

# 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 an 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 apology and provide a persuasive response. If apology is viewed as a form of persuasive argument, which we would argue it certainly is, it should be reasonable to suggest that apology arguments do not occur in a vacuum. Just as apology is a rebuttal to attack (kategoria), antapologia is a rebuttal to the apology. Each stage in the cycle influences the persuasive outcome of the other arguments. Examples of antapologia are less prevalent than 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 apology, 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 apology 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 apology.

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 and 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 announcements 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 apology offered by the accused. Antapologia strategies used to strengthen attack included: 1) identifying of concessions in the apology, and 2) refining the attack based on the apology. Antapologia strategies used to weaken the apology included arguments claiming that: 1) portions of the apology are false, 2) the accused has contradicted previous apology strategies, 3) apology does not take responsibility, 4) apology reflects character flaws of the accused, and 5) harm will come from the apology itself. A sixth strategy for weakening the account of the accused occurred as rhetors would sometimes defend against attacks made in the apology (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 apology (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 apology. 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 is 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 gauge 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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