ISSA Proceedings 2006 – Arguments For Popular Audiences: Early U.S. Woman's Rights Advocacy In The Lyceum Lectures Of Elizabeth Oakes Smith

At the midpoint of the nineteenth century, controversies roiled the United States. In the aftermath of the annexation of Texas, the Mexican-American War, and the California Gold Rush, Americans debated the recently named doctrine of manifest destiny. In books, journals, and public speeches, abolitionists and proslavery advocates challenged and defended the morality and legitimacy of slavery and its extension into western territories; nativist Protestants expressed fears of European immigrants, particularly Catholics from Ireland and Germany; and temperance activists continued their decades-long efforts to control or abolish intoxicating liquors. At a time of profound change in transportation and communication technologies, in patterns of migration, and in customs of work and leisure, Americans also argued about gender roles. This paper explicates one site for the production of arguments about gender, the popular public lecture, and illuminates the rhetorical challenges faced by those who rejected a necessary correlation between biological sex and individual capacity.

Although many women and men had long advocated women's equal access to education, their right to control property, and their right to speak publicly about moral causes, it was at a public meeting in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848 that a more formal, more coherent movement on behalf of American women began. This new woman's rights movement emerged directly from the organized efforts for the abolition of slavery, as abolitionist women had repeatedly found themselves restricted from public action owing to their sex. Adherents of the new woman's rights movement called for women's legal, political, religious, educational, occupational, and social equality with men.

Arguments both for and against an expansion of American women's opportunities

circulated in the media of the time – in newspapers and magazines, in conversations and sermons and legislative addresses, in poems and novels and popular lectures. Opposing arguments were powerful, often expressed by individuals with considerable cultural and economic capital. For example, in the early 1850s a prolific Methodist clergyman, Daniel Wise, published an advice manual for young women, clearly articulating a common belief in gendered realms of action. He wrote, "Everything has its appointed sphere, within which alone it can flourish. Men and women have theirs . . . . Man is fitted for the storms of public life . . . . Woman is formed for the calm of home" ([185-], pp. 91-92). Wise continued with a warning to women: "She may venture . . . to invade the sphere of man, but she will encounter storms which she is utterly unfitted to meet; happiness will forsake her breast, her own sex will despise her, men will be unable to love her, and when she dies she will fill an unhonored grave" (p. 92). Similar attitudes were heard on public lecture platforms. Richard Henry Dana Sr., a Harvard-educated poet and critic, asserted in a popular lecture in the 1840s that a "law" of sex difference grounded appropriate roles for men and women and that the acceptance of women's public action would destroy the future of humanity, creating "a race of moral and mental hybrids" (n.d., 19). Although the educational reformer Horace Mann publicly supported increased opportunities for women's education in the 1850s, he forecast pernicious consequences if women became involved in political strife (Ray 2006, p. 191). Such examples illustrate the argumentative obstacles faced by those who would support contrary positions: not only did the premise of natural or divinely created gender roles present a refutative challenge, forcing one either to argue against nature and God or to reinterpret natural phenomena and scriptural precedent, but a woman who chose to engage in public argument on this question also faced a profound problem of reception: her act of adopting the persona of an arguer could be seen to provide evidence for her opponents' claims. Rhetorical scholar Karlyn Kohrs Campbell has described the woman public speaker as an oxymoron, and that figure of paradox was rarely embodied as starkly as in the mid-nineteenth century (1973, 1999).

Early U.S. woman's rights advocates faced such challenges in a variety of ways, often offering biblical evidence to refute claims of women's inferiority or generating political arguments based on principles of liberal democracy and especially on the nation's founding documents. Many performed femininity in conventional ways, through dress and comportment, seeking to refute the prevailing assumption that, as activist Paulina Wright Davis described it, "all

women's rights women are horrid old frights with beards and mustaches" (1852b). Rhetorical strategies varied depending on the specific purpose, the audience, and the context, of course. Early activists attempted to create movement ideologies and rally adherents to those principles, and they addressed state legislatures to present grievances and to call for legal redress (Campbell 1989, 1:1-69, 2:33-186). Woman's rights supporters also sought to sway public opinion, to express alternative visions of gender roles, to allay fears, and to inspire new ways of thinking and acting. In the early days of the organized movement, a few woman's rights activists traveled throughout the country – especially the Northeast and what is now called the Midwest – addressing audiences in public halls, churches, and commercial lecturing venues like lyceums and literary societies. Only a few women became popular lecturers before the Civil War, for the strength of social pressures opposing women's speaking in public was profound. Social norms dictated that women's voices on public platforms could be heard reading or singing the words of men, but women speaking in instructional and argumentative modes were often deemed unnatural (Ray 2006).

It was in this milieu that Elizabeth Oakes Smith began to deliver popular lectures supporting an expansion of women's opportunities and responsibilities.[i] Oakes Smith was unusual among woman's rights advocates of the early 1850s, having come to public advocacy not through a formal association with the abolitionist movement but as a popular poet and novelist. A native of Maine with a Puritan and Unitarian heritage, Oakes Smith was married at age sixteen to Seba Smith, a writer and newspaper editor twice her age, and she reared four sons who lived to adulthood. Oakes Smith began publishing poetry and articles in the 1820s, but it was only after Seba Smith's failed land speculations combined with the economic panic of 1837 that she began to publish prolifically. During the 1840s she became a well-known author, and her poem *The Sinless Child* of 1842 was admired by Edgar Allan Poe and likely provided the inspiration for Harriet Beecher Stowe's character of Little Eva in her antislavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Oakes Smith also published novels based on Indian folklore and spiritualist belief. In 1839 she had heard the controversial Scottish heiress and freethinker Fanny Wright lecture in New York and was captivated by Wright's platform manner, style, and radical ideas. During the 1840s Oakes Smith was increasingly drawn to public advocacy, and from November 1850 to June 1851 Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune* published a series of ten articles by Oakes Smith collectively titled *Woman and*

Her Needs, which circulated as a pamphlet in 1851 (Belasco 2001; Nickels & Scherman 1994; Scherman 1998, 2001).

A literary celebrity, Oakes Smith in 1851 extended her advocacy beyond the printed page and onto the rostrum. She began arranging speaking engagements in lyceums, churches, and other public venues. This new career proved remunerative for Oakes Smith and her family, although several friends in the New York literary and journalistic community, who had supported her as a poet and novelist, condemned her for her public lecturing (Smith 1852, 1879). She was the first woman to speak at many lyceums, including, in December 1851, the Concord Lyceum in Massachusetts, which boasted the membership of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Amos Bronson Alcott (Cameron 1969, p. 165). She toured the Northeast and the Midwest during the 1850s, giving lectures with such titles as "Womanhood," "Manhood," "Our Humanity," "Woman, Considered as Inferior to Man," "The Dignity of Labor," "Cleopatra," and "Madame Roland." She continued publishing novels and poetry and also wrote plays. In 1854 she published two sentimental novels, *Bertha and Lily* and *The Newsboy,* the former a feminist treatise that developed the themes of her woman's rights lectures, and the latter a story that depicted the plight of young orphaned boys in New York slums.**[ii]** *Bertha and Lily* was praised by Susan B. Anthony, who wrote to Oakes Smith, explicitly identifying the novel's persuasive potential. Anthony wrote that *Bertha and Lily* would "do a glorious work for women" and that it should be published in "a form so cheap" that it would not fail to find audiences across economic classes (Anthony 1854).

At one point in *Bertha and Lily*, the character Bertha – who has acquired a profound spirituality through hard experience – arranges the construction of a special temple, filled with flowers, and delivers public lectures there. Bertha's lectures address women and men, young people and old, and they emphasize the intersection between the practical, natural, and spiritual. To women, she "taught . . . botany, horticulture – she suggested new modes of industry, improvements in housekeeping – in dress. She gave them higher subjects for thought, and encouraged them to question her" (Smith 1854, p. 245). In Oakes Smith's fictional vision, the public lecture is a site for learning to improve one's life and intellect, and although the ideal here is filtered through a romantic sensibility, its emphasis on practical learning for self-improvement and an apprehension of divine wisdom coincides with the idealistic goals espoused by lyceum promoters of the 1820s

and 1830s (Ray 2005, pp. 14-33, 68-72).

The realities of commercial performance in the 1850s, however, meant that Oakes Smith's public lectures treated different themes than did the fictional Bertha's. Whereas Bertha, who did not have to seek fees from her audience, could presume her authority to teach, the nonfictional Elizabeth Oakes Smith found it necessary first to challenge the conventions for gendered performance. The generic expectations of the popular lecture in the 1850s emphasized a lecturer's ability to perform well, captivating an audience through dramatic physical presence and thoughtful content, and also carefully controlling controversial themes. Common topics were tales of exotic travel, philosophical reflection, literary and political history, and national identity. Explicitly partisan or sectarian topics were typically proscribed, and successful lecturers who produced social critique often did so within frameworks that supported conventional belief. The popular lecture was understood to be more instructional or expressive than argumentative. At the same time, the successful lecturer articulated ideas in ways remarkable enough to ignite thought well after the event had ended, and the rhetorical ideal of the lecture platform as free and open meant that audiences did not expect always to agree with views espoused (Ray 2005, p. 111).

Many of Oakes Smith's popular lectures of the 1850s partook of the conventions of the lecture of philosophical reflection, and they echoed themes that she had developed in *Woman and Her Needs*. These lectures included "Womanhood," "Manhood," "Our Humanity," "Woman, Considered as Inferior to Man," and "The Dignity of Labor." Unlike other early woman's rights advocates such as Clarina Howard Nichols, Oakes Smith did not typically claim authority through the use of evidence from personal experience (cf. Campbell 1989, 1:13, 2:123-144). Although literary scholars regularly note parallels between Oakes Smith's own life and the generalizations about marriage, education, and work in her poems, novels, and lectures (e.g., Walker 1982, p. 76; Rose 2001, p. 210), it is important to note that when Oakes Smith wrote or spoke publicly as an advocate, she rarely adopted the persona of the specific "I." Rather, the speaking persona, especially of the lectures, was more often a preacher or a moral force, offering alternative representations of gendered humanity. The speaking persona, that is, was unapologetically assertive. For example, in her lecture "Womanhood," Oakes Smith expressed the purpose of reaching women auditors: "I am here . . . in the hope that by envying the ultimate of which we are capable, [women] may be

roused from flout and imbecility, from pettiness and discontent, into some sphere of true nobleness. We lack the incitements of an aim, the stirring of magnanimous thought, the loftiness of aspiration" (Smith 1851b). The goal of creating women as an audience (Campbell 1989, 1:13), offering women a means of understanding themselves as capable of ambitious action, was thus articulated straightforwardly, and Oakes Smith performed a blend of gender conventions by presenting a form of direct speech conventionally associated with masculinity in the voice and body of a woman. Oakes Smith apparently dressed and comported herself on the public platform in ways that contemporaries among the white Protestant middle and upper classes interpreted as conventionally feminine (Belasco 2001, p. 277; Wyman 1927, p. 194; Scherman 1999). Such a mix of performed conventions of gender enacted the argument that she made repeatedly about the non-natural status of gendered spheres (cf. Campbell & Jamieson 1978, p. 9).

Indeed, an attack on the doctrine of separate spheres was a major theme in Oakes Smith's popular lecturing. Repeating a phrase that recurred throughout her published and unpublished work, Oakes Smith in both "Our Humanity" and "The Dignity of Labor" asserted an individualistic basis for an appropriate sphere of action: "The measure of capacity is the measure of sphere to either man or woman" (Smith 1851a, n.d.; cf. Smith 1850; 1854, p. 83; 1879). In "Dignity of Labor" Oakes Smith described individual capacity as an aptitude for certain types of work: "Men sell us hose and shoes, and fit gaiters to women's ankles, and like these employments, it is in keeping equally for women to be Conductors upon railways." Offering examples of women astronomers, ships' captains, gold miners, farmers, and philanthropists, she illustrated her assertion that a wise and beneficent God, "whose infinite resources of infinite beauty forbids the making of two leaves upon the same tree exactly alike," similarly created women and men in multitudinous variety (Smith n.d.). Oakes Smith claimed gender not as a natural dichotomy but rather as a rhetorical construction, not only by identifying women who adopted so-called masculine roles and by describing men who adopted so-called feminine roles (in "Dignity of Labor" she said, "Some men like the needle and some women like the hoe" [Smith n.d.]). But she also asserted that "the fullest types" of humankind blended masculine and feminine qualities. In "Womanhood" she identified Jesus as an example, along with Plato, Aspasia, and England's queen Elizabeth (Smith 1851b; cf. Ray 2006, p. 212n77). Further, Oakes Smith emphasized this blending of qualities through the image of marriage, promoting an ideal of a marriage of equals and then employing that ideal as a

synecdoche for a sacramental joining of male and female principles, men and women persons, in a collective, public effort for social, material, and spiritual betterment.

It was in expressing an ideal of a new type of womanhood that Oakes Smith's blending of gendered conventions foundered on the shoals of linguistic possibility. In imagining a new form of womanhood as a Noble Woman, she adapted the familiar image of woman as queen, a representation that implicitly circumscribed the figure of the ideal woman within the upper class (cf. Rose 2001, p. 222). In envisioning a transformed public realm, free of political corruption, the squalor and humiliations of poverty, and the egotism of wealth, Oakes Smith imagined the agent of change as a womanly healing angel, echoing a common image purportedly describing women's natures (Smith 1851b). Similarly, in "Dignity of Labor," Oakes Smith unabashedly equated "the feminine element" with spirituality and masculinity with strength and material progress, although the lecture did claim that the principles coexisted within individual men and women (Smith n.d.). Her description of "the woman perfect in all attributes" – a creature who was, said Oakes Smith, still forthcoming – can easily be read as a form of the conventionally pure, pious True Woman: "clear, calm, courageous in thought, virginal in sentiment, and spiritual in the highest" (Smith 1870-1887; cf. Ray 2006, p. 201; Richards 2004, p. 157). Yet Oakes Smith's epitropic acceptance of the terms of antebellum gender conventions were rendered ironic, as she expanded the sphere of the True Woman so that the new Noble Woman reached fulfillment through public action (Rose 2001, pp. 222-223).

The obstacles faced by woman's rights advocates of the 1850s, combined with the expectations for popular lectures as more didactic than argumentative and the exigencies of producing performances for fee-paying audiences, help explain the form of Elizabeth Oakes Smith's lyceum lectures. The rhetorical figure of epitrope recurred repeatedly, in concessions to the terms and occasionally to the claims of opponents (Jasinski 2001, pp. 547-549). Oakes Smith established common ground with conventional belief by accepting the relevance of appropriate spheres of action, determined by God and nature, but she reframed the basis of the spheres argument by denying the relevance of biological sex in such a determination. Rather, according to Oakes Smith, a divinely ordained individual capacity – individual aptitude, skill, and talent – established spheres for action. Such a position resonated with Emersonian self-reliance, Protestantism's emphasis on

the priesthood of the believer, and Enlightenment notions of natural rights. At the same time, however, Oakes Smith laid claim to a feminine superiority in moral and spiritual matters, accepting one of the basic premises of the convention of spheres and undercutting her own assertions about ungendered individuality. The struggle to adapt gendered conventions for the purpose of reformist advocacy, and to present revolutionary notions in familiar language, resulted in complexities, inconsistencies, and confusion in the work of Oakes Smith and other antebellum U.S. woman's rights advocates.

The influence of Elizabeth Oakes Smith's feminist efforts is not easy to gauge. Her contemporaries interpreted her lectures variously (see Wyman 1927, pp. 193-208). Thoreau confided to his journal that he found her lecture "Womanhood" "suggestive" only because "a woman said it," and, as for her personally, he wrote that "she was a woman in the too common sense after all" (1992, p. 233). Woman's rights advocates, conversely, celebrated Oakes Smith's having given voice to women on lyceum platforms (Stanton, Anthony, & Gage 1889, p. 231). Paulina Wright Davis described Oakes Smith as less radical than many activists but nevertheless "a great treasure" who "never offends a hundred where she converts one" (1852a). Some women actively sought the inspiration offered by Oakes Smith's lectures: as a young girl, Christine Ladd-Franklin, later a psychologist who theorized color vision, was taken to an Oakes Smith lecture by her mother, Augusta Ladd, who favorably described the theme, writing that women belonged "every place where a man should be" (Furumoto 1992, p. 176). In our own time, Oakes Smith's work has been largely forgotten, although her poetry and fiction are increasingly receiving treatment from literary critics (e.g., Douglas 1977; Jackson & Prins 1999; Nickels & Scherman 1994; Richards 2004; Rose 2001; Walker 1982, 1992; Wiltenburg 1984; Woidat 2001). For rhetorical scholars, studying the popular lectures of Oakes Smith and other early woman's rights advocates offers the potential to expand our knowledge of the repertoire of rhetorical styles practiced by early women public speakers in the United States, and to illuminate the complexities of linguistic and performative strategies designed to propose fundamental change to popular audiences within a context in which overt argument was culturally proscribed. Oakes Smith's work calls attention to questions that remain salient for discourses of social reform that seek a balance between finding common ground and asserting fundamental change: most notably, how much of an opposition argument can be adopted before one's own position is compromised?

In the early 1850s Oakes Smith carved out a space for herself as a professional and demonstrated a capacity to embody the philosophical lecturer. By enacting the claims that she espoused against the separation of occupational spheres by sex, she performatively challenged the assumptions of gendered behavior, offering an image of gender hybridity that was considerably less threatening – for good and for ill – than that imagined by many of her contemporaries.

NOTES

[i] Born Elizabeth Oakes Prince, she became Elizabeth Oakes Smith upon her marriage. She often chose to publish under the name Elizabeth Oakes Smith or E. Oakes Smith, and she had the names of her sons legally changed to Oaksmith (Kirkland 1994, p. 15). This paper adopts her preferred practice by identifying her surname as Oakes Smith. Because libraries catalog her work under the name Smith, however, the references follow that convention.

[ii] The term feminist is anachronistic in this context, since feminism prior to the 1890s simply denoted "the qualities of females" (Oxford 1989). The term is used here in its twentieth- and twenty-first-century sense, signaling Oakes Smith's advocacy of women's equal access to social, legal, and political opportunities.

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – Undesirable Passions: Utopia's Emotionless Rationality

As these noble Houyhnhnms are endowed by nature with a general disposition to all virtues, and have no conceptions or ideas of what is evil in a rational creature; so their grand maxim is, to cultivate *reason*, and to be wholly governed by it. Neither is *reason* among them a point problematical as with us, where men can argue with plausibility on both sides of the question; but strikes you with immediate conviction; as it must needs do where it is not mingled, obscured, or discoloured by passion or interest. (Swift 1991, p. 285)

There is a large body of literature that might be called utopian ranging from Plato's Republic to many of the more recent works of science fiction that are often more aptly described as dystopian but which inevitably critique utopianism or the attempt to construct an ideal society. Indeed, the field of literature that might be considered in relation to what I shall attempt to argue in this paper concerning utopianism's implied notion of reason, as inferred largely from its treatment of

the emotions, becomes impractically extensive when one attempts to include the countless utopianisms that haunt and inform great swathes of literature as novels, poems, and works of political philosophy variously refer to or attempt to construct utopias of varying hues. For example, to refer to just two of the main utopian texts frequently discussed by scholars of utopianism, one might examine the implicit notions of reason and how these can be better understood in relation to their respective treatments of the emotions in Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun* (1623) and Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1626). But other texts, some of which figure less prominently if at all in academic discourse on utopianism, might also be examined with regard to their implicit notions of reason and treatment or omission of the emotions such as Milton's depiction of the prelapsarian Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden in *Paradise Lost*, Bunyan's quest in his *Pilgrim's Progress* towards freedom from the burden of sin and realization of salvation in the Celestial City, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*, Voltaire's *Candide*, Robert Burns' poem '*A Man's a Man for a That*', John Lennon's famous hit single '*Imagine*', and so on. In short, perhaps unsurprisingly given the traditional connections between reason and many notions of idealism and given that all utopianisms are themselves types or sub-species of idealism, there is a superabundance of texts that are to varying degrees significantly relevant to utopianism and which might yield some interesting readings and reassessments when examined with regard to their respective notions of reason and their treatment of the emotions. However, to constrain my focus considerably: rather uncontentiously, there are three main texts that stand out as central to our comprehension of this often complex genre: Plato's *Republic*, Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). What I have to say in this paper relates to these texts and only indirectly to other instances of utopianism. Constraining my argument to a discussion of some rather broadly defined characteristics of utopianism, I shall not include any close reading of the primary texts in question nor shall I make any pointed reference to several of the secondary texts which have helped to inform this discussion (Kumar 1993, Molnar 1990, Starnes 1990, Slusser 1999). This paper therefore attempts to provide a merely preliminary exploration of some of the underlying assumptions concerning reason and the emotions, and the relevance of the fictive nature of utopian texts.

Evident within much of the literature on utopianism, it is justifiably a virtual commonplace to say that utopias are highly dependent upon rationality, as they construct more or less realistic fictional worlds in which conflict is minimized,

social efficiency and cohesion is crafted by adherence to regulative principles, guidelines, and rules, and in which rational solutions for many if not all of life's ills and vicissitudes collectively describe the good for humankind as something only possible by means of the overarching governance of reason. The ideally just society that is outlined by Socrates in *The Republic*, or the utopian society more elaborately figured by More in *Utopia* or brilliantly satirized by Swift in the final journey of Gulliver to Houyhnhnmland is a society governed by rationality. Indeed, in certain utopian texts, so dominant is reason or the implicit and explicit appeals to rationality, and so de-emphasised are the emotions, that there is little room for any, except the most constricted or anaesthetized, emotional life.

This rationality in the utopian text is decidedly teleological or purposive as it seems to serve a single overarching end or *telos*, namely, the realisation and maintenance of peace, or of a peaceful, harmonious, and even tranquil existence – More's Utopians live wholesome lives, enjoying notably harmless, simple pleasures, comparatively unperturbed by want or strife (More, trans. 1989, pp. 50-60, pp. 74-77). This peaceful nature of the utopian society or ideally good or just society is one that is largely if not entirely devoid of conflict. Certainly, More's *Utopia* seems to insist in several places on the overarching importance of internal peace or harmony and freedom from protracted internal disputes (More, trans. 1989, p. 49, p. 82, p. 104). Thus, the typical utopia is a society of internal harmony, a society almost entirely free of internal conflict. In *Utopia* social activities are restricted to minimize the possibility of brawling, crime, and vice (More, trans. 1989, p. 60, p. 73). Furthermore, there are plenty of severe punishments for conduct that might give rise to internal conflict – banishment, enslavement, and forced celibacy are just some of the more outstanding ones mentioned in *Utopia* (More, trans. 1989, pp. 80-84). However, despite More's severe restrictions on the possibility of *internal* conflict, the Utopians do seem to be eminently capable of dealing successfully with external conflict as they wage war on neighbouring states (More, trans. 1989, pp. 87-95).

To reverse Hume's famously troubling and parlous phrase concerning the relationship of reason to the passions, it would seem that in a utopia, as exemplar of a certain ideal of human well-being, the passions are and ought always to be the slaves of reason since the ameliorative purposiveness or teleology of a rationality aimed at the achievement and maintenance of peace and freedom from internal conflict not only pervades the characteristically utopian text but such

reason is the prevalent engine that produces those solutions to some of the problematic features of human existence that comprise the bulk of the utopian text. The reason-emotion dichotomy within the utopian texts to which I am referring here, seems to acknowledge at least some degree of intersection between reason and the emotions, for how else might it be that reason could be said to control the emotions? And yet, in the utopian text what we tend to get is not so much an idea of reason controlling the emotions but rather something more akin to a reduction of the emotions as though, even more preferable to reason being the master of slave-like passions, reason's predominance seems to be guaranteed by the various ways in which the emotional content of the utopian citizens' lives has been drastically reduced. In More's text, the predominance of reason is a fundamental and inviolable assumption. For example, the Utopians regard an individual who disputes the virtue-generating proposition 'that after this life vices will be punished and virtue rewarded' as 'a low and sordid fellow'. Such an individual is not physically punished but is instead encouraged to argue with the learned 'For they are confident that in the end his madness will yield to reason.' (More, trans. 1989, pp. 98-99). Grounded upon assumptions concerning the nature of a reason-emotion dichotomy in which conflict, as integral to certain emotional experiences and extremes of passion, and the emotions more generally, must be governed, constrained, suppressed, or in some other way rendered subservient to or eradicated from the state by the superior power of reason, the rationality or notion of reason that the utopian text implicitly relies upon may thus be described as an emotionless *and* non-conflictual rationality.

Now all this provides a fairly stark characterisation as mainly inferred from More's Utopia of some features of the typical utopian text pertinent to its vaunted rationality and treatment of conflict and the emotions. A more finely nuanced discussion of the utopian text's notion of rationality would need to make certain qualifications to these rather starkly stated points. But, leaving this aside for a lengthier discussion elsewhere, suffice it to say that the assertions I have made so far seem to apprise us of at least one main problem. If the implicit rationality of the utopian text is something that is so shorn of emotional content and of internal conflict, what kind of reasoning is this? Perhaps the notion of an emotionless rationality largely devoid of any sustained or significant conflict is in a sense comprehensible, but more worryingly, is an emotionless and largely conflict-free rationality thinkable or desirable with regard to the exercise of *human* reason? What sort of human existence would we live were our reasoning to be almost

entirely emotionless and our argumentation devoid of all but the most transitory moments of conflict?

What I want to assert at this stage is that an emotionless rationality, though seemingly possible and even desirable in those cases where we particularly require a very high degree of impartiality, often bears the mark of something at least non-human and even inhuman or inhumane. Furthermore, if we refer to the Pragma-dialectical ideal model of critical discourse, with its reliance upon a definition of 'argument' as a dialogue between at least two disputants aimed at reaching a satisfactory resolution of their dispute, then the utopian notion of rationality as something largely or entirely free of conflict either describes a rationality much more extremely abstracted from real-life social argument or implies the virtual cessation of ameliorative discourse and indeed of any meaningful, or purposive dialogue concerning non-self-evident and thus at least minimally contentious topics such as seem to comprise so much of normal, human discursive exchanges and arguments (Eemeren 1996, pp. 280-83). Though I am acknowledging that emotionless and non-conflictual rationality may be a logical or theoretic possibility (something we can at least comprehend), in practice it is either not possible or it is at least practically futile to construct arguments devoid of any conflictual dimension, and it is undesirable for us to reason without some involvement of our emotions (or it is undesirable for us to *think* that we can so reason without involving the emotions). If the utopian notion of reason implicitly regards the passions as undesirable, contra to this, I would claim that it is undesirable for us to aspire and resort to an emotionless rationality. Furthermore, it is unimaginable that we could reason in any way productively or concerning matters important to us without at least some degree of conflict, since the exercise of reason is so closely interlinked with language as a pre-eminently social and dialogic phenomenon of our existence generally pervaded by conflicts of opinion or perspective of greater or lesser severity, or by reasonable doubting (as is clearly acknowledged by the Pragma-dialecticians and by any other approach to argumentation that insists on conflict as a necessary condition of argument). Though it might seem to be logically or theoretically possible to be an emotionless, solitary reasoner whose reasoning never involves a modicum of conflict or negation, such reasoning would be at risk of failing to accommodate that large and admittedly often ill-defined but nonetheless important emotive dimension of our day-to-day reasoning (and thus, in dealing with topics where the emotions are significant, would run the risk of not only being less competent than

a fully human emotional rationality would be, but would also run the risk thereby of being dangerously inhumane). Alternatively, an emotionless rationality, akin to much non-moral rationality, would quite simply lack direct relevance to the bulk of fully human concerns. Furthermore, just as it would seem to be largely pointless or overly theoretical to rid reasoning of all conflict, it would seem to be practically impossible to reason without some involvement of the emotions, since what possible motivation could we have for defending a particular standpoint if we did not care about that standpoint and thus have at least some degree of explicit or implicit emotional attachment to, or concern for, that standpoint?

Hence, I want to assert that the utopian text, to the extent that it relies upon a notion of reason as emotionless and free from conflict, attempts to construct an ideal world in which all (or at least the greatest majority) of its citizens are emotionless and largely incapable of conflict with one another to such an extent that they cannot be said to represent real human experience of reasoning or argumentation – the citizens of a typical utopia, though in most other respects often quite closely resembling human beings, are at best not fully human in their exercise of reason. Though the utopian citizen may enjoy many of the benefits of an existence free from conflict and unruly passions, the loss of a rich emotional life and the capacity to be genuinely committed to many standpoints, values, and beliefs, and perhaps even to the most important standpoint of the utopian state concerning peace, implies a major reduction of what one might broadly describe as a fully human existence. And so, what I am asserting here is that the citizen of utopia is a de-humanised subject.

But herein another problem: the utopian text advocates that governance by emotionless rationality and its corollary of a de-humanised subject is greatly more preferable to present or actual conditions describing the common or shared experience of humanity. But what is this ideal of a model human nature largely stripped of an emotional life? It is as most ideal things are, contrary to and even contradictory of our present condition. But since this contrary of a de-humanised subject is proffered as preferable to the present condition of humanity, which it often severely critiques, the utopian text indulges in entertaining and even advocating the notion that a drastically modified human nature is crucial to the attainment and maintenance of peace.

But, in advocating as ideal a dehumanised subject, the utopian text is arguably also a dehumanising text in the ways in which it highlights or exaggerates the fallibility of human reason, an exaggeration that indicts humanity as being

profoundly flawed in our abilities to reason and conduct ourselves reasonably. The utopian text, critiquing our present condition (not without some good reasons for doing so), indicts us as doomed to endure the countless ill effects of a rationality crucially flawed by our propensities to involve the emotions in our reasoning and to conflict with each other in argument.

The utopian ideal state of peace, harmony, tranquillity is wrought through an extraordinary degree of social cohesion or integration or a perfect harmonization of ends in which the individual becomes subsumed to the general will and more specifically the general good, largely defined in terms of sustainable peace and internal harmony or freedom from internal conflict. Furthermore, this peaceful state is presented as being only possible following the eradication of our worst vices, especially greed, envy, malice. But in the wake of such a seemingly desirable elimination of excessive or intense and troublesome passions, there would also seem to be an eradication of many other emotional states and emotive aspects relevant to good argumentation.

Emotionless, yet highly rational, the utopian adheres (must adhere) to rules, principles, and norms that define his society, and in such strict adherence to this rationality and the *telos* of peace, the utopian must be said to be committed to his society's rationality and ultimate end of peace and its continuation. But just how can the utopian so adhere or be committed to his society, its rules, structures, the sole end of peace, and so on? How can a utopian be committed to any of the important aspects of his society if he is a dehumanised subject comparatively or largely incapable of experiencing emotions and virtually incapable of engaging in anything recognisably conflictual with his fellow utopians? Is it not fallacious of the utopian text to assert the possibility of a society of perfect internal harmony and peace achieved by the citizens' general if not universal high level of commitment to the *telos* of peace, and to the rules and so on that define the very rationality that seems to promise the sustainability of internal harmony but which now seems inconceivable since such commitment must be so cool or indifferent without some degree of emotional underpinning, participation, or content?

Although this requires much closer examination than I am able to offer here, it would seem that within the utopian text there is, as a corollary to the dehumanised subject utopia requires for its very existence to be thought of as a possibility, a pervasive fallacy, which I shall call the *commitment fallacy.* If utopians are utterly devoid of emotion (or are at least devoid of an emotional life

that we humans might recognize as such), the commitment fallacy in a utopian text will have been perpetrated every time that a utopian expresses or in some other way evinces his or her commitment to, for example, one of the utopian's standpoints on or principles or norms of conduct that so clearly help to maintain a state free from internal conflict, since such commitment is meaningless or empty because it must be an emotionless and hence valueless commitment. Furthermore, the idea that More's Utopians, albeit reluctantly, wage war on enemy states in self-defence, begins to look rather queer – can they care or feel in any way strongly about their state as something worth defending? Suffering little or no grief or being relatively unperturbed by death[i], feeling no very strong if any emotions concerning the particular material goods of their society, and in general only capable of experiencing the mildest of emotions, More's Utopians seem to have little genuine reason to fight in defence of what they have and how they live, unless perhaps they may be thought of as dreading alternative modes of existence as rationally and existentially inferior or in some sense brutal and filled with many of the very things their emotionless rationality seems to eschew or actively suppress (More, trans. 1989, pp. 80-81, p. 99). But, if there are certain hints that the Utopians do feel strongly about the importance of preserving their society against their enemies and can thus be sufficiently committed to that society's internal peace to defend it in warfare, such strength of feeling seems to be merely occurrent and not dispositional, and its occurrence, focused as it is exclusively on their society's sole telos of attaining and maintaining peace, seems to relate to a range of emotions they are largely incapable of or, through their society's processes of enculturation, are prevented from experiencing – thus any emotionally intense reason they may seem to evince (through their conduct in waging war), and which they require to motivate defending their society (making their conduct in doing so consistently rational), is at worst chimerical since the utopians lack the sort of emotions that may be said to ground or better inform the occurrent emotional condition requisite to any good reason there might be for waging war – which is to say, that a good reason for waging (or for refraining from or conducting themselves with any degree of moral propriety during) war must involve some emotion within the commitment to that reason which the Utopians can only apparently/ fictively/ chimerically (since not actually) undergo. But the emotional de-contextualization and merely occurrent nature of the Utopians' inferred intense feeling about the worth of preserving their society and their lives, if it does not render such a feeling chimerical, at best suggests that this necessary emotion to do with so highly valuing their society and their lives, is

an instrumental or merely functional emotional experience or emotive reason that, while it may be tantamount to a concession to the importance and ultimate ineradicability of the emotions in reasoning, cruelly conditions the Utopians towards a unanimously agreed-upon decision to wage war and the inevitable violent conflict with non-Utopians necessary to maintaining Utopia itself against its adversaries. The idea that every citizen of More's Utopia could unfailingly enter into violent conflict without being troubled by any competing emotions that might suggest alternative ways of resolving the conflict, I am suggesting, seems to concentrate virtually all of the Utopians' emotive capability into one, highly restricted and functionally necessary (and thereby publicly-orientated and determined) emotion that we might call a love of peace. But some such overriding or all-governing love of peace, suggests a highly dubious kind of loving in its very necessity or implicit determinism and in the plethora of other emotions that now must be implicit within the Utopians' commitment to certain crucial principles of a just war (and yet which similarly seem to be out of kilter with the emotionless rationality of the Utopians during their periods of peace). But, the Utopians' love of peace seems to be a highly dubious kind of loving in that it also largely subsumes all other feelings of love (for other ideas, people, and material things) to such an extent that this love of peace (this commitment to peace) suggests and even implies a radically dehumanised emotional experience in which the all-governing object of a citizen's love must be the ultimate good of peace within Utopia.

So, from all that I have said so far it would seem that the utopian text typically advocates a dehumanised subject exemplifying an emotionless rationality as the only possible kind of being that could realise and maintain the ideal good of complete internal peace. However, for such a society to be possible it must not only dehumanise itself (or be crucially dependent upon a dehumanised citizenry), but the comparatively emotionless citizens, virtually incapable of conflict, must rigidly adhere or be committed to the particular rules, principles, and norms that define that society, and they must also be committed to the single end or telos of utopia, namely, peace or internal harmony and freedom from internal conflict. However, this great commitment, so essential to the logical possibility of Utopia's realisation and maintenance of internal peace, is deceptively an empty or impossible commitment since, to put this bluntly, Utopians just cannot do commitment. We humans can be gently or fiercely committed to all kinds of thing; but More's Utopians are such emotional castrati – they are so emotionally empty

or anaesthetized – that the text's portrayal of their dutifulness and defence of their otherwise often rather attractive society seems, if not strictly a logical impossibility, then at least rather too close to such impossibility for the text's ideal to be sufficiently credible as one towards which we might aspire.

This seems to take us towards claiming that the ideal of utopia is impossible; that the ideal the utopian text describes does not and cannot exist for human beings. However, the non-existence of utopia – its unrealisability – partakes in what I have been attempting to claim concerning the dehumanising nature of the utopian text. Indeed, arguably the impossibility of utopia drives the dehumanising knife into humanity even deeper than the text's advocacy of a de-humanised subject. Utopia seems comprehensible as a logical possibility (if only we could become dehumanised en masse and rid ourselves of those undesirable and troublesome passions and our resultant propensities towards conflict). Furthermore, the perfect peace, freedom from internal conflict, and immense security in an absolute superiority over any opposition from beyond the parameters of our society are offered by the utopian text as a great inducement, tempting us in a most seductive way by appealing so strongly to some of our greatest fears concerning our security and our greatest desires for a complete life of pleasure or happiness. However, this seems to position the reader somewhat like poor Tantalus: attainment of the ideal is impossible for us and yet, since we seem capable of apprehending it as nonetheless the most desirable thing of all, foolishly, tragically, comically, paradoxically we crave it as the very end of all our craving. Divided against ourselves as we echo a false reason-emotion dichotomy, the utopian text encourages the reader to ascend into the seductively attractive dream-world of an emotionless and conflictless rationality. From this vantage point we may look down disparagingly on ourselves, our pitiful incapacity to be modified, on the complexity, weakness or partiality our emotions seem to generate in our reasoning, and hence we may gaze aghast at the despairingly unreasonable nature of human reason. But there is surely something potentially rather cruel, dehumanising, and ultimately self-destructive about how the utopian text so positions the reader, condemning the reader to participate in and thereby adopt a self or other-regarding attitude of general condemnation. All such construals of human nature, implicit within the utopian text, as an entity that is fatally flawed by self-annihilatory self-division, hopeless longing for what we can never attain, and the humiliating realisation of both a sufficient capacity to comprehend and value the ideal and an insufficiently emotionless rationality to

realise it, so condemn the reader's participation in such humanity as to encourage the reader towards a misanthropic attitude that dehumanises both self and other.

Perhaps the greatest cruelty of the utopian text therefore is deceit and the fallaciousness of what the text appears to be arguing. The notion that the utopian text is fallacious may be buttressed by identifying several other fallacious moves within any given utopian text such as, typically, the use of hyperbole, straw man argumentation, the *ad baculum, ad hominem*, and *ad verecundiam*. But these aside, the fallaciousness of utopianism as evinced in Utopia and in Gulliver's conversion to the rationality of Houyhnhnmland in *Gulliver's Travels* principally resides in its perpetration of a commitment fallacy by means of which the great commitment required to maintain the utopia's internal peace and many social comforts and advantages is deceptively little better than an empty or meaningless commitment since so utterly shorn of any emotion excepting the most purely functional feeling about the worth or love of utopian society and its telos of peace – this is a love of peace that knows no love. The peaceful, harmonious, and understandably desirable state we are tantalisingly offered is one in which, as the commitment fallacy discloses, no human could exist and thus the ideal offered has no real existence beyond its linguistic construction and highly restrictive logic. But having this existence as a linguistic construction, the other-worldly unobtainability of the ideal it conjures for its reader, is ever at risk of being mistaken by the reader as, if not (for the most naïve of readers) a true account of some exotic but actual topos, then true in another sense: true as an object of desire since coherent and since accordant with certain incontestable features of what it is to be reasonable or rational. Inasmuch as the reader may slide into this dream of utopia and from thence partake in a by no means entirely unjustified misanthropy (much akin to what happens to Gulliver), the reader is led into a more or less dangerous collusion with utopian fallaciousness and may thereby unwittingly subscribe to a self-defeating and even self-annihilatory attitude that is, if not entirely, then largely against his or her best interests, the interests of humanity, and the possibility of both personal and social amelioration.

However, as soon as the reader charges the utopian text with falsely implying that: the ideal of rationality is emotionless; commitment to certain standpoints is possible without any emotional content (or, in the case of Gulliver, his commitment to the utopian Houyhnhnmland can be genuine and fully justified, though based on delusion or misperception); and, that reasoning itself may

subsist without conflict – as the reader charges the utopian text with such fallaciousness, the reader's perspective concerning how best to read the utopian text may shift radically towards a more critical and hence more complete understanding of how the text constitutes a significant participant in our discourses concerning certain highly important aspects of human experience. Thus the utopian text can become a participant in developing our understanding of such things as: the relationships between reason and the emotions; the relative desirability and reasonableness of certain emotions or extremes of emotion within argumentation; the value and pervasiveness of conflict in relation to how conflict unconditioned by certain moral and rational rules and principles can be destructive and conduce towards the cessation of argumentative discourse; the interpretative role of the reader's moral perspective and commitments; the reader's capacity to interpret and read the text critically, and so on. But differences in moral perspective, commitments, interests, abilities, experience, and expertise between readers are alone more than sufficient to suggest that a great many readers may, quite excusably, fail to notice from the vantage point of the ideal state that the utopian text describes, that this optimistic and no-doubt well-intentioned dream is dependent upon a dehumanised subject, acceptance of which brings the reader into a fatal, dehumanising and ultimately self-annihilatory attitude of condemnation towards humanity. This fallacious potential of the utopian text is thereby something that the reader, apprised of its ability so to mislead, may feel so indicts utopianism generally that its otherwise elegant castles in the air become tainted with the rank stench of countless human atrocities perpetrated in the name of reason and high moral idealism.

However, fallaciousness is, in a sense, the name of the fictional make-believe game in which, in order to enjoy the utopian text's various deceits and yet at once approach a richer and more accurate understanding of its philosophical import, the reader must become a *critical* participant. The impossibility of utopian existence, except as a fictive existence, is in fact something that More himself suggests by coining the term 'utopia', which as most commentators point out with reference to its Greek etymology means both a no-place and a good (or happy or fortunate) place. The ideal good of a complete and sustained internal peace and harmony only exists, so the term 'utopia' suggests, in a non-existent place or a *topos* of the imagination, a *topos* only possible as a linguistic abstraction or construct, a fictional *topos*. Furthermore, at least in More's *Utopia* and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, it is strongly hinted that the narrators of these texts are at

least somewhat crackbrained, the preposterous mouthpieces of somewhat crazed or ridiculous notions. In More's text the narrator Raphael Hythloday's very name means something like wise-fool (More, trans. 1989, p. 3, p. 5), whereas in Swift's text Gulliver's name hints that he is one who although veracious has been gulled or deluded and hence is the honest reporter of his own highly unreliable testimony or judgement. Thus, what I am alleging concerning the fallaciousness of these texts and the nature of the ideal they seem to advocate, needs to be modified to accommodate the self-consciously and at times playfully fictive characteristics of the utopian text that invite the reader to participate in an extended joke, or be amused by the texts' playful treatments, and at times inversions, of reality, truth, falsehood, the profound, and the trivial. Once we begin to feel the full force of these texts' humour, playfulness, their wanton hyperboles, caricatures, and dependence upon narrators who can be to our immense amusement ridiculous, preposterous, wise, insightful, and misguided in the extreme, charges concerning argumentative fallaciousness seem to fall out of account as irrelevant, if not for the more naïve reader (about whom we ought to be most urgently concerned), then for the ideal implied reader these texts seem both to foster and demand. To avoid the folly of a naïve reading of these texts – to avoid becoming, as it were, the butt of the writer's joke against flawed humanity and perhaps paradoxically thereby a dangerous misanthrope – one needs to become aware of how these texts beckon the reader towards the highly problematic nature of their subject matter and also of the relation between art and life, text and reader. What More's *Utopia* and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* seem to demand of us is that we become ever more cautious, perceptive, sensitive, knowledgeable, and playfully alive to both the seriousness and the humour they attempt to encompass and impart – and in all this the utopian text is a humanising and not a dehumanising discourse.

Utopian literature is by no means straightforward polemic or advocacy of any particular standpoint and as soon as we pay attention to the playfully fictive nature or dimension of the typical utopian text, attempts to charge utopianism with perpetrating fallacies and misleadingly seducing the reader towards profoundly misanthropic attitudes, seem to become less appropriate or greatly more problematic as though we are missing the point, not getting the joke, being as dull as the very coolly rational horses in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* who have such laughably great difficulty in understanding how one can say the thing that is not, or lie. By means of the complexity of the utopian text's fusion of rationality,

philosophical argument, social critique, a sustained comparison of human societies with a supposed ideal society, fiction, and humour, the reader enters a labyrinth of competing notions that collectively unsettle, disturb, delight, and instruct or beckon the reader towards an increasingly sophisticated grasp of several aspects concerning reason and the emotions, and the place of fictional literature within the reader's moral and rational discourse. Dystopian literature, starting with Swift's satire upon the utopian ideal and our dreams and hopes of a utopian state, draws attention to the dystopianism embedded or implicit in the utopian text, the harshness, cruelty, and inhumanity of a broadly misanthropic attitude towards human reasoning and hopes of social amelioration – yet arguably Swift's satire of utopianism, albeit more playfully than More, condemns humanity much more severely or more universally. Thus, for all the playfulness and humour of many utopian texts, I do not think that utopian literature can entirely wriggle free of this indictment of its indictment of us, particularly when one considers the corrosive dehumanising aspects of Swift's own satiric humour and the general pervasiveness of naïve readers all too susceptible to the text's fallaciousness. However, when we actively engage with the utopian text's humane longing for betterment, its challenging disparagement of human reason as marred by the propensity towards conflict and unavoidable incorporation of undesirable emotions, and its deft and humorous highlighting of its fictive ontology, we enter a field of discourse that invites reflection on our morality, rationality, emotionality, and in doing so the utopian text's greatest contribution to our humanity inheres in the ways in which pre-eminently such texts invite us to enter a complex process of reassessing the nature of our fondest wishes, desires, ideals, a process of re-assessing ourselves, the limits, failures, strengths, and richness of our extensive exercise of reason through argumentation dependent upon, or conditioned, informed, or aided and abetted by the emotions, a reassessment of reason in relation to the emotions, conflict, what constitutes the good for humankind, and the rich diversity of our emotional lives as the only hope we may have for achieving that human amelioration, well-being, and flourishing dependent upon our capacity to resolve conflicts involving widely varying degrees of emotional intensity and intelligence, and albeit imperfectly envisioned by utopianism's enchanting, and enchantingly comedic, visions of peace.

NOTE
[i] More's Utopians do grieve (or 'mourn over a death only if the man was torn from life wretchedly and against his will' (More, trans. 1989, p. 99) but their

response to death seems to be rather unnaturally cool, an aspect of their emotionless rationality satirized by Swift's description of the Houyhnhnms who experience 'neither joy nor grief' at the deaths of friends or relations. Gulliver here cites with admiration the female Houyhnhnm's cheerfulness and utterly emotionless response to her mate's death (Swift 1991, pp. 293-4).

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – A Fantasy Theme Analysis Of Prime Minister Koizumi's "Structural Reform Without Sacred Cows"

Introduction

In rhetorical communication, messages are "deliberately chosen to influence an audience whose members have the ability to change their beliefs or behaviors as a consequence of experiencing the message" (Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991, p. 2). In April 2001, Junichiro Koizumi, the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the Prime Minister of Japan, conjured up a vivid symbolic image of Japanese people's interest in politics with his contested slogan, "Structural Reform without Sacred Cows." The public's high expectations for Koizumi's campaign were reflected in the extraordinary high approval ratings he and his Cabinet achieved. According to a poll conducted by the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, his Cabinet recorded an 84.5 percent approval rating on June 30, 2001, an all-time high in Japanese politics.

This public enthusiasm was labeled as "Koizumi fever" by the mass media. David Ignatius (2001) describes: "Media reports about Koizumi have featured the gee-whiz details that journalists love – his long, wavy hair, his taste for heavy-metal music, the public craze to buy his posters, the millions of people who subscribe to his e-mail newsletter, known as "The Lion Heart" because of his leonine looks" (p. 18). Accordingly, the "Koizumi fever" functioned as a driving force for the LDP in the 2001 election of the House of Councilors. The LDP ended up with a victory, as the *Asahi Shimbun* (2001) reported "Koizumi tornado and the LDP's triumph" ("*Koizumi senpu*" 2001, p. 1: my trans.).

Kenzo Uchida (2001) observes: "For years, LDP-centered politics have been the object of public discontent and criticism, creating a deep sense of alienation among the people" (p. 18). Then, Koizumi emerged as a reformer within the LDP. His public demands for the destruction of the usual pork barrel politics provided a blueprint for reforms that promised to end the out-of-date political structures that had been dominant in Japan as they rehabilitated political processes. Thus, the Koizumi administration was regarded as inspirational in moving "the collective will of people trying to meet manifold changes in our [Japanese] economic society to break political inertia" (Suzuki 2001, p. 16). Although his political slogan, "Structural Reform without Sacred Cows," seemed to fulfill the public's rhetorical need, an analysis of its symbolic function has been uncovered by the past scholars of communication.

This essay examines how Koizumi's rhetorical constructions of a social reality unfolded during four periods of time: In the first phase, Junichiro Koizumi became

the president of the LDP on April 25, 2001, by personifying himself as a "reformer." During the second phase, Koizumi made efforts to share his rhetorical vision with the audience. In the third phase, the shared vision motivated the public to support the Koizumi-led LDP at the national election. During the final phase, or the "blank period" in August and September of 2001 disappointed the Japanese people about Koizumi's reform. Then, the progress of Koizumi's structural reform is stopped, at lease temporarily, in the middle of September 2001 because of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. A special Diet committee proposed a bill authorizing the Self Defense Force (SDF) to support the United States military response to international terrorism. The debate about Koizumi's structural reform was put aside until the approval of the bill on the SDF in October 2001. Therefore, it makes sense to limit the scope of this analysis to the period from April-September of 2001.

I will analyze Koizumi's message construction by applying Ernest G. Bormann's Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT) as a paradigm case of political argumentation in Japan. Bormann (1985) defines fantasy as "the creative and imaginative shared interpretation of events that fulfill a group's psychological or rhetorical need" (p. 131). A content of the fantasy, argues Bormann (2000), consists of "characters, real or fictitous, playing out a dramatic situation in a setting removed in time and space from the here-and-now transactions of the group" (p. 248). Such a dramatized content chains out in the group of people because "a dramatic theme might relate to the repressed psychological problems of some or all of the members and thus pull them into participation" (Bormann 2000, p. 248). Conversely, speakers manipulate a content of a fantasy so that people may get involved in the fantasy. A rhetorical vision is constructed from fantasy themes or drama, which are also constructed by the speakers' rhetorical appeals. Bormann (2000) explains that fantasy themes may draw upon a "recollection of something that happened to the group in the past or a dream of what the group might do in the future" (p. 249). A rhetorical vision contains dramas played by characters with typical plot lines. The composite dramas stimulate the people's reminiscence of emotional chains. Consequently, the dramas catch up the audience in various forms of public communication, such as fact-to-face communication, speaker-audience transactions, as viewers and listeners to television and radio broadcasts, and in all the diverse settings for public and intimate communication in a given society (Bormann 2000, p. 250). Such a phenomenon is regarded as people's symbolic convergence on symbolic reality.

The first phase: a construction of the rhetorical vision

In the LDP presidential election, only its politicians and 1.2 million members were eligible to vote. But Koizumi used that election campaign as an opportunity to talk to the nation by going out to the street. Koizumi's aim was "to show the LDP that they couldn't ignore the will of the people" (Brasor 2001, p. 21). Such a campaign strategy was effective in that the media intensively featured Koizumi's campaign. When Koizumi beat Ryutaro Hashimoto in primaries, he commented that "I had no idea I'd do this well in so many districts. It's like pent-up magma that's erupted" ("Koizumi poised" 2001, p. 1). His "pent-up magma" metaphor indicated the rising public expectations. Thanks to the media coverage, his message spread out. Koizumi's victory in the LDP presidential election symbolized a significant change of the LDP's old political style, and, in fact, the presidential election was treated as if it were a general election by the media.

In terms of the life cycle of rhetorical vision, the initial period corresponds to the creation of a social reality. Bormann, Cragan, and Shields (2000) argue: "Speakers dramatize new formulations and others share them until group and community fantasies explain the unfolding experience in novel ways. Because they are dynamic, rhetoricians may embroider and modify the consciousness throughout the life of a rhetorical vision" (p. 261). Thus, a speaker is required to construct a new symbolic ground to catch the minds of his/her audience.

During this period, April 2001, Koizumi establishes himself as a "reformer." Before the election, he had been described as "odd," "eccentric," "strange," or as a "maverick" by the media (Beals 2001, p. 14). But, as the *Asahi Shimbun* ("*Tensei jingo*" 2001) notes, the attractiveness of Koizumi came from the fact that he did not look like the conventional LDP politicians. Also, the people were curious about Koizumi's individual qualities, such as listening to a Japanese hard rock band, X-Japan, watching opera and films, and having an outlandish haircut. These qualities revealed to the people by the media contributed to a construction of Koizumi's popular image as a "hip" reformer, an image that no other LDP member had ever gained before (Beals 2001, p. 15).

A victory in the LDP presidential election provided Koizumi with a ground to generate the symbolic convergence of his persona as a "reformer." There are two important points regarding his victory. First, his victory was interpreted as heroic in the sense that lonely Koizumi won the election against the anti-reform forces within the LDP. Namely, Koizumi's victory was heroic because he became the reformer who made the impossible possible. Before the election, Koizumi seemed

not to have even the slightest chance of winning since he was running against Ryutaro Hashimoto, a former prime minister of Japan who served from January 1996 to July 1998, and controlled the party's largest faction. The media had predicted that based on the number of politicians supporting Hashimoto, he would prevail (Brasor 2001, p. 21). But the overwhelming majority of the general members of the LDP voted for Koizumi advocating the destruction of the old style politics. Thus, it was contrary to general expectations, that Koizumi swept the election. When he was elected, Koizumi stated: "Something is happening the party members could never imagine; people are driving the LDP members, and the LDP members are driving the party. This is a total reversal of the past" (Igunatis 2001, p. 18).

In the past, the LDP had been criticized for its "inability to sever cozy relations with particular industries, determination to rely on public undertakings to invigorate thef economy, and [its] dependence on the ossified seniority system of the party hierarchy" ("A bold new" 2001, p. 14). Although the LDP knew that those systems were out-of-date, many of those who were within the system believed that no one could change them. As Ryutaro Hosokawa (2001) criticizes, "the LDP no longer responds to the people's wishes and appears to be interested only in satisfying the demands of its members" (p. 19).

Koizumi's advocacy dissolved such frustration, and promised to show the LDP supporters a clear path to reform. His election slogan was "Support for Koizumi, the man that will change the LDP." As Minoru Toda (2001) notes, Koizumi is the only candidate that called for eliminating the LDP's pork barrel and faction-driven politics. Identifying the old-LDP politics as the cause of society's woes, Koizumi put the feelings of the LDP supporters into words. As a result, they finally heard words that they had been hoping to hear for a long time. Bormann (2000, p. 230) explains that much persuasive' communication simply repeats what the audience already knows.to be true. Koizumi's contribution was that he had the courage and the foresignt to give voice to opinions and beliefs that many listeners already accepted as true Thus, Koizumi's victory in the LDP'S presidential election triggered the "Koizumi fever."

The second important point about his victory is that the drama of Koizumi as a reformer set the stage to view his critics as anti-reformers, or as representatives of a tainted, un-modern, and arguably corrupt regime. Koizumi was depicted as as man of good character while the anti-reformers were cast as persons of bad character.

In the Symbolic Convergence Theory, a confrontation is one of the essential components of audience psychological process. Dramatized messages typically include good and bad characters (Bormann 1985, p. 132). In other words, speakers can make their message more attractive through constructing the narrative about their antagonists. Bormann (1985) further argues that the plot of "good" versus "evil" encourages the arousal of audience's sympathy and empathy for the good leading character. The emotional investment in a "good" leading character results involvement in the fantasy.

The second phase: a maintenace of the rhetorical vision
The second phase of Koizumi's drama of "Structural Reform" was the period after the LDP presidential election, from April 2001 until July 12, 2001. This was the period when Koizumi tried to sustain the fantasy theme of "Structural Reform" among the public. Due to the huge media coverage, the public had paid much attention to the selection of members for Koizumi's Cabinet, including Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka. During this period, "the press went into the crowds and found out firsthand that the people wanted Koizumi and Tanaka" (Brasor 2001, p. 21). The people were so interested in the Koizumi Cabinet that the TV viewer ratings of deliberative broadcasts of their meetings recorded unusually high figures ("Diet surprises" 2001). For instance, the viewer rating of Koizumi's policy speech on May 7, 2001, was 6.4 percent, while then Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori's speech in September 2000 was only 1.8 percent. In addition, the TV viewer rating for the House of Representative Budget Committee on May 14, 2001, was 6.5 percent, while the viewer rating of the debate in the Lower House Budget Committee in September 2000 was around 1 percent.
Within the life cycle of a rhetorical vision, speakers need to keep their audience shared and committed to their same rhetorical visions. At the sustaining or in some cases during the maturation phase of a rhetorical vision, as Bormann (1985) explained, the rhetorical vision is condensed into a keyword, slogan, or label as "a total coherent view of an aspect of their [rhetorical community members'] social reality" (p. 133).

In this phase, Koizumi cited the anecdote, "One Hundred Sacks of Rice," which pumped a new life into Koizumi's rhetorical vision. The anecdote refers to the well known story of Torasaburo Kobayashi, a samurai at the end of the nineteenth century. At that time, the Edo shogunate, which was established in 1603, was collapsing due to the Boshin Civil War. Every fief, a basic unit of provincial

government in the Edo era, suffered from poverty and distress. When the Nagaoka fief tried to rebuild the town, a related fief sent them a hundred sacks of rice. The members of the donor fief believed that the rice would be distributed to the citizens. However, instead of providing people with rice, Kobayashi sold it for building schools and educating young people. He argued that a small amount of rice was easy to consume, and that it would be more efficient to use it form a long-term vision for the Nagaoka fief (City Nagaoka 2006). Thus, Koizumi illustrated the importance of patience for the sake of a long-term gain, by promoting a laudable spirit of the anecdote.

Admitting the necessary evil of his structural reform, Koizumi constructed the public consensus that the "pain" was inevitable to revive the economy. He repeated such slogans as "No Gain without Pain." What Koizumi indicated with the word, "pain," means a necessary evil, or the dark side of his structural reform. If Koizumi's reform plans were implemented, the unemployment rate was expected to increase. For instance, a clearance of non-performing bank loans, one of his salient policies, would create a lot of bankruptcy and unemployment. Historically, Koizumi's predecessors had placed more importance on economic recovery, or on providing short-term economic stimulus programs for seducing the public (Toda 2001, p. 16). They had hesitated to talk about the negative effects of structural reforms. What is worse, they had failed to revitalize Japanese economy with such a policy. Based on his predecessors' failures, Koizumi stated that he had did not intend to take the same route.

However, Koizumi avoided a detailed discussion of the content of "pain." In his first policy speech as Prime Minister on May 7, 2001, Koizumi stated: "More than anything else what is needed for us today is the spirit of persevering through the present difficulties to build a better tomorrow. With this spirit, we can move forward with reforms. Whether we can create a hopeful Japan in the new century depend on the determination and will of each and every one of us, the Japanese people, to carry out the reforms that are needed" ("Prime Minister's" 2001, p. 4). Thus, he did not clarify what type of "pain" would occur or how long people had to endure such a pain. He rather explained that the form of "pain" would be different from one person to another, since "whether one feels something as pain depends on one's attitude" (Maeda 2001, p. 4).

At this point, the anecdote of "One hundred Sacks of Rice" worked very effectively to persuade the Japanese people to accept Koizumi's rhetorical vision.

According to the SCT, the people "share fantasies that give some old familiar dramas as a new production" (Bormann, Cragan, & Shields 2000, p. 262). If speakers imitate a certain story to present a new story, the audience is encouraged to share the new story. That is, "portraying an ideal past with the old familiar heroes, values, and scenarios" (Bormann, Cragan, & Shields 2000, p. 262) is effective to produce "a symbolic cue," a kind of trigger to raise an emotional involvement of the members of the rhetorical vision.

As a result, no one was sure about what exactly Koizumi meant by the "pain." For instance, the *Asahi Shimbun* (2001) heralded journalist Takao Saito's and novelist Ryu Murakami's criticism ("*Kaikaku no naijitsu*," p. 13). Saito argued that the people could not imagine what negative effects would happen to them. Murakami similarly questions about the lack of explanation about the "pain," and he argues that the weak people would sufferer from the "pain" severely. Therefore, Murakami contends, what Koizumi should have done was to tell who would have to endure the "pain."

The third phase: a crisis management of the rhetorical vision
This stage is the period when Koizumi engaged in the generic election campaign from July 13 to July 31, 2001. Most importantly, during this phase, Koizumi's rhetorical vision clashed with the counter rhetorical visions of the "pain" constructed by opposition parties. The opposition parties constructed the counter rhetorical visions designed to beat the LDP at the coming general election by focusing on the "pain" accrued from the change of Koizumi's structural reform.

Against such counter rhetorical visions, Koizumi began by stressing the need to destroy the LDP's old-style politics. He had to do so. An internal discord within the LDP made the voters hesitant to vote for the Koizumi-led LDP although his drama of the reformer-versus-anti-reformers had worked well for the general public. Even the anti-reform forces within the LDP, at least for the time being, decided to disguise themselves as supporters of popular Koizumi, because they also needed the public support to win the election. The *Japan Times* (2001) reports that to win the election, the LDP candidates tried to ride on Koizumi's popularity ("LDP candidates," p. 1). For Koizumi, too, to win the general election was essential to establish a political authority so that he could mandate the reform plan. According to CNN (2001), Koizumi said that the election would be a test of whether the LDP could support his Cabinet and carry out a bold reform. He also declared that, if the LDP old-guard gained the initiative again after the election, he would destroy the LDP ("Voters head").

Under such circumstances, Koizumi's slogan was re-constructed for the election. In the initial period of the LDP's presidential election, Koizumi demanded "People's Support for Koizumi's Challenge" ("*Bunseki Koizumiryu*" 2001, p. 4). The slogan implied the simple plot of the reformer Koizumi as a protagonist and the anti-reform forces within the LDP as antagonists. Koizumi's other strategy toward the voters was to evade detailed explanations about his structural reform. During the campaign, he did not discuss any detailed issue of his reform plans, but he merely repeated the same phrase, "Let's Change." Insofar as Koizumi strategically employed ambiguity about his plans, opposition parties could not any attack substantial aspects of the reform. As a result, the election represented an overwhelming victory for the Koizumi-led LDP. With that triumph, Koizumi achieved his aim to gain a political authority to implement his proposed structural reforms. In a sense, Koizumi was a savoir of the LDP, which had been on a trend toward decline since the 1990's. In April 2001, therefore, the LDP members were afraid of a fatal loss in the general election ("A bold new" 2001, p. 14). The advent of Prime Minister Koizumi cleared up the party's worry.

To motivate the audience to take action is one of the aims of such a rhetorical message. Bormann argues: "The rhetorical vision of a group of people contains their drives to action. People who generate, legitimatize and participate in a public fantasy are, in Bale's words, "powerfully impelled to action" by that process. Motives do not exist to be expressed in communication but rather arise in the expression itself and come to embedded in the drama of the fantasy themes that generated and serve to sustain them" (2000, p. 257). Thus, in case of Koizumi, he employed rhetorical visions to promote the people's expectation for the structural reform. As a consequence, the people sharing Koizumi's rhetorical visions came to be committed to his structural reform and voted for the Koizumi-led LDP. As Bormann concurs, "when group members respond emotionally to the dramatic situation, they publicly proclaim some commitment to an attitude" (2000, p. 249).

But the counter rhetorical visions constructed by opposition parties were far less effective in swaying the voters' opinion than Koizumi's for two reasons. First, the opposition parties failed to provide concrete objections to Koizumi's reforms. Koizumi stated that "the opposition parties are wrong to criticize me for failing to be specific about my reforms, ... I map out courses of reforms, but specific policies should be determined through discussions" ("LDP rides into town" 2001). Thus, the opposition parties could not find the points to attack. At the same time,

the simplicity of Koizumi's plot of rhetorical visions contributed to the LDP's triumph. He simply described himself as reformer and classified the opposition parties as anti-reform forces. As Bormann, Cragan, and Shields (2000) explain, "when events become confusing and disturbing, people are likely to share fantasies that provide them with a plausible and satisfying account that makes sense out of experiences" (p. 262). By the period of the election campaign, the mood was already constructed by the media in the mind of the public that Koizumi's structural reforms were absolutely right ("A bandwagon election" 2001, p. 18).

In addition, the opposition parties tried to provide an alternative to the Koizumi version of structural reform, rather than a straightforward denial of Koizumi's reforms. For instance, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) described itself as the "real reformer." Yukio Hatoyama, the leader of the DPJ, claimed that the Koizumi-led LDP could not realize the structural reform because of an existence of the potential anti-Koizumi forces within the LDP. The DPJ portrayed their policies as "warm-hearted structural reform," while they called Koizumi's structural reform "cold-hearted structural reform" (Nabeshima 2001, p. 18). The DPJ emphasized that they would prepare "safety nets" for unemployed people who were hit by the structural reform, and accused Koizumi of not having such a safety net. However, the DPJ's discussion failed to make clear crucial differences between the two. Similarly, other opposition parties were faced with a dilemma: When there was a social consensus about a necessity for the structural reform, how could they hammer out an alternative to Koizumi's policy proposal?

What happened during the general election campaign was not an ideal situation for democracy. Each party's policy is literally described, as "Structural Reform" for it is obvious that the current political system needed a drastic change. But clear differences did not exist in abstract policy proposals from each party. As the Daily Yomiuri On-line (2001) notes, an ideal situation for democracy is when competing parties clearly demonstrate contrasting policy view to the voters ("Poll: Ruling coalition shoot-in"). Through comparison between those different views of the parties, each voter should make a decision. In this election, however, all parties proclaimed the need for "Structural Reform" as agenda, but the differences among each party's view were not clear.

The final phase: a termination of the structural reform
The fourth and final phase is the period when Koizumi's rhetorical visions declined between August 1 and September 1, 2001. Bormann argues that

rhetorical visions are placed on a flexible to inflexible continuum, and that "[o]n the end [of the continuum] are flexible rhetorical visions that are sensitive to … the changing experience of the participants in the vision" (Bormann, Cragan, and Shields 2000, p. 272). When a rhetorical vision loses its sense-making power, it declines. Hence, Bormann, Cragan, and Shields (2000) argue that "Rhetoricians can sustain the integrity of the inflexible vision by using a number of different types" (p. 278). Speakers are required to restore new fantasies continuously into rhetorical visions.

The presentation of his reform plans in this period was important, since Koizumi's leadership as prime minister was tested, and that the implementation of the reform was his final goal. However, on the privatization of government-funded corporations for instance, Koizumi still did not present any clear roadmap. As a result, Koizumi was losing his audience's faith in the structural reform, since he held responsible for providing specific explanation about his policies to the public. But Koizumi repeated that "even if [the people] don't get the concrete details of reform, I'm sure they get my spirit toward reform" (Maeda 2001, p.3). Although Koizumi gained a political authority through the triumph in the last general election, the process of the reform stopped for almost two months, which was perceived as the blank period by the public. The media urged Koizumi to do something concrete and meaningful as soon as possible. For instance, the *Asahi Shimbun* (2001) argues that if Koizumi did not do his best for implementation of his plan at this point, the people would never believe his words ("*Kaikaku no seihi*"). The *Japan Times* (2001) cites the comment from the *Financial Times*: "No more compromises. Now is the time for Junichiro Koizumi, Prime Minister of Japan, to make a concrete plan to reverse the decade-long side of the world second-largest economy and to implement it" ("Two steps" p. 18).

At the same time, the "pain" gradually started to take shape before the people. For instance, the unemployment rate of July 2001, climbed to 5 percent, the highest rate since 1953 ("Unemployment" 2001, p. 20). People thus began to experience the hardships caused by Koizumi's reforms, and their suffering seemed to have no clear ending. The tone of the media coverage then became increasingly pessimistic about Koizumi's structural reforms. Their focus shifted to the negative aspects of Koizumi's structural policies. They featured unemployment, which was perceived as "the most severe form of pain" ("Easing the pain" 2001, p. 18). For example, The *Japan Times* (2001) argued that the full impacts of the kinds of pain Koizumi's reform plans would bring were not clear

yet. It also warned that the people would not feel inclined to accept the "pain" incurred by Koizumi's reforms without improvements to Japan's existing unemployment-insurance system ("Easing the pain" p. 18).

The speed of Koizumi's reforms was too slow to make the people convinced that the plan was succeeding. As The *Japan Times* (2001) reported, "A government proposal to drastically overhaul government-backed corporations" faced "resistance from the ministers and agencies" ("Reform of state-linked" p. 1). The victory of the election did not mean an extinction of the anti-reform forces. The anti-reform forces re-appeared in the drama. Thanks to Koizumi's popularity, the LDP conservatives and anti-Koizumi candidates were able to win a seat in the House. This is paradoxical from the voters' perspective in the sense that voting for the Koizumi-led LDP helped his antagonists to survive. In addition, the Japanese stock market did not react positively to Koizumi's triumph in the general election. The *Japan Times* (2001) also cited the *Financial Times* assertion that there was a skeptical view in the world's financial markets of Koizumi's economic policies ("Two steps" p. 18). Despite the situation, Koizumi continued to place the priority on the structural reform plan, and did not propose any new measures to stimulate economic recovery. The *Financial Times* (2001) criticized that "[Koizumi's] slogan 'no pain, no gain' may strike a masochistic chord with some. But the slogan makes no economic sense. Japan's economy will not fire again until demand is stocked up with an ample supply of credit" ("Crazy for Koizumi" p. 18). Furthermore, the *Mainichi Shimbun* (2001) argues that the limitation of Koizumi's philosophy of "patience" was coming because of its slow progress ("*Gaman no tetsugaku*" p. 3).

Another reason for the slow speed of Koizumi's reform actions was very structure of the Japanese political decision-making system. Historically, important policies, such as policies on taxation and road constructions, are deliberated by the LDP. The LDP examines bills prior to the congressional discussion, which was established as a system during the LDP's long-time dominant era. Under that system, the Cabinet cannot make a decision without the approval of the LDP's committees (Ando 2002, p. 2). That system allowed the anti-Koizumi forces with the LDP to obstruct Koizumi's reform plans. The *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* reports that Koizumi was trying to take the initiative of the reform by the top-down style ("*Shushou shudou*" 2001, p. 2). Nobuo Asami (2001) argues that "strengthening the Cabinet functions" (p. 20) is one possible way of implementing Koizumi's reform. For assuring Prime Minister's leadership, Koizumi needed to strive for

changing the dual decision-making system.

Unfortunately, the progress of Koizumi's structural reforms stopped in the middle of September 2001 because of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. A special Diet committee proposed a bill authorizing the Self Defense Force (SDF) to support the United States military response to international terrorism. The debate about Koizumi's structural reform was put aside until the approval of the bill on the SDF in October 2001.

Implications

There are a number of implications to be outlined. First, Koizumi's catchy, simple, assertive words, such as "Structural Reform without Sacred Cows," "without structural reform there can be no rebirth of Japan," "One Hundred Sacks of Rice," and "No fear, no hesitation, and no constraint," caught up the people's attention. Those slogans contributed to constructing the symbolic reality. At the same time, according to the survey conducted by the *Asahi Shimbun* by December 26, 2001, fully 63 percent of the respondents polled did not think that Koizumi's structural reforms had obtained excellent results. On the other hand, the 72 percent of the people surveyed still expressed their approval for the Koizumi administration. The *Asahi Shimbun* (2001) read such seemingly incompatible results as the proof that while the public's expectation of Koizumi's reforms had been sustained, they had not satisfied with what he had done ("'*Susundeninaii*").

Such incompatible results illustrate the gap between Koizumi's words and deeds. Koizumi tried to achieve political objectives through his advocacy to make the people "feel" what he was going to do (Maeda 2001, p. 3). However, his deeds did not match up with his words. Since his inauguration in April 2001, he had been criticized for a lack of clarity of his words ("*Ryukougo*" 2001, p. 4). At this point, the *Asahi Shimbun* (2002) argues that Koizumi had not shown the clear perspective of the future to the people ("'*Kadan*'"). Asaumi (2001) argues: "Although the public entertains high expectations that a charismatic leader will bring them happiness, the leader's ability to bring about the happiness sought by the public inevitably is limited. The relationship between the masses and a charismatic leader can be described as a fantasy shared by many members of society" (p. 20: my trans.).

Second, Koizumi's political style is problematic in the sense that he used the power of rhetoric to focus people's attention, but not to obtaining public support to implement his reform program and to overcome the objections of the anti-

reform forces. Indeed, Takashi Mikuriya (2001) admits that his sensational word choice created a highlight in Japanese political discourse (p. 4). Viewing Koizumi's drama of "Structural Reform," the people praised him as a reformer for a while. Such evidence of symbolic convergence demonstrates the public's agreement with his reform spirit. Therefore, Koizumi should have shifted his strategy to use more clear and concrete language to express his views.

Finally, despite the problems posed by Koizumi's use of symbolic language, future Japanese politicians should not hesitate to use powerful symbols to win public support for the implementation of their new programs. The use of effective rhetoric is essential to help people reach good decisions. Prime Minister Koizumi should be considered one of the pioneers of Japanese politics. He used rhetoric effectively to obtain the public's attention. But, at the same time, he should have also use rhetoric to open up the process of the congressional decision-making so that the public was more fully included in policy deliberations.

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – Antapologia Arguments During The Hurricane Katrina Disaster

Antapologia Arguments During the Hurricane Katrina Disaster
Katrina, a stage 4 hurricane, touched ground on August 29, 2005 just northwest of New Orleans. Twenty hours earlier New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin had called for a mandatory evacuation of the city. Nearly 92% of the city or roughly 1.2 million people heeded the warnings and left the city. However, that left over 100,000 individuals, the indigent, the poor and the sick, to ride out the storm and the massive flooding following the subsequent failure of the 17th street bridge levee. Unfortunately, the consequences of the storm and the flooding killed close to 1,500 people with an estimate cost of $200 billion in damages to the Gulf Coast.

Ellen Goodman (2005) in and editorial in the *Baltimore Sun* pointed out that "For days, we watch the toxic gumbo of natural and man-made disasters cooking along the Gulf Coast. 'The city that care forgot felt forgotten. The 'left behind' were not

characters in a faith-based thriller, but old folks, poor folks, black folks without enough money to pay for a ticket out of hell" (p. 11A.).

An 11 member select committee of Republicans concluded that "If 9/11 was a failure of imagination then Katrina was a failure of initiative. It was a failure of leadership" (Hsu, 2002, p. A5). The report further concludes that the response to Katrina, "the blinding lack of situation awareness and disjointed decision making needlessly compounded and prolonged Katrina's horror." FEMA chief Brown, Homeland Security Secretary Chertoff, Governor Blanco and Mayor Nagin each were held complicit for the problem, as well as the Homeland Security Operations Center and the White House Homeland Security Council. Bush also received extensive criticism: The crisis was so rapid and extensive that citizens questioned how America could have been so unprepared. Ultimately, attackers sought to try and determine responsibility and sought an apology from Bush for the mess.

One of the primary reasons for studying apologetic discourse is that it is so pervasive in our society (Benoit, 1995a; Benoit & Dorries, 1996; Kahl, 1984; Linkugal & Razak, 1969; Short, 1987 and Ware & Linkugal, 1973). Situations calling for an image repair range from bumping into others on the street to presidents apologizing for scandalous behavior. According to Ware and Linkugal (1973) instances of apologia are "typical and recurrent enough for men to feel the need of having a name for them" (p. 273).

Ryan (1982) extended existing theories of *apologia* by arguing that self-defense discourse involves the speech set of both *kategoria* and apologia (attack and defense) and that any critical focus on the apologia requires the examination of the attack preceding it. Ryan argued that many critics, in their recognition of apologia as a distinct genre of criticism, have ignored the important genre of kategoria. The essay argued that any discourse utilized for the purpose of self-defense is naturally a response to some kind of attack. In order to better understand the nature of the defense, one has to also examine the attack. These two elements create what Ryan labeled as a "speech set."

We argue that this speech set ignores a third component called *antapologia* (response to apologia). *Antapologia* is an important feature of the apologetic situation because the rhetor may choose to construct the initial image repair based on what he or she perceives to be the likely response by the offended person(s). What distinguishes antapologia from simply a follow-up instance of kategoria is the fact that the former is designed to be a response to the apologetic

discourse and the latter is designed to be a response to the initial harmful act perpetrated by the accused. Additionally, some apologies are issued as a series of defensive statements, often adapted to be more effective than the previous statements. Just as the specific arguments outlined in the attack are likely to provoke specific strategies in the apologia, the arguments in the apologia are likely to provoke certain types of discursive responses.

For example, during the 2001 spy plane incident in China, the Chinese government as well as its people issued a series of statements condemning the U.S. act as "arrogant" and "hegemonic." Liu Yuexin, a Chinese businessman said: "The US always advocates 'democracy and human rights.' However, their spy plane openly intruded into China's territorial airspace, hit a Chinese fighter and left a Chinese pilot missing. Where are their 'democracy and human rights' now?" ("Chinese Condemn," 2001). This statement reflects an instance of kategoria because it focuses the attack on the act perpetrated by the United States. When the discourse instead addresses the apologia for the act, it constitutes an instance of antapologia. For example, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said in a statement: "The US side, disregarding the facts, continues to confuse right and wrong and even falsely accuse the Chinese side in irresponsible comments made successively by high-ranking members of the US administration in the last few days, in an attempt to shirk its responsibility" ("China Refutes," 2001). This statement, though it does address the violation of Chinese airspace, centers on the strategies used by the U.S. to account for the incident.

In order to be antapologia, a statement has to specifically identify elements of the apologia and provide a persuasive response. If apologia is viewed as a form of persuasive argument, which we would argue it certainly is, it should be reasonable to suggest that apologia arguments do not occur in a vacuum. Just as apologia is a rebuttal to attack (kategoria), antapologia is a rebuttal to the apologia. Each stage in the cycle influences the persuasive outcome of the other arguments. Examples of antapologia are less prevalent that examples of attack and defense because it involves discourse in response to a communicative act rather than discourse merely identifying a harmful behavior, making it slightly more difficult to identify.

The goal of this paper is to draw attention to this unrecognized form of discourse. Although scholars have utilized responses to image repair as external evidence in support of their critical arguments regarding the apologia, only Stein ( )has analyzed the discourse in this new critical way. In order to illuminate the

importance of antapologia discourse, this paper focuses on the apologia strategies used by President Bush during the Hurricane Katrina disaster and the antapologia arguments made by newspaper journalists in response to the image repair discourse. We seek to answer the question of how effective were the antapologia strategies used by newspaper journalists in responding to President Bush's apologia.

In this paper we will initially describe the exigencies that demanded that the President apologize. Then we will describe the method used to analyze the antapologia discourse and describe the texts used in the analysis. Third, we will describe the newspapers antapologia strategies and comment on their effectiveness using internal evidence. And last, we will address the theoretical contributions of the research of propose future directions for study.

Exigencies Requiring a Presidential Apology

In September of 2005, President Bush was forced to account for his administration's failed response to the Hurricane Katrina disaster. A number of administration missteps damaged the President's credibility and triggered extensive media criticism of his preparation for and response to the hurricane. Krauthammer (2005), writing for *Washington Post* described the federal response as "Late, slow, and simply out of tune with the urgency and magnitude of the disaster" (p. A25). George Edwards, a presidential expert at Texas A&M University explained that importance of a timely government response: "People certainly expect government to act when they have a need. These people have been paying taxes for a long time and expect something. They don't expect to be dying by the curbside in New Orleans" (Herman, 2005, p. 4D). Larson, Stein and Grady's (2006) analysis of the attacks in newspaper editorials concluded that the public believed the federal government should have been quicker to respond to the disaster. Citizens were dismayed that America, the remaining superpower, had not responded faster and more forcefully to the disaster. Essentially, the President faced four tasks in rectifying his damaged image vis-à-vis Hurricane Katrina. Initial, the public thought, Bush appeared inattentive to Katrina, making visits to California and then back to Washington with only a fly-over of the devastated Gulf Coast area.

Second, FEMA director Michael Brown and Homeland Security Director Michael Chertoff seemed remarkably out of touch with what was happening in New Orleans. On Thursday night, four days after Katrina touched ground, Brown admitted that FEMA had just learned of the plight of thousands stranded at the

convention center (Lipton and Shane, 2005, p. 17) even though the TV networks had been talking about the problem with tape footage for over a day. Chertoff admitted that he had not learned about the levee breach for over 24 hours after New Orleans started to flood (Bookman, 2005, p. 19A).

Third, FEMA had been restructured once it had been placed under the direction of Homeland Security. Funding had been cut in half and the organization focus had been changed. Three out of four preparation grants at Homeland Security had been spent on counterterrorism (Lipton and Shane, 2005, p. 17). This structural change left FEMA weakened and unable to deal effectively with the massive storm and the subsequent flooding.

Fourth, not only had Government responded slowly, but many of the individuals most directly hurt were poor and black. Former Atlanta mayor Andrew Young cited government for failing to take care of blacks: "It's not just a lack of preparedness. I think the easy answer is to say that there are poor people and black people and so government doesn't give a damn" (Purdum, 2005, p. 1).

President Bush needed to address these four exigencies when responding to Katrina. Although Bush offered a series of brief announcement during the first week following the hurricane, his rhetoric simply outlined executive strategies for handling the crisis. Some might argue that the president was issuing a type of "pre-emptive" apologia. But in the early stages, media criticism directed at the Bush administration was relatively light as journalists sought to determine who was most responsible for the debacle. Bush delivered an initial response in the Rose Garden September 3rd and then later in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on September 8th.

The public did not see these two speeches as an apology for the quagmire. Subsequently newspaper attacks targeted Bush between one and two weeks after the hurricane, forcing Bush to offer his first highly visible national address to the American public on September 15th from Jackson Square in New Orleans. He followed this with a televised speech from the Washington National Cathedral on September 16th and a radio address on September 17th. These three speeches represent the bulk of Bush's apologia discourse and seem to reflect awareness on the part of the president that the attack had gained enough momentum to justify a clear response.

Not satisfied with Bush's rhetoric, critics used editorial and newspaper articles to criticize the president. For example, Franklin Rich's (2005) editorial argued: "But hard as it is to reflect upon so much sorrow at once, we cannot allow ourselves to

forget the real history surrounding 9/11; it is the Rosetta stone for what is happening now. If we are to pull ourselves out of the disasters of Katrina and Iraq alike, we must live in the real world, not the fantasyland of the administration's faith-based propaganda" (p. 10). Rich concluded his editorial by condemning Bush's response. "Now thanks to M. Bush's variously incompetent, diffident and hubristic mismanagement of the attack by Katrina; he sent the entire world a simple and unambiguous message, whatever the explanation, the United States is unable to fight its current war and protect homeland security at the same time" (p. 10). These statements reflect a general attitude in newspaper columns that the president's apologia was insufficient to account for the poor government response to Katrina.

Antapologia Strategies

Each of the categories in the typology of antapologia strategies will be explained, followed by a description and justification for the texts used in the analysis. Stein (2005) explored the characteristics of the antapologia in the 1960 and 2001 spy plane incident and developed a typology of strategies used in the two case studies using grounded theory, specifically the method of constant comparison. From this analysis, several categories of antapologia emerged. According to Stein, there are two primary functions of antapologic discourse – one strengthens the initial attack and the other weakens the apologia offered by the accused. Antapologia strategies used to strengthen attack included: 1) identifying of concessions in the apologia, and 2) refining the attack based on the apologia. Antapologia strategies used to weaken the apologia included arguments claiming that: 1) portions of the apologia are false, 2) the accused has contradicted previous apologia strategies, 3) apologia does not take responsibility, 4) apologia reflects character flaws of the accused, and 5) harm will come from the apologia itself. A sixth strategy for weakening the account of the accused occurred as rhetors would sometimes defend against attacks made in the apologia (image repair strategy of attacking the accuser).

To assume this list is definitive would be premature. We expect that the antapologia discourse following accounts of poor preparation and response to Hurricane Katrina will look somewhat different from the antapologia provided by the Soviets and the Chinese during the respective spy plane incidents. However, we will use the original typology as our starting point in the analysis and make adjustments where necessary by adding additional categories.

Texts used in the Analysis

In order to gauge the discursive response to Bush's apologia (antapologia), our study examined all newspaper articles and editorials mentioning Bush and Katrina during the 9 day period following his principal national televised address. The newspapers surveyed were: the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*. These newspapers, with their national and strong regional readership bases, provided an adequate view of the journalistic response to Bush's remarks vis-à-vis New Orleans and the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina. We wanted to gather the most widely circulated national newspapers including newspapers published in close geographic proximity to the disaster.

Newspaper Antapologia in Response to Bush

Several of the strategies present in Stein's (2005) typology of antapologia used in the 1960 and 2001 spy plane incidents were also present in the newspaper discourse in response to Bush's apologia. This attests to some extent that the typology may be useful in examining antapologic discourse in contexts of differing characteristics. The initial typology suggests that there are two functions to antapologia. One is to strengthen the attack and the other is to weaken the apologia. In order to strengthen the attack against Bush, journalists used the strategy of identifying concessions in the president's discourse. In order to weaken Bush's apologia, the journalists utilized two strategies from the original typology. First, they argued that the apologia was incomplete or did not take adequate responsibility. Second, they argued that the apologia reflected character flaws of the accused. In addition to these strategies for weakening the apologia, several new strategies emerged. One is that the accuser attributes motive to the speaker's apologia. The other is that the accuser makes comparisons between the present apologia and other speeches and/or historical events.

Identifying Concessions

Journalists strengthened the initial attack by identifying concessions made by Bush in his five speeches. In numerous instances, newspapers would report that Bush had admitted some level of responsibility for the poor government response to Hurricane Katrina. For example, Benedetto (2005) wrote in a *USA Today* article: "He [Bush] acknowledged that the chaotic initial response to Katrina showed that the disaster planning is inadequate and again took responsibility for

failures by the government" (p. 1A). Beckel (2005) argued in another *USA Today* column: "There is plenty of blame to go around, but in the end, only the federal government can deal with a crisis of this size. As such, I was glad to see Bush taking responsibility. There's a first time for everything" (p. 17A).

An institutional editorial in the New York Times also highlighted Bush's frank admission: President Bush said three things last night that needed to be said. He forthrightly acknowledged his responsibility for the egregious mishandling of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. He spoke clearly and candidly about race and poverty. And finally, he was clear about what would be needed to bring back the Gulf Coast and said the federal government would have to lead and pay for that effort. ("Mr. Bush in New Orleans. 2005, p. 26) These statements functioned to strengthen the attack on Bush because they point out how the criticism was effective in compelling the president to admit responsibility. Balz (2005) of the *Washington Post* made the argument that Bush's admission of responsibility was nothing short of a concession that the criticism levied against him was legitimate. He wrote: "In again taking responsibility for the federal government's failures, Bush signaled last night that the White House has decided not to contest the widespread perceptions that his administration failed in the early days of the crisis. By embracing those criticisms, they hope to make the issue a sideshow that will play out sometime in the future" (p. A1). This statement strengthens the initial attack by highlighting the initial criticism against the Bush administration, but also by pointing out the lack of any denial regarding the accusations. Newspaper journalists also used several strategies to weaken Bush's apologia following Hurricane Katrina. These strategies include: 1) Arguing that the apologia is incomplete, 2) Arguing that the apologia reflects the character flaws of the accused, 3) Attributing motive to the offender's apologia, and 4) Comparing the apologia to other speakers and/or historical events.

Arguing that the Apologia is Incomplete
The newspapers made several arguments regarding the incompleteness of Bush's overall apologia strategy. First, they argued that the president's proposals were a good start, but insufficient to justify excusing his administration's poor response. Bumiller and Kornblut (2005) wrote in a *New York Times* : Many black leaders, who have newfound political leverage at the White House in the wake of the storm, cautiously applauded. But they said Mr. Bush's promises of help on housing, education, taxes, and job training in two speeches – prime-time address

in New Orleans on Thursday night and remarks at a day of remembrance for storm victims at Washington National Cathedral on Friday – were only the beginning. (p. 21)

Although the statement does praise the president for his offer of corrective action, it does imply that these solutions by themselves do not constitute a full apology. Perhaps the reason that journalists were not quick to accept Bush's promises as adequate is because they saw a distinction between words and deeds. A *New York Times* editorial stated: "Mr. Bush's words could begin a much-needed healing process. But that will happen only if they are followed by deeds that are as principled, disciplined and ambitious as Mr. Bush's speech" (p. 26). In this example, the apologia is weakened through the claim that promises themselves are only discursive and will do little to tangibly address damage caused by the hurricane.

Second, newspapers argued the apologia was incomplete by claiming that Bush's admission of responsibility was relatively hollow. Several journalists argued that Bush's promises to investigate the failed government response using his own people was an indication that he really did not accept personal responsibility for the government's shortcomings. For example, an article in the *Times-Picayune* read: "Their resistance is frustrating. Senator Hillary Clinton, who authored the bill, said that it's not appropriate for the government to investigate itself. Certainly the approach will suffer serious credibility problems, even if it manages to be objective and free of partisan maneuvering" ("Katrina commission," 2005, p. 1). Walsh (2005) made a similar argument: Democrats have complained that Republicans are attempting to control a congressional inquiry into the delayed pace of hurricane assistance, and Bush's selection of a member of his staff to lead the White House probe only heightened that criticism.... How in the world can we get to the truth as to what went wrong with Hurricane Katrina, how can we really hope to discover the incompetence that led to all the human suffering and devastation if the administration is going to investigate itself? (p. A2) Although these examples do not directly say that Bush's choice to appoint his own investigative team showed a lack of mortification, they do imply that the team would be less than objective and perhaps even assembled for the purpose of masking the truth regarding who is essentially responsible.

Third, journalists argued that the corrective action offered would not be sufficient. Most newspapers tended to focus on the difficulty that Bush would have in paying for his lofty proposals. For example, Herbert (2005) wrote in the *New York Times*: In an eerily lit, nationally televised appearance outside the

historic St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans, President Bush promised the world to the Gulf Coast residents whose lives were upended by Hurricane Katrina. He seemed to be saying that no effort, no amount of money would be spared. Two hundred billion dollars? No problem…. The country has put its faith in Mr. Bush many times before, and come up empty. (p. 25) A *New York Times* article also speculates about how Bush would pay: "President Bush didn't say the other night how he would pay for his promise to rebuild the Gulf Coast states. Allow us to explain: Every penny of aid approved by Congress so far and all subsequent aid – perhaps as much as $200 billion – will be borrowed" ("Taking full," 2005, p. 24). These statements weaken the apologia by showing that Bush's overall approach to reconstructing the Gulf states and assisting refugees is logistically difficult.

Fourth, newspapers argued that the apologia came far too late to be acceptable. Rich (2005) argued: Nor can the president's acceptance of "responsibility" for the disaster dislodge what came before. Mr. Bush didn't cough up his modified-limited mea culpa until he'd seen his whole administration flash before his eyes. His admission that some of the buck my stop with him (about a dime's worth in Truman dollars) came two weeks after the levees burst and five years after he promised to usher in a new post-Clinton "culture of responsibility." It came only after the plan to heap all the blame on the indeed blameworthy local Democrats failed to lift Mr. Bush's own record-low poll numbers. It came only after America's highest-rated TV news anchor, Brian Williams, started talking about Katrina the way Walter Cronkite once did about Vietnam. (p. 12) In this example, the argument is made quite clearly that Bush's admission of responsibility could not adequately account for the magnitude of his failings with regard to Katrina. The statement weakened Bush's apologia because it dismissed the idea of forgiving so many failures following one rhetorical act.

Fifth, newspapers also pointed out quite simply how Bush ignored certain elements of the initial attack. For example, Stevenson (2005) argued in his New York Times article: "He was giving a speech as if the nation were disheartened and worried and had lost its spirit, but that's not what people were thinking. They were thinking, why did the government screw up (p. 19)? The authors criticism is that Bush took on the role of national healer, when people simply wanted to know why the government had failed in its responsibility to protect the people from disaster.

Apologia Reflects the Character Flaws of the Accused
Another strategy for weakening the apologia is to argue that the persuasive

defense offered by the accused reflects certain character flaws. This is easy to confuse with other types of character of attacks levied against Bush, which are quite frequent in the press. What distinguishes antapologia arguments regarding character from other ad hominem attacks is that the accuser claims that the apologia discourse itself showcases the character flaws. For example, Keen (2005) argued that Bush's policy initiative outlined in the February 15th speech represented "good use of government from a guy who's demonized it these last five years" (p. 6A). Obviously, the use of the term "demonize" reflects a slightly different connotation than to simply state that Bush's leadership has been lacking. Wolf and Keen (2005) questioned the sincerity of the president's proposals, saying "It's easy to practice checkbook compassion" (p. 6A). The writers claimed that Bush did not really care about the victims and that true compassion requires more than simply spending the American taxpayers' money. Other journalists focused on Bush's incompetence following the hurricane. Herbert (2005) argued: "Mr. Bush's new post-Katrina persona defies belief. The same man who was unforgivably slow to respond to the gruesome and often fatal suffering of his fellow Americans now suddenly emerges from the larva of his ineptitude to present himself as-well, nothing short of enlightened" (p. 25). In this statement, the author claimed that the president was attempting, through his rhetoric, to mask his uselessness during Hurricane Katrina and instead create a more favorable public persona.

Attributing Motive to the Apologia
Another strategy for weakening the apologia, which was not present in Stein's (2005) earlier work on antapologia, was to argue that there were motives – sometimes hidden ones – for the specific apologia strategies chosen by the accused. First, newspapers argued that Bush was trying to shift focus away from his mistakes. Keen (2005) wrote: "Thursday's speech also was intended to be a pivot point for Bush, shifting attention away from mistakes to a new national challenge" (p. 6A). Sagan and Andrews (2005) made a similar argument:
"Taken together with his speech in Jackson Square on Thursday night, Mr. Bush's comments were part of an effort to shift focus to promises of rebuilding and recovery and away from criticism that the White House had been callous in its slowness in helping the storm victims, many of them black" (p. 1).

These examples illustrate the newspapers' attempts to attribute motive to the speech, by arguing that Bush tried to dispel criticism by redirecting the public

focus toward reconstruction. It weakens the apologia by showing that Bush's intentions were not to admit responsibility and to sincerely provide for those in need, but rather to evade the onslaught of media criticism.

Another motive attributed to Bush's apologia is that he was trying to use the Katrina crisis to push political agendas that he had previously failed to get through Congress. One such policy was the president's goal of personal reemployment accounts, as Irwin (2005) describe in a *Washington Post* article:

In a speech Thursday night, the president proposed making those left unemployed by the storm eligible for a one-time $5,000 grant they can use for job training, child care, transportation and other help they need to be able to return to work. The accounts are similar in purpose and design to "personal reemployment accounts," which the Bush administration sought in 2003 along with tax cuts passed that year. (p. A9)

The statement did not directly accuse Bush of taking advantage of the situation, but did highlight the similarity between the president's current "worker recovery accounts" and the original "personal reemployment accounts." This statement weakened the apologia by arguing that Bush's policy for helping refugees get work was perhaps motivated by an effort to successfully implement a failed policy from 2003. A similar argument was made with regard to Bush's proposal for school vouchers. An institution editorial in the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* stated: "President Bush's intention to defray the private school tuition of children forced out of their homes and classroom by Hurricane Katrina may well be a covert attempt to win support for the type of voucher plan that voters have repeatedly and wisely rejected" ("Worth vouching for," 2005, p. 18A). Again, the statement weakened Bush's apologia by claiming that the president had ulterior motives when proposing a solution of school vouchers to assist victims of the hurricane.

Comparing the Apologia to other Speeches and/or Historical Events
The last strategy designed to weaken the apologia involved the comparison of the persuasive defense either to Bush's previous speeches or to other historical events. This strategy was not present in Stein's (2005) analysis of the antapologia in the two spy plane incidents and may be unique to the Katrina context. One historical event that many journalists compared Bush's speeches to was FDR's New Deal. Kemper (2005) wrote: "President Bush, facing what he called 'one of the largest reconstruction projects the world has ever seen' in three Gulf Coast

states devastated by Hurricane Katrina, has proposed a massive New Deal-style federal spending program to help thousands of evacuees rebuild homes, businesses, and lives" (p. 1A). Bumiller and Kornblut (2005) compared Bush's proposals to Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society reforms, which were based on the New Deal and designed to combat racism and poverty. They wrote: "Some African-Americans say that, remarkably, the hurricane has had the effect of pushing Mr. Bush to propose such sweeping Great Society-type programs" (p. 21). These statements may be effective in weakening Bush's apologia, but they require readers of these articles to have an unfavorable view of these historical policies. The implication in the above statements is that the New Deal and the Great Society were not desirable policies.

Journalists also compared Bush's Katrina rhetoric to the president's post-9/11 discourse. An editorial in the *USA Today* argued: It sounded all too much like the initiatives Bush announced four years ago with equal force and fervor in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. Katrina proved those to be a near total failure in their first major test, raising deep suspicions that the administration has bungled terrorism preparations as badly as it bungled the Katrina response. ("Finally, Bush," 2005, p. 10A) This statement was designed to weaken Bush's apologia by showing that sometimes the most fervent and passionate speeches delivered by the president will result in very little benefit.

Evaluation of the Newspaper Antapologia

The antapologia strategies utilized by the newspapers in response to Bush's apologia discourse were generally effective. Journalists highlighted a rare admission of responsibility from the president which strengthened the initial attack. One of the primary functions of an attack in to increase the perceived level of responsibility of someone accused of a harmful act. The newspaper attack was effective in soliciting an admission of guilt from Bush and the antapologia strategy of pointing out the concession served to strengthen the attack. It was also important for journalists to not settle on an insincere admission or a laundry list of corrective actions that Congress would likely not approve funding for. As a whole, newspapers argued that Bush admitted responsibility, that the admission was insincere, that the solutions offered to correct the damage were not workable, and that the proposals were motivated by political gain. Collectively, these arguments made for a fairly strong position. They functioned to strengthen the attack by suggesting that the kategoria was powerful enough to compel the president to respond forcefully. The arguments also weakened the apologia by

showing very specifically how it was insufficient to address the demands of the Bush's accusers.

No external evidence can be utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of the antapologia because polling data focuses almost exclusively on Bush's apologia. Sometimes newspaper commentary is used to gage response to a certain type of discourse, but in this case where the discourse analyzed in the study is provided by newspapers, it would be silly to look for newspaper commentary about the newspaper arguments.

Theoretical Contributions

This study has begun to establish antapologia as an important part of the three-part speech set. Ryan (1982) argued that there were two components of apologia discourse. He claimed that in order to fully understand an apologetic situation, a critic has to explore elements of the attack and the defense. Ryan is correct in his assessment that defensive discourse can better be understood by understanding the attack because the apologia is tailored to respond to specific elements of the attack. However, Ryan arbitrarily assumed that there were only two parts in the apologia speech set. The examination of the antapologia in this study indicates that an accuser may advance new arguments in response to the apologia. They are not designed to repeat the initial attack, but to extend it based on comments on specific elements of the offender's apologia. Additionally, the antapologia is as integrally connected to the apologia as the apologia is linked to the kategoria. There is reason to suspect that the process might extend beyond instances of antapologia to another stage involving more defensive discourse from the accused. We have arbitrarily decided not to look beyond the antapologia. Nevertheless, the study does reveal that examinations of kategoria and apologia are not sufficient to fully understand the discourse of apology.

One of the primary limitations of the study is that we analyze a collective antapologia response and assert that it is offered by the same newspapers that levied the initial wave of attack. We suspect that many newspapers attacked Bush, the president responded, and then many of the same newspapers continued the debate by refuting Bush's apologetic discourse. We cannot be certain, though, that many of the initial attackers did not refrain from utilizing antapologia strategies, nor can we be sure that those who did utilize antapologia ever levied an initial attack. We believe that it is a fair assumption, however, that journalists assigned to cover the Katrina disaster would likely cover the story for its entire duration.

Conclusion

Future research in the area of apologia should examine additional case studies applying the typology of antapologia in order to determine if it represents the beginning of a new genre of criticism. With the analysis of Hurricane Katrina, three distinct contexts have now been studied utilizing this typology. Antapologia is an exciting new area of communication research. The insight gathered from examining discourse during the Hurricane Katrina disaster may help us to see apologia as a sequence of arguments beginning with kategoria and extending to antapologia. It seems somewhat illogical to study discursive argument in a vacuum. Obviously, in the case of Katrina, the newspaper attacks functioned to constrain the eventual Bush defense, which ultimately dictated the antapologia used in response. Studying how the arguments progress will help us to better understand each component of the overall debate.

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – Pragmatic Reflexivity In Self-defeating And Self-justifying Expressions

Arguments that rely on reflexive expressions, specifically self-defeating and self-justifying expressions, are far from rare in epistemology. A good example is Siegel's objection to the epistemological relativist view that knowledge and/or truth or justification is relative to time, place, culture, or a set of non-neutral standards of evaluation. Of the objections to relativism, Siegel says:

… by far the most fundamental is the charge that relativism is self-referentially incoherent or self-refuting, in that defending the doctrine requires one to give it up… relativism precludes the possibility of determining the truth, justificatory status, or more generally the epistemic merit of contentious claims and theses-including itself… if it (relativism) is true (right or justified), the very notion of truth (or of rightness or justifiedness) is undermined, in which case relativism cannot itself be true (right or justified). (Siegel, 2004, p. 747-748)

The reflexivity in this argument lies in the charge that relativism is self-defeating; that it is inconsistent when applied to itself. In this Siegel follows the tradition reaching at least back to *Theaetetus*, of making that charge against various forms of relativism. Another classic reflexivity based argument is Copi's argument for the truth of the principle of non-contradiction or (PNC): the principle that states that contradictions cannot be true. Copi's argument is roughly that the denial of (PNC) is self-defeating. I suspect that Siegel would make the same argument on behalf of (PNC), as well as similar arguments against various forms of naturalism. Although proponents often regard reflexivity based arguments as clearly valid instances of reductio ad absurdum, those same arguments often have been condemned as wishful thinking and nonsense. What is often missing from the primary debate in which the arguments figure is a recognition that the way a given thesis is self-defeating is not always a purely logical matter. In an effort to shed light on this contentious form of argument, I will clarify the extra-logical features of self-defeating expressions in a proposed definition of self-defeating expressions. I will then apply that definition in an evaluation of various reflexivity based arguments, including the above examples. I will also explain how self-defeating expressions relate to self-justifying expressions.

To begin, it is imperative to clarify how an expression may be self-defeating. Following Peirce's 'logical magnifying glass' strategy, the signature features of self-defeating expressions may be revealed by examining extreme cases.**[i]** The Liar sentence is one such extreme self-defeater.

(L) This sentence is false.

Because what (L) says is that (L) itself is false, (L) can be true only by being false. The fact that (L) is true only if it is false is sufficient to qualify (L) as self-defeating.**[ii]** There are some who might object to the claim that the liar sentence as self-defeating. In White's preferred sense of 'self-defeating', for instance, what gets expressed in a self-defeating expression must be false. According to White (L) is neither true nor false and is therefore not self-defeating. Though the claim that (L) is neither true nor false is not uncommon, it is controversial. In any case it is unnecessary to quarrel with the claim that (L) is not false since, even if (L) is not false, (L) is definitely not true. On a more liberal definition, one that does not require falsity, (L) is self-defeating because (L) can be true only by being not true. The exact nature of the non-truth of (L), may thus be left as an open question. Closely related to (L) is another extreme example, (N).

(N) This sentence is false and p.

Unlike (L), it is clearly not the case that (N) is false only if it is true. For perhaps p is false. However, (N) is true only if it is false; and that is enough to be self-defeating. A preliminary sufficient condition for being self-defeating is therefore (P1).

(P1) If 's' is true, then 's' is false.**[iii]**

That is, if (P1) is true of an expression of 's', then 's' is self-defeating. Consider now, an extreme self-defeater that is importantly different from both (L) and (N).

(A) p but I do not assert that p.

Unlike (L) or (N), it is not the case that if (A) is true then (A) is false. Thus, (P1) does not capture what it is to be self-defeating at its most general because (A) does not satisfy (P1) even though (A) is self-defeating. Although the way (A) is self-defeating is not by satisfying the condition (P1), that way is not completely different from the way (L) and (N) are self-defeating. Specifically, although it is not the case that (A) is true only if (A) is false, if (A) is asserted by any speaker of English then what the speaker asserts is false, i.e., (A) can be truly asserted only if it is false. What is different is that the self-defeat arises not merely from the logical features of what is expressed but also the expressing. *The act of asserting* (A) prevents (A) from attaining the status of a true assertion. An assertion of (A) is reflexively inconsistent in the pragmatic sense that the assertion of (A) is inconsistent with what is asserted.

A useful definition of self-defeating expressions must therefore account for the ways in which *acts* of assertion undermine themselves. It is useful to consider the related case of Moore's paradox to see that there are different ways the act may figure into an expression's being self-defeating.

(M) p but I do not believe that p.

Given that the conveyance of a speaker's beliefs is a goal or end associated with genuine or sincere assertion, the impropriety of the Moore sentences such as (M) can be described in a way similar to the above description of the reflexive inconsistency of (A).**[iv]** A successful assertion of (M) should convey that the

speaker believes that p but according to what is asserted the speaker does not believe that p. (M) fails to be a successful assertion because the successful assertion of (M) is inconsistent with (M) itself.**[v]** Acts of assertion have conditions by which they are successful in some respect or not. It is not necessary at this point to state the conditions of successful assertion in great detail; it is enough to note that such success conditions concern belief and truth as they figure in the act of assertion. In the case of (A) and (M), those conditions cannot be met without being undermined. The self-destruction of (A) and (M) has its source in pragmatic reflexivity because it concerns features of the act of assertion in addition to logical features of what is asserted.

The above conclusion echoes O'Connor's distinction between semantic paradox and pragmatic paradox. According to O'Connor the former arises between sign and what it designates whereas the latter "is pragmatic in that it arises from the relations between signs and their users" (O'Connor, 1951). In the case of pragmatic paradox "the conditions of the action are defined in such a way that their publication entails that the action can never be carried out" (O'Connor, 1948). (P2) incorporates the pragmatic element into a sufficient condition for being self-defeating.

(P2) If the assertion of 's' is successful, then the assertion of 's' is a failure.

Both (A) and (M) satisfy (P2) in the way explained above.
Though many pragmatic paradoxes satisfy (P2), it is still too narrow a condition. The problem with (P2) is that not everything that is self-defeating is an assertion. Consider (D).

(D) Do not obey this command.**[vi]**

The problem is that (P2) does not apply to (D) yet (D) is self-defeating. (D) is not something asserted, it is a command. Nonetheless, if someone commanded (D), their act of commanding would undermine the possibility of being obeyed. So, commanding (D) is self-defeating. To accommodate this example, (P2) needs to be generalized to other expressive acts than assertion. (P3) is the result of such a modification.

(P3) If the relevant use of 's' is successful, then that use of 's' is a failure.

Determining what use is the relevant one is a matter of determining whether the

expressive act is an assertion, command, question, or argument, etc. For instance, the relevant use in the above example is the use of (D) as a command. (P3) defines a sense of self-defeating that applies to many different uses of expressions besides assertions.

Although (P3) is very comprehensive insofar as a great many self-defeating expressions satisfy it, it does not explicitly indicate how the *reflexivity* of (L), (N), (A), (M), and (D) give rise to their self-defeating uses. The fact that uses of these expressions are reflexive, i.e., refer to themselves, is both obvious and necessary in order for the expressions to qualify as self-defeating. For instance, the reason that (P3) is true of a use of (D) as a command is that such a command ensures its *own failure.* Nonetheless, it is possible that some use of an expression succeeds only if it fails because it fails, perhaps necessarily, in some non-reflexive way. Consider (ILL) which satisfies (P3) without being self-defeating:

(ILL) and the if red.

It is impossible to use (ILL) in a successful command or assertion, and thus any such use of (ILL) is a failure. However, (ILL) is not self-defeating. The final modification, (P4), clearly indicates that it is the pragmatically reflexive nature of self-defeating expressions that makes them self-defeating.

(P4) If the relevant use of 's' is successful, then that use of 's' is a failure on account of the inconsistency of that use of 's' with the conditions of success for that same use of 's'.

Though I have not argued that (P4) is necessary for being self-defeating, it is a fairly comprehensive sufficient condition.**[vii]** Moreover, a precise condition such as (P4) provides the basis for the evaluation of arguments that involve or concern self-defeating and self-justifying expressions.

There are two predominant types arguments in which self-defeating statements play a central role: Arguments *to the effect that or for the conclusion that* some expression is self-defeating and arguments *made from or on the basis of* an expression's being self-defeating. Thus, there are at least two avenues by which the above characterization of self-defeating expressions in terms of pragmatic reflexivity informs the evaluation of arguments. First, by identifying a sufficient and comprehensive condition, (P4) provides an effective test for whether a given expression is in fact self-defeating. Second, the specific content and conditions

that satisfy (P4), i.e., how the sort of expression and what is expressed result in reflexive inconsistency, constrain what follows from a particular expression's being self-defeating and thus what conclusions can be supported by an argument from that self-defeating expression. Though distinct, the two sorts of evaluation may support one another.

(P4) facilitates the assessment of a claim or argument for the conclusion that some expression is self-defeating. If the claim that some expression is self-defeating is based on good reasons for regarding (P4) as true of that expression, i.e., (P4) is true when the suspect expression is substituted for 'the relevant use of 's'', then there is good reason to regard the expression as self defeating. Since many uses of expressions have more or less well defined success conditions, (P4) can be applied to an alleged self-defeating expression with relative ease. However, there is an interesting problem case.

(SK) No one knows anything.**[viii]**

Suppose (SK) is asserted. It is not clear that if the assertion is successful, then it fails on account of the success conditions for that assertion and what is asserted in (SK). For although what is asserted is that no one knows anything, it may be argued that knowledge is not a success condition of assertion. After all, if it were, every successful assertion would be true and it is obvious that there are successful assertions of falsehoods. This case is problematic not because it is a counterexample to (P4), though it has been proposed as such, but because it may not be clear under what specific success conditions (P4) is to be applied.

There are at least two ways in which (P4) may be applied to (SK) such that it turns out to be self-defeating. First, although knowledge of what is asserted may not be a success condition of assertion, some knowledge of how to make assertions surely is. One obvious success condition of assertion is that one have some knowledge of how to make assertions. Thus some knowledge is required for the success of an assertion of (SK) and it is this condition that is inconsistent with what is so asserted by (SK). Another point is that there is a clear inconsistency between what is asserted by (SK) and knowledge that (SK). If (SK) is true, then it is unknowable. Thus, (SK) is self-defeating when used in any act whose success conditions include the possibility of knowing (SK). Perhaps assertion in general has knowability as a success condition but perhaps not. On the other hand many important epistemic acts clearly do have knowability as a success condition, such as learning and explaining. For these acts (SK) is indeed self-defeating.

There is an additional way in which an argument may concern self-defeating expressions: namely by being one. A self-defeating argument is not the same as an argument either based on the claim or to the effect that some expression is self-defeating. Moreover, a self-defeating argument is different from other expressions that are self-defeating, such as self-defeating assertions, insofar as it is a different kind of act. To determine whether an argument is self-defeating, (P4) may be applied to the use of the argument as a whole. For example, the use of the following set of statements (IMP) *as an argument* is pragmatic reflexive inconsistent because (P4) is true of such a use.

(IMP)
1. If this argument is invalid, then Modus Ponens is invalid.
2. This argument is invalid.
Therefore, Modus Ponens is invalid.

Since one of the conditions for successful use of this argument is that it validly support or establish its conclusion, which in this case is that the argument itself is invalid, the argument succeeds only if fails. If a use of (IMP) as an argument is successful, then that argument fails on account of the inconsistency of that use of (IMP) with the success conditions of so arguing. In this way (P4) may be applied directly to complex acts including arguing.

Since (P4) is only a sufficient condition for being self-defeating, the fact that a given expression does not satisfy (P4) does not by itself undermine the claim that it is self-defeating. Even if (P4) is false for a given expression, it is possible that the expression is self-defeating nonetheless. Of course any such accusations of self-defeat must still be based on some reason even if it is not (P4). In any case, the sufficiency of (P4) provides enough of a test to address the second type of evaluation.

The characterization of self-defeating expressions in terms of (P4) allows for the evaluation of the arguments from self-defeating expressions. Here is the argument for the principle of non-contradiction (PNC) from its self-defeating denial in more detail. If one denies (PNC), it could be true that both (PNC) and not (PNC). But if both (PNC) and not (PNC) could be true, one has not denied that (PNC). In denying the law of contradiction one undermines that very same denial. (In the form of (P4): if the denial of (PNC) is successful, then it fails.) Therefore, (PNC), i.e., necessarily, contradictions are false. Such an argument for (PNC) is the model of rationalistic proofs favored by Siegel, Copi, and others and derided

by Ebersole and Stack.**[ix]** The general strategy is to argue that an expression is self-defeating in such a way that entails the desired conclusion. Usually most of the argument is left implicit or is cast as an objection that a thesis is self-defeating. The common form of arguments based on self-defeating expressions is thus as follows.

(Form)
1. That some specific use of 's' is self-defeating entails T.
2. That specified use of 's' is self-defeating.
Therefore, T.

Though rarely stated so explicitly, the merits of the arguments that have this form depend upon the unstated assumption (1). What is entailed by an expression's being self-defeating, i.e., the truth of (1), depends on *how* the expression is self-defeating.

When the self-defeating is purely logical the argument is a reductio ad absurdum of what the self-defeating expression expresses. Reflexive inconsistency that is due exclusively to the semantic or syntactic properties of what is expressed entails the negation of what the logical self-defeater expresses. Logical reflexive inconsistency is logical inconsistency. Assuming classical propositional logic: logical inconsistency implies falsity and falsity entails the truth of the negation. Thus, given that the reflexive inconsistency of (N) is purely logical, then an instance of (Form) in terms of (N) is a good argument for not-(N). Of course, not-(N) is a relatively uninteresting conclusion. A likely explanation for the usual implicitness of (1) is that where 'T' is the negation of 's' and 's' is logically reflexive inconsistent, as is the case with (N), (1) is a logical truth.
When the self-defeating is not purely logical the assumption of (1) is more significant and the argument is not a reductio ad absurdum. If (2) is true because the expression is pragmatic reflexive inconsistent, then the merit of the argument depends entirely on what is entailed by that pragmatic reflexive inconsistency. What is entailed largely depends on the *specifics* of the pragmatic reflexivity, i.e., the success conditions of the relevant expressive act along with the semantic and syntactic properties of what is so expressed.
Optimists about this sort of argument would be mistaken to assume without argument an entailment of the favored conclusion T from the mere fact that an expression s is self-defeating. In order for the arguments to carry any weight it must be determined how the expression is self-defeating. The relevant connection

between the way in which the expression is self-defeating (e.g., some specific success conditions that figure in pragmatic reflexive inconsistency) and the content of the conclusion, T, must be accurately specified in (1). Otherwise, very little can be concluded beyond the fact, if it is a fact, that the expression is self-defeating.

Although it is often difficult to determine the connection that would make the arguments work, it cannot be assumed without argument that there is no such connection. Pessimists as much as optimists about a given argument from a self-defeating expression must specify the needed connection as well as argue that it does not hold. Not surprisingly, if one assumes that there is no relevant connection between the success conditions for denial and (PNC) or that the connection is not what it must be, one will find the argument for (PNC) worthless. Stack (1983), for instance, regards such arguments as a contemptible means of avoiding a reductio ad absurdum of some cherished belief, in this case the belief that a certain logical law holds. According to his line of criticism, if the principle of non-contradiction leads to the absurdity of denying that one is denying it as in the simple example argument above, then not only is it not a proof of (PNC) it shows that there is something suspect about it.

Logic is then reduced, it self-destructs, it is shown to be internally incoherent. We use logic to discover this of logic. But this does not mean that logic is necessary. (Stack 1983, p. 334)

According to Stack, the fact that the denial of (PNC) is self-defeating does not entail (PNC), but rather that (PNC) is false. If true, this would amount to a serious objection to the rationalist proof of the logical laws of which the argument for (PNC) is a representative example. Moreover, to his credit, Stack does not assume that there is no connection between the self-defeating and the conclusion of the optimist's argument; he holds that former entails the denial of the latter. However, he does not offer any argument that I can find for this connection. Thus, his objection to the argument is inconclusive.

(P4) along with (Form) model the structure of the standard arguments from self-defeating expressions.[x] This model indicates what must be the case for a use of the argument to be sound, namely that (P4) be satisfied in such a way that (1) is true. In the case of the argument for (PNC), the soundness of that argument depends upon the relation between (PNC) and the act of denial. Suppose, that the

act of denial consists partially in the correct application of the logical laws associated with negation such as (PNC). In that case, not only is the pragmatic reflexive inconsistency of denying (PNC) assured but the argument to be made for (PNC) itself is thereby considerably stronger. This is because the supposition about what constitutes the act of denial guarantees that any successful denial entails that (PNC) is true. Thus, the supposition indicates the truth of premise (1) when the argument is cast as an instance of (Form) so that the successful denial of (PNC) entails (PNC). The question then is whether the supposition is true. I am inclined to think it is if for no other reason than we need to distinguish denial from agreement. On the other hand, even if a good case could be made against the supposition, my immediate point is just that such a connection would have to be articulated if the argument or the objection to it is to be any good.

Roughly the same points may be made on behalf of Siegel's argument against relativism. Suppose the act of defending a theory is partially constituted by the application of neutral standards of evaluation that are not relative to time, place, or culture. In that case, (P4) is satisfied for any defense of relativism and is therefore self-defeating. Now if we cast T in (Form) as the negation of relativism, then (1) is true. This is because the supposition about what constitutes the act of defending a theory guarantees that any successful defense entails the denial of relativism. Not only is the supposition plausible, similar suppositions about the acts of propounding, articulating, and teaching theories are all just as plausible. As long as the argument against relativism pertains to these acts, it is deadly.

All of this illustrates the general point: that some very important epistemological arguments turn out to depend on pragmatic rather than semantic or syntactic considerations. Here is an explanation of that point. Epistemology is the study of knowledge and acts that concern it such as inquiring, learning, teaching, etc. Also, epistemology is itself an inquiry and presumably an act of knowledge acquisition. Thus, epistemology is peculiarly reflexive in that it is essentially the very same kind of epistemic act that it purports to be an inquiry into. Thus a great many epistemological theories turn out to be pragmatically reflexive. Moreover, inconsistencies that arise from such pragmatic reflexivity do carry argumentative force in epistemology insofar as the success of epistemic acts entails that certain epistemic conditions hold. I have argued that some of Copi and Siegel's arguments are actually supported by pragmatic considerations. I have also provided the support for an argument against skepticism in my argument that (P4) holds for (SK), though that support is limited.

It is interesting to note that when an argument from or based on reflexive inconsistency is successful it shows that its conclusion is a self-justifying claim**[xi]** More precisely, a claim that is supported by an argument from the reflexive inconsistency of its negation is a self-justified claim, in the relevant pragmatic or logical sense. So, if the example argument for (PNC) is correct, then (PNC) may be said to be self-justifying. If Siegel is correct, some form of epistemological absolutism is self-justifying. If my arguments for (SK) being self-defeating are correct, then some form of anti-skepticism is self-justifying. Provided that they are successful, which means at least supporting (1) and (2) of (Form), arguments made on the basis of self-defeating expressions establish self-justifying conclusions.

Like self-defeating arguments, self-justifying arguments are distinct both from other kinds of self-justifying expressions and the arguments for them. A self-justifying claim or assertion is different from a self-justifying argument in the same way that self-defeating assertion is different from a self-defeating argument. This difference is a difference in the kind of act. Self-justifying arguments are also not to be confused with those arguments that purport to show that some claim is self-justifying. As explained above, arguments for self-justifying conclusions are based on their self-defeating negations. Self-justifying arguments, on the other hand, are reflexive with respect to their use as an argument. As such, self-justifying arguments and self-defeating arguments such as (IMP) involve the same kind of act. The difference is that only the latter are reflexively inconsistent. For self-justifying arguments are reflexively consistent in both the logical and pragmatic sense. A self-justifying argument is one whose successful use supports rather than undermines that very use. The following set of statements (C) can be so used in a self-justifying argument.

(C)
1. Circular arguments are valid.
Therefore this argument is valid.

To summarize these points about self-justification: a self-justifying argument, like a self-defeating argument and unlike a self-justifying claim or assertion, is reflexive with respect to its use as an argument. There are arguments for self-justifying claims but these are not self-justifying arguments. Rather they are based on the reflexive inconsistency of the negation of their conclusion. An argument from a self-defeating claim is an argument for a self-justifying claim.

I will conclude with a restatement of the major points of this paper. In the first section I proposed a useful definition of 'self-defeating'. The proposed definition (P4) is not perfect but has the following redeeming features. It is a sufficient and fairly comprehensive condition for being self-defeating and it illuminates both the pragmatic as well as the logical features of self-defeating expressions. The notion of pragmatic reflexive inconsistency articulated in the proposed definition proved useful in the evaluation of arguments that involve self-defeating expressions. Arguments could involve self-defeating expressions in at least three distinct ways and the notion of pragmatic reflexivity helps to explain each of these three. First, there are arguments to the effect that some expression is self-defeating. The evaluation of such arguments facilitated by the precision of the proposed definition (P4). Second, there are arguments that concern self-defeating expressions in none other way than by being self-defeating arguments. I explained such arguments in terms of the general concept of pragmatic reflexive inconsistency and demonstrated how (P4) applies to such complex expressive acts as argumentation. Finally, there are arguments that purport to establish some conclusion on the basis of some expression's being self-defeating. Arguments of this type are very important to epistemology and ultimately depend on pragmatic considerations about various epistemic acts such as denying, defending, propounding, inquiring into, and teaching, etc. I argued that because epistemology is the study of such acts and yet must also perform those acts, epistemology has an inescapable dependence on pragmatic reflexivity.

NOTES
[i] C.S. Peirce sought to uncover the important features of assertion by examining extreme or magnified instances of assertion such as oaths. This is the strategy of the logical magnifying glass that I follow here. See The Collected Papers of C. S. Peirce 5.546. Hilpinen (1998) is a detailed account of Peirce's logical methodology and resultant theory of assertion.
[ii] Since (L) is false only if it is true as well, (L) is perhaps self-justifying as well as self defeating. As I discuss in connection with White's definition, this may rule (L) out as purely self-defeating but it will still count as self-defeating on my attempted, more inclusive, definition. I will discuss the relation between self-justification and self-defeat in more at the end.
[iii] It may be observed that a material conditional reading of (P1) threatens to reduce the proposed definition to the condition that 's' is false. Since this would make mere falsity a sufficient condition, such a reduction would ruin any hope of

a definition of self-defeating expressions. I thank Michael Shaffer for forcefully making this point at the 2006 ISSA Conference on Argumentation. I intend the conditional in this and subsequent definitions to be read non-materially. However, I cannot here defend a specific semantic account of counterfactuals or normal conditionals etc., since it is beyond the scope of this paper to address all the issues that arise for such conditionals.

[iv] Instead of putting the matter in terms of goals I could just as well describe the same point about assertion in terms of rules, e.g., successful assertions are those that conform to the rule: assert only what you (the assertor) believe. I use the formulation in terms of goals in a neutral way.

[v] I realize that even if one allows that assertions of (M) entail that the speaker believes that (M) other, more controversial principles concerning belief must be assumed to derive a contradiction. These include at least a principle of distribution of belief for believed conjunctions and some principle concerning the iteration of belief. I ignore those issues here because I am only concerned to point out the necessity of referring to the connection between belief and the act of assertion, i.e., that it must be assumed that an assertion of (M) conveys belief that (M) in any explanation of the impropriety of such an assertion.

[vi] Michael Veber, in conversation, came up with this example in a more realistic but less obvious form: "Don't take my advice."

[vii] It should also be noted that my definition of pragmatic reflexive inconsistency in terms of (P4) is consistent with the recent work of Ingvar Johanssen. Johanssen (2003) provides a detailed explanation of, not just semantic and pragmatic self-defeaters, but of various sub-types of the pragmatic variety. In particular, he makes a distinction between performative contradictions, which are self-defeating on account of the content of a given use of an expression and its conditions of success, and anti-performatives, which are self defeating on account of what is shown by a given use of an expression and its conditions of success. For example (A), above, is an example of a performative contradiction whereas (H) and (!) below, are anti-performatives.

(H) I'm always very humble.

(!) I never raise my voice! (Yelled at audience)

According to (P4), both (H) and (!) are pragmatic reflexive inconsistent, even though such expressions differ from (A) in the way indicated by Johanssen. I will not pursue Johanssen's classification any further than noting that my analysis in terms of (P4) leaves open the possibility of further distinctions among types of pragmatic reflexive inconsistency. The points I make will be relevant to both the

performative and anti-performative types of pragmatic reflexive inconsistency.

[viii] I owe this example to a fruitful discussion with Kirk Ludwig at the 2005 meeting of the Florida Philosophical Association. Ebersole also argued that this example shows a shortfall in the notion of pragmatic paradox defended by O'Connor.

[ix] The argument against Protagorean relativism gleaned from Plato's Theaetetus and Descartes "Cogito" argument are perhaps the most well-known historical examples of arguments from self-defeating expressions. For one other, more recent example see: Bonjour(1998), for the objective epistemic value of a priori justification.

[x] (P4) together with (Form) model the structure of arguments like Siegel's argument against relativism. Harvey Siegel's agile and prolific use of this form of argument is not only a large part of the impetus for this paper but is also the source of the use of the term 'harvpoon' as a general name for that type argument.

[xi] The notion of self-justification I discuss is not very robust: I simply mean that the expression contains the resources for its own support.

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – The Relevance Of Intention In Argument Evaluation

Abstract

The paper discusses intention as a rhetorical key term and argues that a consideration of rhetor's intent should be maintained as relevant to both the production and critique of rhetorical discourse. It is argued that the fact that the critic usually has little or no access to the rhetor's mind does not render intention an irrelevant factor. Rather than allowing methodological difficulties to constrain critical inquiry, I suggest some ways in which the critic can incorporate the rhetor's intention in evaluating argumentation.

Over the last decades, the notion of intentionality has been challenged from various theoretical perspectives within rhetoric and argumentation. For instance, some feministic rhetoricians have rejected intention as a key term in the definition of rhetoric, claiming that the rhetor's intent to persuade makes rhetoric an act of violence, oppression, and coercion. Likewise, but for different reasons, argumentation theorists associated with pragma-dialectic distance themselves from what they consider the critical pitfall of intention.

Although I share the common view that the definition of rhetoric cannot be

reduced to matters of persuasion in a narrow sense, I nevertheless regard persuasion and persuasive discourse as pivotal to rhetoric. Furthermore, I maintain that rhetoric's most basic contribution to society lies precisely in its insistence that the impulse to persuade others is a constructive and valuable aspect of human symbolic interaction. In the first of the following three sections, I defend this view against the attack on persuasive intent. In the second section I turn to the pragma-dialectical view of the critical relevancy of the arguers intention. This discussion leads on to the third section in which I, via a presentation of an ethical standard for rhetorical argumentation, suggest how the arguers' intention remains central to rhetorical inquiry.

1. From her feministic point of view, Gearhart made the following allegation against mainstream rhetoric: "To change other people or other entities is not in itself a violation. It is a fact of existence that we do so. The act of violence is in the *intention* to change others." (Gearhart 1979, p. 196) In their proposal for an *Invitational Rhetoric*, Foss and Griffin (1995) adopted this view, although not quite as rigorously as Gearhart.**[i]**

I strongly oppose the distinction. Surely, the intention to change others can only be an act of violence if we assume that to change others always is against their interest and that persuasion occurs in situations where the rhetor has all the power and the audience no free will to make their own decision. But does not this assumption take us back to the "hypodermic" theory of communication that we all are supposed to have left behind us long ago?
Secondly, I oppose Gearhart's distinction because of its general implications for rhetoric and democracy. Since the intent to change the environment and the minds of others is at the root of arguing it forces us to condemn argumentation and to exclude deliberative rhetoric from the field of legitimate rhetoric.**[ii]** Thus, in the end, to ban the intent to persuade is, in my mind, to undermine democracy.
Thirdly, it is a simplification that the purpose of rhetoric should be to "change others". The purpose of rhetorical communication is to effect change in public life – or defend *status quo* – and this involves influencing the minds of others. The intentions to do so may be good or bad, and the purpose may result in good or bad rhetoric – bad if it is oppressive.
Fourthly, making the intent to persuade *per se* an oppressive and immoral act leads language users and rhetorical criticism in the wrong direction. Whether rhetoric becomes an act of violence and dominance does not depend on the

intention to change others. It depends primarily on the *means* you employ to persuade others. And instead of depriving humans of their right to seek to persuade or convince others as they think best, rhetoricians should advise debaters that it is more harmful to deny your intentions than openly admit them. For instance, politicians often do this, ostensibly wanting to *inform* the citizens although what they are actually doing is to persuade or convince. This arguably amounts to cheating with speech acts and is as problematic as aggressive or threatening argumentation, perhaps even worse because of its underhandedness.

2. The pragma-dialectical dismissal of intentionality is of another kind. It does not concern the morality of the arguer's intention to persuade, but the critical *relevancy* of the arguer's intention when evaluating argument. The pragma-dialecticians distance themselves from the notion of intention for *methodological* reasons in order to avoid *psychologism* (van Eemeren et al. 1996, p. 276-277, Walton 1995, p. 272).

In connection with the *responsibility conditions* for argumentation, van Eemeren and Grootendorst emphasize that "the responsibility conditions do not imply that the speaker need always be sincere: He may be lying and think something quite different from what he says, but even then he is committed to what he has said and, consequently, the listener can hold him to his word." And in the footnote they specify their point as follows: "The major consequence of the responsibility condition is that the speaker, because he is answerable for what he has said, may be deemed to act *as if he were sincere* – whether he actually is sincere or not. For our purposes, it is what the speaker can be held accountable to that counts, not what he privately thinks." (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992, p. 32)

The principle of *externalization* that van Eemeren and Grootendorst include in their pragma-dialectical research program has the same focus. In brief, *externalization* means that the critic of public argumentation must stick to what the speaker has uttered: "Whereas the motives people may have for holding a position might be different from the grounds they offer and accept in its defense, what they can be held committed to is not so much their actual position, but the position they have expressed in the discourse, whether directly or indirectly. [...] The study of argumentation should not concentrate on the psychological dispositions of the people involved in an argumentation, but on their externalized – or externalizable – commitments." (van Eemeren et al. 1996, p. 276-277)

The same principle, as formulated here, also applies to rhetorical criticism in

general. If, for instance, a politician during the election campaign makes a promise to preserve the program for early retirement (or expresses himself in a manner that makes voters entitled to understand his words as a promise), and then shortly after having won the election lets his government implement a cut in the said program, his explanations are irrelevant. It is no good, as the former Danish Prime minister Poul Nyrup Rasmusssen did in 1998, to say that people had misunderstood him the first time: He never meant what he said as a promise to make no reductions at all; if people had studied this or that statement by him and other leading social democrats they should have known that he only intended to secure the system, and words to that effect. In such a case, the critic is entitled to disregard later explanations and decide whether the rhetor actually made a promise or not on the basis of what was originally said in the campaign.

As long as it is a question of what people *say* or which speech act they perform, I agree that as a rule the rhetor's personal intent is irrelevant to the critic's interpretation. In this respect, rhetoricians primarily are concerned with intention as expressed in the artifact, and very often it would not be relevant or worthwhile to speculate further on the matter. However, I do find that sometimes it may be relevant to consider the author's own remarks on the intended meaning. This would typically be in cases of obscurity. An example could be the bewildering passage in *The New Rhetoric* that some readers have understood as Perelman's own view. I refer specifically to the sentence: "Argumentation addressed to a universal audience must convince the reader that the reasons adduced are of a compelling character, that they are self-evident, and possess an absolute and timeless validity, independent of local or historical contingencies." (Perelman and Olbrects-Tyteca 1969, p. 32) But, in retrospect Perelman expressly explains this as the point of view to which he was opposed and regrets to have "lead certain rhetorical readers to consider it as expressing [his] own ideas." (Perelman 1984, p. 190) So far, I have heard no scholar resort to the fallacy of intention, crying out: What Perelman intended to say is irrelevant!

You may dismiss this example as trivial: the authors simply did not express themselves clearly. However, the example illustrates a characteristic aspect of rhetoric that makes it natural to focus on intention. It concerns the productive dimension of rhetoric. When teaching public speaking and composition, or working as advisors in these areas, one acutely relevant question is: What do you intend to say? And next: How do you best design the speech or text so that your

message comes across as intended?

One thing is the relevance of intention for interpreting what rhetors say, as in the Nyrup Rasmussen example. It is another thing if we next ask the question, essential to normative rhetoric: Was it an act of deception? When it comes to this question one cannot disregard the arguer's intention. According to van Eemeren and Grootendorst, the critic could censure Nyrup Rasmussen for not keeping his promise after the election. But was the promise all along only a trick to secure votes and get reelected? Such was the common Danish interpretation of Nyrup Rasmussen's statement and it caused an uproar among those who had voted for the social democrats because of his guaranties and who now felt deceived. If a critic were to reach the same conclusion, we confront a more serious offence than if Nyrup Rasmussen had expressed himself clumsily, or if he broke his promise afterwards because of a change of mind. Thus, the intentions of arguers are relevant to evaluating the nature and gravity of their misdemeanor.

Walton, in *A Pragmatic Theory of Fallacy*, devotes a section to a nuanced discussion of the relevance of intention and deception to the definition of fallacies (Walton 1995, p. 269-272). He recognizes the question of the arguer's intent as a genuine problem, pointing out that fallacies often are used as a tactic of deception. He does, however, conclude that the arguer's intent to deceive is irrelevant in order to determine whether a fallacy has been committed. Prior to this, he has described a fallacy as "a very special and serious kind of error – not an intentional error or deliberate abuse of a technique, necessarily. Instead, it is defined as a misdirected execution – the use of a *tactic to bloc or prevent* legitimate goals of reasonable dialogue from being implemented." (Ibid. p. 259-260) I find this definition problematic, since the expression a tactic to bloc or prevent something implies an agent who argues intentionally. Nevertheless, Walton explicitly dismisses this implication as a confusion between the common goal of the discourse and the individual goal of the participants (Ibid. p. 272). This is an important distinction also from a rhetorical point of view but does not entail that the individual goal of rhetors can be deemed totally irrelevant to the critic's evaluation, as suggested in the Nyrup Rasmussen example.

3. The issue of intentionality of course depends on how we use the word. For some the concept is problematic because it connotes consciousness of one's own intentions. This is not how rhetoricians usually understand it. When I maintain intention as a key term in rhetoric, I do not hereby imply that rhetors necessarily have conscious intentions. This is often the case in typical rhetorical discourse,

but not always. Rhetors may pursue a purpose with or without realizing the intention that motivates them, or they may be unaware or negligent of the purpose that can be applied to the situation. So, perhaps it would be more adequate to say that rhetorical discourse is *purposive* than *intentional.*

On the one hand, the attraction of theories that dismiss intentionality is that they give a clear cut solution to the problem that the critic usually does not know what goes on in the rhetor's mind. On the other hand, methodological difficulties must not dictate our understanding of how communication works: Communicators do have conscious or vague intentions, and audiences certainly attribute them to rhetors. The fact that the critic usually has little or no access to the rhetor's mind should not constrain critical inquiry in a way that totally disregards the rhetor's intention in evaluating argumentation. In many cases rhetorical critics do have some available information to infer the arguer's intention. The Nyrup Rasmussen example again may serve as illustration. Ironically, his own explanations afterwards provided evidence suggesting that he did intend to deceive his voters. In the absence of new circumstances in the meantime, what other reason could he have had to not openly declare his willingness to accept some changes in the program for early retirement?

I consider a notion of rhetoric claiming that it does not matter if the rhetor is insincere or deceptive as untenable. Rather, the difference between legitimate and illegitimate rhetoric is of the utmost importance, and I am especially interested in what distinguishes the manipulative persuader from the rhetor who argues decently.

In our Danish textbook – in English *Practical Argumentation* – my colleague Merete Onsberg and I contemplate criteria for *good and bad* argumentation (Jørgensen and Onsberg 1999, chapter 6). We introduce a concept to evaluate argumentation ethically, a concept that has proven useful to many students in Denmark. The Danish term is the same word as Redlichkeit in German. I have had some difficulty finding the proper English translation. I have considered *honesty, probity, uprightness, reliability*, and *decency,* but have chosen *fairness* as the most fitting translation.

The normative standard of *fairness* concerns rhetor, the fairness of the argumentation depending primarily on the sender's *attitude towards the receiver.* We define *unfair* argumentation as argumentation in which the rhetor attempts to win the audience's adherence by *misleading* them. The unfair arguer abuses his

privilege as sender, for instance preying on the audience's lacking ability to fully understand the line of argument. The standard allows evaluation by degrees, i.e., the rhetor may argue more or less fairly, and a breach of fairness may be more or less grave. The gravity is relative to the symmetry or asymmetry in the interaction.

If the interaction is symmetric, i.e., if the participants are equal in regard to competence, knowledge or power, they share the responsibility, and the audience that accepts unfair argument must also share the blame. Likewise, in formal debates, each debater's obligation to produce fair argumentation is lessened, since the allotment of roles delegates part of the argumentative burden to the other debater. After all, the counsel for the defense cannot be blamed for withholding the arguments of the prosecution.

In asymmetric situations it is possible for rhetors to exploit the unequal relation, to use it to their own advantage and gain the audience's adherence by deceitful means. If, for instance, the arguer deliberately suppresses information that would prevent the audience from being persuaded, this is unfair arguing. The opportunity to seduce or manipulate the audience increases with the asymmetry. Since rhetorical situations seldom are absolutely symmetric, there is usually reason to look for unfair argumentation. A violation of the fairness standard is grave if the rhetor clearly misleads the audience on purpose, an act of *retrickery* as Booth called it (Booth 2004, 2005). And when it works, unfair argumentation becomes 'dangerous rhetoric'. Then we can talk of 'demagogy' etc.

We distinguish between three categories of unfair argumentation, often overlapping, consisting in persuasion by means of *lying, suppression,* and *distortion.* All three must be applied with due respect for the specific situation of the artifact.

Lies are always unfair – apart from 'white lies' with no evil intent. Lying concerns both facts and opinions. The latter is the case, when the arguers parade an opinion as their own. In other words, they express an opinion that they do not share themselves, because they reckon it expedient in relation to the audience. An unfair lie may in certain situations be deemed a minor offence or even acceptable, if dictated by situational constraints.

Suppression is only unfair if the arguer deliberately omits something because he or she feels sure that it would be important to the audience and would prevent them from being persuaded. Since typical rhetorical situations are characterized

by uncertainty and a shortage of time, arguers have to select among their arguments, even the relevant ones, and hence cannot be accused on this account, unless they hold something back in order to deceive.

Distortion consists in a manipulation of proportion or relevance. Of the three kinds of unfairness, distortion is the subtlest – and hence probably the most common kind. A downright lie is often too risky for the arguers themselves; to suppress something is often no use; but in the case of a distortion it is often difficult to hold arguers to their word. We distinguish between three kinds of distortion: They can be done through *exaggeration, simplification*, and *substitution.*

Distortion by *exaggeration* must not be confused with *hyperbole*. In the figure of style the exaggeration is to be understood as such by the audience, whereas this is not the case in unfair exaggerations.

The typical example of distortion by *simplification* is the presentation of complex issues as questions of either-or, of black and white. Another is hasty generalization. Under the heading of distortion by *substitution* we find irrelevant direct ad hominem arguments and *ignoratio elenchi,* where the arguer in bad faith shifts the issue at hand to an irrelevant point.

Scapegoat arguments are a wellknown strategy associated with infamous arguing. Such arguments form a special type of unfair argumentation by distortion, including all three kinds: In trying to solve complex problems in a community by blaming a person, minority group or institution, the argument type includes the elements of substituting one problem with another, of simplifying the real problem, and of exaggerating a problem with the person, group or institution.

Discourse may be good or bad rhetoric for many reasons: the content boring, the arguments weak or unclear, the information incorrect, the language poor etc. The standard of fairness is only one of the various criteria that the critic can apply in evaluating rhetorical discourse from a normative point of view.

One might object to our definition of fairness that it is not the arguer's intent to mislead that counts, but whether the discourse is misleading. In fact, this objection has been raised in a Danish context (Foght Mikkelsen 2002). Our main reasons to maintain the focus on the arguer are the following.
The issue of ethical argumentative conduct requires a human agent. To say that

the discourse misleads or manipulates the audience is a metonymy. Only humans can do this. Our next point is that you cannot accuse arguers of manipulative and deceptive rhetoric if they for instance pass on information as facts that later on turns out to be untrue. The critic can only evaluate the argumentation as unfair if the rhetor *in the situation* speaks against his better knowledge – or is in a position and assumes an authority where he ought to have acquired sufficient knowledge (Jørgensen 2000). We may all happen to say something wrong under various mitigating circumstances. This does not make it good rhetoric, but you can only be accused of unfairness if you act in bad faith. Thus, the standard of fairness is consistent with Perelman's theory of the universal audience when he says that he manages "to distinguish manipulative discourse from that which addresses itself to reason, conceived as universal audience, and which *cannot be deceptive (although it might be mistaken)*." (Perelman 1984, p. 194, emphasis added) The same idea – that the intent to mislead is the decisive distinguishing factor between fair and unfair argumentation – is present in Aristotle's Rhetoric when he points out that "the deliberate choice [*proairesis*] [of specious arguments]" separates speakers within the field of rhetoric, whereas it separates the sophist from the dialectician and their respective fields. (1355a, Kennedy's translation 1991, I.1.14.)

A related reason to maintain the focus on the arguer is our reluctance to cut the line between rhetor and the rhetorical product, between arguers and the arguments they use. A responsible rhetoric must insist that rhetors are accountable for what they say and how they argue. It is not enough to keep your word; we also expect you to mean what you say. The whole lesson of the rhetorical notions of *ethos* and *pistis* comes down to this demand. Especially in contemporary public address, the discourse is often a concoction of several senders, making it difficult to place the responsibility. In the evaluation, rhetorical critics of course must take such complexities into consideration. While doing so, the critic must resist the tendency to let the distribution of responsibility result in the dissolving of the principle that humans are responsible for their rhetorical acts. The standard of fairness is suggested as a tool to secure this principle.

In conclusion, let me sum up my views of intention and rhetoric. I have not said that the private intentions of rhetors are the main object of rhetoric. I have said that intentionality in communication is a main focus in the study of rhetoric. Rhetoricians investigate how to implement intended meanings in discourse according to the purpose in specific situations and, ditto, how to evaluate

discourse. Rhetorical criticism is mainly concerned with internal features of the rhetorical artifact, but external factors of the communication are always relevant to the interpretation. Among these the known or assumed intention of the rhetor is a significant aspect for the critic to deal with. And finally, we cannot distinguish good rhetoric from manipulative rhetoric without contemplating rhetor's intention.

NOTES

[i] On the further controversy, see especially Fulkerson 1996, Condit 1997, Foss, Griffin & Foss 1997.

[ii] For a fuller discussion in defense of argumentation in rhetoric and its teaching tradition, see Fulkerson 1996.

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