor he inserts within paragraph eleven is an unfortunate choice. To compare this very honorable civil rights protest movement to the horrendous devastation caused to mothers and their families from their use of the drug thalidomide, initially thought to be a mild sleeping pill believed safe for pregnant women but whose use tragically resulted in babies born with malformed limbs, was wrong and a misstep by Dr. King. Fortunately Dr. King, as has already been shown, was widely known and celebrated for his writing precision and careful thoughtful prose. However, this metaphor was more a distraction than a helpful addition.

Next comes in paragraph eleven another widely repeated **paroemia** statement, generally defined as “short pithy sayings [also called] adage, maxim, proverb, *sententia*” ([www.dailytrope.com](http://www.dailytrope.com)): “... **justice** too long delayed is **justice** denied” (emphasis added). Paragraph eleven is the essay/letter’s longest, covering a full page and one-half. The third sentence from the bottom up is actually twenty-five lines but packs a tremendous punch:

... when you take a cross country drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; ... when your first name becomes ‘nigger’ and your middle name becomes ‘boy’ (however old you are) and your last name becomes ‘John,’ and

when your wife and mother are never given the respected title ‘Mrs.’ ... then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait.

The paragraph and sentences are correctly punctuated. There are no grammatical rules about the lengths of sentences or paragraphs, as long as the sentences are properly punctuated. He closes the paragraph with **metaphors**: “There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into an abyss of injustice where they experience the bleakness of corroding despair. I hope, Sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience.” But of course, the ministers are uncaring and unwilling. Dr. King’s use here of *enumeratio* and *anaphora*, listing and repetition for emphasis are splendid additions as Fahnestock and others have recommended.

Paragraph twelve is a concise six sentences, one compound sentence, three simple sentences, and two complex sentences, all making for a stimulating well-developed paragraph. The one main idea for the paragraph is an exposition on the necessity of breaking the law, and why it can be proper to follow and praise some laws (for example, *Brown v. Board of Education*, 1954) yet breaking other laws. Dr. King’s response is direct and concise: “The answer is found in the fact that there are two types of laws: There are *just* and *unjust* laws.” Paragraph twelve ends with *proemia*, a profound statement from Saint Augustine of Hippo, Roman African theologian and philosopher: “An unjust law is no law at all.”

Dr. King begins and ends paragraph twenty-two with metaphors. To open, he comments, “I had hoped that the white moderate would understand that law and order exist **for the purpose of establishing justice**, and that when they fail to do this they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress” (emphasis added). And to close, he continues with another **simile**, “Like a boil that can never be cured as long as it is covered up but must be

opened with all its pus-flowing ugliness to the natural medicines of air and light, injustice must likewise be exposed, with all of the tension its exposing creates, to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured.” For the African American citizens of Birmingham, time had arrived to unblock the symbolic dams and pierce the unsightly boils.

Dr. King addresses the illogic of condemning the protesters for violence caused by the antagonizers of civil rights. He admonishes the clergymen profoundly using more *proemia*, another comment that has become an often quoted maxim, “We must use time creatively, and forever realize that **the time is always right to do right**” (emphasis added). The paragraph again, as is Dr. King’s style, includes a **metaphor**, which ends the paragraph, “Now is the time to lift our national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of human dignity.” This is a meticulously well-crafted letter that properly has become historically iconic.

A five-line succinct paragraph twenty-nine contains only two complex sentences as Dr. King merely expresses his utter disappointment with the church, a space he has served with intimate devotion most of his life. Paragraph thirty is used by Dr. King to express his surprise and disappointment, “I felt that the white ministers, priests and rabbis of the South would be some of our strongest allies.” But such was not the case as “instead, some have been outright opponents, refusing to understand the freedom movement and misrepresenting its leaders ... [all the while] *others have been more cautious than courageous* and have remained silent behind the anesthesia game security of stained-glass windows” (emphasis added). **Alliteration** and **metaphor**. An outsider might wonder, what god these men (few had been women) actually worshipped, and what bible they proclaim to be reading. King’s use of alliteration is masterful.

Early in paragraph thirty-six, Dr. King uses another cleverly placed **metaphor** to engage the clergymen, “In those days the Church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas

and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society.”

And his words sing an alliterative syntactical structure to crescendo, “They were small in number but big in commitment.” But since no reply to Dr. King would be forthcoming, these deeply heartfelt words there in Birmingham, Alabama, would find few listeners who could actually *hear* his words and thoughts.

Paragraph thirty-seven seems to appear with more of a vengeance as Dr. King speaks of how “the contemporary church ... is so often the arch supporter ... of the status quo.” And these actions, Dr. King insinuates, provide nefarious power, a sinister result for those in control. The objective of those in control is the continuing betrayal of the laws of the land and the spirit of the Church. Paragraph thirty-eight contains two interesting sentences of syntactical eloquence in **metaphor**, “But they [some white Christians] have gone with the faith that right defeated is stronger than evil triumphant”; and “They have carved a tunnel of hope through the dark mountain of disappointment.” Otherwise, Dr. King asserts his utter disappointment with white Christians. Although later in the paragraph, Dr. King expresses a clear hopefulness for the future, “But even if the church does not come to the aid of justice, I have no despair about the future. ... We will reach the goal of freedom in Birmingham and all over the nation, because the goal of America is freedom. .... If the inexpressible cruelties of slavery could not stop us, the opposition we now face will surely fail.” These words project an effective and thorough *logos* appeal. Dr. King’s pronouncements herein have proven to be prophetic.

Dr. King writes in paragraph forty about the ministers’ statements commending the local police. Unlike the clergymen’s pronouncements, Dr. King uses *enumeratio* as he details a series of complaints,

You warmly commended the Birmingham police force for keeping ‘order’ and ‘preventing violence.’ I don’t believe you would have so warmly commended the police force if you had seen its angry violent dogs literally biting six unarmed, nonviolent Negroes ... [or] observe[d] their ugly and inhuman treatment of Negroes here in the city jail ... [or] if you would watch them push and curse old Negro women and young Negro girls.

Then, Dr. King closes the paragraph with an obvious slight with a quite sarcastic rebuke, “I’m sorry that I can’t join you in your praise for the police department. On occasion, **sarcasm** can be a quite warranted rebuke.

Paragraph forty-one contains *paroemia*, a few profound statements, one from Dr. King “... it is wrong to use immoral means to attain moral ends,” and the other from writer T. S. Elliot, “... there is no greater treason than to do the right deed for the wrong reason.” Next, Dr. King draws his conclusion effectively, “So I have tried to make it clear that it is wrong to use immoral means to attain moral ends ... [but also] it is just as wrong, or even more so to use moral means to preserve immoral ends.” Dr. King’s statements are thought-provoking and obviously valid. A very clear *logos* appeal is made.

The letter ends with paragraph forty-five as Dr. King requests of the ministers that they meet as “fellow clergymen and [he a] Christian brother.” Dr. King expresses hope and a sincere vision of brotherhood in their future in “our great nation with all of ... [its] scintillating beauty.” The closing is interesting, “Yours for the cause of Peace and Brotherhood.” Dr. King throughout the letter continues to write with respectful courtesy and grace, most unfortunately, toward those who are unable to hear or understand his thoughtful and detailed entreaty.

*Martin Luther King, Jr. Offers a Plea for <Justice>:*

*A Rhetorical Analysis of “I Have a Dream”*

One of the most celebrated speeches in modern American history was delivered by civil rights champion Martin Luther King, Jr., at the 28 August 1963, March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom civil rights demonstration. Dr. King spoke while fronting the iconic Lincoln Memorial in Washington, District of Columbia, before an estimated gathering of over 200,000 people. In 1963, the USA was still largely segregated, *de jure* segregation in the North and *de facto* segregation in the South where many if not most African American citizens were still not allowed to vote, or even to register to vote. “Separate but equal” was supposedly no longer the law of the land, but it was still largely the law of the land, the law of the South. Dr. King was a widely known and celebrated American social activist, and at this moment of history during the early 1960s, the most opportune moment in United States history had arrived for such a superb speech at this protest gathering; *kairos* was present. The Emancipation Proclamation had been signed into law one-hundred years earlier, and soon thereafter, African Americans by law had gained citizenship and the right to vote (although males only), but local customs and social mores of racial prejudice and discrimination would continue to prevail for decades. In much of the South, African Americans were still not allowed to vote as their everyday lives were overwhelmed by the daily indignities.

Aristotle proposed three primary audience appeals—*ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*. And each of these three factors in some measure exists with regard to this celebrated speech. Dr. King had a prepared text before him, but during the speech, he began to improvise, gloriously. His *ethos* appeal was, in 1963, already established. Dr. King was college-educated and also held a doctorate from a prominent northeastern university. He was an established minister at the



Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, his hometown. And for one year (December 1955 to 1956), he had been one of the leaders of the successful Montgomery Bus Boycott that led to desegregation of public transportation in Montgomery, Alabama. On this day, 28 August 1963, he was one of the primary speakers the crowd had ventured to this event to hear.

Dr. King was widely known for his powerful sermons and his speeches. The “I Have a Dream” speech met if not surpassed the crowd’s expectations. The speech had been meticulously crafted though Dr. King’s impromptu delivery of the speech veered away from his prepared notes, but that portion equally matched the quality of his prepared text. His arguments were reasonable and logically consistent; *logos* was also clearly established. The diverse gathering in attendance, of course, were supporters of civil rights for African Americans, but even so, the logic of the speech would have been obvious for any objective evaluation.

Dr. King was a master tactician in his use of metaphor and also skillful in using other figures of speech. The language he chose for the text at various points in the speech clearly put the diverse audience at ease. And on occasion, some humor was inserted within the text of the speech even as the seriousness of the occasion was not minimized. Disappointment and sadness in some measure could not have been avoided, so *pathos* too was clearly established. Thus with *ethos*, *logos*, *pathos*, and *kairos* clearly evident, Dr. King’s presentation easily matches Aristotle’s instruction as his performance clearly moved—and persuaded—this audience.

The first paragraph as presented in that year 1963, with apologies to Dr. King, might have been a very mild **hyperbole**; but only slightly so. But, clearly the speech event was *one of* “the greatest demonstrations for freedom in the history of our nation.” The second paragraph begins eloquently as Dr. King recalls our celebrated President Abraham Lincoln, the leader who wrote and executed the Emancipation Proclamation, an Executive Order that began the process that

eventually ended slavery in the United States. The short three-sentence paragraph ends with two apt **metaphors** with reference to "... [a] great beacon light of hope" and "a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity." However, the next paragraph returns the audience to the then present condition, the state of the African American presence in America and the South.

Paragraph three provides a reality snapshot about conditions in the USA for African Americans. Dr. King calls out segregation and discrimination in addition to restrictive housing. Again his felicitous use of **metaphor** infuses his presentation with clarity and grace, "... the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination"; "... the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity"; "... the Negro still languishes in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land." The tactile virtuosity of King's poetic language is mellifluously delightful.

Paragraph four begins with an awesome maneuver in his fitting **metaphor** placement, comparing the plight of blacks in America to personal finance:

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. ... This note was a promise that all men [sic] ... will be guaranteed ... Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.... America has defaulted on this promissory note [because] ... America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked 'insufficient funds.' (Reported in Lopez et al. 87)

The crowd's applause provided a vigorous crescendo in response to this final sentence of the paragraph. Paragraph five continues as Dr. King extends his personal finance metaphor: "... we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt ... [or] that there are insufficient funds in the

great vaults of opportunity ... And so, we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice" (ibid.). Aptly stated.

Paragraph six provides an additional collection of propitious metaphors, "The tranquilizing drug of gradualism," "... the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice," and "... to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood." Paragraph seven presents an ominous warning, that did come to fruition in the summers that followed 1963: "And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. And there will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his [sic] ... rights."

Paragraph eight makes a direct plea to African Americans, to resist any urge toward violence, with another strategic use of metaphor: Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. ... [W]e must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force." And paragraph nine, addresses the growing militancy and unrest within the black community by commenting:

**The marvelous new militancy** which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. (Emphasis added)

This message to his audience offers Dr. King's assessment of the growing sentiment of social change in American society while he establishes his *ethos* appeal to his audiences.

Paragraph ten lectures about the timeliness of the African American protests as Dr. King utilizes another apropos figure of speech, *anaphora*, the repetition of the same word or phrase at the beginning of a succession of sentences. The paragraph begins with the often heard query from moderate whites, “When will you be satisfied?” To which, Dr. King responds with anaphora, “We can never be satisfied ...,” which he repeats in five successive sentences as the paragraph ends with an emphatic crescendo of metaphor response, “No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until ‘justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream,’” an **allusion** to a Biblical passage reference (Amos 5:24). With the only exception being the triumphant ending of the entire speech, the audience applause following this resounding comment at this moment is the most vociferous of the entire speech.

Paragraph eleven finds Dr. King speaking to the people, many of whom are also protest activists. He consoles and reminds them of their plight and the struggle. He returns to **anaphora**, using “go back to ...” five straight times as he again ends the paragraph with a crescendo, “... go back ..., knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.” Paragraph twelve, Dr. King introduces his iconic dream **metaphor**, “And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream rooted in the American dream,” an **allusion** to one of America’s most prized capitalism themes. What follows is a litany of anaphora, “I have a dream ...” single sentence paragraphs, eight in number with a longer paragraph twenty, all of four lines, a very long compound-complex sentence,

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; ‘and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.’

Dr. King's delivery of this second crescendo is masterful with the concluding phrase a rendering of Bible verse Isaiah 40:4-5 from the King James Bible, the estimated 200,000+ people in attendance can be seen and heard, almost reaching a state of delirium. Dr. King calms the crowd with a short single sentence paragraph twenty-one, "This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with." Paragraph twenty-two contains three sentences of more *anaphora*, two simple sentences followed by an ending complex sentence, "With this faith ..." repeated just three times. And Dr. King responds to an unasked question (from the aforementioned litany of *anaphora*) with a welcomed ending gerund phrase, "... knowing that we will be free one day."

Dr. King speaks (rather than sings) the opening stanza of the well-known patriotic anthem "America (My Country 'Tis of Thee)" by Samuel F. Smith; then, Dr. King proceeds toward a return to the text of his speech as he inserts "Let freedom ring ..." *anaphora* again, here seven straight times; he begins the litany by commenting, "And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true." The eighth mention of "... let freedom ring" ends the ninth and final sentence of the continuous figure of speech. Dr. King's delivery during this very short speech of seventeen minutes, given the occasion and place in front of the Lincoln Memorial and before such an expansive audience is a masterful presentation. The twenty-fourth and final paragraph of the speech, its magnificence beyond words, lifts the crowd to a frenzy, interspersed among the words some **hyperbole**:

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the

words of the old Negro spiritual: 'Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!

The enormous gathering began to erupt almost in a frenzy that was possibly even felt by the millions among the national television viewing audience. The "old Negro spiritual" comment is a reference to the song "Free at Last" by J. W. Work. Again, Dr. King's tenor vocal delivery using an appropriate cadence mesmerizes his immediate audience, the crowd in attendance. This speech would become iconic among great American speeches, especially of the twentieth century. It was actually voted number one among great America speeches by an evaluating group of 137 communications scholars, as reported at the American Rhetoric website and the University of Wisconsin-Madison website. In addition, *Time* magazine would vote him Man of the Year for 1963, in no small part a result of Dr. King's dedicated social movement protests and this triumphant speech occasion; the following year Dr. King would win the Nobel Peace Prize.

Unfortunately, though a spirit of positive movement in the USA of a renewed hope of <justice> for African Americans was felt, the reality of the current struggle would return to shock the nation. On 15 September, not even one month later, the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, would be bombed; four children, all young girls, were killed in the bombing and another twenty-two were injured, some gravely. Carol Denise McNair (age eleven), Addie Mae Collins (age fourteen), Carole Robertson (age fourteen), and Cynthia Wesley (age fourteen). Sarah Collins (age twelve), younger sister of Addie Mae Collins, had extensive glass blasted onto her face, and she was blinded in one eye. Following this Sunday morning bombing, throughout the city of Birmingham, already notorious for bombings and other violence, there followed more killings and bombings.

Just under two months later, on 10 November 1963, advancing black nationalist Nation of Islam minister Malcolm X would give a speech in Detroit, Michigan, that has also become iconic among communication scholars, “Message to the Grassroots.” This speech would present a different direction for African American citizens for gaining their full Constitutional rights; the speech would be voted #91 by the same 137 communications academic scholars. The scholars would find a second Malcolm X speech, “The Ballot or the Bullet,” also splendid and voted #7. The more aggressive black nationalists were gaining a bigger voice in and among African American communities as they began to gain traction in African America. And too often today social scientists and historians minimize the contributions of these more militant social activists and neglect to acknowledge their importance in providing a very serious alternative consideration growing in the black community. This more aggressive black nationalist voice would be a very serious threat that, most likely, had a positive effect on the pace of desegregation efforts as the officials became aware of this rising black nationalist ethos.

These militant groups did not encourage, as Dr. King and other civil rights leaders had, the often repeated admonition from the Holy Bible Gospel of Matthew spoken by Jesus: “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.” These growing black nationalist voices eschewed this “turn the other cheek” philosophy of the national civil rights movement; they were proclaiming a very different strategy taken from old Babylonian Law from the *Code of Hammurabi* of ancient Mesopotamia, of which the Christian deity Jesus Christ spoke just above—“An eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth.” No doubt, civic leaders, governmental authorities, racists, and typically unconcerned bystanders were being forced to reconsider their complacency and begin to consider what may become as these more

aggressive alternative strategies were being considered in the black communities of America.

Even though no major planned retaliation occurred, just the thought of the possibilities no doubt helped those audiences in power to quicken the country's pace toward equality and <justice> for African Americans in America.

*First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist. Then they came out for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.*

—Martin Niemöller

***Malcolm X Announces A Different Demand for <Justice> in America:***

***Rhetorical Analysis of “Message to the Grassroots”***

Nation of Islam minister El Hajj Malik El Shabazz was born Malcolm Little, but later came to be known as Malcolm X. The X, for those who follow this ministry, represents the ancestral name that African Americans lost when they were abducted and brought to the Americas under the system of brutal chattel slavery. Malcolm X was not a fiery speaker, nor was his public speaking done in any style or manner similar to Martin Luther King, Jr, the civil rights leader with whom he is most often compared. But using his own method, Malcolm X was just as powerful as a speaker as was Dr. King; however, the delivery style was more “calm, cool, and collected,” as Malcolm X sometimes commented in his speeches.



The *kairos* for a speech such as this “Message to the Grassroots” speech in late 1963 was established. The growing civil rights movement nonviolent direct action approach involving solemn peaceful prayerful protests where the African American protesters were met by often violent direct reaction from anti-protesters brought indelible images before blacks nationwide who were not protesting. A growing number of African Americans were ready to hear a different message, and this message of a different approach that could be used to help African Americans, especially blacks living in the South, gain their full Constitutional rights of equality and <justice>. Malcolm X proved to be the perfect spokesperson to counter the established civil rights methods since all three audience appeals were met by his approach on this night. He was a tall svelte attractive figure, always respectfully dressed in business suit, dress coat, and tie. He was articulate, even though his formal education had been interrupted by his family situation. His father had been a Garveyite, among those African Americans who were followers of the black nationalist leader Marcus Garvey, popular movement leader of the early 1920s who spoke for the establishment of a black state for African Americans separate and apart, away from America and back to Africa, a separation from whites economically and politically.

The father of Malcolm X, Earl Little, was killed on 28 September 1931, when Malcolm Little (young Malcolm X) was just six years old. Earl Little had been a prominent speaker in the black community of Lansing, Michigan, and he would often take his young son Malcolm with him. Perhaps, young Malcolm’s exposure to his father’s speeches led to his own impressive public speaking prowess. Earl Little was killed by a KKK-like group in young Malcolm’s hometown. The killing of his father eventually led to the disintegration of his family and a cause of young Malcolm Little’s troublesome early adult years. His mother would later become

confined to a mental hospital. One can only imagine how abominable that experience would have been for an African American woman so hospitalized during the Great Depression era.

The three artistic proofs as coined by Aristotle are clearly evident in this “Message to the Grassroots” speech by Malcolm X. His *ethos* appeal of character is clearly established for this audience since the growing popularity of Malcolm X in the black community was well-known. In addition, his six-plus years in prison and his years with the Nation of Islam ministry had already established his authenticity and street credibility as a leading spokesperson for a different more aggressive approach for blacks toward pursuing their civil rights. His articulate use of the King’s English only heightened his credibility. His *logos* appeal was readily established for audiences of African Americans since they knew only too well the racism and discrimination they encountered in their everyday personal lives, which they knew to be unfair and a violation of the founding precepts of the United States, and they knew that the established civil rights movement protests were moving only at a snail’s pace.

Malcolm X would usually state the obvious in his speeches, and his commonsensical approach was revealed as he would constantly comment about the suffering of black People in America. And in doing so, a *pathos* appeal was met because to the African American community, talk about the treatment of blacks in America wherever they lived would always draw out strong emotions in audiences.

Regarding Malcolm X, his delivery and overall message were the outstanding aspects of his exemplary oratory. Although he was a master public speaker like Martin Luther King, Jr., his speeches did not have the organization, coherence, and detail exhibited in the speeches of Dr. King. However, no less eloquent, Malcolm X’s powerful message—a need for drastic change in civil rights protest passiveness—and his skillful delivery were the outstanding features of his

speeches. Delivery is one of the basic canons of rhetoric and along with memory has often been neglected in academic study. However, there are several aspects of capable and effective delivery that contribute to Malcolm X's rhetorical skill, "Delivery is about voice (intonation, pitch, and volume) and gesture (how one uses one's hands, holds one's body, moves, stands, dresses, makes eye contact ...)" (Pullman 203). Malcolm X's delivery in his speeches provides the superior example for all of these factors.

Following the first paragraph introduction, still not yet providing his approach, Malcolm X begins his presentation by reminding the audience that blacks are discriminated against not because of their religion or political party affiliation. He reminds the audience that the sole reason they suffer is their race, "You don't catch hell 'cause you're a Baptist [or] ... Methodist. ... You don't catch hell because you're a Democrat or a Republican. ... And you sure don't catch hell 'cause you're an American; 'cause if you was an American, you wouldn't catch no hell." His speeches, as always spoken using a forceful African American Vernacular English (AAVE) dialect (most often pejoratively called Black English), are matter-of-fact and thoughtful as he appeals to the basic common sense of his audience. The ending sentence of this litany contains a subject-verb-agreement "error" and also a double negative "error" that both only heighten the comments' emphatic resonance.

Celebrated writer James Baldwin famously wrote that AAVE is not just an English language dialect but itself a separate and distinct language form:

There was a moment, in time, and in this place, when my brother, or my mother, or my father, or my sister, had to convey to me, for example, the danger in which I was standing from the white man standing just behind me, and to convey this with a speed, and in a language, that the white man could not possibly understand,

and that, indeed, he cannot understand, until today. ... Now, if this passion, this skill, this (to quote Toni Morrison) ‘sheer intelligence,’ this incredible music, the mighty achievement of having brought a people utterly unknown to, or despised by ‘history’—to have brought this people to their present, troubled, troubling, and unassailable and unanswerable place—if this absolutely unprecedented journey does not indicate that black English is a language, I am curious to know what definition of language is to be trusted. A people at the center of the Western world, and in the midst of so hostile a population, has not endured and transcended by means of what is patronizingly called a ‘dialect.’ We, the blacks, are in trouble, certainly, but we are not doomed, and we are not inarticulate because we are not compelled to defend a morality that we know to be a lie.<sup>100</sup>

For the next paragraph, Malcolm X follows his customary public speaking pattern of gently engaging a mild rebuke of African Americans in general. His style of public speaking was to just present the reality he knew his audience would recognize, without providing the rhetoric of hope Dr. King was a master of presenting. The third paragraph of this speech, Malcolm X uses to remind his overwhelmingly African American audience that they are not really accepted in America, “So we are all black people, so-called Negroes, second-class citizens, ex-slaves. You are nothing but a [sic] ex-slave. You don’t like to be told that. But what else are you?” Malcolm X is chastising his black brethren in a loving way; his purpose being to

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<sup>100</sup> Baldwin, James. “If Black English Isn’t a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?” [www.nytimes.com>books>specials>Baldwin-english](http://www.nytimes.com/books/specials/Baldwin-english). 29 July 1979. Retrieved 20 December 2019.

alert them to the inadequacy and deficiencies of the civil rights movement activity toward protest in seeking fair treatment and <justice> in the USA (of the 1960s).

A quotation from Frederick Douglass seems apt:

If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, ... men who want crops without plowing. ... They want rain without thunder and lightening. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its waters. This struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. (Foner)<sup>101</sup>

Malcolm X mostly inspires his audience by telling his people that they can succeed, but that there was a better way to seek <justice> and <equality> in America other than by continuing the passive nonviolent peaceful protests that draw angry antagonism and violence from racist whites. Malcolm X often reminds his audiences that even though the passive protesters are nonviolent, they often arouse physically violent attacks from their antagonists. His repeated message to black people that to continue these peaceful prayerful protests is unwarranted and ridiculous, primarily because these solemn actions from blacks often draw those physically violent attacks.

Another unfortunate continuing theme of Malcolm X speeches was his belief that there could be no future for blacks in America with white people. His views in this regard would change following his pilgrimage to Mecca, which is detailed in his *Autobiography of Malcolm X : as told to Alex Haley*, published just prior to his assassination. Dr. King's message continued to be that blacks and whites could "live together as sisters and brothers," which is what he wanted

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<sup>101</sup> Foner, Philip S., ed. *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings*. Chicago, IL: Lawrence Hill Books, 1975. Print.

from America for justice. Malcolm X in his speeches during the very early 1960s offers a very different message, one carrying no hope of that vision. For Malcolm X, justice was just plain fairness, without the brotherhood. His *logos* appeal was revealed in his overall message since many in his audience were beginning to believe in agreement with his assessment that maybe blacks and whites could not live together peacefully in America. These African Americans in Michigan had viewed television images of whites terrorizing and otherwise using violence in attacking peaceful nonviolent blacks, some of whom would be praying, who were just protesting for basic human rights and civil rights as citizens of America, and those in this audience had watched television news reports of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing and had read about the other bombings in Birmingham. All of what Malcolm X was speaking seemed logical and reasoned; his *logos* appeal was clearly satisfied.

This rhetoric so used by a prominent black person speaking in public was not a common occurrence in the early 1960s. Many blacks away from this audience would not agree with this rhetoric of Malcolm X; however, younger blacks were becoming impatient with continuing calls for more patience, and they were growing restless and more dissatisfied with the state of human rights and common decency in America. They were beginning to listen more intensely to the growing militant voices in the black community, different from those promoted by the established American media of the times. Young blacks were beginning to ignore the negative press coverage about the Black Panther Party; the changing Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC: John Lewis was followed by Stokeley Carmichael [Kwame Ture]); the US organization in California led by Ron Karenga (later Dr. Maulana Karenga), creator of the Pan-African and African American holiday of KWANZAA; the Nation of Islam, and other more militant groups in the African American communities of America.

England in the late eighteenth century was ruled by George III, the King of Great Britain and Ireland. It would later be said, in the nineteenth century, that the British Empire was so vast that the sun never set over its domain. Malcolm X in paragraph eleven strategically moves his focus in a somewhat disorderly fashion to talk about the importance of land, the colonists' move toward revolution, and the reality of bloodshed. His purpose was to compare the often conventional civil rights community strategem of nonviolent prayerful public protests. Malcolm X highlights the fact that the American revolutionaries did not engage in nonviolent protests against the British government, even as Great Britain was then the world's superpower, a Goliath many times more massive than the colonists David. This American history lesson reminder has contained within a *meta-discourse* conclusion, "that is, discourse about the discourse" (Fahnestock 386). Malcolm X guides his listeners as he compellingly recounts this American history, of which his audience is well aware; he need not provide all of the specific details in his history reminder as he expects his audience to make the obvious connections, and draw conclusions, and fill in gaps; that is, mentally make the comparison of the American Revolution protests with the civil rights protests and potentials for victory. Certainly the prospects for success were no less ominous for African Americans then in the 1960s than it was for the colonial revolutionaries in the 1770s.

This American audience is fully expected to have been educated about the American Revolution in their elementary school, middle school, high school, and perhaps college classes; the audience can easily fill in what is left unsaid by Malcolm X. Fahnestock's exemplary text *Rhetorical STYLE: The Uses of Language in Persuasion* explains this discourse strategy: "**Transitio**, shepherding the listener or reader from one section to another ... [and] **praeparatio**, where the rhetor not only announces the coming sections but also explains ahead of time their

purpose and sometimes even their intended effect,” are figures of speech “grouped ... by modern discourse analysts ... under the useful name of *metadiscourse*” (385-386, emphasis in text); the speaker or writer provides only a cursory accounting as s/he allows the audience to fill in the details. Fahnestock also provides discussion of Quintilian’s “five strategies for achieving amplification” that can be found in book eight of his *Institution Oratoria*. With regard to this Malcolm X speech, Quintilian’s fourth tactic of amplification is instructive:

The fourth tactic of amplification, heightening through reasoning (*rationation* ...), involves leading the audience to make an inference that results in an amplified assessment of something else. ‘One thing is magnified in order to affect a corresponding augmentation elsewhere, and it is by reasoning that our hearers are then led on from the first point to the second which we desire to emphasize. ... This tactic of heightening by directing inference was considered especially useful in epideictic arguments of praise or blame. (392-393)

Paragraphs eleven and twelve are disjointed even while the message is interesting, as Malcolm X mixes his themes of revolution and bloodshed:

The French Revolution [was based on] ... land. How did they get it? Bloodshed. Was no love lost; was no compromise; was no negotiation. ... The Russian Revolution—what was it based on? Land. ... How did they bring it about? Bloodshed. You haven’t got a revolution that doesn’t involve bloodshed. And you’re afraid to bleed. I said, you’re afraid to bleed.

With his use of short timely bursts of *anaphora*, Malcolm X displays impeccable timing with repetition throughout his diatribe. He would receive thunderous applause from his audience along each step in his recounting. Left unstated is that he is only “arguing” with himself because



he is the only national black leader calling for violent revolution. Yet, still the talk is tantalizing and certainly enthralling for his listeners, especially the younger adults and older teens in his audience. Even so, the crowd laughed and applauded this continuing tract by Malcolm X. And of course, the “ragtag collection of Americans” did go on to challenge the British militarily and actually did propel themselves (their David), to eventual success and ultimate victory against the British (Goliath). Malcolm X did not need to mention this fact because everyone in his audience already knew this from their years of education in elementary school. Quintilian’s fourth tactic of amplification is again utilized.

In addition, federal government officials, including political figures and military leaders, of America would often eschew diplomacy and nonviolence at every turn as the country would recklessly engage adventurous military escapades in and against other countries concerning disputes or ambitious adventures where invariably international mediation could have saved the millions of lives lost and other millions of people hopelessly maimed and dismembered. The United States history of war engagement in both hemispheres were, too often, not noble undertakings, just more greed and power excursions and exhibitions. The Stephen Kinzer Book *Overthrow: America’s Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* and the Paul L. Atwood book *War and Empire: The American Way of Life* detail many of America’s atrocities and unauthorized misadventures.<sup>102</sup> Yet the American public, the American press, and government officials continued to expect black people to continue to just engage passive peaceful protests for

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<sup>102</sup> See also Stephen Kinzer. *The Brothers: John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles, and their Secret World War*. New York, NY: Times Books, Henry Holt and Company LLC, 2013. Print. See also Adam Burns. *American Imperialism: The Territorial Expansion of the United States, 1783-2013*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2017. Print. See also Stephen G. Rabe. *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016. Print.

their just American rights; obviously, time was running out, and black nationalist activists like Malcolm X, Angela Davis, Stokeley Carmichael, Bobby Seale, Huey P. Newton, Maulana Karenga, and others were sounding an alarm for change of tactics. Younger blacks listened to these voices more intently just as older blacks were also becoming more intrigued about these newer voices of discontent.

The *logos* appeal of this closing comment of paragraph twelve was disheartening as it was so accurate. In 1963 on the night of this speech, the USA was engaged in a monstrous build-up in Vietnam where young men and a few young women were being killed and maimed and otherwise injured in a war where no one in this audience nor most of the citizens in America would know the intimate details of America's engagement and the real reason why America was at war in Vietnam<sup>103</sup>; later generally acknowledged to be merely a civil war that the United States could not win.<sup>104</sup> Lives lost, and lives maimed, *for what?* Prior to America's engagement in Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh who had briefly lived in Harlem admired the USA and its founding; he had written letters to American Presidents seeking assistance for his people, for his country to gain independence from the yoke of colonialist France; the Vietnamese people no longer wanted to be colonial "property" of France,<sup>105</sup> just as America's own founding fathers had not wanted to remain a colony of the Kingdom of Great Britain. However, none of this information had been

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<sup>103</sup> See Sheehan, Neil, and Hedrick Smith. *The Pentagon Papers: The Secret History of the Vietnam War*. New York, NY: Racehorse Publishing, 2017. Print.

<sup>104</sup> See "The Pentagon Papers." [www.hustory.com](http://www.hustory.com). 2 August 2011. Updated 21 August 2018. Retrieved 20 December 2019.

<sup>105</sup> *The Vietnam War*. PBS Documentary Mini-Series, Episode one (of ten). 2017. See also "Letter from Ho Chi Minh to President Harry S. Truman." National Archives Catalog. [www.catalog.archives.gov](http://www.catalog.archives.gov). 28 February 1946. Web.

presented to the American people in the 1960s as the USA was preparing its buildup toward going to war.

Continuing this *logos* appeal, Malcolm X uses paragraph thirteen to make clear the message he is presenting to his audience, comments that are obvious to this audience:

If violence is wrong in America, violence is wrong abroad. If it's wrong to be violent defending black women and black children and black babies and black men, then it's wrong for America to draft us and make us violent abroad in defense of her. [T]hen it is right for you and me to do whatever is necessary to defend our own people right here in this country.

Malcolm X is planting a seed with his audience by just introducing a different concept toward gaining civil rights. This *logos* appeal is established. J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI among other U. S. Agencies and government officials became apoplectic.

Early in paragraph fourteen, Malcolm X confesses his past life in prison as he continues the discussion of his revolution theme, speaking here of the Chinese Revolution. Possibly some mild *hyperbole* but only a slight exaggeration; his audience had already been won over: “The Chinese Revolution ... [t]hey threw the British out along with the Uncle Tom Chinese. ... **When I was in prison, I** read an article—don't be shocked **when I say I was in prison**. You're still **in prison. That's what America means: prison**” (emphasis added). There is a Chinese rhetorical tradition that predates Greek and Roman rhetoric. Professor Heping Zhao of California State University, Fullerton, has written that the trajectory of Chinese rhetoric was not unlike that of Greek and Roman rhetoric: “An omnipresent phenomenon in its recorded history of five millennia, much as rhetoric was in European history, the history of Chinese rhetoric has

likewise been characterized by continuous changes ... with the varying circumstances of social and political evolution” (qtd. in Enos 100).

The historical focus of both schools of thought in Chinese rhetoric, Zhao notes, “concern ... the power of language.” Professor Zhao explains, “[The] two prominent schools of discourse, Confucianism and Daoism, were the driving forces behind this vast practice of rhetoric .... The former evolved from the teachings of Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.), the latter from a book titled *Dao De Jing* by Lao Zi (c. 604-517 B.C.E.)” (ibid.). This confession of his prison background by Malcolm X to his audience exemplifies a “moral code” tenet of Confucianism, which “evolved from the teachings of Confucius ... [recorded in the book] *Lun Yu*, or ‘The Analects,’ a collection of dialogues between Confucius and his followers” (ibid.). Traced upon a spectrum, philosophically Confucianism would be at one end of a spectrum while Daoism would be at the other where both schools of Chinese thought recognized “the power of language.” This casual aside comment by Malcolm X confessing his prison past exemplifies one of the basic tenets of Confucianism:

**Knowing oneself**, that is *zhengming* (‘rectifying one’s name’), ... in fact a rhetorical act by which the context of discourse could be correctly evaluated, an act necessary for successful communication. It helped to maintain the ... social order, eliminate uncertainty, and promote stability. Daoism, on the other hand, did not care much for man-made codes, rules, or rites. (Ibid., emphasis added)

Malcolm X knows himself and is not ashamed of his criminal past, as he uses this casual aside reference to his prison life to move his audience toward full acceptance of him, his *ethos*, as he comments about how their lives (that of his audience and his own) were not so different.

As was customary, Malcolm X uses humor all the while he mildly chastises his audience of black people as he makes a somewhat valid observation. Only somewhat because Malcolm X is in serious error with this statement. Dr. King would often speak of a man he revered, Mahatma Gandhi, who did in fact lead a nonviolent revolution.

Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) who had been a lawyer by profession and first worked in South Africa, where he acquired the honorific Mahatma. When he returned to his native India in 1915, he led the Indian Independence Movement against the British colonial rule. His only weapons were the size of his future nation, his faith in nonviolent civil disobedience, and his ability to organize his people. They first organized to protest racial discrimination and the high land taxes the British had installed. But, unlike the Americans in their revolution against the British, Gandhi did not take up military weapons. He developed his nonviolence philosophy after his experiences in South Africa and his reading of Henry David Thoreau:

Since *Indian Opinion*, the South African newsletter published by Gandhi from 1903 to 1914, is now available for study, much new material on Gandhi's knowledge of Thoreau has come to light. ... For example, Gandhi, in his 1942 appeal, 'To American Friends,' wrote, 'You have given me a teacher in Thoreau, who furnished me through this essay 'On the Duty of Civil Disobedience' scientific confirmation of what I was doing in South Africa.

Similarly Gandhi had written to Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1942, 'I have profited greatly by the writings of Thoreau and Emerson' ... [and once on a train ride with a companion, Gandhi acknowledged that Thoreau's essay]

contained the essence of his political philosophy, not only as India's struggle related to the British, ... [and] his own views of citizens to government.<sup>106</sup>

And, Britain was forced to eventually grant independence to the Indian people, with the British India Empire being carved into two nations, India and Pakistan.

Returning to what he sees as the problem for African Americans in America, Malcolm X uses paragraph seventeen to return his discussion to demonizing “the white man,” and it is sometimes difficult to criticize his critique of the rampant prejudice and racial discrimination in America suggesting that blacks become engaged in more aggressive actions *instead of* continuing the passive nonviolent protest marches, which was often promulgated by the traditional civil rights leaders. This representation was a false dichotomy (either/or fallacy), the claim that there are only two options with regard to a dilemma when actually there are several; here the reality is that African Americans need not just pursue either nonviolent civil disobedience or violent protest action to gain their <justice> and fair treatment in America because there were these and other strategies that could have been (and can be today) implemented. For example, noted concert singer and human rights activist Paul Robeson and others had presented a petition *We Charge Genocide: The Historic Petition to the United Nations for Relief from a Crime of the United States Against the Negro People* before the United Nations on 17 December 1951, to the chagrin of the national civil rights leadership. And of course, there was Marcus Garvey's back-to-Africa movement—no longer a viable option today— of the 1920s. And further, there have been other ideas presented over the years that generally receive only limited national media attention.

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<sup>106</sup> George Hendrick. “The Influence of Thoreau's ‘Civil Disobedience’ On Gandhi's Satyagraha,” *The New England Quarterly* 29.4 (December 1956): 462-471. Web.

Malcolm X's continuing blame of all white people for the ills and animus befalling African Americans in general is certainly problematic because the comment is false, and unequivocally inaccurate. In addition, such a mindset would prevent blacks from utilizing all available avenues and resources for achieving <justice> in America. Certainly, those who would give their lives in the struggle for African American equality and <justice> in America should not be so callously discounted. Of course, first and foremost, **John Brown** made the ultimate contribution that actually led to the (civil) war that ended the scourge of slavery. The Southern Poverty Law Center, among others, has compiled a partial listing of those who gave their lives to the civil rights struggle, many of whom just happened to be members of the white race. **Paul Guihard**, a reporter from Europe, on 30 September 1962, was killed in the integration riot at the University of Mississippi campus in Oxford. **Rev. Bruce Kundera** on 7 April 1964 in Cleveland, Ohio, was with a group protesting while using their bodies to block the building of a segregated school when Rev. Kundera was crushed by a bulldozer. **Michael Schwerner** age 24 and **Andrew Goodman** age 20 on 21 June 1964, had been two of the three missing civil rights workers, the third **James Earl Chaney** age 21; all had traveled to Philadelphia, Mississippi, to help in the movement. They were found dead and buried in a shallow grave. **Rev. James Reeb** on 3 March 1965 had traveled from Boston to Selma following news of the civil rights attack at the Edmund Pettus Bridge, but one evening after eating a meal with other white ministers, he was beaten to death as he was walking down a Selma street. **Mrs. Viola Gregg Liuzzo** age 39 on 25 March 1965, drove her car from Detroit to Selma, Alabama, to participate in driving marchers between Selma and Montgomery when she was shot by a passing car shooter; she was the mother of five children. **Jonathan Myrick Daniels** on 20 August 1965 in Haynesville, Alabama, had traveled from Boston to help with black voter registration in Lownes County when

he was arrested at a demonstration, then suddenly released from jail, but shortly later was shot and killed by a deputy sheriff. **Vernon Ferdinand Dahmer** on 10 January 1966 in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, had announced on public radio that he would be paying the poll taxes for blacks who could not afford the tax for voting but later his home was firebombed, and he died from the burns he suffered in the firebombing.<sup>107</sup> These eight white people here were just a few of the many people who had traveled *to* the civil rights protests to offer their help and support, yet their lives were ended prematurely; they can never be forgotten. As Martin Luther King, Jr., so eloquently stated in his glorious March on Washington “I Have A Dream” speech,

In the process of gaining our rightful place ... [, ]let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to generate into physical violence. ... The **marvelous new militancy** which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers [sic], [and sisters] as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. They have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone. (Emphasis added)

Fortunately, Malcolm X would later learn that skin pigmentation does not determine a person’s character. Malcolm X did learn and evolve from his earlier ill-informed limited thinking with

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<sup>107</sup> “Civil Rights Martyrs.” SPLC Southern Poverty Law Center. [www.splcenter.org](http://www.splcenter.org). Retrieved 16 February 2019. Web. See also New York Times Archives. “The 40 Who Fell in the Turbulence of the U.S. Battles for Civil Rights.” 4 November 1989. [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com). Web.



regard to white people following his religious pilgrimage to Mecca. He penned a letter to a friend about his pilgrimage:

There are Muslims of all colors and ranks here in Mecca from all parts of this earth... During the past seven days of this holy pilgrimage, while undergoing the rituals of the hajj [pilgrimage], I have eaten from the same plate, drank from the same glass, slept on the same bed or rug, while praying to the same God ... with fellow Muslims whose skin was the whitest of white, whose eyes were the bluest of blue, and whose hair was the blondest of blond—yet it was the first time in my life that I didn't see them as 'white' men. I could look into their faces and see that these men didn't regard themselves as 'white.'<sup>108</sup>

Further, during this 1960s decade young white college students also began to speak out about racial injustice. For example, Tom Hayden and the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) published their manifesto *The Port Huron Statement*, which viewed race as one of the two main problems of modern society (the other being Cold War politics) and provided acknowledgement of the seriousness of the issue of race in America:

[T]he pervasiveness of racism in American ... [and the] national heritage of racial discrimination via slavery has been a part of America since ... Columbus' advent on the new continent. As such, racism ... antedates the Republic and the thirteen colonies. (Hayden 115)

And continuing this recent theme, Malcolm X tells his audience, again with subtle humor, something any objective listener might be forced to agree with, "I even heard one [anonymous

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<sup>108</sup> New York Times Archives. "Malcolm X Pleased by Whites' Attitude On Trip to Mecca." 8 May 1964. [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com).

black speaker] say ‘our astronauts.’ They won’t even let him near the plant—and ‘our astronauts’! ‘Our Navy’—that’s a Negro that’s out of his mind. That’s a Negro that’s out of his mind.” Malcolm X was possibly the undisputed master of understatement rhetoric, *litotes*, which Fahnestock explains clearly “In *litotes*, the speaker requires the listener to reevaluate an expression by judging that the words actually used to minimize or downplay a subject that the audience does or should estimate differently” (117).

However, this detailed description by Malcolm X in paragraph thirty-four about the change in direction for the March, with the customary humor, was spot-on:

It was the grassroots out there in the street. [It] scared the white man to death, scared the white power structure in Washington, D. C. to death; **I was there.**

When they found out that this black steamroller was going to come down on the capital, they called in Wilkins; they called in Randolph; they called in these national Negro leaders that you respect and told them, ‘Call it off.’ Kennedy said, ‘Call it off.’ Kennedy said, ‘Look, you all letting this thing go too far.’ And Old Tom said, ‘Boss, I can’t stop it, because I didn’t start it. (emphasis added)

The subtle humor is difficult to describe in words; the audience erupted in laughter and applause as the people heard and viewed Malcolm X’s pantomime. Malcolm X was a master of delivery, one of Aristotle’s five canons, interposed with understated humor delivered in an articulate forceful manner and a moderated tenor voice. “Humor is a significant rhetorical skill” (285) according to Professor Pullman who devotes several pages of his exemplary text to this important aspect of the delivery canon. Malcolm X provides an impeccable exemplar of the delivery canon in that he is respectful of his audience, his dress is professional and always dress coat and tie, he use of language is articulate and measured, his hand gestures are limited but

competent, and he eschews wild histrionics. But, his understated humor, generally just a careful comment interspaced within moments of a speech, is exemplary.

Interestingly, Malcolm X states clearly “I was there.” Some elaboration should have been added by Malcolm X to further address his attendance, considered in hindsight, this assertion would need something more to further establish his *logos* appeal.

Malcolm X uses paragraph thirty-six to provide his details about the behind-the-scenes political machinations although he provides no details about his proof; what he says does seem plausible. He says the government leaders “donated” an exact figure (\$800,000) to the civil rights groups involved, to be split up among the Big Six. The Big Six civil rights leaders he indicated would include Martin Luther King, Jr., chairman of Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); James Farmer, founder of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE); John Lewis, as representative and head of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC); A. Phillip Randolph, organizer of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and one of the inspirational originators of the idea of a march on Washington; Roy Wilkins, Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and Whitney M. Young, Executive Director of the National Urban League.

Malcolm X also uses paragraph thirty-seven to continue his version of how the March was expropriated by governmental authorities,

They [the Kennedy Administration] became the march. They took it over. And the first move they made after they took it over they invited Walter Reuther, a white man; they invited a priest, a rabbi, and an old white preacher. Yes, an old white preacher. The same white element that put Kennedy in power—labor, the

Catholics, the Jews, and liberal Protestants; [the] same clique that's put Kennedy in power, joined the march on Washington.

This short **anaphora** repetition by Malcolm X adds to the subtle humor his speeches often exhibit. His delivery, as always, was flawless and precise as his customary inclusion of humor really captures his audience's full attention. The specific details he gives seem plausible; however, he provides no source or reason about how he was able to gather this information.

A second reading of this speech reveals that not much was covered, just an emphasis on how during slavery, field slaves had a troublesome relationship with house slaves, and also how even in modern times the black masses must remain vigilantly aware that black infiltrators who the black community, and Malcolm X, historically called "Uncle Toms," were always a problem. This reality would be revealed years later when the existence of the government infiltration COINTELPRO surveillance program was discovered and became public. The customary humor inserted by Malcolm X in his speeches always held the attention of his audience: "They controlled it so tight—they told those Negroes what time to hit town, where to stop, what signs to carry, what song to sing, what speech they could make, and what speech they couldn't make; and then told them to get out of town by sundown. And every one of those Toms was out of town by sundown." A dose of some **hyperbole** here. There seems to be a seething anger in Malcolm X, which was unfortunate. After all, these leaders for the most part have the same interest in the betterment of black people as does Malcolm X, to get <justice> for the African American people although the exact meaning of <justice> may differ. And most of them had courageously confronted racist groups on their turf down there in the cauldrons of the South. This reality seems absent from Malcolm X's "Message to the Grassroots" speech, and this reality

is a deficiency in his speech. Such a result was altogether unnecessary because Malcolm X did have a valid, although somewhat implausible, alternative option for black people.

*A Warning for <Justice> from Malcolm X:*

*A Rhetorical Analysis of “The Ballot or the Bullet”*

Rhetorical criticism provides a unique and distinct service to, of course, English Studies and Speech Communication, but also a service to America. We who are teachers, especially those of us engaged in rhetorical criticism educate our students in written communication, English (language) skill development, and especially, critical thinking capabilities along with analytical reasoning strategies. As a functioning democracy, our nation relies upon a knowledgeable and engaged electorate that is adept at critical thinking and can adapt to changing circumstances through analytical reasoning. Sometimes the choices our citizens make are questionable, with regard to the advancement of our nation’s cause (America’s promise). However, we in academia are in a unique position in that our work product directly addresses what our country relies upon, a thoughtfully engaged citizenry capable of analytical reasoning skill and of an ability to critically assess from among the different collections of candidates and various other voting measures, to make wise choices and careful decisions, allowing the American electorate to distinguish the wheat from the chaff. To this end, the study of rhetoric provides a fundamental service to the USA, and we educators in rhetorical studies must not avoid this responsibility—we must emphatically embrace it fully.

This iconic speech by Malcolm X occurring on 3 April 1964 in Cleveland, Ohio, spoke to the depressing conditions under which African Americans were still living during that era. Although today in the early years of the twenty-first century much has changed, much still

remains unchanged for peoples of color in America. On this night in 1964, Malcolm X titled his presentation “The Ballot or the Bullet,” a topic and title of **alliteration** clear and distinct. He vehemently disagreed with the then prevalent peaceful nonviolent civil rights protest activity, and on this night he continued his urging that black America take up a different stance, a more aggressive kind of protest, all toward achieving his true <justice> in America for black people. He would give several versions of this speech during the early 1960s. The title is an interesting and emphatic alliterative wordplay that asks the African American community to consider two options: one, an “hat-in-hands” approach, to continue along the same tedious and passive directions in hopes of a possible eventual victory; or two, a not too dissimilar approach than that used by America’s founding fathers during the American Revolution—to pursue an all-out revolutionary “by any means necessary” mindset.

The *Rhetorical ad Herennium* (c. 80s BC) is the oldest surviving Latin text on rhetoric, formerly thought to have been the work of classical rhetorical theorist Cicero; however, the actual author is unknown. It was a popular book used to teach rhetoric during the Middle Ages (5<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century) and the Renaissance (14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century) and was addressed to a person named Gaius Herennius. This Malcolm X selected title is an effective figure of speech identified in the *Rhetorical ad Herennium* and explained by Fahnestock, “This manual recommends that rhetors alter a word by adding, deleting, transposing, or replacing letters to create a pair of ‘similar words [to] express dissimilar things’ (128). The rhetorical term for this figure of speech is *agnominatio* (but also called *paronomasia*). Fahnestock continues,

The *agnominatio* is useful when ... [the rhetor] wants to pose two—and only two—alternatives. This either/or strategy can be epitomized by two (and apparently the only two) look-alike terms. Their close similarity conveys that

these two are competing possibilities, while their slight differences suggest that they need to be distinguished. In addition to loading the language toward constrained alternatives, the *agnominatio* also ‘implies’ that the two terms involved are equal contenders. (Ibid.)

The word <justice> is a polysemous word open to different interpretations of meaning. For Malcolm X and other more aggressive civil rights advocates, <justice> means fair and impartial treatment from governmental authorities and business interests and vendors, all with no interest or concern for mixing with the white American population at large.

Scholar James Jasinski writes of “five crucial characteristics of criticism” (126) he draws from Abrams and Bryant: First of all, criticism defines its rhetorical artifact; next, it classifies the rhetorical artifact into specific categories, especially with regard to genre; third, the capable rhetorical critic explicates the artifact with regard to its organization and its persuasiveness, “... how an object is put together and how it works” (127); fourth, the competent critic provides an interpretation based upon the critic’s capabilities and experience; and fifth, the critic provides an evaluation detailing the findings. Following this sequence of ideas with regard to this Malcolm X speech, obviously herein we begin with this speech given before an audience at Cory Methodist Church in Cleveland, Ohio, before a primarily African American audience. However, there are some whites in attendance, of which Malcolm X comments early in the speech.

To truly evaluate this widely celebrated speech, three surrounding aspects, the rhetorical situation, with regard to timing must be considered. Aristotle wrote about *kairos*, the opportune moment for the rhetorical event; this was indeed one opportune moment in history for this speech. Of course, President Kennedy had just been assassinated the prior November, just three months previous (22 November 1963). So, the nation was still in deep mourning, and even

among this audience, on the night of this Malcolm X speech, many in the audience were also still in mourning. President Kennedy was deeply popular in the African American community. In addition, a new civil rights bill had been proposed by President Kennedy just months earlier, but the legislation had been stalled in Congress by elected officials from Southern states. However, following the assassination, newly installed President Johnson, a former Speaker of the House and U.S. Senator representing Texas, aggressively pursued passage. The civil rights bill passed the House of Representatives on 10 February 1964, just one month prior to the night of this speech. Now the bill was stalled in the Senate by southern Dixiecrats, politicians who switched from the Democratic Party in 1948 when the national party was leading an effort toward granting civil rights to African Americans. A third reason this night was special was that just one month prior to this night, Malcolm X on 8 March 1964, had renounced his association with the Nation of Islam organization, the national religious group that had rehabilitated him away from his former life of crime and directed him toward a dedicated life of service to the African American people. Working as an emissary of the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X had gained his national prominence, following his release from prison ten years earlier.

Actually, the Nation of Islam had saved his life; his life path had been one commonly seen with regard to poor black males fighting to survive in America—following a path of crime. However, followers of Elijah Muhammad and the Nation of Islam had introduced him to a more enlightened path, a way toward self-confidence and self-worth along with contentment in service to the African American people. And eventually, his eyes were opened to a more righteous path, a belief system that engendered respect and confidence in his personhood. And at this stage of his life along his journey, he had now/then cut his umbilical cord and just this evening was pursuing a detour away from restrictions, the formal strict beliefs and practices of Elijah



Muhammad and the Nation of Islam. Malcolm X was enacting his move of a more reasoned approach toward <justice> for African Americans with a view toward modifying his former stance. On the night of this speech, having just rid himself of his restrictions, he would express his newly realized freedom to follow a somewhat modified direction than that promoted by the Nation of Islam. Some listeners may have seen and understood a new found joy that engulfed him at this time, following his new path. After all, many if not most of those in the audience it can be assumed, were aware of his new independence. Actually, he does comment about his relationship with his former mentor, the Nation of Islam, and his Muslim religion. He would proclaim on this night that he would now be willing to work with civil rights leaders and organizations with whom he had previously spoken so vehemently against with such great hostility.

Aristotle identifies three genres of discourse, and the Malcolm X speech on this night wherein he is urging his audience both to do something and also to not do something (both; interestingly), Aristotle would consider deliberative discourse. Although Malcolm X subtly comments derisively about the national civil rights leaders, his speech should not be considered an example of forensic discourse; this speech not being part of a functioning ceremony, neither is this speech epideictic discourse, also called praise-and-blame rhetoric or ceremonial oratory. This speech made before an audience should not be considered a ceremony.

The third characteristic element of criticism suggests that an examination be made of the persuasiveness of the artifact (the speech). Much of the Malcolm X commentary in this speech is convincing. Antagonistic whites in the South had not been fair to their fellow black citizens whose peaceful nonviolent protests had produced only (quite) limited modest success. Those in attendance can infer from this speech that every person has an absolute right to self defense, so

blacks maybe should begin to consider this as an alternate philosophy in pursuing <justice> in America, which would be Malcolm X's message. His national following was gradually building as a result of his common sense approach. But clearly, the audience en masse would not be expected to abruptly change their views about gaining their civil rights, and begin following the Malcolm X instruction to limit or end peaceful nonviolent protests.

The audience members are merely listening, for many of them, on this night to a new and different voice; they are assessing the information they are receiving. However, Malcolm X does not actually have a plan. He is more a backseat driver or bleacher athlete critic. Many of the national civil rights leaders he often criticizes had, unlike him, actually been engaged in serious combat missions of battle—life and death struggles—in the streets, in the trenches. But the freshness and novelty of this new voice promoting a very different approach is captivating, especially for young blacks in attendance; just as it becomes more frightening for the governmental authorities who are in secret surveillance of the civil rights movement. It is unfortunate that these government authorities had not been as resourceful and committed toward helping members of the African American community to gain their right to vote, to ride mass transit without restriction, to be able to stay overnight in hotels and motels, to be treated equally and fairly in department stores, and so on.

On this night, Malcolm X was at his oratorical zenith. His heart is in a good place as it always had been, but there had been restrictions imposed upon him by his Nation of Islam associates, the religious faith that delivered him from his former ignorance of world affairs. Yet, he had recently freed himself of his training wheels and was now prepared to pursue his own counsel, and new mission in the world. Malcolm X was able to see beyond the limits of his religion and his former colleagues. German economist and philosopher Karl Marx famously

commented in one of his writings “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.”<sup>109</sup> This comment is not altogether inapplicable to communities of African American people living in America.

As Malcolm X continued to gain notoriety, his ascendancy in human rights already had become instrumental in moving along the granting of civil rights for African Americans; he was a critical asset to the civil rights movement even though he was not a part of the movement. Malcolm X actually became quite helpful to the civil rights community he regularly criticized because he and other like-minded African Americans who espoused black nationalism provided the powers that be a very different adversary for those who would continue to deny civil rights to African Americans and those other Americans who seemed noncommittal to the ongoing atrocities still facing African American citizens in America. And interestingly, more increased government assistance and accommodation toward freeing blacks began to emerge.

This “The Ballot or the Bullet” speech in print covers about nine full pages in length. The first paragraph of the first page is Malcolm X’s greeting to his audience, “Mr. Moderator, Reverend Cleage, Brother Lorax, brothers and sisters, and friends and I see some enemies. In fact, I think we’d be fooling ourselves if we had an audience this large and didn’t realize that there were some enemies present.” Malcolm X exhibits his committed principles he had learned in his religious studies that we humans should always engage others with common courtesy. Such a stance reinforces his *ethos* appeal as taught by Aristotle, that a speaker who reveals to an audience a sense of honesty, goodwill, and intelligence becomes more believable (Stoner and

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<sup>109</sup> “Works of Karl Marx 1843, *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: Introduction.*” [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org). 7 February 1844. Retrieved 21 December 2019.

Perkins 148). Common courtesy puts an audience at ease as the people can relax and become more willing to listen to the speaker's presentation.

The second comment by Malcolm X is an interesting insertion that would appear to be directed toward the “enemies” more so than his audience. He appears to be informing the “enemies” that he is aware of their existence. Probably not all whites in the audience are governmental infiltrators, and also just as probable, and likely, some of the African American audience members possibly were. The FBI Counterintelligence Program called COINTELPRO actually began in 1956, and obviously the few African American FBI agents working in the 1950s (if there were any) and 1960s would have been assigned to this program. The top-secret program was surreptitiously discovered in 1971; later through the Freedom of Information Act, the operation was discovered to be created “... to discredit and neutralize organizations [and persons] considered subversive to U. S. political stability” (Frédérique)<sup>110</sup>; prominent among COINTELPRO targets were Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X.<sup>111</sup> The FBI's notorious leader J. Edgar Hoover was paranoid about a variety of concerns, prominent among them was black people and the national civil rights movement and its leaders.

So here, this Malcolm X comment denigrating white audience members while not announcing the fact that there may be black infiltrators also in the audience would appear to reveal an untoward naïveté from Malcolm X. Otherwise, this public shaming tactic is a

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<sup>110</sup> Frédérique, Nadine. “COINTELPRO UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PROGRAM.” Encyclopedia Britannica. [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com). Retrieved 28 January 2019. Web. and also “Category: COINTELPRO Targets.” [www.en.m.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.m.wikipedia.org). Retrieved 28 January 2019. Web.

<sup>111</sup> “COINTELPRO Targets.” BBC Programmes. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk). Retrieved 28 January 2019. Web. and also “FBI COINTELPRO: The U.S. Government's War Against Dissent.” Nation of Islam. [www.noi.org](http://www.noi.org). Retrieved 28 January 2019. Web.

recommended rhetorical ploy useful for the rhetor to present a more emotional appeal (*pathos*), to give warning to the assumed infiltrators, and to gain more rapt audience attentiveness.

Quintilian provides a definition using a judicial trial as context for the “calling on” technique:

Speech ‘averted’ from the judge . . . , which is called apostrophe, is also remarkably effective, whether we (1) turn on the adversary (‘What was that sword of your doing, Tubero, on the field of Pharsalus?’) or (2) proceed to some kind of invocation (‘On you I call, ye hills and groves of Alba’) or (3) to an appeal designed to create odium (‘O Porcian and Sempronian laws!’). (Quintilian in Fahnestock 292)

The *Rhetorical ad Herennium* also provides comment regarding the “calling on” (technique) that it should be used for stronger emotional appeals:

“Apostrophe [*exclamatio*] is the figure which expresses grief or indignation by means of an address to some man or city or place or object . . . . If we use apostrophe in its proper place, sparingly, and when the importance of the subject seems to demand it, we shall instill in the hearer as much indignation as we desire.” (qtd in Fahnestock 292)

Malcolm X here gives an interesting opening for this “The Ballot or the Bullet” speech using this “calling out” strategem; however, recognition informing his audience that there were probably black infiltrators present would have given even greater *ethos* appeal.

In 1964 with his personal celebrity still rising, Malcolm X was on an ascendant plane as his powerful speeches and more open comments calling to task the vicious whites in the South were appealing to a growing segment of the African American population who by and large had become disenchanted with peaceful nonviolent protests and the “turn the other cheek”

philosophy that were being met by violence from ruffians and violence from the police authorities.

He continues the paragraph by stating clearly his speaking topic for that evening, “This afternoon we want to talk about the **ballot or the bullet**. . . I would like to clarify some things that refer to me personally—concerning my own personal position.” This speech is better structured than his former “Message to the Grassroots” speech, which also achieved iconic stature, certainly in the African American community but also in the annals of great American speeches” (emphasis added).<sup>112</sup> And in paragraph two of this speech he continues by proclaiming that he is still a Muslim, “My religion is still Islam.” The audience applauds at this mention, but it is unclear exactly why. Most in this predominantly African American audience who were religious would probably consider themselves Christian and not Muslim, regardless of whether they attended church regularly. Perhaps this audience is applauding his Islam comment because the audience is relieved to hear that he still respects his former Nation of Islam colleagues but that he wants to go on his own independent path. However, the exact reason for the applause remains unclear.

Malcolm X acknowledges his gratitude for the reawakening he received from the counsel of Nation of Islam followers while he was in prison at a time when it most affected his future life on earth, “My religion is still Islam. I still credit Mr. Mohammed for what I know and what I

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<sup>112</sup>One poll selected the “Message to the Grassroots” speech #89 of all celebrated twentieth century speeches by Americans, and “The Ballot or the Bullet” at #7. A second poll compiled by researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Texas A & M University voted the “Message” speech #91 but also found the “Ballot/Bullet” speech #7. Lucas, Stephen E., and Martin J. Medhurst. *American Rhetoric: Top 100 Speeches of the Twentieth Century*. [Www.americanrhetoric.com](http://www.americanrhetoric.com). See also University of Wisconsin-Madison. “News Release: Top 100 American speeches of the twentieth speeches.” [www.news.wisc.edu](http://www.news.wisc.edu).

am. He's the one who opened my eyes. At present, I'm the Minister of the newly founded Muslim Mosque, Inc. ...." He goes on to acknowledge other leaders in the black community, including Minister Elijah Mohammed, Adam Clayton Powell (a political leader), Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (a Christian minister and civil rights leader), New York's Rev. Galamison (a less famous Christian minister and integration activist), and Detroit's Rev. Cleage (local integration activist). And in so doing, he makes a prophetic announcement then that he was no longer tied directly to the Nation of Islam, "I'm a Muslim minister—the same as they are Christian Ministers—I'm a Muslim minister. **And I don't believe in fighting today in any one front, but on all fronts**" (emphasis added). Malcolm X is announcing that he is ready to begin working with civil rights groups he so regularly criticized in past speeches, and such an announcement immediately put government surveillance authorities on special alert. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X did meet and communicate on at least one occasion, and there is a popular photo/poster of the two greeting and smiling toward each other as they shake hands. No doubt Hoover's FBI and other governmental figures did not welcome this possibility of a budding relationship between the leading civil rights leader in the nation and the burgeoning black nationalist activist. But of course, Malcolm X was assassinated, killed on 21 February 1965; and Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated, killed on 4 April 1968.

Malcolm X uses paragraph three to continue, and conclude his talk of religion. His offering is that the black community should keep religion as a personal, individual, and private aspect of their lives, which they should not project in public venues where they are confronting and combating the continuing injustice and racial prejudice. Paragraph four is used to introduce his understanding of "black nationalism," which is his philosophy: "The political philosophy of black nationalism only means that the black **man** [sic] should control the politics and the

politicians in **his** own community” (emphasis added). And just as white males during the Revolutionary War period and then in the 1960s, among blacks during the civil rights movement, the speakers who were most often males, still would speak in public using the male personal pronoun reference supposedly to also represent the women. Otherwise, his introduction of the term “black nationalism” was still a new consideration for the African American community. Malcolm X had previously proclaimed that he was not an American, and such a boast proved disconcerting to middle class blacks and most whites; to such a degree that no one knew what to make of such a bold pronouncement. Young blacks and (many) working class blacks seemed to revel in such a proclamation, enjoying the idea that maybe America was not so special; however, whites overall and middle class blacks were widely unsettled.

Paragraph three continues as Malcolm X provides an historical reference for background information as he explains his not unreasonable philosophy:

The time when white people can come in our community and get us to vote for them so that they can be our political leaders and tell us what to do and what not to do is long gone. ... The political philosophy of black nationalism only means that if you and I are going to live in a black community—and that’s where we’re going to live, cause as soon as you move into one of their—soon as you move out of the black community into their community, it’s mixed for a period of time, but they’re gone and you’re right there all by yourself again.

Any reasonable sociological study of American neighborhoods would easily find this comment absolutely accurate.

Malcolm X is entering a new arena as he then speaks openly about politics, something he was not allowed to pursue while he was representing the Nation of Islam. And too, his approach



in speaking provided black audiences with a refreshing new honesty that unfortunately Dr. King and others in the national civil rights movement always avoided mention; the fact that even in the North where there was much integration in neighborhoods, the integration in neighborhoods and public schools only lasted for a relatively short period before the white residents of the integrated areas would seemingly all move out. So integration, in reality, would only last for usually a very short period of years.

Paragraph five provides a current state of affairs about the status of black people in their communities. Malcolm X again speaks of the necessity of black people gaining control over their community businesses. This is a *logos* appeal that probably does resonate with those African Americans in the audience because he carefully highlights the ongoing problem that most of the businesses in black communities were not owned by black people. In addition, there is a *pathos* appeal because his narration about the realities of life for African Americans, very clear to them, was obviously unfair and unjust. Malcolm X has given the people a clear plausible reason for this reality, something the national civil rights community rarely comments about.

Paragraph six begins with a re-enforcement of his assessment of the continuing problem as he provides his proposed solution for this major problem: “But the political and economic philosophy of ... black nationalism shows our people the importance of setting up these little stores and developing them and expanding them into larger operations.” His positive energy is no doubt intoxicating to his audience; the passion for the people and his confidence about the solution is clearly visible. The paragraph ends with humor, which is a valuable asset for his presentation. In fact, his presentation is compelling because his voice is deeply tenor in quality, his language use is articulate, his presentation is logical, and his injection of humor clearly puts

the audience at ease as if he were discussing issues at a social gathering among friends somewhere within a black community:

What we will be doing is developing a situation wherein we will actually be able to create employment for the people in the community. And once you can create some employment in the community where you live, it will eliminate the necessity of you and me having to act ignorantly and disgracefully, boycotting and picketing some cracker some place else trying to beg him for a job.

His completion of this paragraph with humor visibly highlights the message with a crescendo:

“Anytime you have to rely upon your enemy for a job—you’re in bad shape. ... [H]e is your enemy. Let me tell you, you wouldn’t be in this country if some enemy hadn’t kidnapped you and brought you here. On the other hand, some of you think you came here on the Mayflower.”

As to be expected, there is considerable **hyperbole** included in this message, but overall the comment concerning economics in the black community is sound. However, how workable such a massive project might be is unclear. It did happen in the past: early in the twentieth century, there were a few burgeoning all-black towns, but white racism and devastating violence directed upon those black towns too often led to their destruction.<sup>113</sup>

Paragraph seven begins with Malcolm X again discussing religion and how allowing any comments about religion when discussing community affairs would merely result in large

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<sup>113</sup> Brown, DeNeen. “Style: Black towns established by freed slaves after the civil war, are dying out.” *The Washington Post*. 27 March 2015. See also Sanders, Brandee. “History’s Lost Black Towns. *The Root*. 27 January 2011. [www.theroot.com](http://www.theroot.com). Web. See also Kennedy, Tanasia. Atlanta Black Star. “10 Thriving Black Towns You Didn’t Learn About in History Class.” 4 May 2016. [www.atlantablackstar.com](http://www.atlantablackstar.com). Web.

arguments. Early in the paragraph as is his practice, Malcolm X injects a simple humorous comment that actually has a message contained within:

We're going to forget religion. If we bring up religion, we'll be in an argument, and the best way to keep away from arguments and differences—as I said earlier—put your religion at home—in the closet. Keep it between you and your God. Because if it hasn't done anything more for you than it has, you need to forget it anyway.

This message resonates and a *logos* appeal is clear to any thoughtful and objective audience member. His delivery, though different from Martin Luther King, Jr., is still just as effective because Malcolm X makes an articulate presentation that he infuses with subtle humor, all of which captures the audience. In the middle of paragraph seven, Malcolm X makes another humorous aside that particularly resonates: “The government has failed us; you can't deny that. Anytime you live in the twentieth century [1964] and you walkin' around here singing ‘We Shall Overcome,’ the government has failed us.” This paragraph is actually a hodgepodge of commentary that plays more as conversational aside than strategic analysis. But the information supports his initial ongoing theme that African Americans should begin to start businesses again within their African American communities. His message fills a void in civil rights advocacy. The national civil rights community dared not venture in areas outside their restrictive boundaries; or else they would irritate or anger wealthy (white) benefactors. Malcolm X and a growing younger contingent within the black community disregarded these boundaries.

Paragraph eleven introduces a good analogy for Malcolm X's presentation as he attempts to convince African Americans to forego peaceful nonviolent protests in pursuit of their Constitutional rights. He speaks of the American Revolution, about how those small somewhat

disorganized thirteen colonies challenged the most powerful country in the world at that time. He also reminds the audience that those early colonists did not engage in peaceful nonviolent protests with regard to what they felt were unfair tax policies enacted by Great Britain. He reminds his audience that revolutionary Patrick Henry was famous for his cry, “liberty or death”:

... wasn't nothing non-violent about old Pat or George Washington. Liberty or death was what brought about the freedom of whites in this country from the English. They didn't care about the odds. Why they faced the wrath of the entire British Empire. And in those days they used to say that the British Empire was so vast and so powerful when the sun—the sun would never set on them. This is how big it was, yet these thirteen little, scrawny states, tired of taxation without representation, tired of being exploited and oppressed and degraded, told that big British Empire ‘liberty or death.’ And here you have 22 million Afro-American black people today catching more hell than Patrick Henry ever saw.

That last comment, a short outburst, while humorous spoke a reality everyone in this audience would understand only too clearly. Anyone listening to this speech would feel obligated to reflect upon the sentiment of this clearly vivid rhetorical language. Paragraph eleven also closes with a humorous flourish that too has some validity:

And I'm here to tell you in case you don't know it that you got a new generation of black people in this country who don't care anything whatsoever about odds. They don't want to hear you old Uncle Tom handkerchief heads talking about the odds. No. This is a new generation. If they're gonna draft these young black men and send them over to Korea or South Vietnam to face 800 million Chinese—if you're not afraid of those odds, you shouldn't be afraid of these odds.

Some hyperbole? Maybe. But also a few kernels of truth, also. Those in the audience hearing these words with the customary Malcolm X cadence really caused an uproar. The earliest Roman text of rhetoric the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (c. 89-86 BCE), a book found almost complete provides a detailed discussion of the five canons of rhetoric, a breaking down of the parts of an effective speech in their direct order of activities for presenting a competent public speech—invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. “Delivery is the graceful regulation of voice, countenance, and gesture” (reported in Lopez et al 122-123). Malcolm X in his understated method was a master of this last canon as he avoided loud histrionics as he used understated delivery including strategies of voice modulation, hand gestures, tone of voice, and direct eye contact. The audience erupted *en masse* as Malcolm X here states the obvious, a comment everyone of sound mind would be forced to consider. His comment is, again **hyperbole**, literally inaccurate but in a larger sense essentially valid.

One clear aspect of the notoriety of Malcolm X speeches are these repeated denials of American citizenship comments. These comments are seldom if ever heard from any other notable public person, especially any black leader. Malcolm X makes his comments because he believes that the racism and discrimination against African Americans proves that black people are not accepted by this country since obviously the country does nothing to end the racial discrimination and hate so widely practiced against African Americans in America. The reality is that the federal government did on occasion make moves to address some problems but those actions were quite measured and not very successful. In addition, the blatant racism and widespread discrimination did not occur just in the states of the former Confederacy. These are the realities of which members of his audience were fully aware.

The customary **hyperbole** of Malcolm X in paragraph thirteen is largely accurate. That previous presidential election in 1960 between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon was one of the closest in history. In the history of the USA, five presidential elections have been “won” where the “winner” lost the popular vote: John Quincy Adams in 1824, Rutherford Hayes in 1876, Benjamin Harrison in 1888, George W. Bush in 2000, and Donald Trump in 2016. Not including those five elections, the closest presidential elections in the history of the USA are Garfield in 1880 who won by 0.09% of the popular vote and Kennedy in 1960 winning by 0.17% of the popular vote (a total of 118,550 out of 69 million cast votes).<sup>114</sup> JFK won with 70% of the African American vote.<sup>115</sup> The 1960 popular vote among whites was basically even, and the more accurate truth is that Kennedy won the presidency because of the black vote. Nixon won more states than Kennedy in 1960, but Kennedy narrowly won the popular vote and the Electoral College vote, 303-219.<sup>116</sup>

Malcolm X continues his assault, with his customary **hyperbole** although in this instance the rhetoric is more truth than fiction,

You're the one who sent Kennedy to Washington. You're the one who put the present Democratic Administration in Washington, D.C. The whites were evenly divided. It was the fact that you threw 80% of your votes behind the Democrats that put the Democrats in the White House. ... And despite the fact that you are in a position to be the determining factor, what do you get out of it?

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<sup>114</sup> [www.jfklibrary.org](http://www.jfklibrary.org)

<sup>115</sup> [www.ontheissues.org](http://www.ontheissues.org)

<sup>116</sup> [www.ushistory.org](http://www.ushistory.org)

The “80%” number is an exaggeration, but not by much. Malcolm X next asks a critical question that no other public civil rights leader had been reported to have said:

The Democrats have been in Washington, D.C., only because of the Negro vote. They’ve been down there four years, and there [sic] all other legislations they wanted to bring up they brought it up and gotten it out of the way, and now they bring up you. And now, they bring up you. You put them first, and they put you last ‘cause you’re a chump, a political chump.

This modest repetition is quite effective. At the time of this speech, the politicians were then gearing up for a new election period cycle, so the seemingly last minute inclusion of voting measures that would impact the black community was a valid comment by Malcolm X. Next he goes into greater detail to ask some serious questions that civil rights leaders and black political leaders had neglected to ask:

In Washington, D.C., in the House of Representatives there are 258 who are Democrats; only 177 are Republican. In the Senate there are 67 Democrats; only 33 are Republicans. The Party that you backed controls two-thirds of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and still they can’t keep their promise to you, ‘cause you’re a chump.

Of course, the political realities of Congress and the presidency are complex; however, the spirit of Malcolm X’s rhetorical rebuke to this audience is essentially accurate. But then, the Democratic Party officials and governmental leaders always had excuses for not providing something tangible and concrete for their most faithful supporters—African American citizens who were allowed to vote.

Since the Grand Old Party (the GOP) was at its origin instrumental in ending slavery; the party's first president Abraham Lincoln actually did end slavery, those African Americans who were allowed to vote generally *en masse* understandably supported Republican candidates, for decades. It was not until the FDR years (Franklin Delano Roosevelt was president 1933-1945) of the Great Depression that black voters began to change their voting support. Especially beloved in the black communities of America was the First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. She was a tireless advocate and supporter of humanitarian causes, civil rights, and women's rights, even beginning in her late teens. She was, indeed "a great lady," which is how those of the era would often refer to her. When President Roosevelt first entered politics, Eleanor Roosevelt was a teacher "of American history and literature at the Todhunter School, a private Manhattan girls' school."<sup>117</sup> The contributions of Eleanor Roosevelt<sup>118</sup> to poor people, women, workers/labor, African Americans, and others especially during the Great Depression years cannot be overestimated.

As first lady, Eleanor traveled across the United States, acting as her husband's eyes and ears and reporting back to him after she visited government institutions and programs and numerous other facilities. She was an early champion of civil rights for African Americans, as well as an advocate for women, American workers, the poor and young people. She also supported government-funded programs for artists and writers. Roosevelt encouraged her husband to appoint more women to federal positions, and she held hundreds of press conferences for

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<sup>117</sup> "Eleanor Roosevelt." [www.history.com](http://www.history.com). Retrieved 13 February 2019. Web.

<sup>118</sup> Goodwin, Doris Kearns. *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1994. Print.



female reporters only, at a time when women were typically barred from White House press conferences. ... [She] wrote a syndicated newspaper column entitled “My Day” from December 1935 until shortly before her death. (Ibid.)

Even still after FDR, African Americans who could vote, still in large though less than majority numbers, supported Republican candidates.

Roosevelt’s last vice president Harry S. Truman also supported legislation—voter protection, anti-lynching laws, stabilizing civil rights laws—that made life better for African Americans, so the black vote for Democrats continued its ascendancy under President Truman.<sup>119</sup> According to data compiled by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies as reported by Bump, the African American vote for the Democratic presidential candidate, for selected elections in the mid-twentieth century, was as follows: 1936 – over 70%; 1940 ~67%; 1944 ~68%; 1948 ~78%; 1952 ~76%; 1956 ~ 61%; and 1960 ~ 70%. Thus here Malcolm X is largely correct in his assessment of the presidential election and the black vote.

Paragraph sixteen continues this strategy as Malcolm X informs the audience that a different tactic is used in the North, called gerrymandering, “They maneuver you out of power. Even though you vote, they fix it so you’re voting for nobody; they’ve got you going and coming.” And he makes his pointed message with humor, “In the South, they’re outright political wolves. In the North, they’re political foxes. A fox and a wolf are both canine, both belong to the dog family.” A large applause from his audience follows for this very plain inanity of just plain and simple **alogism**; then another short interlude of humor encased in the singular

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<sup>119</sup> Bump, Philip. “When did black Americans start voting so heavily Democratic?” *The Washington Post* The Fix. [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com). 7 July 2015. Web. See also Cost, Jay. “Race, Reallignment, and the Election of 1948.” Real Clear Politics HorseRaceBlog. [www.realclearpolitics.com](http://www.realclearpolitics.com). 22 April 2009. Web.

message kernel, “Now you take your choice. You going to choose a Northern dog or a Southern dog? Because either dog you choose I guarantee you you’ll still be in the dog house. This is why I say it’s the ballot or the bullet. It’s liberty or it’s death. **It’s freedom for everybody or freedom for nobody**” (emphasis added). Actually quite accurate in the assessment **metaphor**, “because either dog you choose I guarantee you [African Americans] choose, you’ll still be in the dog house.”

Those final three sentences were announced with sincere passion and resolve that the audience thoroughly consumed. This last sentence of the paragraph especially resonates with his audience and no doubt sent shockwaves to J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI, and the highest levels of government. After all, everyone in power knew blacks were being denied basic Constitutional rights and human rights in the South but also in much of the North. Especially abhorrent in both Southern neighborhoods and Northern ghettos was the scourge of police brutality. And, these highly aggressive political and governmental officials could easily visualize how they might respond were it them receiving the discriminatory treatment African Americans were receiving everyday. One need only study American military and Central Intelligence Agency (mis)adventures throughout the world, as Malcolm X repeatedly comments in his speeches, to observe how *nonviolent* American military officials had proceeded in Hawaii, Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Nicaragua, Honduras, Haiti, Guatemala, Chile, Grenada, Panama, Korea, Vietnam, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and other sovereign foreign nations unknown.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Kinzer, Stephen. *Overthrow: America’s Century of Regime Change From Hawaii to Iraq*. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 2006. Print. See also Howard Zinn. *A People’s History of the United States, 1492-Present*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1999. Print. See also Bob Woodward. *Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA, 1981-1987*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1987. See also John Prada. *Presidents’ Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations Since World War II*. New York, NY: William Morrow, 1986. Print.

Paragraph seventeen is short as Malcolm X directs his language toward whites in almost threat-like rhetorical language by stating directly that weaponry will not matter. He ends the paragraph emphatically, “When two or three different countries have atomic bombs, nobody can use them, so it means that the white man today is without a weapon. If you want some action, you gotta come on down to Earth. And there’s more black people on Earth than there are white people on Earth.” His audience immediately responds with applause. The comment may appear to be more **hyperbole** at first glance, but it is probably more accurate than not. As of July of this year (2019) from United Nations census data, the world population is over 7½ billion people, with over half living in just seven countries: China (1.42 billion), India (1.35 billion), USA (327 million), Indonesia (267 million), Brazil (211 million), Pakistan (202 million), and Nigeria (198 million); the last five countries have a total population of fewer than India alone (Hackett).<sup>121</sup> So technically, the most populous race is the Asian population (China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh (8<sup>th</sup>; 167 million) are all in the top ten among the most populous countries in the world. Of course grouping humans by skin color is no different than grouping humans by hair color or eye color or body type or some other non scientific measure because “Today, the mainstream belief among scientists is that race is [just] a social construct without biological meaning.”<sup>122</sup> There is no DNA marker, geneticists assert, for race among human beings. The total numbers of blacks and whites in world population are probably about even. Here with this

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<sup>121</sup> Hackett, Conrad. “Which 7 countries hold half the world’s population?” Pew Research Center: FactTank News in the Numbers. 11 July 2018. [www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org).

<sup>122</sup> Gannon, Megan. “Race Is a Social Construct, Scientists Argue: Racial categories are weak proxies for genetic diversity and need to be phased out.” *Scientific American Future The Sciences*. 5 February 2016. [www.scientificamerican.com](http://www.scientificamerican.com). Web.

comment, Malcolm X probably has a meaning concerning people of color overall rather than just blacks.

Paragraph eighteen provides the beginning of the end for this speech as Malcolm X comments, “I only got a couple more minutes.” Effective speeches have a defined beginning, middle, and end; and providing the audience some guideposts along the way both helps the listeners better understand and follow the speaker’s complete message being presented while also helping to put the audience more at ease, their knowing where the speech is headed. Malcolm X in paragraph eighteen reminds listeners that overpowering weaponry does not always assure ultimate confrontation success.

Paragraph twenty-two would continue this theme for the civil rights struggle to be taken before the United Nations. Malcolm X uses paragraph twenty-three to remind his audience of the hypocrisy of government leaders in that the United States intercedes in human rights efforts in countries and talks often in the media about those efforts, yet the United States government still does not address the racism, racial violence, denial of voting rights, police brutality, and discrimination suffered by African American citizens and other peoples of color in this country. The argument is a powerful one. Malcolm X ends with an insightful observation:

He keeps us divided in order to conquer us. He tells you I’m for separation and you for integration to keep us fighting with each other. No, I’m not for separation and you’re not for integration. What you and I is [sic] for is freedom. ... [Y]ou think that integration would get you freedom; I think separation would get me freedom. We ... got the same objective; we just got different ways of getting at it.

Here Malcolm X defines the differences between his approach and what he wants for <justice> and what Martin Luther King, Jr., and the other national civil rights leaders want for <justice>.

The final paragraph is his closing comment to his audience. He announces that he will be visiting Africa, and that he will investigate whether the people in the Africa he visits are concerned about the conditions for blacks in America. He thanks the people who invited him to the event and closes with a comment that he would gladly return to Detroit or other city to again discuss his views and strategies about how African Americans can best achieve equality and <justice> in America. Obviously in this speech, the <justice> Malcolm X and his followers seek does not comport with the <justice> Martin Luther King, Jr., and the greater civil rights community want. Malcolm's vision is not unlike that of other militant more aggressive followers want. For them <justice> would mean basic fairness, without any interest or concern about whether or not whites wanted to accept blacks as brothers and sisters. For Martin Luther King, Jr., and the national civil rights community, the <justice> they want is much more as they want (to encourage) whites to love them as brothers and sisters. It is the primary view of this present project herein, from a nonreligious perspective that overall, human beings are basically decent and caring individuals, only some of whom learn racial prejudice, sexism, homophobia, selfishness and like flaws of character from others. Malcolm X was wrong in his view that "all white people are devils," a view he changed as reported in his autobiography, following his pilgrimage to Mecca.

**THIRD INTERLUDE ... ANOTHER PLAUSIBLE SOLUTION—RHETORICAL ANALYSIS**

of Robert Paul Wolff's Theory of Anarchism

The word “anarchism” comes from the Greek language to simply mean “[the state or country] without a ruler.” The term’s use in philosophy “[is the thought] that all forms of government are oppressive and undesirable ... [and] should be abolished” (“Doing”). Marxist philosopher and professor Robert Paul Wolff wrote a popular (mild classic) academic text *In Defense of Anarchism* where he explains more fully his view of anarchism. His stated exponent was the eighteenth century German philosopher Immanuel Kant although Wolff acknowledges that Kant would probably not have envisioned or accepted Wolff’s interpretation and use of his philosophical approach.

According to Wolff, Kant was “a rigorous thinker” who supported the idea of the human as “moral agent” and “autonomous individual” (ibid.). Wolff consumed Kant’s philosophy and modeled his own view of the human individual as a person who could confront (stand up against) any consideration of the state as supreme authority. Wolff introduces his conception of anarchism as inclusive of four different types: (1) the blatant outspoken anarchist; (2) the libertarian anarchist, two examples of whom might be writer Ayn Rand and today’s Senator Rand Paul, not dissimilar from those views of modern (overwhelmingly Republican) libertarian politicians; (3) the utopian or communitarian anarchist who “seeks a consensus,” regarding state policy in relation to the individual, in social relations; and (4) the philosophical anarchist, those who seek to locate a working solution as between the authority claims of the state in tension against the moral autonomy sense of the individual, whether the two claims can be made compatible. Wolff generally announces this kind as his own personal philosophy.

Wolff's assertion of anarchism is that the state claims should not override the moral autonomy of the individual. His notion of this thought is that in theory, the state (implied) assumption that it has the sole right to govern (over) society from its authoritative power position; that the state can command people to obey its laws. Under this consideration, the state's view would be that the individual must follow the law, humans having no freedom to act otherwise. Wolff explains that this notion follows a rationale that humans acting otherwise would lead to dire results, where society would be worse; such that Wolff's anarchists might "accept the rule of a benevolent dictator or a wise king or a not-so-bad President" (ibid.). Wolff's belief is more in support of human individualism and personal autonomy; that "there is no such thing as a legitimate state" ("Doing") to which the individual must comply. Wolff's criticism of democratic nations is that they are not true democracies since these states are governed solely by "majority" rule, and those elected do not truly represent the people. As a result, not all individuals voting are represented; many are forced to comply with state laws and governance as they feel compelled to just accept the authority of state action.

Wolff's theory of anarchism is interesting and intriguing with regard to persons of color and the injustices they continue to endure daily in America because this philosophy represents an alternative approach (a sports analogy offensive) in protest activism; a strategy wherein peoples of color could begin to act more affirmatively pursuing different aims. The theory seems quite complex to implement; however perhaps, any attempted beginning action may be enough to build a consensus of activity to cause the state (America) to take notice and feel compelled to provide some (promising) responsive action. After all, the city of Greensboro, North Carolina, was forced to integrate its public (downtown) establishments in 1960 as the result of a singular protest plan of action orchestrated by the now well-known Greensboro Four. The four young

men were all college freshmen students attending a local college. Their planned action was engaged without organizational support or outside funding of any kind; just four teenagers making a stand. And they were successful. And their vision, they achieved a profound and everlasting undeniable success, against unbelievable odds.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **OTHER PEOPLES OF COLOR SEEKING <JUSTICE> IN AMERICA**

Asian-Americans have a long and very important history of existence in the United States of America. The first immigrants, the indigenous first settlers in the Americas may have crossed a land bridge then connecting Asia to the Americas.

ASIAN-AMERICANS Seeking Justice

#### ***A Rhetorical Analysis of George Takei's 2016 Washington Post Editorial***

*“The United States apologized for locking up Japanese Americans. Have we learned nothing?”*

The essay's introduction begins with a clever unassuming aside comment by George Takei, an original cast member of the iconic *Star Trek* television series of the 1960s. The opening sentence, “There is dangerous talk these days by those who have the ear of some at the highest levels of government,” provides readers with little indication of the focus of the essay. Many readers, perhaps, do not know where this essay is headed, especially since George Takei, though very popular in science fiction circles, is not as well-known throughout the national motion picture media. This *Washington Post* newspaper editorial is written in thirteen paragraphs. The first paragraph provides Takei's full introduction to his message, providing informative detail as he connects the then current ignominious event with his personal family devastation suffered at



the hands of the United States government—his family along with the other 120,000 American citizens, families of Japanese heritage who were arrested and forced to suffer incarceration (euphemistically called internment) in squalid concentration camps though they committed no crime.

Paragraph two is written to address the casual comment by Trump administration spokesperson Carl Higbie speaking to FOX news reporter Megyn Kelly. “Trump surrogate and co-chair of the Great America PAC” (Higbie) in a television FOX News interview commenting about the Trump administration’s national security plans, “We did it during World War II with the Japanese, which, you know, call it what you will.” Takei’s presentation fully illuminates the complete indifference Higbie displays as he comments, as if this historical American blemish was not the shameful upheaval event that it was, “Higbie speaks of the internment in the abstract, as a ‘precedent’ or a policy, ignoring the true human tragedy that occurred.” Japanese American *citizens* were severely devastated, not just inconvenienced; some of these American citizens actually died while in United States custody. Some had *died*. And when these Japanese-American *citizens* were released from incarceration, their homes and personal property had not been protected; they were lost.

Paragraph three is used by Takei to provide detail in an attempt to help readers understand the tremendous suffering experienced by these 120,000 American families as *their own* home country, which was supposedly fighting in a world war for freedom and <justice>. These Japanese-American citizens were gathered at gunpoint, given only days to gather their belongings, and forcibly removed miles away to unfamiliar states where they were incarcerated for years, until the end of the war—children, women, and men. Their homes and personal belongings were confiscated and never returned. At the war’s end, no apologies were given; and

America's political leaders and our schools simply engaged an erasure of this ordeal from American history. The forced incarceration of Japanese American citizens was unjust and unnecessary. The event lends further credence to legal scholar Derrick Bell's Racial Realism Theory.

Early in the war, just as the Hitler and Goebbels cabal were gathering up millions of Jews, six million of whom would be killed in gas chambers, and marching them away from their homes, the United States of America was doing similarly, gathering up Japanese-American *citizens* and marching them away from their homes but fortunately with "only" hundreds succumbing to their deaths.

Yet the USA was acting thoroughly in an unjust way against a segment of its "family." Takei writes that he was "a child of 5 when we were forced at gunpoint from our home and sent away to a sequence of wretched quarters hundreds of miles away from their homes. "Really, it was a prison: Armed guards looked down upon us from sentry towers; their guns pointed inward at us; searchlights lit pathways at night. We understood. We were not to leave." Takei's words would appear to impact all readers save only the most heartless. Even if such an unfair uncaring position was believed necessary by our government officials, we must ask why our Japanese American neighbors forced to live in squalor, were forced to forfeit their homes and personal belongings. And were forced to gather some personal belongings and leave their homes within days and hours of notification, and forced to live so many miles away from their native west coast homes. And, why were their homes and personal belongings not protected?

We Americans even today should demand of our federal government an explanation for such an unforgivable act. Or else, it can likely happen again, and again. Just as it is currently happening today as our federal government incarcerates refugees—mostly women and

children— who only seek a better life for their families; for too many of whom, the young children have been taken away as their mothers have been sent away without any recourse for future contact with their children. How traumatized desperate women and children (and men) are being treated today by the current administration officials at our nation's southern border shows that we as a country have never learned lessons from our past, as we continue to hide the truths of America's horrible inglorious past.

World War II was being fought in Europe, and many in America did not want the country to intercede. However, the Japanese military bombed Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, and shortly thereafter the United States entered the war. And within months, President Roosevelt signed the infamous disingenuous Executive Order 9066, written in cowardly wording not mentioning the Japanese American citizens by name or by group, on 19 February 1942, which provided for the establishment of ten concentration camps set up to “protect” the country from sabotage. Just as the United States Constitution avoids using the words “Africans” for the captives forced into slavery, and absolutely avoids humanized reference to the indigenous peoples who had lived on the land for centuries, merely providing reference to them as “savages,” American officials neglect to name the Japanese-American citizens nor do the officials state their crime. Only a few thousand Americans of Italian and German ancestry were incarcerated while over 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were so held. Paragraph four introduces the daily indignities suffered by the Japanese-American families.

Being a very young child just a few years beyond infancy, Takei reveals that he would begin to accept the daily routines as just a common reality of life. A child of five would, of course, know no better. The families had to suffer daily “line-ups,” “a common latrine,” a complete lack of privacy, and being forced to eat poor food (“wretched grub in a common mess

hall”). *A common latrine. A common latrine.* Takei ends the paragraph with a shocking irony, “And it was normal to stand each day in our makeshift classroom, reciting the words to the Pledge of Allegiance, ‘With liberty and justice for all,’ as I looked past the U.S. flag out the window, the barbed wire of the camp just visible behind it.” Paragraph five continues a discussion of the oppressive injustices these Americans suffered. Takei states the internment of these Americans was not only an assault upon Japanese-Americans but also upon the ... [U.S.] Constitution: “... how its guarantees of due process and equal protection [was] ...decimated by forces of fear and prejudice [from] unscrupulous politicians. ... [A] Democratic administration at the time, under Franklin D. Roosevelt ... ordered us to ... camps, proving that demagoguery and race-baiting knows no party.” Progressive Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt was President. Future civil rights champion Earl Warren (as Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court) then was the governor of the state of California. Derrick Bell’s Interest Conversion Thesis and also his Racial Realism Theory seems especially prescient.

Takei uses paragraph six to reveal that decades before, the American government would admit its unwarranted action “and officially apologize for the internment, offering symbolic monetary reparations to the survivors.” The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 (the Redress Act) provided a formal apology to Japanese American survivors of the 1940s Internment Camps and \$20,000 to be provided to each *living* survivor.<sup>123</sup> But of those Japanese-Americans incarcerated/interned who did not survive following release and those who died during the ordeal, there is no mention. Those Japanese Americans incarcerated did not begin leaving the internment “camps until after January 1945” (*ibid.*). This paragraph personalizes Takei’s family

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<sup>123</sup> Nishikawa, A. H. “Looking back at the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.” 9 August 2013. [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org)

ordeal, his family's experience suffering under this imprisonment. Takei closes the paragraph succinctly in explanation for why his essay was now being published, "... these words by Higbie, which ominously are representative of much of the current thinking in the incoming administration, have reopened very old and very deep wounds."

Paragraph seven further explains Takei's alarm as a result of comments from the newly installed President Trump (along with some of his support staff), stating that "FDR was 'one of the most highly respected presidents,' and ... what he was suggesting [the internment camps incarcerating Japanese Americans] was 'no different from FDR.' ... Trump [merely gave] a nod to the horror of the camps, but tellingly did not disavow them: 'I certainly hate the concept of it. But I would have had to be there at the time to give you a proper answer' [as to whether President Trump would have acted in the same manner]."

Takei uses paragraph eight to return the discussion back to Trump surrogate Higbie by repeating some of his comments, first that he (Higbie) "does not favor the idea," but continues by stating "We have to protect America first." But obviously, citizens of Japanese ancestry—and today citizens who happen to be Muslims or happen to be Latinos—are all still American citizens. Takei closes the paragraph by repeating Higbie's published statement from the *New York Times*, "There is historical, factual precedent to do things [that] are not politically popular and sometimes not right in the interest of national security." Of course, officials seem to often resort to commenting about "protecting national security" when they are obviously violating the Constitution and citizens' rights. Takei's paragraph nine has just two succinct sentences, "Let us all be clear: 'National security' USA never again be permitted to justify wholesale denial of constitutional rights and protections." If it is freedom and our way of life that we fight for, our

first obligation is to ensure that our own government adheres to those principles. Without that, we are no better than our enemies.” Well-stated *paroemia* effectively presented.

Paragraph ten offers a collection of comments about discrimination in general as Takei connects these comments to the impending discrimination to today’s current American government action against Muslims: “Let us ... agree that ethnic or religious discrimination cannot be justified by calls for greater security.” Unfortunately, Takei is in error here because not all readers would so agree, but probably most sensible and fair-minded readers would (so agree). The paragraph ends with a compact sentence accurately summarizing the focus and theme of this essay: “The very same arguments echo today [as they did in 1942 when spoken against Japanese Americans], on the assumption that a handful of presumed radical elements within the Muslim community necessitates draconian measures against the whole, all in the name of national security.” Takei’s paragraph eleven is just two sentences of profound assessment that effectively summarize the current political dilemma: “It [American government actions directed against selected religious groups of citizens, immigrants, and visitors] begins with profiling and with registries, but as Trump and Higbie have made clear, once the safety of the country is at stake, all safeguards are off. In their world, national security justifies actions that are ‘sometimes not right,’ and no one really can guarantee where it will end.”

Paragraph twelve continues with additional criticisms and concludes with *paroemia*, another profound assessment: “The stigmatization, separation and labeling of our fellow humans based on race or religion has never led to a more secure world. But it has too often led to one where the most vulnerable pay the highest price.” Paragraph thirteen provides Takei’s compactful conclusion, which simply and effectively provides his essay’s central theme and assessment: “The Constitution and the government exist in large measure to protect against the

excesses of democracies [,] ... particularly salient when, in an atmosphere of fear ..., one group is singled out and vilified, as Japanese Americans during World War II and as Muslim Americans are today.” As are Latinx citizens and immigrants and undocumented workers.

The nation’s two founding documents, the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution with specificity decry government actions against citizens such as these, that are being contemplated. Both the words and the spirit of these documents belie the actions Trump administration officials wish to implement. Takei is sounding an alarm as he ends his editorial with three impactful sentences, one complex sentence and two succinct simple sentences, by asking that all Americans consider and reject this proposed (unconstitutional) government action, “How terrible it is to contemplate, once again, that the government itself might once more be the very instrument of terror and division. That cannot happen again. We cannot allow it.”

*A Rhetorical Analysis of A JACL (Japanese American Citizens League)*

*Publication—An Unnoticed Struggle:*

*A Concise History of Asian American Civil Rights Issues*

This 2008 JACL (Japanese American Citizens League) publication composed by JACL Ford Program Fellow Elaine Low competently recounts and encapsulates a history of selected Asian American groups, their troubling life experiences and their histories of suffering unwarranted injustices. The continent of Asia, of the seven encompassing our planet Earth, is our world’s most populous; current population statistics reveal that eight of our world’s largest countries are

in Asia. Our planet's current population<sup>124</sup> is today over 7,584,000,000+ and growing, with our world's two largest nations, China and India, each having over one billion inhabitants; North America's United States of America is currently the third most populous nation on our planet at 332,000,000+ and growing. Asian cultures living in the United States include many; researcher Low in her publication primarily discusses the negative experiences suffered by just two Asian-American cultures, the Chinese-American experience and the Japanese-American experience where injustice for them has not been uncommon.

This JACL publication contains ten helpful photographs along with eleven emboldened side notes providing historical specificity. Visually, the compilation provides a pleasant appeal as four text items are boldly embossed as additional side note entries; four sections begin with interesting personal quotations from persons of a given era. The publication begins with two sections: "Acknowledgements" and "Preface." The first item provides Low's words of thanks to her various supporters in this project, most prominently the Japanese American Citizens League and the Ford Motor Company Fund (a grant):

I would like to thank the Japanese American Citizens League for giving me the opportunity to write this booklet, which will hopefully speak to young Asian Americans just beginning to uncover their roots, and to those unfamiliar with our history who would like to learn more. ... I'd also like to thank to [sic] JACL Midwest Director Bill Yoshino **for mentoring me along the way**. Special thanks to Lane Ryo Hyrabyashi, Larry Shinagawa, Ronald Takaki, John Tateishi and

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<sup>124</sup> [www.census.gov/popclock/world](http://www.census.gov/popclock/world)



Frank Wu **for letting me pick their brains and glean a bit of insight from them during the writing of this piece.** (Emphasis added; initial page)

This initial entry speaks well of Ms. Low's *ethos* appeal as it demonstrates her thoughtfulness and concern for her readers, especially young people whose Asian ancestry this publication documents. The short list of names, some of whom are noteworthy academic scholars or celebrated activists enhances a *logos* appeal for her audience of readers. And Aristotle's third instruction in *pathos* appeal is clearly apparent as readers begin reading the publication. Any history of the Asian experience in America is indeed a troubling one, so in 2008, the *kairos* aspect of this project is certainly revealed. The pleasant yet forceful tone of Low's writing speaks well of her scholarly acumen. The Preface introduces the initial impetus for this project and Elaine Low's involvement. Its first paragraph documents Low's purpose for the writing, but she explains that the topic was much too expansive for her to follow her original thoughts. She finds two reasons for her change of plans: one, the topic proved to be too great for her "attempt to form something of a comprehensive history of Asian American civil rights," and two, "our history cannot be smartly categorized by ethnicity and then chronologically listed and detailed" (1).

The second paragraph of her preface displays her readily apparent genuine humility and modest **understatement**, "I hope that **this small contribution** will serve as a primer for those who are curious about the battles our community has faced in the past ..." (ibid.; emphasis added); audience appeal would appear obvious. Any documentary compilation of these dreadful accounts of America's past can never be "a small contribution" because such historical research is instructive so as to prevent future similar acts. Her third paragraph outlines her compact project, that will include discussion of Asian American "firsts," Asian American "pioneers in

film and in literature,” and finally “those who are iconic not for their active involvement in Asian American politics or for their attempts to speak on behalf of the community but for personal struggles that came to inadvertently represent a people,” a quite profound commentary that ends the paragraph. Paragraph three contains one mild misstep, “diversifying fields not traditionally dominated by **minority** Americans” (ibid.; emphasis added). Four of the six most populous nations of our world (China, 1.4 billion people; India, 1.35 billion people; Indonesia, 268 million; and Pakistan, 205 million) are predominated by Asian cultures. Here in the early stages of our documented twenty-first century world, Asian cultures and countries represent well over *one-half* of our world’s 7.5 billion human beings. So, Asian Americans are in no way a “minority.” Perhaps, a small concern but also an important one for purposes of this study. It is estimated by our U.S. Census Bureau that by mid-century, there will no longer be a *minority group* of Americans living within and among our United States population.

Paragraph three begins with the stated names of three men—Wong Kim Ark, Kajiro O, and Vincent Chin—who became frustrating examples of America’s inhospitable treatment of its Asian brothers, “They were ... men who each had a personal struggle with immigration, land laws, hate crimes, and came to represent milestones in our collective civil rights history.”

Paragraph six comfortably concludes this introduction with a one-sentence paragraph that covers four lines and ends with a hopeful plea, “... this booklet, the JAACL hopes that more young Asian Americans will be able to slowly unfold their own history, page after page, and discover that the struggle of what seems like many different ethnic enclaves is really a communal struggle to all be recognized as Americans with our own unique voices and histories.”

This project covering a mere seventeen pages is organized in six helpful overarching sections: “CHINESE EXCLUSION,” “ALIEN LAND LAWS LF 1913 AND 1920,”

“JAPANESE AMERICAN INTERNMENT,” “STRUGGLES IN THE SIXTIES,” “THE MURDER OF VINCENT CHIN,” “THE ROAD AHEAD” NEW STRUGGLES, OLD PROBLEMS, and THE QUESTION OF PAN-ASIAN AMERICAN UNITY.” Low’s use of all capital letters in bold print allows her to highlight and further emphasize the stories she will tell her audience of readers as she recounts American <justice> for the country’s Asian brothers and sisters, an unmasking of the myriad injustices these American citizens also faced in their American homeland. The project’s penultimate end is a helpful “Additional Reading” bibliography section of sixteen entries that are available for those readers seeking further elaboration and history of the Asian experience in America. And the project closes with an endnotes listing of thirty-eight, listed in two parts of twenty-eight numbers plus nine Roman numerals.

The formal project begins with a racial taunt from a California United States Senator as Low introduces a semblance of the atmosphere Asian Americans faced the decade following the Civil War. The first paragraph concerns the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, a clearly and flagrantly unconstitutional law, then recently passed by the United States Congress and signed into law by the nation’s twenty-first president, who came into office following the assassination of President James Garfield. Low closes this initial paragraph with a competent closing comment, “In essence, the Chinese were no longer welcome in the United States” that encapsulates the mood of the era towards Asian-Americans and those whose ancestry was from Asian countries. The next paragraph informs readers that the law’s original ten year ban was “eventually renewed indefinitely” and “would remain steadfastly in place for over half a century until the mid-twentieth century.” Paragraph three introduces a new phrase “Section 6 certificates,” which were essentially “papers that confirmed their legal status, which they

[Chinese-Americans] had to carry on their persons at all times at risk of deportation [although, Low continues] they were allowed to leave and reenter the U.S. by providing cumbersome documentation.”

Paragraph four explains that the treatment of these Chinese Americans had not always been so restrictive:

When they first immigrated to the U.S. during the Gold Rush (or ‘Gold Mountain’ as the Chinese called it in 1849), discrimination was prevalent but not yet pervasive. However, the Foreign Miners’ Tax was established in 1952, which heavily taxed the Chinese despite their paltry income (yet would provide the state with much of its revenue).

This detailed history of the era is footnoted carefully as Low documents her assertions throughout this project, as the next few paragraphs introduce more historical terminology she faithfully explains: “the Burlingame Treaty with China,” “the Transcontinental Railroad,” and “contract laborers.” “The Industrial Workers of the World,” and “the Civil Rights Act of 1870.” The USA is doomed to repeat its unconstitutional misadventures as the country continues to evade its ignoble history with regard to its peoples of color, if the country does not acknowledge its past injustices.

Paragraph seven of this section explains that much of the injustice that over 100,000 Chinese Americans, among other Asian-Americans, experienced was in part due to an economic downturn, “Some scholars argue that Chinese exclusion was not so much the result of a logical concern over foreign labor, or even an undercurrent of xenophobia, than a way to handily solve the economic downturn occurring in the years after the Civil War.” As was her practice in this rhetorical artifact, Low provides detailed specificity and statistical quality that enhances her

authority and *ethos* appeal over her subject. Left unsaid, however, is the obvious consideration—basic racial animus. There is a helpful side note “Notes on dissent,” a first among several, that reveals to her audience the clear injustice and hatred Chinese railroad workers continued to suffer in our “land of the free.”

Too often in our schools, American students are not allowed to learn most of this deplorable history of life in America for certain ethnic and cultural groups (of Americans). Paragraph eight brings to light one such hidden and little known historical event: “Dozens of peaceable Chinese Americans living in Los Angeles’ Chinatown were attacked in the **Chinese Massacre of 1871**, leaving around twenty dead and many injured. Some of the dead were found **hanging from lamp posts or dragged to their death**” (emphasis added). The sheer barbarity and cruelty from today’s vantage seems unreal. Low’s detail here and throughout this project (that) allows readers to almost experience these deplorable events and the uneasy lives these Asian Americans lived. America cannot fully improve and make better its treatment of citizens as long as government figures and educators continue to hide from Americans the very real dreadful historical past of injustice and cruelty, especially directed toward peoples of color.

Low uses paragraph nine to detail additional, seemingly endless, horrors Chinese Americans, among all other Asians, continued to suffer. Low’s writing strategy is to begin discussions with key words and phrases, here “increase in anti-Chinese sentiment and exclusionary feelings,” “depicti[ions in political cartoons] ... [of] the Chinese as conniving and untrustworthy,” actions of organizations such as the Workingmen’s Party, and so on. Low ends the paragraph with more historical fact, “States began to establish laws that made it difficult for these early Chinese Americans to find work.” The efficacy of Low’s rhetoric highlights the overall enormity of her project, this rhetorical artifact.

Paragraphs ten and eleven conclude this section of the artifact as Low introduces new terminology: “The Immigration Act of 1924,” “Angel Island Immigration Station,” “the unwelcoming ‘Guardian of the Western Gate,’” “the Magnuson Act of 1943,” and “the Immigration Act of 1965.” The historical thoroughness that infuses this rhetorical artifact in succinct but exemplary fashion is a godsend for those of her audience who are curious and concerned about America’s historical past. Illuminating this American reality of injustice can only help encourage those concerned Americans who hope and expect the nation to perform better for America’s future. Low’s artifact is her noble contribution to America’s future survival.

The Immigration Act of 1924 set quotas for immigration, allowing only minuscule numbers of immigrants from Asian countries, Low clarifies that its efficacy “would widen the breadth of ... institutionalized discrimination to all people of Asian descent.” Low further explains, “The few Chinese who were allowed to enter ...—merchants, professionals and other non-laborers—were subjected to rigorous scrutiny at Angel Island Immigration Station, a detention center that would imprison immigrants for up to two years.” Low comments about its Ellis Island comparison, “it [Angel Island] was more often known as the unwelcoming ‘Guardian of the Western Gate.’” Only decades later with Congressional passage of the Magnuson Act of 1943 and the Immigration Act of 1965 would these overly restrictive immigration practices (installed to restrict immigration from Asia) end. These abuses became somewhat corrected such that “a large[r] influx of immigrants from Asia would be welcomed into the country.” Low’s recounting of this hidden (not taught in schools nor published by the national press) American history is revealed with a true storyteller’s skill, performed with compassion. This rendering by Low awards appreciative readers, particularly her audience.

Low's next section "Alien Land Laws of 1913 and 1920" moves to a revelation of continuing injustice for Chinese and Japanese immigrants. There is an informative side note "Champion of the U.S. Birthright" written in a smart synopsis format recounts the experience of Wong Kim Ark whom Low highlights was born in 1873. Wong was born in San Francisco, a city in the state of California, where he grew to adulthood. Low encapsulates detail of the atrocious and atrocious journey he had to endure, that because of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, "Wong's parents ... were not eligible for naturalization to become U.S. citizens under the current law," a law clearly unconstitutional. Periodically Wong had traveled abroad and visited China, yet in 1894 upon his attempted return to the U.S. Low carefully explains Wong's dilemma, "... this time around he was detained upon re-entry ... on the grounds that he and his family were 'Chinese persons, and subjects of the Emperor of China,' and ineligible to return under the Chinese Exclusion Act." Wong filed suit.

The U.S. Supreme Court found in a 6-2 decision, "... [S]ince Wong was born in the U.S., he was thereby an American citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment, which states that 'All persons born or naturalized in the ... [U.S.], and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.'" Low's inclusion of this one story of one Asian American citizen's treatment highlights Low's continuing theme, as presented—continuing and profound injustice toward Asian-Americans and their families.

In this second section of Low's project, this very capable rhetor introduces what she calls "Alien Land Laws," those state laws that severely restricted land ownership for Asian Americans. The first of these Low notes is the California Alien Land Law of 1913, a law which "prevented 'aliens ineligible for citizenship' [those so named in the Immigration Act of 1924] from owning property, in which 'aliens ineligible for citizenship' served as a euphemism for

‘Asians.’” America’s History is one of using euphemisms to mark extensive injustice toward peoples of color, the vast majority of whom are American citizens. Low’s repetition of the stated legal language is a clever construction that should appeal to her reading audience. Low uses paragraph three of this section to elaborate by restating a direct quotation from a California government official, fully explaining the travesty propelled upon Asians in America, “The fundamental basis of all legislation upon this subject, State and Federal, has been, and is, race undesirability,” stated Ulysses S. Webb, California Attorney General. The Attorney General of a state is responsible for enforcing all of the laws of a given state. These laws are blatantly unconstitutional, yet government, state and local, officials tout their legality. Low’s inclusion of these realities further enhances the strengths of this artifact. Readers should be horrified by these realities of life for another ethnic group of Americans. The thoroughness of Low’s detail allows for little dispute from her various audiences.

Low explains in paragraph four that this Alien Land Law was then aimed at Japanese American farmers, a different Asian community; Chinese American immigration, after the new century emerged, had been virtually eliminated. Low provides a California newspaper comment to illustrate the hostility and racial animus directed toward Japanese Americans. She introduces another unconstitutional law, the Alien Land Law of 1920, as she explains a strategy Japanese Issei community began to use to circumvent the unconstitutional laws directed toward them,

Many Issei (first generation Japanese Americans) undercut the exclusionary law by registering land ownership under the names of their young American-born children, and then claimed to be employees on that property. The Alien Land Law of 1920 imposed additional reinforcements to counter that, sewing together loopholes and tying on criminal penalties. The new law prohibited resident aliens



from even buying agricultural land or using the names of their children born on U.S. soil.

Low continues to carefully introduce and document the undeniable cruelty and unbelievable racial hatred and discrimination directed toward these Asian-American ethnic groups. By merely providing the detail (facts) without her personal critical commentary, Low makes an effective presentation leaving little room for audience doubt or denial.

Paragraph eight of this section provides an unfortunate quote by our nation's president only contributed to the growing national hostility toward Asian Americans, who were obviously considered outsiders, not fellow Americans. The paragraph both opens and closes with a well chosen summation of the growing national sentiment: "Discrimination was institutionalized, and President Theodore Roosevelt was one of many who backed Asian exclusion. ... Economic depression and a fear of foreign workers stealing jobs from American laborers all increased anti-Asian sentiment in the years leading up to WWII." Low's strategic summation of the times effectively educates her reading audience.

Low uses paragraph nine to offer a summation of the times with regard to the living experiences for Asian-Americans. The inability of Asian Americans to gain American citizenship, the removal of property rights in land, and the growing national hostility toward the Asian presence in America are recounted in this paragraph. Then suddenly, Low closes the paragraph with mention of an important Supreme Court case: "This [the continuing Asian difficulties in America] is reflected in the landmark case of *Oyama v. California*."

Low capably introduces the Oyama family ordeal in paragraph ten as she instructs readers about this little known American history. Not all Americans of Japanese descent were arrested and incarcerated ("interned") although over 120,000 were, some Japanese American

families like the Oyama family were merely “forced from the West coast in a ‘voluntary evacuation,’ part of a minority of Japanese Americans who managed to avoid being unjustly incarcerated and imprisoned during WWII by instead being forced from their own homes.” This comment is documented in a retrievable newspaper source from that period. Low’s splendid recount of the Oyama family ordeal ends the paragraph with succinct eloquence: “Upon returning to the area after the war ... the Oyama family discovered that their land had been confiscated and illegally purchased pursuant to the Alien Land laws.” Low’s presentation of this long forgotten American period national hysteria is abrupt and shocking.

The final three paragraphs of this section are well used by Low to continue the retelling of this neglected and hidden American history. The family was fortunate to receive assistance from the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) in pursuing legal action, “funding and support,” against the state of California. The family lost in the Superior Court of San Diego and also on appeal to the California Supreme Court. Low writes in paragraph eleven a single sentence that personalizes the continuing sequence of events: “The JACL and Kajiro Oyama persisted, taking their case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1947, and arguing that the unfair confiscation deprived Fred Oyama of his rights as an American citizen and Kajiro [Kajiro, the father of the family, purchased the land and placed title to the land in the name of his six-year old son] of his rights to equal protection under the law.”

Low closes the section in paragraph twelve with the inadequate Supreme Court ruling. The Court ruled in favor of the Oyama family, but neglected comment regarding the constitutionality of the Alien Land Law. This result is emblematic of a reality our country faces even today, a complete lack of courage or true commitment from our national political leaders and Supreme Court justices to dedicate themselves to our nation’s laws. Our American

democracy was said to be governed by three independent competent branches of government (legislative, judicial, and executive). Yet, too often, each branch seems to be unwilling to fulfill its authority when faced with a national ordeal for fear of “rocking the boat” of public opinion. Today’s current presidential turmoil is indicative as our nation’s executive authority continues to over-reach its authority while the legislative branch, Congress and Senate, is effectively impotent as the nation’s highest legal authority is openly fearful, being reluctant to call up appropriate cases or rule favorably for the country in cases it does call up. Our country’s democratic future may be in peril.

The third section of Low’s artifact navigates “Japanese American Internment [imprisonment].” Low begins the section with a headnote repeating a sarcastic 1942 *LA Times* editorial comment, troubling though not totally inaccurate, explaining that a person “born of Japanese parents—grows up to be a Japanese, not an American.” This headnote does set the atmosphere Low is creating herein as she explains the unbelievably horrific treatment Japanese Americans had to endure just after the USA entered WWII. The section begins with Low’s bold statement, one that is very difficult to dispute: “The most egregious crime committed against a group of American citizens by its own government is seldom documented in U.S. history books ... [that is] the incarceration [“internment”] and imprisonment of over 120,000 innocent Japanese Americans [merely] **accused** of disloyalty following the bombing of Pearl Harbor” (emphasis added).

Low ably provides historical context as she weaves through the historical narrative in her presentation. There were American officials, such as the military governor of Hawaii, General Delos Emmons, who spoke in support of the Japanese Americans. His report basically protected the Hawaiian population of Japanese Americans (“37% of the state population ... [;] almost

300,000 in total”) from incarceration, as “ fewer than 1,500 were sent to concentration camps from Hawaii.” Low uses paragraph fifteen of this section to inform her audience of the results of another formal written document called the Munson Report, “. . . an investigation that was issued a month prior to the attacks, which evaluated Japanese American loyalty and concluded that they posed no threat to internal security, suspicion [—racism—] still abounded among the public and some political officials.” It remains unclear the reasons why the widely revered President Franklin Roosevelt felt compelled to still go ahead with the mass incarcerations of American citizens. Low’s patient retelling of this hidden American historical reality of life for Japanese American citizens adroitly constructs a striking depiction. This is quite the effective presentation of events.

Low ends paragraph seven with her succinct and emphatic statement of the event: “. . . on February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt issued **Executive Order 9066**, which, like the Alien Land Laws before it, singled out a specific ethnicity without explicitly stating so . . .” (emphasis added). The Japanese American citizens were not named even though all officials and others clearly knew about whom the new law would be directed. Low is carefully bringing to light another shameful, hidden, and forgotten (for many Americans) episode of American history. The United States Constitution specifically provides in Article 1, Section 9, Paragraph 3: “No **Bill of Attainder** or ex post facto Law will be passed” (emphasis added). One primary definition of “Bill of Attainder” is “A legislative act that singles out an individual or group for punishment without trial.”<sup>125</sup> Japanese American citizens are obviously a group of individuals; forced incarceration and deprivation of land, homes, and personal property is punishment.

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<sup>125</sup> [Http://www.techlawjournal.com](http://www.techlawjournal.com).

Paragraph eight covering just two sentences (one complex sentence and the other a simple sentence) offers an addendum or sorts, as Low again and again educates her reading audience without embellishment: “However, despite WWII being fought not just against Japan, but against Germany and Italy, the Order was not applied to German Americans as a group or to Italian Americans.” Low next informs her audience of the physical dimensions and the practical realities of the events that followed: “Copies of the evacuation notice were posted on telephone poles and storefronts on April 1, 1942, commanding ‘all persons of Japanese ancestry [...] to be evacuated from the above designated area by 12:00 noon, Tuesday, April 7, 1942.’” Six days!

The ironic character of these effects seemed totally lost on everyone, that—Nazi Germany was also putting up flyers and notices also singling out a segment of their own citizens, there Jews, for transport to concentration camps. Horrifically, the German concentration camps became death camps while the American concentration camps suffered only “a few deaths.” And also, these American camps were given a more euphemistically appealing name “internment camps,” two innocuous words for something that could only be described as horrible for the children, women, and men who were incarcerated there. The thoroughness of Low’s elegant artifact is difficult to ignore in analysis. Paragraph nine in just three sentences presents a very clear visual of the horrors that were to come for these American citizens:

The notice gave Japanese Americans mere weeks to sell all of their belongings and report to assembly centers, whereupon families were given numbered tags and herded like cattle. **Most of the 120,000 internees were children, youth, and the elderly.** ... Sent to internment camps far from home in Wyoming, Idaho, Colorado, Utah, California, Arkansas and Arizona, families were given little more

than a dusty twenty by twenty foot space in barracks, provided with meager healthcare and supplies. (Emphasis added)

Low ends this paragraph with a simple sentence collection of items in a series, “**Some died** in the camps, most for lack of proper medical care, and in a few cases, at the hands of military guards” (emphasis added). “*Some died* in the camps ... at the hands of military guards” (emphasis added again). Some died!

Paragraphs eleven and twelve of this section Low uses to introduce further indignities to be suffered by incarcerated Japanese Americans. At the camps, the people were, unbelievably, presented with loyalty questionnaires, a display that demonstrated the utter disavowal of these Americans as citizens of America. They were now incarcerated, yet they were asked to “swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power or organization.” Such a tragedy is reminiscent of requiring black schoolchildren in the South being required to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, “... with liberty and justice for all.” Low’s presentation of this unbelievably discordant antagonistic measure some government official created was especially cruel and troublesome. The detail Low presents in this artifact clearly reveals the full message she wants her audience to understand.

Paragraph thirteen reports of the thousands of young Japanese Americans who volunteered to serve in the armed forces, even as their families were being locked up: “... thousands of young Japanese American men signed up for the draft ... [and] over the course of WWII, more than 33,000 Japanese Americans served in the U.S. Armed Forces ... .” Low continues this thread of “new” information in the next paragraph, “Thousands of volunteers and

drafttees from these detention camps were enlisted in the army, becoming part of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team, a segregated unit. Others were recruited to be part of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS), acting as translators and gathering military intelligence in the Pacific.” Low dramatically informs her audience of the constant irony displayed by government leaders who were not fearful of having Japanese Americans working in American Intelligence matters, where such information speaks well of Low’s rhetorical communication.

Low uses paragraph fifteen to address what happened to these incarcerated (“interned”) Japanese families at the end of WWII where they were required to navigate continuing racial animus, widespread poverty as a result of losing their confiscated property, and the continuing difficulties they experienced in seeking employment. Low closes the paragraph with a summary statement: “It would not be until 1988, almost 50 years after the internment [incarceration], that Japanese Americans would be given their due apology and reparations. But of course, a payment of \$20,000 made to surviving Japanese-Americans decades later did little to repair for the damage the people suffered.”

Paragraph sixteen offers the findings of a special commission, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, another euphemism for racial prejudice, where again the name of the commission failed to acknowledge that Japanese-American citizens had been victimized. The commission issued a report about the forced relocation and incarceration of these American citizens and made its findings, “... the incarceration and internment of 120,000 Japanese Americans was ‘motivated largely by racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.’” Paragraph seventeen presents the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 that was signed into law by President Reagan, where an apology was provided along with

\$20,000 provided for each survivor. Low's presentation herein completes her retelling of this very un-American effort committed by government officials against these American citizens.

The fourth section of this rhetorical artifact features the nation's modern decade of public activism, "Struggles in the Sixties." Low's first paragraph encapsulates the message of this section as she introduces the inspiration of the decade of social activism that mobilized young people "with regard to race relations and politics, with the civil rights movement dissecting and questioning issues of racial segregation, anti-miscegenation laws, voter disenfranchisement, hate crimes and employment discrimination." This growing national activism, Low notes, served to inform and "inspire ... Asian Americans to take action in their struggle for equality in the eyes of society." Low notes that "legislative change for Asian Americans" led to "government finally eas[ing] ... laws restricting immigration and open[ing] its doors to new Asian immigrants."

Paragraph two of the section recounts a victory of sorts, that the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 provided in "finally lift[ing] restrictions on immigration to the U.S., eliminating previous nation-origin quotas as the new law had the practical impact of allowing for more Asian immigration that would counteract the "previous restrictions on Asian immigration that dated all the way back [to] the Immigration Act of 1924 (sometimes known as the **Asian Exclusion Act**) and the **Chinese Exclusion Act** of 1882." Low's historical references highlight the persuasive efficacy of her artifact, this capable rhetorical artifact.

Paragraph three is used by Low to explain how the activism of the decade led young people to connect various factions of the Asian American experience as "Chinese American, Filipino American, Japanese American and other Asian American students [who] ... began to coalesce as pan-Asian American groups [who would engage with other groups, such as] ... the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Black Students Union (BSU), the Third World



Liberation Front (TWLF), a coalition of black, Latino, Native American and Asian American students . . . .” This commingling was evident at various college campuses where massive student strikes occurred, such as San Francisco State and University of California-Berkeley.

Low closes paragraph five with a compact statement that effectively illuminates the spirit and successes of the decade, “While first generation Asian American immigrants had fought for the right to naturalize and the right to own property—essentially, the right to **be** Americans—this generation began to fight for their rights **as** Americans” (emphasis in original text). And Low continues this theme as she begins paragraph six, “This [multi-level activism] included fighting for open admissions at institutions of higher education, fair housing, and the gradual coming together as Asian Americans, instead of just Chinese Americans or Korean Americans or Indian Americans. Community based organizations (CBO) and local grassroots activists began to multiply in an effort” to help everyone, for the better.

Low uses the next section “The Murder of Vincent Chin,” an innocent victim of senseless racial hostility, to educate her audience about the senseless killings and other atrocities Asian-Americans continued to suffer in America. The final section of Low’s project has a title that fully explains the focus of the section, “The Road Ahead: New Struggles, Old Problems, and the Question of Pan-Asian American Unity.” Within this final section, there are five subsections.

AMERICA'S ANCESTRAL (INDIGENOUS) PEOPLES,  
Including Native American Nations, Native Hawaiians,  
Alaskan Natives, and Pacific Islanders Seeking <Justice> in America

*The Massacre Of Fort Dearborn at Chicago:*

*A Rhetorical Analysis of the Speech by chief Tecumseh*

This Tecumseh speech was spoken c. 1800 and published in *Harpers New Monthly Magazine*, the March 1899 issue. Chief Tecumseh begins philosophically, “Before me stand the rightful owners of Kwai-notching-we au-kee (this beautiful land). The Great Spirit in His wisdom gave it to you and your children to defend, and placed you here.” The indigenous peoples of the Americas for generations had lived on the lands. But, the new intruders from Europe did not consider or value the land and waters as the Native peoples did. Tecumseh’s statement is clearly obvious.

Tecumseh next comments about the European people symbolically, “But ä-te-wä (alas!) the incoming race, like a huge serpent, is coiling closer and closer about you.” He uses an apt **simile** to help clarify his message. The simile comparison is direct, as the words “like” or “as” are used to make the comparison (Corbett and Connors 396). Comparisons assist readers and listeners to more completely understand a message being given by the rhetor. He continues his speech by providing his assessment of these transplanted Europeans who had come to overwhelm their lands: “And not content with hemming you in on every side, they have built at She-got-one (Chicago), in the very center of our country, a military fort, garrisoned with soldiers, ready and equipped for battle. As sure as waw-og (the heavens) are above you they are determined to destroy you and your children and occupy this goodly land themselves. Then they

will destroy these forests, whose branches wave in the winds above the graves your fathers, chanting their praises.” Tecumseh’s prophesy as viewed today, over two centuries hence, was unfortunately fully accurate. The indigenous peoples were decimated as we today observe global warming reaching disastrous levels. For his audience, such observations were probably too incredible to accept. There are no reports of how his audience reacted to these observations.

Tecumseh, interestingly, makes these observations effortless as he continues, “If you doubt it, come, go with me eastward or southward a few days’ journey along your ancient mi-kan-og (trails), and I will show you a land you once occupied made desolate. There the forests of untold years have been hewn down and cast into the fire!” The destruction and devastation seems to have continued to follow the Western cultures wherever they have landed. Sometimes presenting to an audience the unvarnished truths is appreciated by the audience; sometimes not. This rhetor messenger believed it necessary to present a message to his followers honorably and honestly without deceit, which only enhances the rhetor’s both *ethos* and *logos* appeals. Tecumseh is an honorable and honest leader presenting the truth to his people.

As he continues his assessment, the honesty only becomes even more graphic and unbelievable: “There be-sheck-kee and waw-mawsh-ka-she (the buffalo and deer) pe-nay-shen and ke-gon (the fowl and fish), are all gone. There the woodland birds, whose sweet songs once pleased your ears, have forsaken the land, never to return. And waw-bi-gon-ag (the wild flowers), which your maidens once loved to wear, have all withered and died.” As honorable as this message is, it is difficult to understand his reasoning for clearly overwhelming his people with these truths: “You must bear in mind these strangers are not as you—they are devoid of natural affection, loving gold or gain better than one another, or ki-tchi-tchag (their own souls).”

Viewing this new environment from the perspective of these Native peoples makes Tecumseh's assessment appear believable.

Tecumseh's detail about the behavior of these new outsiders is quite thorough: "some of them follow on your track as quietly as maw-in-gawn (the wolf) pursues the deer, to shoot you down, as you hunt and kill mé-she-bé-zhe (the panther)." He then provides a detailed observation he had directly: "But a few years since I saw with my own eyes a young white man near the O-hi-o River who was held by our people as a prisoner of war. He won the hearts of his captors with his apparent friendship and good-will, while murder was in his heart." This narrative, obviously is not representative of all of the European interlopers. But unfortunately, too many whites of good will probably failed to act in ways that would contradict this assessment. Even today, many of us Americans are appalled by the policies of the current President and his administration, most especially the separation and caging of these desperate human beings by and large refugees, a robust many of whom are children, yet we Americans neglect to act in redress of the situations at our southern border.

Tecumseh closes his speech, not lightly, "They trusted him as they trusted one another. But he most treacherously betrayed their confidence, and secretly killed not less than nech-to-naw (twenty) before his crimes were detected, and then he had fled ..." Ordinarily a speaker is encouraged to end a speech with a helpful and hopeful positive message, but here Tecumseh does neither.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Simon Pokagon. "The Massacre of Fort Dearborn at Chicago" rpt in *Harpers New Monthly Magazine*. March 1899. [www.californiaindianeducation.org](http://www.californiaindianeducation.org). Retrieved 25 February 2020.

*Tecumseh's Speech to the Osages—A Rhetorical Analysis*

The Shawnee leader was prophetic in his assessment of the danger posed by white settlers in the Americas. He and his brother pursued unification of the indigenous Nations to present a united front against colonists who continued to encroach upon their lands (Zinn and Arnove 23). In this speech, Chief Tecumseh is speaking to people of the Osage nation in an effort for all indigenous Nations to unite together in battle against the encroaching colonists.

Tecumseh begins with a familiar greeting, “Brothers.—We all belong to one family; we are all children of the Great Spirit; we walk in the same path, slake our thirst at the same spring; and now affairs of the greatest concern lead us to smoke the pipe around the same council fire!” He reminds his audience of the necessity of their meeting. Re-introducing the particulars of the gathering makes certain that everyone in the audience is specifically aware for their gathering. Opening a speech so simply encourages the audience to more closely follow the speaker’s words as s/he continues more in depth with more complex concerns: “Brothers,—We are friends; we must assist each other to bear our burdens. The blood of many of our fathers and brothers has run like water on the ground, to satisfy the avarice of the white men. We, ourselves, are threatened with a great evil; nothing will pacify them but the destruction of all the red men.” To some in the audience these words of Tecumseh may be beyond belief. However his stature in character as chief has preceded him; his *ethos* appeal is probably universally assumed. But what is to be established is a *logos* appeal; he is just beginning a presentation of his argument.

“Brothers,—When the white men first set foot on our grounds, they were hungry; they had no place on which to spread their blankets, or to kindle their fires. They were feeble; they

could do nothing for themselves. Our father commiserated their distress, and shared freely with them whatever the Great Spirit had given his red children. They gave them food when hungry, medicine when sick, spread skins for them to sleep on, and gave them grounds, that they might hunt and raise corn.” This retelling of the history of the European invasion and continuing presence on the Native peoples’ lands is a reminder to his audience indirectly that the actions of their peoples had been honorable while those of the white colonists were altogether dishonorable. This retelling is his way of introducing this argument. The implication is that the indigenous peoples have a moral right to unite in battle against the colonists.

Beginning each section of his speech with a repeated word is a utilization of the rhetorical device *anaphora*, where the rhetor repeats a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses although here there are two concerns that may disrupt this understanding of the term’s use in this speech. Tecumseh is in fact repeating the word “Brothers” in succession, but this word is merely a greeting, and secondarily, the repeated word begins new paragraphs, not new clauses. However, still this use should be considered *anaphora* because even though it is a greeting, the same word is used, and using a repeated word following longer groups of words (paragraphs instead of clauses) is still a strategic use of repetition. The value of repetition is that it allows the rhetor to guide his audience along through the speech toward a conclusion or climax, and repetition is useful as a way of creating emphasis.

Tecumseh next uses more graphic language to describe the practices of the whites utilizing **symbolism**, another rhetorical device, since they had entered Native peoples’ lands: “Brothers,—The white people are like poisonous serpents: when chilled, they are feeble and harmless; but invigorate them with warmth, and they sting their benefactors to death. / The white people came among us feeble; and now we have made them strong, they wish to kill us, or drive

us back, as they would wolves and panthers.” His words are true and accurate, but redundant. This is an interesting use of simile (“like”) and metaphor, combined. Redundancy can be a distraction in a speech if done too often. This speech is not a long one, so it is probably not detrimental to the overall presentation. “Brothers,—The white men are not friends to the Indians; at first, they only asked for land sufficient for a wigwams; now, nothing will satisfy them but the whole of our hunting grounds, from the rising to the setting sun.” This apt **metaphor** use at this point in the speech is quite effective. A metaphor is another comparison of two completely different “things,” but the comparison really seems to drive home the emphatic message in a speech. Moliken (et al.) provides a helpful rationale for its use: “A metaphor speaks poetically, but it should not be viewed solely as a stylistic device. It can help your readers [or listeners] see [or hear] something as you want them to see [or hear] it—to convey not just the literal truths of a thing, but the emotional or psychological truths of it as well” (52). One troubling item is Chief Tecumseh’s use broad and totally inaccurate term “Indians.” These indigenous Nations of peoples were in fact not Indians, people of India. It is also unclear whether this practice was customary: that of Native Americans using the term “Indians” to refer to themselves.

Based upon what we know today in the year 2020, Chief Tecumseh’s appraisal of the conflict situation in the Americas of that age is an appropriate and accurate assessment of their danger: “Brothers,—The white men are not friends to the Indians: at first, they only asked for land sufficient for a wigwam; now, nothing will satisfy them but the whole of our hunting grounds, from the rising to the setting sun. Brothers,—The white men want more than our hunting grounds; they wish to kill our warriors; they would even kill our old men, women and little ones.” The brutal honesty of Tecumseh’s words would for some audience members

encompass all three audience appeals proposed by Aristotle. Tecumseh's well known acumen as a leader and a warrior was beyond reproach; thus, *ethos* is clearly established. These Osage Nation warriors would be expected to already know about much of what Tecumseh is speaking, and his words would seem logical and consistent for these warriors having just a modicum of common sense, so a *logos* appeal would also be firmly established. And since their way of life would then be threatened to non-existence, a *pathos* emotional appeal is firmly entrenched.

Next, Tecumseh provides his own creation story as he closes with an inspirational message of action: "Brothers,—Many winters ago, there was no land; the sun did not rise and set; all was darkness. The Great Spirit made all things. He gave the white people a home beyond the great waters. He supplied these grounds with game, and gave them to his red children; and he gave the strength and courage to defend them." Chief Tecumseh wants the Osage Nation and others to join together to combat this new hazard that all of the indigenous Nations would be facing. The sincere commitment and honesty Tecumseh is presenting would seem awe inspiring to warriors unafraid of the future.

Tecumseh continues his graphic and repeated diatribes about these new settlers: "Brothers—My people wish for peace; the red men all wish for each; but where the white people are, there is no peace for them, except it be on the bosom of our mother. Brothers—The white men despise and cheat the Indians, they abuse and insult them; they do not think the red men sufficiently good to live." He finds no redeeming qualities to this incoming culture of peoples from "a home beyond the great waters." Such severe graphic and harsh honesty would have been inspirational. The quality of **symbolism** would be helpful to his audience. Symbolism is another kind of indirect comparison, which would present a more vivid reproduction of the situation at hand: a group of words clearly applying to a different situation than one being



discussed, in order to secretly draw listeners into making the automatic comparison. And always, pictures are “worth a thousand words.” The **symbolism** is clear, Tecumseh wants his audience to agree with him and join together in combat against the whites to a degree such that they might find the only safe place for themselves in the Americas would be back at their previous homes, with their mothers.

Tecumseh continues his verbal assault with more **symbolism**:

The red men have borne many and great injuries; they ought to suffer them no longer. My people will not; they are determined on vengeance; they have taken up the tomahawk; they will make it fat with blood; they will drink the blood of the white people. Brothers,—My people are brave and numerous; but the white people are too strong for them alone. I wish you to take up the tomahawk with them. If we all unite, we will cause the rivers to stain the great waters with their blood.

Tecumseh is leaving no doubt as to his message and vision—bloodshed for the intruders upon the indigenous peoples’ lands. This call to action as viewed in hindsight from our 2020 vantage point seems clearly warranted.

Tecumseh’s invectives continue, nearing overkill, ending with a modest **simile**:

Brothers,—if you do not unite with us, they will first destroy us, and then you will fall easy prey to them. They have destroyed many nations of red men, because they were not united, because they were not friends to each other. Brothers,—the white people send runners amongst us; they wish to make us enemies that they may sweep over and desolate our hunting grounds, like devastating winds, or rushing waters.

This detailed assessment presents a vivid imagery representation of the future for these Native peoples of the Americas, a holocaust of death and destruction beyond measure. The ending symbolism of simile “like devastating winds, or rushing waters” competently drives home Tecumseh’s message. A simile provides a comparison of two unlike notions (“things”) similar only in concept indirectly, basically a noun or noun phrase compared to another noun or noun phrase using the words “like” or “as” (Moliken [et al.] 41). The **simile** has a versatility and usefulness unlike that of other rhetorical devices:

The strategic value of this rhetorical maneuver for a rhetor is its “many stylistic uses [, including an] ... ability to create images and new associations in ... [the mind of a reader or listener, and similes] are common enough that they don’t break the flow of [the speech or writing,] ... but have enough flexibility that ... [a rhetor] can make ... [similes] do virtually anything ... [a rhetor needs] them to do. (Moliken [et al.] 42)

Unfortunately, Chief Tecumseh ventures toward monotony in his burgeoning paranoia although one seeing the bloodshed and desolation he would have seen, up close and personal (first-hand), makes understandable his emerging unbalance:

Brothers,—Our Great Father over the great waters, is angry with the white people, our enemies. He will send his brave warriors against them; he will send us rifles, and whatever else we want—he is our friend and we are his children. Brothers,—who are the white people that we should fear them? They cannot run fast, and are good marks to shoot at: they are only men; our fathers have killed many of them; we are not squaws, and we will stain the earth red with blood.

Monotony is of little value to a public speaker, as uninspired verbosity causes listeners to lose focus. The Purdue Owl Online Writing Lab cautions writers not to overuse **anaphora** (also applicable to speakers) to “Avoid passive voice, **needless repetition**, and wordy phrases and clauses” (emphasis added), as such actions can lead an audience to distraction or much worse, disinterest.

Tecumseh ends his speech with a rush of poetic **symbolism** followed by a philosophical assessment of his deity’s love:

Brothers,—The Great Spirit is angry with our enemies; he speaks in thunder, and the earth swallows up villages, and drinks up the Mississippi. The great waters will cover their lowlands; the corn cannot grow, and the Great Spirit will sweep those who escape to the hills from the earth with his terrible breach. Brothers,—We must be united; we must smoke the same pipe; we must fight each other’s battles; and more than all, we must love the Great Spirits [sic] he is for us; he will destroy our enemies, and make all his red children happy.

Purdue Owl provides clear and concise instruction for the writing (also applicable to public speaking) *conclusion*: “Conclusions wrap up what you have been discussing. . . . Your conclusion should begin pulling back into more general information that restates the main points of your argument. Conclusions may also call for action.” The online website follows this general information with a bullet point listing in detailed specificity:

In a general way,

- Restate your topic and why it is important,
- Restate your thesis/claim,
- Address opposing viewpoints and explain why readers should align with your position,

- Call for action

Chief Tecumseh in his speech to the Osage Nation has generally satisfied most of these recommendations in his passionate closing comments.

***A Rhetorical Analysis of the Dr. Haunani-Kay Trask Speech  
at Iolani Palace Protest Rally (17 January 1993)***

The Hawaiian archipelago is a collection of islands (8 major, 137 altogether), including islet and atolls. The Hawaiian monarchy of Queen Liliuokalani was overthrown on 29 January 1891, by a cabal of American businessmen and political operatives. They called themselves the Committee of Public Safety (formally named Citizen's Committee of Public Safety), a collection of Hawaii subjects and foreign nationals; a thirteen member group of the Annexation Club. A coup d' état was implemented with the assistance of United States Marines supposedly in port to protect American (business) interests. A collection of islands in the area united without bloodshed in 1795 and became the Kingdom of Hawaii. The newly formed independent nation became recognized by European powers and also the United States of America. And, the United States became a primary trading partner. Through assorted political machinations the Kingdom of Hawaii was overthrown primarily by American businessmen. The newly named Republic of Hawaii would eventually become the USA's fiftieth state.

The one-hundredth anniversary of this immoral and unlawful overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii was the reason for this very large protest rally at Iolani Palace. One prominent local speaker was Professor Haunani-Kay Trask, an unapologetic advocate for the return of native Hawaiian independence. She was an outspoken professor of Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Her antagonists are uncomfortable with her unhesitating anger and

aggressive oratory in her public speeches. On this hundredth anniversary of the taking of her homeland by force, she gave possibly her most celebrated speech.

The speech begins with “Aloha kakou,” an intimate greeting literally meaning “we love.” The large crowd responds in kind, “Aloha.” Her opening paragraph dives right in with her unapologetic insult to the outsiders who have “invaded” her homeland:

Aloha, the indigenous people ..., aloha to you, my love to you because you are still here. The intention was to kill everyone ... [,a]nd we are still here, one hundred years to the day that the racist American country took our sovereignty.

**Hyperbole** some might comment, but for the indigenous peoples more probably *litotes*. People who are not native Hawaiian do not enjoy hearing such harsh language, but although the instigators and American money interests may not have technically wanted to kill each native Hawaiian, they did want them safely out of the way, so essentially Dr. Trask was not totally inaccurate. Second, business interests from America did engage acts of racism in their interactions with the dark-skinned “outsiders” they would encounter in various economic and military “adventures”; and third, the USA through its functionaries and emissaries, did by force command the overthrow of this—The Kingdom of Hawaii—a sovereign nation solely because of selfish greed and military power. Most people in public gatherings hear speakers engage a modified polite discourse, but Dr. Trask clearly expresses her hostility against the American hoodlums that stole her country; her anger drips with vicious venom, not altogether unwarranted.

Professor Trask continues with a comment just as she heard said by Malcolm X, one of the men she admired during her college years of activism at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, “I am not an American. I am not an American, I am not an American. I am not an American. I am not an American.” This form of repetition is *epizeuxis*, the “[r]epeating [of] a

word or phrase immediately, with nothing intervening” (Fahnestock 231). Such a sudden admonition is certainly shocking to listeners unfamiliar with her oratory and with the ignoble history of the Kingdom of Hawaii sovereign nation. Rhetorical theorists since the Greeks and Romans have agreed that one important strategy for displaying emphasis is repetition but with a caveat:

Repetition is ... [a] method of emphasis within discourse. While important ideas are frequently placed in the first sentence of paragraphs and restarted or recast in the final sentence of the same paragraph to emphasize their importance, use of repetition for emphasis takes place in other ways. For example, important ideas are repeated within paragraphs. ... Use of repetition, however, should be done selectively so as to avoid monotony to the reader or to the listener. (Enos 221)

Dr. Trask’s obviously passionate speech though authentic does border on monotony. A widely acclaimed text for writers *Random House Guide to Good Writing* (Mitchell Ivers) also suggests, “Much of the power of formal prose comes from the repetition of words and phrases and the connections made between them. ... You can, for example, repeat or add a word for emphasis or for rhythm. ... [And, r]epeating words at the beginning of two or more successive clauses or sentences can be a dramatic means of emphasis” (78). Certainly, this same suggested strategy most definitely would apply to speeches. Here Dr. Trask is just repeating an entire sentence six times, and the power of her retort comes through emphatically.

This litany from Dr. Trask is followed by *erotesis*, four successive rhetorical questions, “Do you think they can hear us now? Do you think John Waihe’e is listening? Do you think Dan Inouye is listening? How about the Office of Hawaiian Affairs? These are local and statewide political leaders who have accepted the notion of statehood, in a sense rejecting their

cultural heritage. The use of rhetorical questions and the use of **sarcasm** are also strategies. Corbett and Connors explain the efficacy of the rhetorical question, “There are a number of reasons why such an opening is an attention-getter. ... [A] rhetorician question ... [,] a type that does not require a direct and immediate answer from the audience or reader ... [,] does challenge the audience ... [and makes] them more alert” (269). Lanham defines *erotesis* clearly: “A ‘rhetorical question’ ... [is] one which implies an answer but does not give or lead us to expect one ...” (71).

There is a clear element of **sarcasm** in these rhetorical questions. Corbett and Connors comment about its use as follows: **sarcasm** is another mode of humor that requires a master hand, for it can easily go wrong. **Sarcasm** seems to succeed best when it is directed at an individual; it is risky when it is directed at nationalities, classes, ranks, or vocations” (282). Although **sarcasm**, mild humor, is directed at a nationality—white Americans—a tactic that is generally thought to be avoided, here Dr. Trask’s passionate presentation may overcome the monotony. Here Dr. Trask knows her audience and does use “a master hand” that succeeds in its message. Because of the audience, people marching as they are commemorating the taking over and subjugation of an entire country, their forebears, the **sarcasm** is well placed. A final comment of caution in the use of **sarcasm** coming from classical theorist Quintilian is also included in Corbett and Connors, “Quintilian once said (*Instit. Orat.*, VI, iii, 26) that ‘there are no jests so insipid as those which parade the fact that they are intended to be witty’ (282-283). But again, because of this audience marching for this occasion, Dr. Trask has hit her mark.

Dr. Trask completes her theme in this paragraph with more *erotesis* repetition but using the plural pronoun “We” (five times, including four times in succession) instead, “We are not American. We are not American. We are not American. We are not American. Say it in your

heart. Say it when you sleep. We are not American. We will die as Hawaiians. We will never be Americans.” The enormous hostility in her voice can not be missed. But is this misplaced hostility? For non-native Hawaiians, the response probably would be yes; for natives, a response would be mixed, as indicated by the applause and cheers Dr. Trask receives.

She is saying “We will never forget” almost in an effort to beg the people to never forget, that they should never forget. The crowd (her audience) in unison say “Never,” and Dr. Trask responds with repetition for more emphasis “Never, never, never.” As she was saying this repetition, the audience erupts in applause and cheers. Her next paragraph is full throttle accusation, detailing exactly what happened; she does not hold back in an attempt to make her accusations more palatable: “The Americans, my people, are our enemies and you must understand that. They are our enemies. They took our land, they imprisoned our queen, they banned our language, they forcibly made us a colony of the United States.” Perhaps one should not condemn an entire race of people for the transgressions of some of the people; however, even though President Cleveland and a few of the Congressmen (no women in Congress in 1893) were reluctant to accede to the Committee of Safety misdeeds, the Congress did eventually annex the Hawaiian Islands and make the archipelago our nation’s fiftieth state. So Dr. Trask can infer, “America always says they are democratic. Lies. That is a lie. They have never been democratic with native people; they have never been democratic with Indians [sic]; they have never been democratic with Hawaiians.” There can be no attacking the veracity of these comments. Masks: the full and comprehensive history of America always includes a collection of masks.

Next, Professor Trask speaks to her people about their reluctance to be more forthright, like she is, in their interactions with the white people, “We cannot say any longer, oh, we are



Hawaiian, make nice. ... We have been so brainwashed with missionary [expletive, bull excrement]. Be nice.” The use of profane *epithet* words, a rhetorical device, is not customary in protest gatherings such as this. Dr. Trask seems a very bitter, though thoroughly enlightened, woman. The missionaries did combine with the American businessmen (few if any women) and American politicians to overthrow this very small country. At this gathering, there is great applause and cheering. Dr. Trask then speaks of her efforts to work with the local authorities with regard to land matters for the native Hawaiians; she reports that even after five years, she was unsuccessful, so she has no faith in working with the government authorities concerning land reform. So, she says, she works only with native Hawaiian groups, “Ka Lahaina Hawai’i represents Hawaiians, Hawaiians. I am not interested in feelings. I have my own feelings. They break my heart. That’s what I share with my ‘ohana But to you, my people, what I say is: politics, politics, politics. This march today took years of organizing. Ka Lahaina Hawai’i worked years to enroll Hawaiians.”

Although she was born in California to native Hawaiian parents but raised in Hawaii, Dr. Trask is unapologetic in her accusations against those politicians and businessmen who control the state, “We need legislation through the Congress of the United States to recognize that we are a native people. They don’t even recognize that. We have to go around [Senator] Dan Inouye. We have to beat him; we have to beat Dan Inouye in office. He needs to get out of office. ... We don’t need nice guys in Congress. What we need is a fighter. We need somebody who is fierce.” Dr. Trask appears to be given up on the American system of government. Hawaiian demographic as of 2013 Census Bureau report was 37% Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Filipino), 23% white, 10% Hispanic, 2% African American, 1% Alaskan native, and 6% Native

Hawaiian (20% including part-Hawaiian), and 19% biracial.<sup>127</sup> Trask uses *anaphora* to good effect as McKenzie explains: “[It] is used by presenters to appeal to the audience’s emotions. It is a rhetorical device used to inspire and persuade them [by repeating] ... the first part of the sentence” (15). Hawaii is possibly the most racially diverse state in the entire United States.

Yet Professor Trask is relentless in her demand for <justice>, “The age has passed for Hawaiians to be nice.” For her, <justice> would be the full and complete return of her native lands, something no longer possible. “The age has passed for Hawaiians to ho’oponopono. I don’t believe in ho’oponopono. I’ve never practiced it. I don’t want to. I believe in fighting to the death. And if we lose, we go down and die and we lose. But I am not making any deals.” This is the attitude that Malcolm X promoted and that J. Edgar Hoover feared most in America, among his obsessions.

Professor Trask next informs her audience that she does not support the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and she gives her reasons. She reports that this office did not recognize or support their work. Another reason she gives is that that office did not support a right-to-sue bill. She wants to work toward getting a return of Hawaiian land back to the Hawaiian Natives. She does not support the Office of Hawaiian Affairs because it is an agent of the state of Hawaii. She also disagrees with the idea that land returned to the people should go to the Hawaiian Homes Commission, a group which was appointed by the governor. She says to support this action would not be democracy. The speech seems disjointed as Dr. Trask talks just in a rambling disorganized manner. She uses repetition to engage her audience. However, her spirit and tenacity is intoxicating because of the language she uses, the message she presents, and the

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<sup>127</sup> Goo, Sara Kehaulani. “After 200 years, native Hawaiians make a comeback.” Pew Research Center: FACTANK, News in Numbers. 6 April 2015. [www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org). Web.

fervor she presents in her rambling text of *anaphora*, “**I am so proud to be here. I am so proud to be angry. I am so proud to be a Hawaiian. I am so proud to talk to you** because it took my whole life to get here, and I’ll be damned if I’m ever going to lie in front of my people.”

Professor Trask introduces her sister who then begins to speak,

It is a great day for all po’e Hawaii’i, for all kanaka Maori. This morning, as the sun lifted up, we saw the dawning of a new time. We have not come here to celebrate, nor have we come to mourn. But we have come to mark the turning of a page in the history of our people and to close a chapter of betrayal and treachery and of oppression, a chapter that was opened a hundred years ago on this day when American businessmen and the forces of the United States military marched here and, in open treason, overthrew the lawful and peaceful government of the Kingdom of Hawaii’i and imprisoned our beloved queen.

Were these words an exaggeration or false statements, the speech would be considered outrageous. The speech is actually more *litotes* than *hyperbole*. However, Mililani Trask is giving an accurate restatement of the historical record of the sequence of events with regard to how the Kingdom of Hawaii became a state within the United States. The Reciprocity Treaty of 1875 was a free trade agreement between the sovereign Kingdom of Hawaii and the sovereign United States of America. The Hawaii Kingdom also had signed treaty recognition agreements with England, France, and Belgium, that recognized Hawaiian independence.<sup>128</sup> Yet, the USA then in the 1890s acted totally without honor as they (business merchants along with American marines) enacted a coup d’ état and forcibly took over the government and most especially the

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<sup>128</sup> “Recognition of Hawaiian Independence.” Hawaiian Kingdom International Treaties. [www.hawaiiankingdom.org](http://www.hawaiiankingdom.org). Retrieved 4 March 2019. Web.

land, just because they could. The actions of the American government can not be defended. This result can explain the vigorous disdain Dr. Trask has for her country of birth.

This closes “Part 1” of Dr. Trask’s speech at the centennial commemoration event. Also occurring in 1993, United States Public Law 103-150 (Apology Resolution) was passed as a joint resolution of the United States Congress. But alas, without reparations. The resolution acknowledges that agents and citizens of the USA did act in the overthrow of the sovereign Kingdom of Hawaii, and that the Native Hawaiian people did not relinquish their sovereign authority as an independent nation. This history and other events altogether led to the Hawaiian sovereignty movement. Dr. Trask had been at the forefront of this movement.

LATINX, INCLUDING LATINAS/LATINOS AND CHICANAS/CHICANOS,  
SEEKING <JUSTICE> IN AMERICA

*The Wrath of Grapes Boycott Speech*  
*of Cesar Chavez—A Rhetorical Analysis*

Farm workers perform the most labor intensive and mentally demoralizing jobs in American society. Most unemployed American citizens eschew any consideration at all of these, often dangerous, physically demanding jobs. These minimum wage jobs are performed only by our most desperate citizens and large numbers of undocumented laborers. These workers have traditionally been taken advantage of by their employers and American society as a whole; our American food industry would cease to function economically without these workers.

During the late second half of the twentieth century, these workers began to organize and demand just a few basic human rights. Labor leader, community organizer, and human rights activist Cesar Chavez became one of the movement's foremost early spokesperson leaders. He and another activist Delores Huerta co-founded the National Farmworkers Association, which would become the United Farmworkers Union; Chavez was born in Yuma, Arizona, and Huerta was born in Dawson, New Mexico; both, of course, American states. American society through its actions exerts scorn—derision, contempt, anger, disdain, mockery, ridicule—daily upon these vastly unappreciated workers.

Whether documented or not, these human beings pay taxes, pay into our social security fund, and helpfully cause lower prices for our foods; without their work, our American food industry would cease to exist as we have come to know it because American citizens would not perform this backbreaking labor without being paid reasonable wages and under our capitalist system where greed rules, farm conglomerates would not pay fair wages for this backbreaking work. This Wrath of Grapes Boycott speech was given by Cesar Chavez at various venues, beginning in May 1986<sup>129</sup>:

I am speaking to you about our Wrath of Grapes Boycott. Because I believe our greatest court, the court of last resort, is the American people. And I believe that once you have taken a few moments to hear this message you will concur in this verdict along with a million other North Americans who are already committed to the largest grape boycott in history. The worth of humans is involved here.

This farm workers campaign began by the farm workers in an effort to inform Americans of the dangerous risk certain farm produce posed for Americans: the use of certain pesticides in food crops, the danger to farm workers from pesticide drift and pesticide residue,<sup>130</sup> the danger for Americans from the pesticides. Of particular danger were the pesticides used in growing grapes, hence the name given to the boycott. The noun (word) “wrath” is defined as “strong, stern, or fierce anger; deeply resentful indignation; ire” ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)). His introduction is matter-of-factly straight-forward.

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<sup>129</sup> “Wrath of Grapes Boycott.” Emerson Kent.com: HISTORY FOR THE RELAXED HISTORIAN. [Www.EmersonKent.com](http://www.EmersonKent.com). Retrieved 26 February 2020.

<sup>130</sup> “Remembering Cesar Chavez and his Wrath of Grapes Speech.” WatersKrausPaul. [Www.waterskraus.com](http://www.waterskraus.com). 31 May 2017.

This opening by Chavez may be too bland and a possible waste of precious time, in the opinion of some speech and business experts. Jeff Schmitt of Forbes recommends a different opening strategy:

**3) Don't Waste the Opening:** Too often, speakers squander the time when their audience is most receptive: the opening. Some probably need time to get comfortable on stage. In the meantime, the audience silently suffers. When you write [or speak], come out swingin [try using] ... a shocking fact ... [or] a humorous anecdote ... [or] a question. ... Get your listeners engaged early. And keep the preliminaries short. You're already losing audience members every minute you talk. Capitalize on the goodwill and momentum you'll enjoy in your earliest moments on stage.<sup>131</sup>

Chavez's opening comments only consumed seconds, and an argument can be made that his strategy allowed him to better ingratiate himself to his audience, enhancing his *ethos* appeal.

Chavez continues his speech by announcing that farm workers are also persons among the families of America: "I see us as one family. We cannot turn our backs on each other and our future. We farm workers are closest to food production. We were the first to recognize the serious health hazards of agriculture pesticides to both consumers and ourselves." Chavez continues his message by reminding his audience that the farm workers union alerted Americans decades earlier during the 1960s about the dangers of certain pesticides: "Our first contracts banned the use of DDT, DDE, Dieldrin on crops, years before the federal government acted." This history reminder enhances his *logos* appeal since the efforts of the union protest before was

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<sup>131</sup> Jeff Schmitt. "10 Keys To Writing A Speech." *Forbes*. [www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com). 16 July 2013.

beneficial to the American people. His *ethos* appeal is firmly established because also in that prior boycott campaign, the name Cesar Chavez came into the public sphere as he was one of the leaders in that effort.

Next, Chavez announces his precise message to Americans about this boycott effort:

Twenty years later, our contracts still seek to limit the spread of poison in our food and fields, but we need your help once again if we are to succeed. A powerful self-serving alliance between the California governor and the 14 billion dollar agricultural industry has resulted in a systematic and reckless poisoning of not only California farm workers but of grape consumers throughout our nation and Canada.”

The capable introduction did in fact introduce the specific topic and reason for this speech and this boycott campaign effort. Chavez’s primary strategy in this speech is a *pathos* appeal; he wants those Americans listening to his words to understand that their lives are in danger because of the agribusiness use of certain life-threatening pesticides used on some of the foods Americans will be eating.

Chavez continues by providing a rationale for his presentation, a full explanation for the problem he is exposing: “The hard won law enacted in 1975 has been trampled beneath the feet of self-interest. Blatant violations of California labor laws are constantly ignored. And worst of all, the indiscriminate and even illegal use of dangerous pesticides has radically increased in the last decade causing illness, permanent disability and even death.” This allegation from this historically reliable spokesman (Cesar Chavez) probably did engender an emotional response from many members of his audiences. He continues his assault with additional background information: “We must not allow the Governor of California and the selfish interests of



California grape growers to threaten lives through-out North America. We have known for many years that pesticides used in agriculture pollute the air, earth and water, contaminate animals and humans and are found in the tissue of newborn infants and mothers' milk."

And to apply a crescendo to the crux of this problem, Chavez reports, "This March, the *New York Times* reported that the Environmental Protection Agency finally considers pesticide pollution its most urgent problem noting virtually everyone is exposed to pesticides." He continues with *dinumeratio*, a form of *enumeratio* by listing four specific dangers the American people should consider:

The Environmental Protection Agency experts have warned that

#1—Pesticide residue is being found in a growing number of food products.

#2—Some poisons registered for use in the last 30 years cause cancer, mutations and birth defects.

#3—Most chemicals on the market have insufficient and sometimes fraudulent test results.

#4—Underground water supplies of 23 states are already tainted and farm workers suffer some pesticide induced illness in alarming numbers.

Consumers must be alerted now that no one can actually define or measure so called safe exposure to residual poison that accumulates in the human body as environments differ and each person's tolerance is unique. Including a list of items in a presentation can generally be considered an effective strategy for adding emphasis to an argument. A *logos* appeal becomes firmly established as Chavez gives the chemical names for these dangerous pesticides, so he is most knowledgeable about that of which he speaks.

Later in his speech, Chavez directs his focus to the pesticide problem with the grape industry:

In June local agriculture officials quarantined fields in Delano, California grape ranches because residues of the pesticide Orthene were found in the vineyards, yet Orthene cannot be legally used on table grapes. And a new study shows pesticides used in growing may be responsible for the illness of over 300,000 of the nation's 4 million farm workers. But of the 27 legal restricted toxic poisons currently used on grapes, at least 5 are potentially as dangerous or more hazardous to consumers and grape workers than deadly Aldicarb and Orthene.

Ordinarily, overly technical language might cause a speaker to lose the audience. And Chavez next provides details about additional chemicals, which might possibly be an overreaching by Chavez. But his summation paragraph helpfully brings his talk back to stating the more general consequences of the deleterious chemicals involved: "Here are 5 major threats to your health that cling to the California table grapes. Parathion and Phosdrin—are highly poisonous insecticides, similar to nerve gas, and are responsible for the majority of deaths and serious poisoning of farm workers. They cause birth defects and are carcinogens." He ends his speech by making a passionate request plea for contributions. Most Americans, unfortunately, view farm workers as separate and apart from the American family. A major problem in America is the overbearing injustice certain segments of our population continue to suffer.

### *EPILOGUE*

Performing capable rhetorical criticism would appear to require that we critics remember our responsibilities toward our pedagogical functions. Our analyses of rhetorical artifacts should also consider the rhetor's capacity for critical thinking and analytical reasoning, which must encompass their artifacts for complete rhetorical success. Humans are separated from the rest of the animal kingdom largely by our "greater" levels of intelligence; however, critical thinking and analytical reasoning are not inherently natural and innate to us. These skills can be learned, so they must be taught. One definition of "critical thinking" is "disciplined thinking that is clear, rational, open-minded, and informed by evidence" ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)). Professor Pullman offers further insight in his assessment: "*Critical thinking is about making good decisions about what to think and what to say and what to do and developing justifications for those decisions. ... If you are thinking critically, you are looking for and evaluating evidence before you decide what to do or think or say*" (24-27; emphasis in original).

And "analytical reasoning" can be defined as "the ability to recognize and determine the meaning of patterns in a variety of information ... [and] refers to the ability to look at information, be it qualitative or quantitative in nature, and discern patterns within the

information” ([www.theclassroom.com](http://www.theclassroom.com)). These two concepts share several aspects but they also differ in ways. English and Communications teachers might also consider the importance of civic responsibility for their students. Analytical reasoning can involve several actions as needed:

Gathering relevant information [,] ... examining chunks of data or information [,]  
 ... separating more complex information into simpler parts [,] ...sub-dividing  
 information into manageable sizes [,] ... finding patterns and recognizing trends  
 [,] ... asking questions [,] ... assessing bias or unsubstantiated assumptions [,] ...  
 making inferences from the information and filling in gaps [,] ... using abstract  
 ideas to interpret information [,] ... formulating ideas [,] ... weighing opinions [,]  
 ... testing conclusions [,] ... verifying if evidence/argument support the  
 conclusions [,]” and so on. (ibid.)

We educators must recognize in our rhetorical analyses how well (or not) a rhetorical artifact under consideration exhibits these qualities, and not analyze solely the facial boundaries of a given artifact text.

For this present project herein, an attempt is made toward examination of the concept of <justice> in America with regard to all that it entails, specifically with regard to women and peoples of color. America’s promise of <justice> is most clearly seen in the movement of immigrants—those who hold documents but also those who do not—yearning to enter the United States to attain the American Dream. Especially for those who enter illegally, the hardships and travels for themselves and their families are unimaginable, yet these people of desperation persist seemingly unfazed. Immigrants seek to become Americans because they believe in America’s promise, most often more so than us (native born Americans).

The United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948 adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which guaranteed to every human being the right “to seek and enjoy asylum in other countries” because of a fear of persecution. There were 48 (of 58) signatories voting in favorable support of this pronouncement, one country voting in favor was the United States of America. The 1951 Refugee Convention (the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees) is an international treaty of the United Nations that defines the status and rights of refugees; however, the United States was *not* a signatory. But, the USA is a signatory to the 1967 Protocol (Protocol to the Status of Refugees) where 146 countries are signatories. Especially in today’s political climate in the USA, relations with immigrants are strained; however, the people from locations everywhere throughout the world still *flock* to America, seeking a better life for themselves and their families. And these immigrants and other newcomers provide a vivid reminder for native born American citizens of exactly what makes the United States of America so unique and special—not “great”—most democracy governed countries are “great,” a word having little meaning.

The United States Refugee Act of 1980 is an amendment to earlier laws, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 and the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, and provides “a permanent and systematic procedure for admission ... [to]” the USA for refugees. *America’s promise* remains strong to those living outside of our nation’s boundaries even as we citizens of America along with our national and local political leaders seem content upon its destruction. Some would build a Berlin Wall-type barrier at our *southern* border to keep out those seeking asylum, and others, all primarily peoples of color. Our nation’s current Speaker of the House of Representatives has said it best, “if we citizens of America still value a moral component to our existence, such a wall if erected would be an immorality.”

Of course, our academic rhetorical criticism community provides assorted analyses of the facial errors in a rhetorical artifact in regard to grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax; however, we critics must also recognize the moral component, in addition to recognition of a critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and civic responsibility component. And to do so, we must be aware with regard to our students' writing, of talents (and deficiencies) in these areas; second, we must teach these skills to our students; and third, we must look out for these qualities where they appear in the rhetorical artifacts we critique.

This present project herein (this study) offers a collection of ideological analyses utilizing an examination of the ideograph <justice> as it exists in the USA, especially with regard to women and peoples of color, assembled altogether as a pedagogical primer on rhetoric. Our nation's founding documents are explicitly detailed in providing that "liberty and justice for all" shall be the foundational principle of this newly formed democratic republic. Of course in 1776, these words were merely symbolic and not fully understood by the peoples of the land, mostly immigrants, enslaved Africans, and indigenous peoples. However, over the course of centuries, decades, and years, and also through Constitutional amendment, new laws, and changing customs and mores, the United States of America as a notable work in progress has *approached* a reality, at least in words, that has become a near match toward some semblance of meaning. Unfortunately, there are still miles to go.

For women and peoples of color living in the United States of America today, there is growing discontent because of continuing injustice as the middle class in America has been decimated while the economic gap between the rich and the poor has continued to expand. These marginalized Americans no longer feel appreciated and beloved by their country. Marxist economist Richard Wolff comments about capitalism, "Over the last century, capitalism has

repeatedly revealed its worst tendencies: instability and inequality. ... Extreme inequality infects all for society as corporations and the rich, to protect their positions, buy the politicians, mass media and other cultural forms that are for sale.”<sup>132</sup> Of course, these inequities invariably fall upon groups stuck below the poverty level—most often peoples of color. We rhetorical critics in performing our critical analyses of rhetorical artifacts should expect rhetors to be cognizant of these current realities as exhibited in the artifacts they create. Otherwise, rhetorical critics and/or rhetors are complicit in the continuing deleterious hegemony of American society that sustains injustice and unfairness.

Symbolically, Frederick Douglass on 5 July 1852 in Rochester, New York, expressed in his “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July” oration, a symbolic message of a growing sentiment of discontent, not unlike that found among some population groups within America today, “The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence bequeathed by your fathers is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought life and healing to you has brought stripes and death to me. The Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn.” Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1963, at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom protest event in Washington, D. C., proclaimed a more hopeful assessment for America. Americans’ hope for America is clearly on display in America’s promise. The rhetoric of our daily interactions with each other belies a growing discontent and impediment that we in rhetorical studies should not ignore. These deficiencies, clearly visible in our country, we educators in rhetorical theory and communication study must observe and require the full recognition thereof

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<sup>132</sup> Woolf, Richard. Democracy at work—For Economic Justice. [www.democracy.info](http://www.democracy.info). 7 January 2017. Web.

from the rhetorical artifacts we continue to analyze. Or whither our discipline, our society if our nation is in ruins.

“The World Happiness Report 2018, ranks 156 countries by their happiness levels, and 117 countries by the happiness of their immigrants.”<sup>133</sup> Using Gallup World Poll surveys the year 2018 focus was “on migration within and between countries” (ibid.). The report uses “six key variables that have been found to support well-being” for their measure of the happiness level of a country: “income, healthy life expectancy, social support, freedom, trust and generosity” (ibid.). For the year 2018 survey, a Scandinavian quintet of Nordic nations leads the way: Finland, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Switzerland, along with Canada, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, and Australia. The United States of America, a country traditionally revered worldwide for its “American Dream” placed 18<sup>th</sup>: “The United States has never made the top ten in the happiness rankings, and this year it slid from 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>. Rather than always eagerly self-congratulating our country and proclaiming that “America is the greatest country [in the history of the world community of nations]” perhaps our politicians (of both major political parties) might be better served to actually study findings such as these, to just basically make America *better* for all of us Americans.

Report co-editor Jeffrey D. Sachs writes that “America’s subjective well-being is being systematically undermined by three interrelated epidemic diseases: obesity, substance abuse and

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<sup>133</sup> Sustainable Development Solutions Network: A Global Initiative for the United Nations. “World Happiness Report 2018. [www.unsdsn.org](http://www.unsdsn.org). 14 March 2018. Retrieved 1 February 2019. Web.



depression.”<sup>134</sup> America ranks first worldwide in obesity.<sup>135</sup> The USA ranks first in opioid addiction.<sup>136</sup> Almost one in three of the world’s women in prisons is incarcerated in USA prisons, two-thirds of whom, “disproportionately women of color,” are incarcerated in federal prisons for non-violent drug offenses.<sup>137</sup> And for males, the USA also ranks first in the world with 724 incarcerated males per 100,000 population; second place Russia has a rate of 581 in comparison.<sup>138</sup> And more tragic, the USA ranks five worldwide in each of three (unhappiness) measures and overall: unipolar depressive disorder, anxiety, alcohol and drug use.<sup>139</sup>

The failure of our nation’s federal, local, and state political leaders to acknowledge the errors of America’s past in its horrendous treatment of African Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, and *women among all demographic groupings*, prevents our nation from actually moving beyond its past injustices toward its promise. As we now approach the second decade of the twenty-*first* century, approaching three centuries removed from our nation’s founding, political leaders still resort to nefarious strategies, such as voter

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<sup>134</sup> Newsday.com staff with the Associated Press. “World Happiness Report 2018: See the World Happiest Countries.” [Www.newsday.com](http://www.newsday.com). 15 October 2018. Retrieved 1 February 2019. Web.

<sup>135</sup> Khan, Amir. “America Tops List of 10 Most Obese Countries.” [Www.health.usnews.com](http://www.health.usnews.com). 28 May 2014. Retrieved 1 February 2018. Web.

<sup>136</sup> Fischer, Benedikt, Annette Keates, Gerhard Bühringer, Jens Reimer, Jürgen Buhringer. “Non-medical use of prescription opioids and prescription opioid-related harms: why so markedly higher in North America compared to the rest of the world.” [Www.onlinelibrary.wiley.com](http://www.onlinelibrary.wiley.com). 20 May 2013. Retrieved 1 February 2019. Web.

<sup>137</sup> Bahadur, Nina. “The U.S. is Home to Nearly One-Third Of The World’s Female Prisoners.” [Www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com). 1 October 2014. Retrieved 1 February 2019. Web.

<sup>138</sup> “World Prison Populations: Half of the world’s prison population of about nine million is held in the US, China, or Russia.” BBC News. [Www.news.bbc.co.uk](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk). Retrieved 1 February 2019. Web.

<sup>139</sup> McPhillips, Deidre. “U.S. Among the Most Depressed Countries in the World.” [Www.usnews.com](http://www.usnews.com). 14 September 2016. Retrieved 1 February 2019. Web.

suppression, gerrymandering, continued use of an outdated unexplained Electoral College system, stop-and-frisk law enforcement tactics (whether pre-announced or not), and so on that prevent the U.S.A. from actually becoming a true democracy. Rhetorical criticism that acknowledges the hegemony that infuses all of our lives is but one attempt toward correcting our nation's past horrendous behavior. Criticism of how rhetors communicate their rhetorical projects must include recognition of the power dynamics within our culture.

Whether the United States of America seeks to enter a dawn of rebirth and awakening in advancing towards its promise, or not, by continuing down this dim road toward Constitutional crisis and an ever widening gap between the rich and poor—0.01% of the ultra rich in America today own 60% of the nation's wealth—"only time will tell" (Malcolm X). Current presidential candidate Bernie Sanders regularly proclaims that "the richest *three* [persons] hold more wealth than the *entire* bottom half of America's population." Could this comment be accurate? The measure of <justice> in America for women and peoples of color will ultimately determine our nation's future relevance. Or survival. We educators in English studies generally and rhetorical criticism specifically as we teach our students how best to use and analyze rhetorical artifacts, must not neglect to include within our analyses of students' grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax proficiency, recognition also of these realities of life for Americans today and the power dynamics that continue to command our society. For all of us, "only time will tell" (Malcolm X).

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## APPENDIX

### GLOSSARY of Rhetorical Devices and Rhetorical Terms

College writers and actually all writers have access to a variety of rhetorical devices that can and should assist them in their own academic and personal writing. These techniques and strategies allow writers to access other senses we have as human beings. Writers skillful in their use of these strategem devices can make their writing *sing* with echos, shouts, and other "sounds" while also becoming more vivid in its greater complexity; and perhaps, their writing develops a sensory aspect difficult to describe. This listing is not meant to be an exhaustive comprehensive collection of rhetorical devices, just a somewhat perfunctory compilation of a limited number of rhetorical devices and terms.

### TERMS USEFUL IN THE STUDY OF RHETORIC

***Ethos***. One of the three major audience appeals compiled by ancient Greeks, most prominently philosopher Aristotle in the fourth century BCE. This audience appeal attends to character, credentials, and authority; that is, the credibility of the rhetor (speaker or writer or artist) to pursue her or his promoted objective in persuasion (rhetoric).

***Kairos.*** Rhetorical concern that has its focus on the urgency of the moment for this persuasive discourse; the timeliness of the rhetorical artifact for a given production of discourse (speech or writing or artwork).

***Logos.*** One of the three major audience appeals compiled by ancient Greeks, most prominently philosopher Aristotle. This audience appeal attends to the reasonableness or logical consistency of the rhetorical artifact.

***Pathos.*** One of the three major audience appeals compiled by ancient Greeks, most prominently philosopher Aristotle in the fourth century BCE. This audience appeal is a concrete effort to evoke an emotional response from an audience.

**rhetoric.** For purposes of classroom teaching, “rhetoric” is the art of using communication effectively to either cause someone (an audience) to believe in the veracity (truthfulness) of a communication or to convince (persuade) someone (an audience) to follow a particular course of action.

**Rhetorical situation.** The background events and attendant circumstances that called forth the rhetorical effort.

### Forms of Parallelism

**Parallelism.** A listing of chunks of information presented in equal or very similar phrase structure or sentence structure form, generally a use of the same number of words and beginning with the same parts of speech.

EXAMPLE. I spend my leisure time reading science fiction novels, watching movies, and enjoying sports.

***Chiasmus.*** A form of parallelism where the second parallel item mentioned is reversed, such that the two parallel items are then placed closer together “for contrast and ... emphasis” (Harris 5).

EXAMPLE. *Parallelism*>

The team’s basketball players practiced diligently and as a result benefited mightily.

EXAMPLE. *Chiasmus*>

The team’s basketball players practiced mightily and as a result benefited diligently.

**Antithesis.** Making a contrast in an effort to bring greater clarity utilizing both a parallel structure and a placement of two items in close proximity; a joining (placement) together of contrasting ideas (Lanham 16).

EXAMPLE. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they **will not be** judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character (Martin Luther King, Jr., “I Have A Dream” speech).

### Emphatic States

**Asyndeton.** / **polysyndeton.** A listing of words, phrases, or clauses presented without the aid of conjunctions: “A list of items without conjunctions gives the effect of unpremeditated multiplicity, of a spontaneous rather than a labored account” (Harris 12).

The rhetorical device **polysyndeton** provides the opposite in that conjunctions are used to interspace a listing; there is a different effect for an audience: “While asyndeton usually creates the feeling of a spontaneous, even hurried enumeration or an enumeration where one term seems to replace another, polysyndeton produces the feeling of a deliberate piling up, a one-added-to-another multiplicity” (Harris 14)..

EXAMPLE asyndeton and polysyndeton from Moliken (164). Asyndeton is one of the best, most expressive, effective rhetorical devices there is, while polysyndeton is interesting and instructional and stylish (Moliken 164).

**Climax.** An organizational rhetorical device where the rhetor builds a narrative by ordering her or his sequence of events from those of lesser importance in the beginning to an ending conclusion, showcasing the most important ideas.

EXAMPLE. “But you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears / Bury the rag deep in your face / For now’s the time for your tears / .”

**Expletive.** A sudden profanity inserted within a conversation away from a males-only environment would be a shocking (emphatic) occurrence. And certainly, profanities would not be acceptable in a formal business setting or in an academic writing. But to still insert the sudden jolt of emphasis within the business conversation or academic writing, other acceptable language so used is still referred to as “expletives ... [,] a word or short phrase, often interrupting a sentence, used to lend emphasis to the words immediately before and after the expletive. The forced pause created by the expletive, together with the expletive itself, brings focus and emphasis to that part of the sentence” (Harris 15).

EXAMPLE WITHOUT EXPLETIVE

The defendant was at the time of the burglary at home with his family.

## EXAMPLE WITH EXPLETIVE

The defendant was at the time of the burglary, **as a matter of fact**, at home with his family.

**Hyperbole.** An extreme exaggeration; “the opposite of understatement ... [, and its use is most effective with a] calm and moderate tone [; in addition, ] ... the exaggeration ... [should be] of such a quality that it will not be taken literally by ... readers” (Harris 26).

## EXAMPLE

(from Malcolm X). “And I’m here to tell you in case you don’t know it that you got a new generation of black people in this country who don’t care anything whatsoever about odds. ... If they’re gonna draft these young black men and send them over to Korea or South Vietnam **to face 800 million Chinese**—if you’re not afraid of those odds, you shouldn’t be afraid of these odds” (Walker herein 257).

**Irony.** Using language in such a way that the overall meaning of the communication is in contradiction to its literal meaning, “as to convey a meaning opposite to the literal meaning of the word[s]” (Corbett and Connors 405).

EXAMPLE. “The investor pulled his money from the stock market and invested in precious stones” (Harris 22).

**Litotes.** A kind of understatement where a surprising reference is provided by indirection, “created by denying the opposite of the idea in mind” (Harris 24), emphasizing “its point by using a word opposite to the condition” (Moliken et al. 19).

## EXAMPLE without litotes

The presence at the basketball game of a number of college scouts meant that the star point-guard might receive some scholarship offers.

## EXAMPLE with litotes

The presence at the basketball game of a number of college scouts meant that the star point-guard should not expect to not receive some scholarship offers.

**Understatement.** A figure of speech used when the speaker intentionally makes a statement that is obviously (to almost everyone) false; a comment where listeners understand that obviously this statement is much less than what everyone expects.

EXAMPLE. President Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address”: “The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.” When made, President Lincoln’s use, probably, was not given intentionally as understatement.

### Summary Transitions (Questions)

**Hypophora.** Asking one or more questions but continuing a discussion where an expanded answer to the question(s) is provided. “A common usage is to ask a question at the beginning of a paragraph and then use the rest of the paragraph to answer it” (Harris 33).

EXAMPLE. Some of you might be asking, How might we in the black community as a group approach our future in America if we accept Professor Derrick Bell’s Racial Realism Theory. Well, just by eliminating our wholehearted dependence upon the benevolence of the federal government power structure in its myriad discriminatory practices, we can become proactive controlling our own destiny by ...

**Metabasis.** Providing a summary of the key information that has come before: “a brief statement of what has been said and what will follow. It functions as a kind of thought hinge, a transitional summary that links sections of writing together” (Harris 29).

EXAMPLE. I have provided you with some strategies for constructing your introduction paragraphs, but now I would like to offer some ideas for putting together your conclusion paragraph, a different element entirely.

**Procatalepsis.** This rhetorical device is a form of transition where the rhetor during the communication effort somewhat obliquely recognizes reasonable objections to a position and offers a refutation for each while continuing forward with the message, “... creat[ing] a conversational effect to an argument, where opposing comments are introduced and responded to in a back-and-forth dialog” (Harris 30-31).

EXAMPLE. The customary argument raised immediately by audiences upon hearing this idea about citizenship for undocumented workers is that they take away jobs from “true” Americans. However, this claim is a faulty generalization, being a “fallac[y] ... of reasoning in induction” (Corbett and Connors 68). These immigrants work jobs that “true” Americans will not work, at least at that hourly pay.

### Providing Clarification

**Amplification.** Providing different ways of explaining or describing an idea; a form of summary or elaboration by providing additional details or information (McKenzie 12) and is most useful for providing “clarity and emphasis ... [with] the effect ... of slowing down the process of thought, as the writer seems to back up a bit, restate a term, and provide detail about it before continuing the discussion” (Harris 42).

EXAMPLE. Now I've presented you students with a variety of argument essay organization strategies, one primary strategy being the introduction paragraph followed by paragraphs focused (in order) on two of your arguments in paragraph two, two additional arguments in paragraph three, a paragraph four where you refute valid opposing views, and a conclusion paragraph where you wrap up the discussion.

**Distinctio.** Providing detailed specificity in an elaboration effort to define a word toward the prevention of misunderstanding. “Words that indicate how *good* something is, how *likely* something is, or how *difficult* something is—these are all words that often need clarification. ... [and *distinctio* is] ... used with a linking phrase such as, “which is to say” or “by which I mean” (Moliken et al. 37).

EXAMPLE without *distinctio*

Illegal aliens should be allowed to become citizens.

EXAMPLE with *distinctio*

Undocumented workers should be allowed to become citizens because making a pathway to United States citizenship for these human beings is in the best interest of all concerned because these people pay taxes, they help finance our Social Security Fund, and their enormous labor intensive work on farms allows us to have produce available at much lower prices.

**Exemplum.** All communication efforts can be enhanced by providing examples to further explain or elaborate upon an idea. This rhetorical device is the mere addition of examples to further explain a communication effort.

EXAMPLE. “You’ll find this device to be very useful, especially in research papers, for example, when you want to cite specific authorities or quote specific sources” (Moliken 97).

**Metanoia.** A sort of elaboration to further explain an immediately prior comment, “a [q]ualification of a statement by recalling it and expressing it in a better way, often by using a negative” (Lanham 100); “calling ... back [the previous comment] and expressing it in a better, milder, or stronger way (Harris 43).

EXAMPLE. Many basketball coaches don’t really understand that the most valuable quality to look for in a prospect along with, of course, talent is intensity; no, not so much wild energy but dedication and commitment toward self-improvement and team.

### Figurative Language Comparisons

**Analogy.** Related to the metaphor and the simile, an analogy is also a comparison of two unlike items in an effort to bring greater clarity with regard to a possibly more complex entity, by comparison to a less complex concept: “... [as it] makes use of something already well known to explain something that is less well known ... helping to quickly make your reader see



precisely what you mean” (Moliken 63). “An analogy is created for the purpose of giving conceptual clarity, explaining an unfamiliar idea by comparing it to a familiar one ... [;] [it] is a practical device used to help the reader’s thought process, and is therefore usually chosen for its close similarity to the subject, so that the qualities in common offer helpful illumination of the subject” (Harris 52).

EXAMPLE. “The analogy is as important to the writer as the computer model is to the builder” (Moliken 63).

**Catachresis.** A somewhat shocking excessive (in tenor) metaphor that is mentioned along with a grammatical obstruction that effortlessly compares two unlike things: “The combination of a metaphor and the unusual expression can be dramatically effective.

EXAMPLE. The early dawn 10K run **was peopled with** little old ladies and young kids all wearing street clothes.

**Metaphor.** A comparison to two completely different “things,” but the comparison really seems to drive home the emphatic message in a speech. “Metaphor ... is a fundamental mechanism of mind, one that allows us to use what we know about our physical and social experience to provide understanding of countless other subjects” (115). “Metaphor ... is a fundamental mechanism of mind, one that allows us to use what we know about our physical and social experience to provide understanding of countless other subjects ... [and they] can shape our perceptions and actions without our ever noticing them” (Lakoff and Johnson cover).

EXAMPLE from Martin Luther King, Jr. “There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into an abyss of injustice where they experience the bleakness of corroding despair” (qtd. herein Walker 209).

**Simile.** This rhetorical device makes a direct comparison by using words such as “like” or “as,” to help clarify a message. Comparisons assist readers and listeners to more fully understand the message being given by the rhetor.

EXAMPLE. “But ä-the-wä (alas!) the incoming race, like a huge serpent, is coiling closer and closer about you” (qtd. herein Walker 293).

.....  
 Consideration: **symbolism.** Ordinarily, the use of symbols to portend ideas and qualities that reflect meanings that are different than the literal sense of the words is most often used as a literary device. Symbolism is another kind of indirect comparison, which would present a more vivid reproduction of a situation at hand. And always, pictures are “worth a thousand words.”

EXAMPLE. “Brothers—My people wish for peace; the red men all wish for each; but where the white people are, there is no peace for them, except it be on **the bosom of our mother**” (emphasis added).

**Synecdoche / metonymy.** Two related rhetorical devices wherein naming a part of a whole to reference the entire whole. “Synecdoche is the use of a part of something to represent the whole ... [and metonymy] refer[s] to something closely related to the actual object, and use[s] that as a way of referring to the object itself” (Moliken 174).

EXAMPLE *synecdoche*. There are a few retail stores today that no longer accept cash as **plastic** is fast becoming more widely used.

EXAMPLE *metonymy*. Our current President uses the familiar totalitarian epithet as he refers to the press as “the enemy of the people,” which is unfortunate because without a free press we cannot have a fully functioning democracy.

**Personification.** Assigning human qualities or characteristics to “animals, objects, or ideas: “The human attributes can be those of form, behavior, feelings, attitudes, motivation, and so forth” (Harris 68).

EXAMPLE from Moliken (194). Your writing will spring to life and energize your readers with fire-breathing ideas (194).

.....

Humor: **sarcasm.** A stylistic rhetorical device that offers a subtle humor, specifically satirical with where the rhetor makes a comment that he knows and hopes the audience also knows is patently false. Rhetor’s must be careful in its use because audiences may misinterpret or not understand the comment’s untruthfulness.

EXAMPLE. In the courtroom of honor, the judge pounded his gavel / To show that all’s equal and that the courts are o the level / And the strings in the books ain’t pulled and persuaded. And that even the Bible’s get properly handled. Once that the cops have chased after and caught ‘em / And that the ladder of law has no top and no bottom / Stared at the person who killed for no reason / Who just happened to be feelin’ that way without warnin’ / (“The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll”).

**Allusion.** A gentle reference to another event, person, or circumstance by a rhetor to an audience in an effort to present an image (visual) of the message s/he is disclosing. Moliken (et al.) writes affectingly about this rhetorical device, “*Allusions* can be used to help your reader see a broader picture, to evoke a negative or positive feeling, or to add credibility to your writing” (72).

EXAMPLE. “But now we got weapons / Of the chemical dust / If fire them we’re forced to / Then fire them we must / One push of the button / And a shot the world wide / And you never ask

questions / When God's on your side / ." The first comment is an allusion to nuclear war and an indirect consideration about the what that might (would?) happen with regard to nuclear annihilation. As the saying goes, "a picture is worth a thousand words" (qtd. herein Walker 54).

**Apostrophe.** A quite unique rhetorical device that involves a clear and distinct change of direction for the rhetor. Following a sequence discussion of ideas, the author suddenly shifts the discourse and begins "speaking" to himself/herself or to someone else, with an explanation of sorts: "[A] direct address to someone, whether present or absent, and whether real, imaginary, or personified. Its most common purpose is to permit the writer to turn away from the subject under discussion for a moment and give expression to built-up emotion" (Harris 76). The rhetor leaves the dialogue flow of speaking or writing to direct his/her attention to an inanimate object or to himself/herself: "[A] forceful, emotional device [that results where the] ... feeling it evokes is that the writer has become so caught up in what he or she is writing that it is no longer possible to respect the bounds of the narrative. Instead the text lets the writer demonstrate this fervor in a way that helps reinforce the central point" (Moliken et al. 140).

EXAMPLE. Undocumented immigrants perform a valuable service for our nation. Americans, don't you realize that our food prices, our Social Security Fund, and our nation's wealth from taxes would be tremendously devastated were all eleven million "illegals" sent away tomorrow? Our nation should create a pathway to citizenship for undocumented workers.

**Eponym.** A useful rhetorical device that is actually also an allusion, as the reference is to a well known person (a celebrity) where the effort is to connect some attribute or quality of the famous person to the person being discussed, but "using an *eponym* well can be something of a balancing act [:] if the person is too obscure, no one will understand your reference, but if it's too well known, it may come across as a cliché. ... [They] should be used sparingly, but with the right touch they can give a perfect finish to a piece" (Moliken et al. 79).

EXAMPLE. My friend Jacob really enjoys playing basketball probably as much as I do, a lot, but unfortunately, he is no Michael Jordan.

**Transferred epithet.** An epithet is the use of an adjective or adjective phrase to provide a special visual to the noun it modifies, providing or "describ[ing] a key characteristic of the noun ... [, and they] can also be metaphorical, usually with personified characteristics" (Harris 78). The **transferred epithet**, the adjective/adjective phrase use is especially selective in that it "... modif[ies] a noun that it cannot normally modify, but that makes figurative sense" (ibid.).

EXAMPLE. How many months must we continue to endure this coronavirus crisis, the joyful silences of our streets and roadways.

.....

Consider: **persona**. Not a rhetorical device *per se* but also not totally dissimilar to one, how the rhetor presents his/her message to an audience should depend upon the particular audience to be engaged. Harris writes extensively about this consideration “a person’s [the rhetor] perceived or evident personality” ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)):

[T]he personality that [is] reveal[ed] or creat[ed] through the communication. Aspects of **persona** include how knowledgeable the writer appears, what beliefs and values guide the writing, how calm or emotional the writer is, and so forth. ... All writing reflects a **persona**: Even writers who take care to remove themselves from their writing as far as possible still reveal [one] ... to their readers. [B]ehind much academic and scientific writing often appears to be detached, emotionless, cerebral, and guarded [which can be perceived to some] as cold, passionless, and even dull. Therefore, a single **persona** for all purposes will not be the most effective strategy to adopt.

### Syntax Language Use

**Zeugma**. Using a word to intentionally to apply to different parts of a sentence, which will engender different connotations (McKenzie 56). A strategy that involves managing audience expectations as a word is used to connect unexpected parts of a sentence: “... *any* linking of words, phrases, or clauses with a single word are examples of **zeugma**, but the most stylistically pleasing [ones]... involve linking unexpected elements in surprising ways” (McKenzie 170).

EXAMPLE. To become a better basketball player, you must learn dribbling, passing, and shooting the basketball, as second nature.

**Diazeugma**. The connecting word is a single subject that joins different verbs and verb phrases: “The phrases are usually put into parallel form to make the sentence easier to follow and to give it a balanced feel” (Harris 84).

EXAMPLE. A well written argument essay **introduces** its topic capably, **develops** several ideas well, and **ends** the discussion adroitly.

**Hypozeugma**. The linking word, rather than having a location early in a sentence, for this rhetorical device follows the words being linked together, generally “the presentation of multiple subjects” (Harris 87).

EXAMPLE. Because they pay taxes like everyone else, they pay into our Social Security system, and they work the menial jobs Americans generally will not work (at the minimum-wage range), undocumented workers should be provided with a pathway to United States citizenship.

**Mesozeugma.** Neither up front nor at the end, for this rhetorical device the linking words are placed in the middle of the sentence, which “shifts the emphasis from the verb idea ... to the object of inclusion” (Harris 86).

EXAMPLE from Harris (87). The governor left the news conference and then the reporter.

**Prozeugma.** Where there are sets of words, with this rhetorical device the linking word is used only once as it is “omitted from the subsequent sets of words or phrases linked together [;] ... the link is often a verb” (Harris 85).

EXAMPLE. The freshman point guard is a fantastic shooter; the junior, a good passer; the senior, a determined rebounder.

**Syllepsis.** This example of a kind of zeugma differs in that the parts joined are “linked ... in different senses or meanings of the linking word. ... Sometimes the different senses of the linking word include a literal sense and a figurative sense” (Harris 88).

EXAMPLE from Harris (89). When daylight saving time ends, change your clocks, your smoke alarm batteries, and your mind about sleeping late.

**Anastrophe.** Subject – Verb – Object is the customary structure of the sentence in the English language, but with **anastrophe**, this structure is disrupted in some manner. By making this disruption, emphasis is then placed upon a selected word or phrase different from the usual words as placed. For example, ordinarily an adjective is placed before the noun it modifies, but with this rhetorical device using a reversed order, emphasis is then placed upon the adjective instead of the noun. In addition, “[A]**nastrophe** can also be constructed by separating two adjectives by the noun they modify, creating a construction similar to mesozeugma,” (Harris 94) where the linking word is placed in the middle of the sentence.

EXAMPLE from Harris (95). That is a story amazing but true (95).

**Appositive.** A noun phrase that follows and renames the noun immediately before it as “the ... nouns are in apposition (not opposition) to each other” (Harris 96). The placement structure is accomplished by using commas (most often used), dashes or parentheses (ibid.).

EXAMPLE. Alex, **my younger brother**, is also a public school teacher as are our other two brothers.

**Hyperbaton.** There are a number of ways the rhetor can arrange words in a sentence in order to place the focus where s/he desires. **Hyperbaton** is the rhetorical device that provides the example in that this term is the reference for the disruption of the common word order: “any departure from normal word order. The unexpected arrangement of words calls sharp attention to the word or words that are out of their usually expected place, thus emphasizing them.

Displacing a word to the end or beginning of the sentence (the positions of greatest emphasis) further stresses them” (Harris 93).

EXAMPLE. Because of an error in the contract, the film rights to the novel, after all the pre-filming preparation, were lost (Harris 94).

NOTE: Another way to utilize this rhetorical device “is to insert a phrase or clause between the subject and verb of a standard sentence” (Harris 94).

**Hypotaxis / Parataxis.** Concerning the arrangements of clauses or phrases, those arrangements that are coordinate define the rhetorical device as **parataxis**, where often conjunctions or other connecting words are not found. Where subordination is present, the term **hypotaxis** is used, most often along with conjunctions or other connecting words (Lanham 108): In paratactic prose, clauses are loosely connected [without conjunctions], creating a lopping discourse ... [and] [i]n hypotactic prose, sentences are connected by the interclausal relations [with conjunctions].

EXAMPLE hypotaxis from McKenzie (39). “I was hungry, so I ate” (McKenzie 39).

EXAMPLE parataxis from Lanham (108). “I came, I saw, I conquered” (Lanham 108).

**Parenthesis.** On some occasions, the communicator (rhetor) will need to interrupt the flow of a message. This flow can be interrupted (set off) in several ways; by using the parenthesis marks, or the commas or the dashes; an increasing order of emphasis or importance. Helpfully, the parenthesis marks are used when the interruption is merely an aside, supplemental information of no great importance; “...[t]he least emphatic way of setting off a parenthetical interruption... [and] confers a natural, spoken, informal feel to a sentence” (Harris 98). The commas are most often used with additional information of mid-range importance and “are calmer version of dashes” (Moliken 131). And the dashes are used for important information that is to be highlighted or that is given to “jolt your readers and make them pay attention to what you have to say” (ibid.).

The following basic sentence concept idea comes from Harris (98); the changed examples from Walker (author herein).

EXAMPLE using parenthesis. “The collection (**vases not inventoried**) including the priceless Stimson collection was not inventoried until four months after the suspected break-in.”

EXAMPLE using commas. The collection of vases, including the priceless Stimson collection, was not inventoried until four months after the suspected break-in.

EXAMPLE using dashes. The collection of vases was not inventoried—including the priceless Stimson collection—until four months after the suspected break-in.

NOTE: The rhetor makes the decision concerning what information s/he wishes to emphasize.

### Repetition Transitions

**Anaphora / Epistrophe / Symploce.** Repetition is used by communicators (rhetors) to relay an emphatic sequence of information to an audience. When this information is given by repetition “of a word or phrase at the beginning of multiple clauses or sentences” (Moliken 185), the rhetorical device is *anaphora*. When the repetition of a word or phrase occurs “at the end of multiple clauses or sentences” (ibid.), the *epistrophe* rhetorical device is used. And when both rhetorical devices are used “by repeating words at both the beginning and the ending of phrases, clauses, or sentences” (Harris 107), the *symploce* rhetorical device is used.

Emphatic and somewhat aggressive (ibid.), *anaphora* should only occasionally be used just when special emphasis is to be applied in a message. The end of a sentence is also a natural point of stress, so *epistrophe* should also be used sparingly; its uniqueness among the three is that placement of repetition at the end of sentences make it useful in “combin[ation] with climax and metanoia to create a highly dramatic effect” (Harris 106). The *symploce* rhetorical device, using its repetition of words at both beginnings and endings of sentences, can be useful “to set up a contrast or antithesis” (Harris 107) in a message.

EXAMPLE *anaphora*. These human beings, eleven million undocumented workers, work our farms; these human beings pay our taxes; these human beings have become our neighbors—they should be brought out into the open and given a pathway to United States citizenship.

EXAMPLE *epistrophe*. The eleven million undocumented workers in the United States today contribute mightily to our own way of life, as they work our farms; paying taxes as they work our farms; paying into our Social Security Fund as they work our farms; and raising our American children (their children) as they work our farms.

EXAMPLE *symploce*. These human beings, eleven million undocumented workers, work our farms because we native-born Americans do not desire to perform that work, and so we silently allow these human beings to work our farms.

**Anadiplosis / *conduplicatio*.** A form of repetition utilizing the emphatic parts of a sentence—the beginning and the ending. This repetition uses the last word(s) of one clause or sentence to be immediately followed by repeating that same word/words at the beginning of the very next clause or sentence.

Closely related, *conduplicatio*, is a repetition of a key word that can be found anywhere in a previous clause or sentence, that is placed at the beginning of the very next sentence, or clause.

EXAMPLE *anadiplosis*. Undocumented workers employed on our American farms perform an invaluable service to our United States economy; our United States economy would go into free-fall if these eleven million human beings were not there.

EXAMPLE *conduplicatio*. Our American farms are harvested primarily by eleven million undocumented workers who are forced to live in the shadows; these eleven million undocumented workers are human beings we continue to ignore.

**Antimetabole.** Repeated words or phrases in successive clauses where the repeated wording is made in reverse order: “revers[ing] the order of repeated words or phrases ... call[s] attention to the final formulation, present[s] ... alternatives, or show[s] ... contrast.

EXAMPLE. “And so, my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country” (Inaugural Address of John F. Kennedy, 20 January 1961).

**Diacope.** The repetition of a word or phrase where other words have intervened between the repetition, which “... can occur anywhere in the sentence” (Harris 119).

EXAMPLE. The stock market fell mightily with news of the coronavirus; the stock market fell mightily.

**Epanalepsis.** This repetition involves a repeating of a word or phrase that begins a sentence with the same word or phrase at the end of the sentence (Lanham 66-67): “Placing the same idea in the two major positions of emphasis in the sentence calls attention to it, while the echo of the beginning at the end creates a feeling of return to the first thought. ... The number of words intervening before the repetition may be many or few ...” (Harris 114).

EXAMPLE. **Getting groceries** these days of the coronavirus pandemic seems nonstop and endless as I’m seemingly always **getting groceries**.

**Epizeuxis.** Strictly for emphasis, a word or very short phrase is repeated usually two or three times in succession, “with no other words between” (Lanham 71). “A primary use and effect of *epizeuxis* is to present the idea that there is a large amount of whatever is being repeated—that repetition is required, not merely for emphasis, but to cover the quantity being described, as if a single word could not perform the task by itself” (Harris 121). The repetition can occur at the beginning of the sentence or in the middle or at the end.

EXAMPLE. Undocumented workers toil in the hot sun for hours each day of the growing season **harvesting the farm produce, harvesting the farm produce** for us while we native-born Americans give them little thought.



**Scesis onomaton.** Synonyms are words having identical meanings, and the use of several of these synonyms following the original word (for these synonyms) is the *scesis onomaton* rhetorical device: “[a] sentence constructed of substantive and adjectives only ... [u]sing a string of synonymous expressions” (Lanham 135). “The repetition garners attention for an idea by dwelling on it, and at the same time the various restatements allow the writer to present a richer view of the idea through multiple ways of expressing it” (Harris 123).

EXAMPLE. This coronavirus is now a pandemic, people everywhere are getting the virus, so many people are getting sick.

### Musical Sounds

**Alliteration.** Some scholars believe that our writing has rhythm and sound, which we automatically engage as we read silently or aloud. Assuming this to be a reality, controlling the words we use for rhythm (placement) and sound (**alliteration**) enhances the message a rhetor produces. Thus, the use of words in succession that have the same or similar beginning syllables produces a certain rhythm and sound.

EXAMPLE. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth **to lead the land we love**, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God’s work must truly be our own (John F. Kennedy’s Inaugural Address, 1961)

**Assonance.** A kind of repetition of sound where similar vowel sounds (from words placed in close proximity) that “... are preceded and followed by consonants, in stressed syllables ... [of those] stressed words” (Corbett and Connors 389). Harris comments that, “[a]ssonance creates a subtle but elegant effect [that] ... allows the writer to include a feeling of rhythm and sound that is perfectly acceptable. ... In formal prose, while rhyming would be inappropriate, **assonance** allows the writer to include a feeling of rhythm and sound that is perfectly acceptable. ... [It] differs from alliteration (initial vowel sound) and rhyme (same ending sound)” (133-134).

EXAMPLE from Harris (135). “If if **flies like** a duck, it’s assonance” (Harris 135).

**Euphony.** The use of pleasant sounding words generated by a melodious effect is an assist in a rhetorical artifact. Such words and phrases provide “... pleasing and soothing effects to the ear due to repeated vowels and smooth consonants ... . [Its] purpose ... is to bring about ... peaceful and pleasant feelings ... . The long vowels create more melodious effect than short vowels and consonants, making the sounds harmonious and soothing. In addition, pronunciation and enunciation become agreeable and easy” ([www.literarydevices.net](http://www.literarydevices.net)).

EXAMPLE from *Macbeth* (William Shakespeare) reported in [www.literarydevices.net](http://www.literarydevices.net). "... Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, ... It is a tale / Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, / Signifying nothing."

**Cacophony.** "The use of words with sharp, harsh, hissing, and unmelodious sounds—primarily those of consonants—to achieve desired results" ([www.literarydevices.net](http://www.literarydevices.net)). There is a specific function for use of harsh wording as "[w]riters use **cacophony** as a tool to describe a discordant situation using discordant words [, which] ... allows readers to picture and feel the unpleasantness of the situation the writer [or speaker] has described through words" (ibid.).

EXAMPLE from *Gulliver's Travels* (Jonathan Swift) reported in [www.literarydevices.net](http://www.literarydevices.net). And being no stranger to the art of war, I have him a description of cannons, culverins, muskets, carabines, pistols, bullets, powder, swords, bayonets, battles, sieges, ..."

**Consonance.** Called "backwards alliteration" (Harris 134) or "reverse alliteration" (Lanham 40), **assonance** occurs with the repetition "of consonant sounds within and among words" (Fahnestock 136) "at the end of stressed syllables (or short words) with different vowels before the consonants" (Harris 134).

EXAMPLE from Harris (135). "If it **looks like** a duck it's consonance" (Harris 135).

**Onomatopoeia.** Using words that phonetically have the same sound when pronounced (Harris 130) as the words they are describing (McKenzie 43). **Onomatopoeias** add not only interesting and lively sounds to writing, but they also often involve distinctive movements of the mouth to pronounce, thereby adding to their effect" (Harris 130).

EXAMPLE from Harris (135). "If it **quacks** like a duck, it's onomatopoeia" (Harris 135).

## **ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF RHETORICAL DEVICES AND TERMS**

**alliteration.** 20, 21, 56, 93, 129, 205, 211, 242, 243, 338

**allusion.** 20, 53, 57, 76, 107, 108, 143-145, 152, 217, 332

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**anadiplosis** 337

**analogy.** 256, 330

**anaphora.** 20, 21, 53, 56, 61, 67, 77, 109-110, 112-114, 150, 151, 153-6, 158, 160, 161, 178, 179, 185, 186, 210, 217, 218, 230, 241, 297, 308-10, 336

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