



Iowa Journal of Communication

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Welcome from the Editor

pg. 7

Kristen L. Majocha

**Using Emojis to Transform Messages: Manipulating
Visual Rhetoric to Achieve Compliance**

pg. 9

Brenda Rourke, Deya Roy, Joy Daggs, and John Katsion

Emojis are commonplace in mediated communication and function as substitutes for non-verbal behavior, emotions, concepts, and ideas. Previous research indicates that emojis serve as a visual element that draws attention to a message (Willoughby & Lui, 2018) and they can impact emotional responses toward the sender and the message (Das et al., 2019; Gesselman et al, 2019; Luangrath et al., 2017). This study examines emojis as visual rhetorical devices and the effect these visual communication elements have on a receiver's emotional response to a message. The findings indicate that visual artifacts (emojis like cake, pizza, a clock, etc.) serve a function, but they do not always elicit the senders intended emotional response. The implications and drawbacks of emojis as visual rhetoric are discussed. Additionally, this study investigates the use of emojis that represent artifacts and their impact on compliance. Emojis that elicited negative emotional responses to the message decreased compliance. However, positive emotional responses did increase compliance. The use of emojis as artifacts and their implications in peripheral processing are discussed as well as their function as visual rhetoric.

**Returning to Space and Revisiting the Challenger and
Columbia Addresses**

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Jay M. Hudkins

This article argues that Bush's Columbia address lacked the necessary rhetorical touchstones established by Reagan's Challenger address, the exemplar for presidential eulogistic rhetoric following a tragedy in space flight. First, a central theme found in presidential rhetoric concerning space exploration, that of characterizing astronauts as pioneers and space as the new frontier, will be traced. Next, Reagan's eulogy to the Challenger crew, noting the speech's

points of rhetorical excellence, several of which previous scholars have articulated (Goldzwig & Dionisopoulos, 1986; Jamieson, 1988; Mister, 1986), will be outlined. The goal is to establish rhetorical touchstones by which to judge the Bush address. Then the literature on eulogies generally to complete the survey of what a successful eulogy should be and do will be reviewed. Finally, Bush's Columbia address will be turned to using Reagan's eulogy and the general literature on eulogies as touchstones to critique the Bush speech.

Family Communication Patterns and Educational Orientations pg. 50

Nathan Miczo and Lisa A. Miczo

This research investigated the impact of family communication patterns on educational orientations. Two hundred and nine students completed an online survey assessing family communication patterns (conversation and conformity orientation) and educational orientations (learning orientation and grade orientation). Regression analyses revealed that both conversation and conformity orientation were positive predictors of learning orientation, while only conformity orientation was a positive predictor of grade orientation. The discussion highlights the need for continued research into the role of the family as an influence on college student motivations.

Chastity and Celibacy: A Rhetorical History of a Rhetoric of Sex and the Priest in the Catholic Church pg. 71

Teresa Morales

The seemingly never-ending instances of reported sex abuse by Roman Catholic priests is commonly thought to be a matter of deviancy and crime. This is true; but there is more to the story. The RC Church has, for two thousand years, known of the sexual behaviors and deviancies of its priests, yet has accomplished little in controlling the situation. The rise of the lawsuit against the Church has led, finally, to the need to examine more deeply the reasons for this ongoing criminal behavior. This paper uses a method of rhetorical history to uncover and understand how and why this might have happened. The rhetoric of secrecy that has been the stronghold of the confessional is part of the problem, but seeking the historicity of the language of sex reveals how deeply ingrained the problem is and how deeply honest one must be with the rhetoric of chastity in a highly sexualized society.

Book Review

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Joy Daggs

Dougherty, D. S. (2023). *Sexual harassment in organizational culture: A transformative approach*. San Diego, CA: Cognella Academic Publishing.

Over the past 20 years, Debbie Dougherty has emerged as Communication's leading sexual harassment researcher. Her first book on sexual harassment is not only a culmination of the work of the last 20 years, but the development of a theoretical framework to apply to identify, address, and repair organizational cultures that perpetuate predatory sexual harassment.

Welcome from the Editor

Kristen L. Majocha

Welcome to the 55.1 edition of the Iowa Journal of Communication. We are an award-winning state journal that publishes the highest quality peer-reviewed scholarship on a variety of communication topics. Our journal is a product of the Iowa Communication Association, a professional organization whose purpose is to unite those people with either an academic or professional interest in all disciplines of Communication and the Performing Arts. Our acceptance rate is 40% with a consistent impact factor of two.

The scholarship in this issue is provocative and represents a breadth in both scope of topics and institutional reach. The reader will appreciate the movement of the qualitative approaches, quantitative approaches, a novel literary approach, and a review of a recent scholarly publication.

The lead article, “Using Emojis to Transform Messages: Manipulating Visual Rhetoric to Achieve Compliance” by Brenda Rourke, Deya Roy, Joy Daggs, and John Katsion, explores the emotional response provoked by the use of emojis and how they do not always elicit the senders intended emotional response. “Returning to Space and Revisiting the Challenger and Columbia Addresses” by Jay M. Hudkins argues that Bush’s Columbia address lacked the necessary rhetorical touchstones established by Reagan’s Challenger address, the exemplar for presidential eulogistic rhetoric following a tragedy in space flight. Nathan Miczo and Lisa A. Miczo investigate the impact of family communication patterns on educational orientations in “Family Communication Patterns and Educational Orientations”. Their discussion highlights the need for continued research into the role of the family as an influence on college student motivations. “Chastity and Celibacy: A Rhetorical History of a Rhetoric of Sex and the Priest in the Catholic Church” by Teresa Morales uses the method of rhetorical history when exploring how the rise of the lawsuit against the Church has led to the need to examine more deeply the reasons for ongoing criminal behavior. Finally, Joy Daggs evaluates the book Sexual harassment in organizational culture: A transformative approach by D. S. Dougherty (2023, San Diego, CA: Cognella Academic Publishing.

As you read through the journal, consider how you may cite the articles in your own scholarship. Then consider submitting your work to the Iowa Journal of Communication. Manuscripts are now

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KM', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Kristen L. Majocha, PhD
Editor

Using Emojis to Transform Messages: Manipulating Visual Rhetoric to Achieve Compliance

Brenda Rourke, Deya Roy,
Joy Daggs, and John Katsion

Emojis are commonplace in mediated communication and function as substitutes for non-verbal behavior, emotions, concepts, and ideas. Previous research indicates that emojis serve as a visual element that draws attention to a message (Willoughby & Lui, 2018) and they can impact emotional responses toward the sender and the message (Das et al., 2019; Gesselman et al, 2019; Luangrath et al., 2017). This study examines emojis as visual rhetorical devices and the effect these visual communication elements have on a receiver's emotional response to a message. The findings indicate that visual artifacts (emojis like cake, pizza, a clock, etc.) serve a function, but they do not always elicit the senders intended emotional response. The implications and drawbacks of emojis as visual rhetoric are discussed. Additionally, this study investigates the use of emojis that represent artifacts and their impact on compliance. Emojis that elicited negative emotional responses to the message decreased compliance. However, positive emotional responses did increase compliance. The use of emojis as artifacts and their implications in peripheral processing are discussed as well as their function as visual rhetoric.

Introduction

The first emoji was invented in 1998 by a Japanese telecommunications worker (Padres, 2018). Emoji means "picture character" in Japanese, and they were created specifically to "facilitate digital communication" (Kralj et al., 2015, p.2). In 2010, there were 722 standardized emojis in Unicode 6.0. According to Unicode 13.0, there are now 1317 emojis that a person can choose to communicate their feelings beyond words while texting¹. Emojis have grown as a way for people to communicate emotions, artifacts,

¹ Unicode is the official language for those who wish to encode symbols in computer software: "Unicode provides a unique number for every character, no matter what the platform, no matter what the program, no matter what the language" (<https://www.unicode.org/standard/WhatIsUnicode.html>).

ideas, and concepts, as well as a variety of other nonverbal messages in computer-mediated communication (CMC). The Oxford English dictionary officially added Emoji in 2013 and named emoji Word of the Year for 2015 as the icons moved from teens' text messages into the global mainstream (Steinmetz, 2015). The popularity of the icons also led to 2017 *The Emoji Movie*, which grossed over \$200 million at the box office worldwide (IMDb, 2017). Emojis are a significant part of our daily interactions, and they have captured the attention of scholars in fields such as Psychology and Marketing, but research in the field of Communication is still developing. Emojis should be of particular interest to Communication researchers due to their symbiotic nature and their rhetorical value.

Emoji use is growing—with 92% of users reporting that they use (Grabowski, 2016) these "picture characters." Emoji research has generally taken three significant tracks. The first track examines emojis to measure feelings in consumer research (Ares & Jaeger, 2017). This research examined the use of emojis for consumers to express feelings about a product. The second concerns the function of emojis in written communication (Skovholt et al., 2014), and the third line examines how emojis convey feelings within an interpersonal context, such as the use of emojis to express emotions in texts or emails (Das et al., 2019; Gesselman et al., 2019; Luangrath et al., 2017). The current research seeks to add to the body of knowledge in interpersonal communication by examining the persuasive value of emojis as a visual rhetorical tool. This research examines how the presence of emojis (emotions, artifacts, and ideas) influence a receiver's emotional response to the message, and the receiver's willingness to comply.

Literature Review

Visual Rhetoric and Emojis

To use a visual rhetorical framework for this study, we must first understand how emojis can fit into visual communication. Foss (2004) states that one of the reasons to study the visual rhetorically is to see the visual as an artifact: "Visual rhetoric as artifact, then, is the purposive production or arrangement of colors, forms, and other elements to communicate with an audience" (Foss, 2004, p. 304). Foss (2004) goes on to state that "three characteristics appear to define artifacts or products conceptualized as visual rhetoric: They must be symbolic, involve human intervention, and be presented to an audience for the purpose of communicating" (p. 304 - 305). Emojis meet all of Foss' criteria. Emojis are symbolic, creating a digital representation of an object or feeling. Emojis involve human

intervention, as people create emojis and select which emojis to use in a message. Finally, emojis are presented as a way of communicating in a variety of digital contexts. Our research into emoji use will help to develop a better understanding of how emojis intervene in symbolic environments to communicate. Our research into emoji use will help expand our understanding of emoji as a rhetorical artifact and how emojis produce (or do not produce) emotion in a communicative context. Danesi in 2016 was one of the first researchers to examine the rhetorical aspect of emojis. The study was focused on more the pragmatic use of emojis to communicate a desired meaning (Danesi, 2016). Danesi's research states that emojis operate as rhetorical devices that are considered accurate representations of a person's intent with a message, citing two criminal court cases where a defendant's use of emoji was used as evidence of intent. Drawing on the work of Foss (2004), Ge and Gretzel (2018) extended the framework of Danesi research and examined the use of emojis by social media influencers to determine the effectiveness of emojis as persuasive tools. Ge and Gretzel concluded that emojis can stand alone as a rhetorical tool for persuasion, but emojis could also strengthen and support messages meant to encourage engagement. Therefore, emojis function as a peripheral cue or a simple decision rule (such as humor, positive or negative affect, or an argument by an expert source) in a persuasive message.

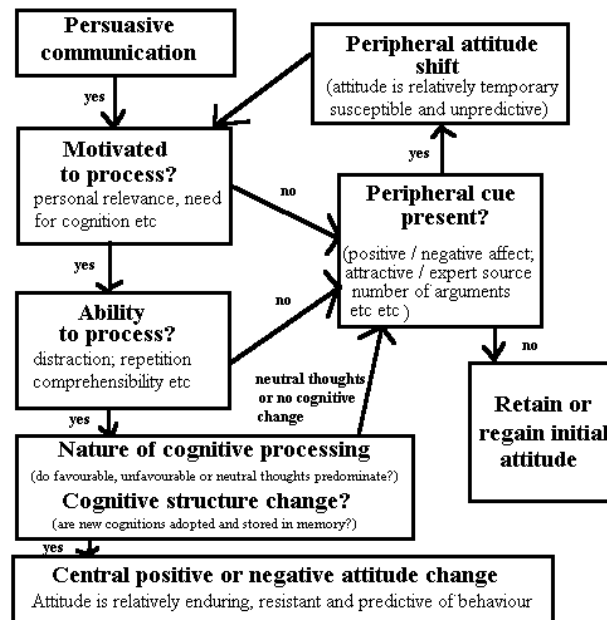
The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion

Petty and Cacioppo's Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM hereafter) focuses on persuasion as a process that involves one of two processing routes. Various factors, such as motivation and the ability to process a message, influence whether an individual uses the central processing route or peripheral processing route (see fig. 1). The central route requires more elaboration, and an individual will scrutinize the message presented. If an individual is motivated to process (personal relevance, high need for cognition, or positive thoughts about the message is required for this) and is present in an environment without any distractions, then they are more likely to use the central route to process the persuasive information (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). For instance, if a smoker, who has been trying to quit smoking, is subjected to a PSA encouraging smokers to quit smoking, then they will process this information using the central processing route due to the personal relevance and the possibility of favorable thoughts about the message.

On the other hand, the peripheral route is used when the individual is presented with a peripheral cue (such as humor, positive or negative affect, or an argument by an expert source) or has neutral thoughts about the message (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). ELM posits that a peripheral cue uses simple heuristics (positive or negative affect are heuristics), and an *effective* peripheral cue with positive associations could potentially lead to attitude change (Kerr et al., 2010).

Using the same example as above, if a non-smoker is presented with an anti-smoking PSA, then they may use the peripheral route of processing as this PSA is not relevant to the viewer. On the contrary, if a smoker who does not want to quit smoking is presented with a PSA that increases their positive or negative affect, they may start processing the message using peripheral route that eventually leads to temporary attitude shift due to peripheral cues present (see Figure).

Figure: The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986)



Researchers in the past have investigated the effects of various peripheral cues on attitude change and persuasion. One such potential peripheral cue that is understudied is emojis. Das and

colleagues (2019) have lent support to the idea that emojis are effective in increasing affect. Consider the example of receiving a happy face emoji after a text message. One can argue that psychologically it can elevate our perceptions of joy (Patel & Rietveld, 2020). Keeping ELM in mind, emojis can influence individual's behaviors and attitudes—but through the peripheral route.

The present research follows three significant tracks. The first track is examining emojis as a way of measuring feelings in consumer research. This research examined the use of emojis for consumers to express feelings about a product. A typical example of this is the work of Ares & Jaeger (2017), who looked at emoji use in surveys and whether the format of a question influenced the users' perception. This study established that emojis are an excellent way to measure respondents' feelings about a product.

The second examines the function of emoticons and emojis in written communication. A great example of this line of research is Skovholt, et al. (2014). They looked at 1606 email messages between various companies in Finland, Sweden, and Denmark. Specifically, they found that people used emoticons to signify a positive attitude with signatures, as joke/irony markers, and as hedges to reduce the impact of negative messages. Their method used speech act theory and politeness theory to develop a fascinating approach to analyze their data.

The third broad track that research in emoji has taken is how emojis convey feelings within an interpersonal context. Gesselman & Garcia (2019) give an excellent example of this type of research. The goal of this study was to see whether "people use emojis to capitalize on evolved social-psychological features of human communication, particularly in the domain of courtship. We use affect to refer to the biopsychosocial experience of emotions" (Gesselman & Garcia, 2019). They go on to clarify that they believe as ". . . many romantic and sexual connections are initiated via CMC, emojis may be useful tools in creating the elementary units of intimacy between partners" (Gesselman & Garcia, 2019, p. 3). Essentially, they want to see whether emoji can be valuable tools in "creating the elementary units of intimacy between partners" (Gesselman & Garcia, 2019). To study this, they did two studies that asked participants whether they used emojis in their text messaging, why they used them and the frequency of dates and sexual activity they had in the last year. Results from both studies "indicated that participants who used emojis/emoticons more frequently went on more first dates and engaged in sexual activity more often over the last year" (Gesselman & Garcia, 2019, p.

6). We can summarize that emojis enable individuals to communicate important affective information, which in turn can launch successful connections and potential sexual opportunities (Gesselman & Garcia, 2019).

The present work examines interpersonal communication via e-mail and the impact of emojis in a persuasive appeal. First, does emoji use in an email increase positive feelings about the sender? Additionally, if positive feelings are engendered in the receiver of the email, how do emoji influence those positive feelings?

Emojis and Emotion

People use a variety of nonverbal cues such as head nods, facial expressions, distance, body language, and voice inflection to enhance their verbal message. The receiver then uses these nonverbal cues to make judgements about the senders' attitudes and emotions (Kraut, et al., 1982). Emojis are used as a substitute for the face-to-face expression of the senders' attitudes and emotions. Thereby, emojis can be defined as textual paralanguage (TPL) (Das, et al., 2019; Luangrath, et al. 2017). Luangrath, et al. (2017) define TPL as "the written manifestations of nonverbal audible, tactile, and visual elements that supplement or replace written language and that can be expressed through words, symbols, images, punctuation, demarcations, or any combination of these elements" (p. 98).

The use of emojis as a TPL can elicit emotional responses in the receiver (Das, et al., 2019), and significantly influence a receiver's mood (Das et al., 2019; Ganster, et al., 2012; Lohman, et al., 2017). Ganster and colleagues (2012) found that when a message included a smiley face the receiver felt more positively and in contrast when the message contained a frown the receiver experienced negative feelings. Additionally, the use of emojis in advertising produced positive emotional responses in the receiver for hedonic purchases but not for utilitarian purchases (Das et al., 2019). Lastly, messages about a friend's recent trip that contained positive emojis (a single smiley) produced more joy and less distress than those that contained a negative emoji (a frown) (Lohman, et al., 2017). Emojis are a powerful tool for conveying the emotional state of the sender and they influence the assessments made by the receiver.

Based on current research, when a message contains emojis that specify a sender's emotional state the receiver is also more likely to experience those emotions. However, the previous work does not examine the use of emojis that are artifacts, or those that do not represent emotional states. Thus, little is known about the impact of

emojis that target artifacts like money (a stack of coins) or time (a clock). Therefore, this research seeks to examine how the absence or presence of emojis as visual rhetoric (artifacts) will influence a receiver's emotional response, in addition to emojis that express emotion. Next, we aim to understand if the use of emojis (positive, negative, and artifacts) will increase compliance. The following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: E-mails that contain emojis will produce more positive emotions than e-mails that do not contain emojis.

H2: (a) Positive emotions will positively predict compliance and (b) negative emotions will negatively predict compliance.

H3: Familiarity will moderate the relationship between emojis and compliance, such that individuals who view messages with emojis and are familiar with the source will be more compliant than those that receive the email from an unfamiliar source.

Methods

Design

The participants for this study were recruited from a general education course at a large northeastern university. 445 students participated in the study with 46% of participants identifying themselves as male and 52% identifying themselves as female. The study was a 2x2 design in which participants were systematically assigned to one of four conditions. Participants were systematically placed into one of the four conditions based on their answers to a previous, unrelated question about their birth month. The first two conditions represented a familiar other; as such, participants were told that they received an e-mail message from a close friend. The e-mail message they read was either text based, or text mixed with a variety of emojis meant to reflect both the affective state of the sender or a pictorial representation of the text. In the alternate condition, participants were told that the e-mail they received was from the university's listserv. The listserv is a bulk e-mail server used to disseminate information to the university at large and therefore is representative of an unfamiliar source. The e-mail messages were identical to the messages presented in the preceding familiar source condition.

Stimulus

The participants viewed one of two messages. One of the emails had only written text, while the other email had emojis throughout the message. The email with emojis included emojis such as a smiley face, a tortoise, pizza, money, a high five and so on. The content of both the emails was the same, where participants were invited to the *Relay for Life* (a cancer charity walk) event on campus. Participants were asked to donate money to the cause if they were unable to make it to the event.

Measures

Emotional responses to the message were measured using The Interpersonal Emotions Scale (IES) (Buck, et al., 2003). The IES is composed of a set of 26 emotion words selected to represent individualistic and social factors.

Positive emotions. Positive emotions were measured using the following items: pride, admiration, interest, love, happy, powerful, confident, nurturing, pleasure, satisfied, energetic, and compassionate. The alpha reliability for the positive emotions was within the range for an acceptable scale reliability ($\alpha = .93$).

Negative emotions. Negative emotions were measured using the following items: anger, envy, afraid, nervous, disgusted, anxious, aggressive, ashamed, hatred, embarrassment, resentment, jealous, scornful, and guilty. The alpha reliability for the positive emotions was within the range for an acceptable scale reliability ($\alpha = .95$).

Compliance. The final scale used in the study was a measure of compliance with the sender's request. The participants were asked if they would forward the e-mail on to family and friends, participate in Relay for Life, or if they would be willing to donate to Relay for Life. The alpha reliability for the compliance measure was within the range for an acceptable scale reliability ($\alpha = .72$).

Results

The first hypothesis proposed a direct and positive effect for the use of emojis on positive emotions. The results indicate that when a participant received an e-mail with emojis they experienced less positive emotions than the e-mail with no emojis ($r(407) = -.20, p = .00$).

The second hypothesis proposed that when a participant experienced more positive emotions, they would comply with the senders' request and when they experienced negative emotions they

would not comply. This hypothesis was supported. Positive emotions were positively correlated with compliance ($r(398) = .52, p = .00$) and negative emotions were negative correlated with compliance ($r(401) = -.29, p = .00$).

The third hypothesis predicted that when participants receive an e-mail with emojis, and the e-mail was sent from a friend (familiar) and not a university list serve (unfamiliar) they would be more likely to comply. Thereby, individuals who view messages with emojis and are familiar with the source will be more compliant than those that receive the email from an unfamiliar source. This hypothesis was tested using linear regression analysis. The first block of the regression included the use of emojis in the e-mail and familiarity with the source. The use of emojis was a significant negative predictor of compliance ($\beta = -.13, t(419) = -2.64, p < .01$) and the familiarity of the source was not a significant predictor. Emoji use explained 2% of variance in compliance ($R^2 = .02, F(2, 419) = 4.38, p = .01$). The second block of the regression included the interaction for emoji use and familiarity. The interaction was not significant.

Discussion

The present study aims to further our understanding about visual communication cues in context of compliance. While previous studies have looked at the use of emojis to simply gain compliance, this study looked at the emotional response to a mix of emojis (positive, negative, and artifacts). H1 predicted and the analysis supported that emails containing emojis elicited more positive emotions than emails that did not contain emojis. Much like a real-life smile, emojis can serve as an emotional contagion where one can “catch” another’s emotions (Smith & Rose, 2020). When viewing a message with emojis, one can feel the sender’s emotions and effectively feel the emotions. Considering the stimulus for the present paper included a variety of emojis ranging from smiling emojis to a clock emoji, the message could appear upbeat and happy, in turn leaving the participants with more positive emotions. The present study is able to establish a relationship between visual communication and emotional contagion theory. Das et al. (2019) in their study about using emojis in advertisements asserted that higher positive emotions were experienced when the product in question was hedonic in nature and not utilitarian. In the same vein, we can argue that as the emails contained information about *Relay for Life*, which is a sensitive cause, was hedonic in nature.

In line with ELM, it was found that positive emotions were positively correlated with compliance and negative emotions were negatively correlated with compliance. As positive affect and negative affect are peripheral cues, it can influence attitudes about the message in question eventually leading to intentions to comply. We know from past studies that peripheral attitude shifts are rather temporary and may shift in the future (O’Keefe, 2008). Therefore, future studies should look at the long-term effects of emojis on compliance.

While H3 was not supported, it led us to an interesting finding. It was uncovered that the use of emojis was a significant negative predictor of compliance. This means that using emojis in messages can lead to lower compliance. In retrospect, this finding is in line with previous research about using amusement or humor in health campaigns. Nabi (2015) noted that while humorous PSAs about cancer screening increased positive attitudes about cancer screening, it did not yield a higher intention to engage in cancer screening. In the present study, emojis were not used in the stimulus to introduce humor, but it can be perceived as such. As *Relay for Life* is an established organization with a serious image, the stimulus containing emojis can be viewed as paradoxical. Practitioners should note that emojis can be an effective way to draw attention or to increase positive affect, but it may not be enough to increase compliance—especially about a serious topic.

The previous work examining emojis and emotion examined how the valence of those expressions in e-mail contributed to “emotional contagion”. This study identified that the presence of emojis as visual communication (positive, negative and artifacts) produced more negative feelings overall. The results also show that when participants experienced positive emotions, they were more likely to comply. Previous research supports the notion that positive emotions are linked to compliance (Das, et al, 2019; Ge & Gretzel, 2018; Kang, et al, 2013). However, it is important to note that this study found that a mix of emojis (Positive, negative, and artifacts) did not increase positive feelings. The previous body of research suggests that when emojis are used in message to visually represent the senders emotional state, they increase that emotional state in the receiver (Das, et al., 2019; Ganster, et al, 2012; Lohman, et al., 2017). However, when emojis are used as visual representation of items (visual rhetoric) and emotions (positive and negative) positive emotions did not increase.

Foss (2004) suggests that visual symbols provide us with access to human experiences that are not available through discourse

alone. The present study indicates that when we are communicating in a platform that is largely predicated on verbal discourse, and communicating about a more serious topic, incorporating these visual communication elements (visual rhetoric) can change the receivers experience with the message. The visual artifacts serve a function, and we must consider that the function is not always synonymous with the purpose (Foss, 2004). Researchers may consider including emojis to enhance the verbal discourse and create a more positive response for the receiver, but they may not be interpreted in that way. Previous research has found that the use of a smiley can elicit feelings of happiness (Lohman, et al., 2017). However, this research shows that when there are multiple visual artifacts in the message, they may serve the function of visual representation of dialogue, but they may not be interpreted positively (they did not meet their intended purpose).

Limitations and Future Research

While this research provides a first look at how a mix of emojis (positive, negative, and artifacts) as visual rhetoric may influence emotional responses, there are several limitations to consider. The sample used for this study was a population of college students, and while they are familiar with, and use emojis, this may not be common practice in e-mail. Future research should test the use of multiple emojis in a text message, or in other CMC environments to see if the results would differ. It is possible that people respond differently to the use of these visual elements in requests sent through other CMC platforms. Additionally, research indicates that males utilize emojis less than females (Tossell et al., 2012). Future research should examine which emojis may be used more by males and those used more often by females. The use of emojis as visual rhetoric may be influenced by perceptions of masculinity and femininity. Future studies could examine if men may use more artifacts, and women use more emotions and how these are used in mixed gender communication.

Finally, the context (*Relay for Life*) may have influenced how participants responded to the use of emojis. The use of emojis in a request that is viewed as utilitarian vs. a request that is hedonic may produce different results. Das and colleagues (2019) found that the emotional responses of the receiver were tied to the type of purchase (hedonic vs. utilitarian). This research used a very utilitarian event, and the emotional responses of the receiver's may have been different if the context were more hedonic. Finally, future research looking at emojis as visual rhetoric should consider not just how

emojis are used as a representation of emotion but also as artifacts (money, pizza, clocks, etc.). The message for this study includes many different types of emojis as visual rhetoric and this may have influenced the emotional response to the message. Foss (2004) states that function does not always reflect the purpose. The emojis served the function of adding visual communication to the discourse but their purpose was perhaps not relevant to the receiver.

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Returning to Space and Revisiting the *Challenger* and *Columbia* Addresses

Jay M. Hudkins

This article argues that Bush's Columbia address lacked the necessary rhetorical touchstones established by Reagan's Challenger address, the exemplar for presidential eulogistic rhetoric following a tragedy in space flight. First, a central theme found in presidential rhetoric concerning space exploration, that of characterizing astronauts as pioneers and space as the new frontier, will be traced. Next, Reagan's eulogy to the Challenger crew, noting the speech's points of rhetorical excellence, several of which previous scholars have articulated (Goldzwig & Dionisopoulos, 1986; Jamieson, 1988; Mister, 1986), will be outlined. The goal is to establish rhetorical touchstones by which to judge the Bush address. Then the literature on eulogies generally to complete the survey of what a successful eulogy should be and do will be reviewed. Finally, Bush's Columbia address will be turned to using Reagan's eulogy and the general literature on eulogies as touchstones to critique the Bush speech.

Introduction

We thought it could never happen again—but it did. On February 1, 2003, the space shuttle *Columbia* disintegrated over Texas as it approached its planned landing at Cape Canaveral—just 16 days after beginning its journey and only 16 minutes until its touchdown (Kluger, 2003). Once again, the nation went into shock; once again, America entered into a national state of mourning; once again, the responsibility fell to our president to articulate the thoughts and longings of a grieving nation.

Of course, a tragedy in space had happened before—on January 28, 1986, the space shuttle *Challenger* exploded 73 seconds into its ascent in “the most visible and cataclysmic accident” in NASA's history (Neal, 1998, p. 816). The *Challenger's* loss was the most visible accident because millions of Americans around the country, many of them schoolchildren, watched the tragedy unfold live on their televisions, captivated by the journey of America's first teacher-astronaut in space, Christa McAuliffe (Kubey & Peloso, 1990; Wright et al., 1989). The *Challenger's* disintegration was cataclysmic because these were the first American fatalities ever to occur during space flight. For the 10th shuttle flight, “the ultimate field trip” (Dowling, 1996, p. 40) abruptly ended in a televised fireball.

With two of NASA's five space shuttles now out of commission, and following the *Columbia* tragedy, President George W. Bush announced the shuttering of the shuttle program and therefore an end to the exploration of outer space by astronauts. As President Bush explained to an audience assembled at NASA, "In 2010, the space shuttle, after nearly 30 years of duty, will be retired from service" (Bush, 2004, p. 4). NASA exceeded the year for terminating the shuttle program, but the remaining three shuttles—*Discovery*, *Endeavor*, and *Atlantis*—completed their missions in 2011 and returned safely home on March 9, June 1, and July 21, respectively ("Space Shuttle Launches," 2011). On August 31, the space shuttle program officially ended, thereby concluding America's historic tradition of astronauts exploring outer space.

Despite the impending demise of the space shuttle program, President Barack Obama held a new, long-term vision for NASA and for America's space program—traveling beyond the Moon and safely landing humans on Mars. In his 2010 speech at the John F. Kennedy Space Center in Merritt Island, Florida, President Obama outlined his plans:

And by 2025, we expect new spacecraft designed for long journeys to allow us to begin the first-ever crewed missions beyond the Moon into deep space. So we'll start—we'll start by sending astronauts to an asteroid for the first time in history. By the mid-2030s, I believe we can send humans to orbit Mars and return them safely to Earth. And a landing on Mars will follow. And I expect to be around to see it.

President Obama's plans for NASA's future revitalized public interest in space exploration. Unfortunately, his budget proposals slashed funding for space exploration-related programs (Koren, 2016), and America failed to venture closer to realizing the president's rhetorical dream.

On March 21, 2017, however, President Donald Trump brought President Obama's dream closer to becoming a reality. President Trump signed S.422, the "National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017." The bill, designed to make space exploration a reality once again, gave new purpose to NASA and its traditional mission—sending astronauts to explore the vast unknown frontiers of space. After signing the first NASA authorization bill in seven years, President Trump (2017) stated that the bill would allow for "human space exploration" and for "deep space exploration," and that the bill would provide the necessary "support for the commercial crew program, which will

carry American astronauts into space from American soil once again...”

President Trump eventually described his visions for space flight consistent with how previous presidents described their visions—space was a new frontier awaiting exploration and settlement by America. As Trump said in his State of the Union Address in 2020:

In reaffirming our heritage as a free nation, we must remember that America has always been a frontier nation. Now we must embrace the next frontier, America’s manifest destiny in the stars. I am asking Congress to fully fund the Artemis program to ensure that the next man and the first woman on the Moon will be American astronauts using this as a launching pad to ensure that America is the first nation to plant its flag on Mars.

With his signature on an historic piece of legislation for the 21st century, and his plans for space exploration announced to the Congress and to the American people, President Trump brought the space program closer to resuming space shuttle flights, closer to traveling to and beyond the moon, closer to landing a shuttle crew on Mars—and closer to another unforeseen and unexpected tragedy in space, where astronauts once again perish on the space frontier.

President Obama’s rhetorical dream and President Trump’s decisive action, therefore, warrant a revisiting of President Reagan’s *Challenger* address and President Bush’s *Columbia* address because the new charge to NASA means that a future president may be called upon yet again to deliver a eulogy for American astronauts.

The evening of the *Challenger* tragedy, President Ronald Reagan went on national television before the American people and delivered one of the most memorable speeches of the 20th century—a eulogy for the *Challenger* astronauts. Universally praised at the time, scholars of American public address selected Reagan’s eulogy as one of the top 10 American speeches of the 20th century. As such, the speech can serve as an exemplar for our examination of President George W. Bush’s eulogy to the *Columbia* astronauts, as well as serve as an exemplar for a future president who must deliver a eulogy following another space tragedy.

Consistent with Lloyd Bitzer’s (1968) notion that a rhetorical situation calls forth a discursive response, both Reagan and Bush delivered nationally televised addresses hours after the shuttle tragedies. In fact, the existing exigence demanded a discursive response. For when a national tragedy strikes, presidential historian Michael Beschloss argues, “Americans are affected more than

anything else by the way the president frames the issues” (Stevenson, 2003, p. 32). Kathleen Hall Jamieson (1988) notes that when a national tragedy strikes “the country turns to the only person who can speak on its behalf. In such circumstances a rhetorically skillful president can assume the role of the head of the national family” (p. 128). To successfully assume that role, however, the president’s discourse must satisfy the audiences’ expectations. Whereas Reagan successfully assumed that role and met his audiences’ expectations with his *Challenger* speech, I shall argue that Bush did not. While it would be easy to claim that Bush would never be the “Great Communicator” Reagan was and therefore could not attain Reagan’s rhetorical success, a close textual reading of both speeches reveals that Bush’s failure was due not to a lack of rhetorical skill, or eloquence, but rather to the content of the speech itself. For when a national tragedy occurs, especially one involving the nation’s space program, a discursive response that exceeds the generic elements found in a traditional eulogy is required. While a eulogy must acknowledge the death, as Campbell and Jamieson (1990) suggest, the speech also must do more than that. The eulogy must incorporate an audience’s prior conceptions of the deceased, the speech must eulogize the deceased consistent with previous rhetorical characterizations, and the eulogy should rhetorically fuse the historical past, the recent past, and the future into a persuasive narrative that comforts, consoles, and provides hope to a grieving nation.

I argue that Bush’s *Columbia* address lacked the necessary rhetorical touchstones established by Reagan’s *Challenger* address, the exemplar for presidential eulogistic rhetoric following a tragedy in space flight. To illustrate the argument, I first will trace a central theme found in presidential rhetoric concerning space exploration, that of characterizing astronauts as pioneers and space as the new frontier. Next, I will outline Reagan’s eulogy to the *Challenger* crew, noting the speech’s points of rhetorical excellence, several of which previous scholars have articulated (Goldzweig & Dionisopoulos, 1986; Jamieson, 1988; Mister, 1986). My goal is to establish rhetorical touchstones by which to judge the Bush address. Then I will review the literature on eulogies generally to complete the survey of what a successful eulogy should be and do. Finally, I will turn to Bush’s *Columbia* address, using Reagan’s eulogy and the general literature on eulogies as touchstones to critique the Bush speech.

Presidential Discourse, Space, and America's New Frontier

Stories of the triumphs and tragedies of America's pioneers as they traversed the Western frontier are hallmarks of American culture (e.g., Carpenter, 1977; Slotkin, 1992). As Janice Hocker Rushing (1983) observes, regardless of how it is told, "The story of America's westward movement and settlement, in its various manifestations, is the most enduring and characteristic American myth" (p. 15). Tales abound of rugged pioneers crossing the plains in covered wagons, establishing settlements in the West on the hostile frontier. Stories about Daniel Boone, James Bowie, and Jedediah Smith teach us that Western heroes sacrificed their lives for their communities. Even Clint Eastwood and John Wayne became cultural icons, which is largely attributable to their television and movie roles as cowboys. Yet while America no longer has a frontier to settle, the frontier myth "remains a viable, cultural force in America" (Carpenter, 1990, p. 7). Dorsey (2013) argues that "the Frontier Myth" functions as one of "the most influential" of America's myths (p. 431), and other scholars concur about the Frontier Myth's import (Rushing, 1995, 1996; Jones, 2011; McMullen, 1996; Moore, 1991; Rushing, 1986; Stuckey, 2011; Valenzano & Engstrom, 2014).

Indeed, another unsettled, hostile frontier exists—space. In fact, as Rushing (1991) notes, with the passing of the Western frontier, America "discovered 'The New Frontier' of space," which remains "central to our mythic consciousness" (p. 243). Indeed, "the frontier myth roots American identity in the constant conquest of new lands and challenges" (Kelly & Neville-Shepard, 2020, p. 2). While some scholars suggest that presidents have little influence over the space program (e.g., Jordan, 2003; Launius & McCurdy, 1997; Vedda, 2000), the rhetorical record suggests that when framing space as a new frontier awaiting exploration by eager pioneers, presidents can successfully alter the public's perception of space and the nation's space program because "Americans have celebrated the pioneer spirit of discovery and exploration" (Lewis, 2011, p. 131).

When the Soviet Union launched Sputnik I in 1957, the space race began. President Dwight D. Eisenhower responded to the Soviet challenge and created NASA, though America's space program failed, at first, to capture the attention of the public. It was John F. Kennedy's 1960 presidential campaign that initially introduced the American public to the idea of space as the "New Frontier," and "Kennedy made space a centerpiece of his 'new frontier' message" (Depoe, 1991, p. 221). As president, Kennedy carried his campaign theme to the halls of Congress, and in 1961, he

addressed Congress and articulated his vision for the nation's space effort, an effort that would culminate, he promised, "with landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth" (Kennedy, 1961). A year later, Kennedy delivered an address at Rice University in Houston, Texas, devoted entirely to the nation's space effort. In that speech, he guided his audience back to the West and rhetorically constructed a vision of a new frontier awaiting settlement by pioneers. "This country of the United States was not built by those who waited and rested and wished to look behind them," Kennedy proclaimed, "this country was conquered by those who moved forward—and so will space," he told the crowd (Kennedy, 1962). Perhaps nothing reflects Kennedy's vision of space as a new frontier more than the narrative told in *We Seven* (Carpenter, et al. 1962), the autobiography of the Mercury 7 astronauts, who "compared themselves to the American pioneers" (Kauffman, 1991, p. 65). While critics principally regarded the book as politically biased and as NASA propaganda, the book enamored the American public, who began to see astronauts as "almost super-heroes" (Shayler, 2000, p. 4), largely because the astronauts wrote their account "to persuade the public that like the pioneers, success or failure depended on their actions" (Kauffman, 1991, p. 65). Kennedy's framing of space as the new frontier and astronauts as eager pioneers "set a course for future presidents" because "presidents play an important role in crafting the public's understanding of space" (Jordan, 2003, p. 213).

Ten years later, after Kennedy's rhetorical dream became a reality, President Richard Nixon's administration debated whether to expand the nation's space effort by pursuing a space shuttle program. While several departments opposed a shuttle program, Casper Weinberger, then deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget, persuaded Nixon to authorize a shuttle, arguing that space "was the next frontier" (Launius & McCurdy, 1997, p. 237). After much internal debate, Nixon ignored the critics within his administration and he sided with Weinberger. On January 5, 1972, President Nixon held a news conference and he announced his vision for the nation's space effort. He authorized the shuttle program, he said, "to help transform the space frontier of the 1970's into familiar territory, easily accessible for human endeavor in the 1980's and 1990's" (Nixon, 1972).

Twelve years later, President Ronald Reagan addressed the nation and outlined his vision for the nation's space effort. Like Kennedy and Nixon, Reagan saw space as "our next frontier" and in his 1984 State of the Union address he directed "NASA to develop a permanently manned space station and to do it within a decade"

(Reagan, 1984). Reagan envisioned space as “America’s next frontier” awaiting exploration by “America’s pioneer spirit” (Reagan, 1984). Unfortunately, Reagan’s dream for the future also became his nightmare, for “the thrilling adventure of the untamed frontier [ended] in failure and defeat” (McLure, 2000, p. 457).

The Shuttle *Challenger*: Death of a Dream, Part One

Reagan’s vision for the nation’s space program took flight during his presidency. Shuttle missions became routine voyages, and NASA engineers were designing plans for an inhabitable space station. The *Challenger*’s upcoming flight, though, received extraordinary media attention, as Americans eagerly awaited schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe’s journey. According to space historian Malcolm McConnell (1987), “The space shuttle had carried us back to the frontier and made us proud again. That was the myth that surrounded *Challenger* as it stood on its launch pad in early January” (p. 8).

Eager anticipation quickly changed to sudden shock when the *Challenger* exploded on live television. Jamieson (1988) describes the scene that unfolded:

Expecting to watch until its white trail disappeared into the heavens, viewers saw instead an explosion, the single column of white transformed into a large birdlike shape. Then parts of the *Challenger* began raining in white streaks from the sky. Throughout, the symbology was wrong. White is a symbol of life and rebirth, not death. Ascent into heaven is supposed to signal redemptive triumph, not tragedy. (p. 129)

Minutes after the tragedy, as Ann Larabee (1994) noted, “The *Challenger* catastrophe threatened political mythologies of the final frontier...” (n.p.). The *Challenger* tragedy also threatened the new frontier myth because America came face-to-face with the realization that its pioneers died trying to reach the new frontier. As a result, the *Challenger* disaster endangered “the expectations created by the myth” (Opt, 1996, 41), and with the loss of the *Challenger* and its crew, the rhetorical vision of three presidents seemed in danger of perishing as well.

When the *Challenger* tragedy occurred, Reagan was attending a meeting with television network anchors and other reporters regarding that night’s scheduled State of the Union address. The topic quickly switched from a question-and-answer session on that evening’s speech to one on how Reagan felt when he received news that the *Challenger* exploded. One reporter asked if the

Challenger tragedy “raises questions about having citizens aboard the space shuttle?” Reagan calmly responded, “Well, they’re all citizens, and I don’t think anyone’s ever been on there that isn’t a volunteer...So, no, that is the last frontier and the most important frontier” (Reagan, 1986a). Another reporter asked the president, “Can you say something that would help [the children] to understand how this happened?” to which Reagan replied, “In pioneering we’ve always known that there are pioneers that give their lives out there on the frontier. And now this has happened...life does go on and you don’t back up and quit some worthwhile endeavor because of tragedy” (Reagan, 1986a). During Reagan’s exchange with the reporters, he recast the astronauts as daring pioneers and space as a new but dangerous frontier, and he inferred that for those who gave their lives exploring the new frontier, America would continue the space exploration program, just as deaths of the early Western pioneers did not stop future pioneers from venturing out and exploring. Equally important to Reagan’s remarks was what took place during the questioning session. Karna Small, Robert McFarlane’s assistant at the National Security Council, took notes on Reagan’s responses, and she later delivered her notes to speechwriter Peggy Noonan, who penned the 648-word address Reagan would deliver that evening.

Reagan’s responses to the questions served a vital purpose for how he would address the nation that evening; he would make use of the myth of space as the new frontier to eulogize the astronauts, the pioneers who sacrificed their lives on the frontier for their community. Reagan’s rhetorical strategy was a fitting response for the tragedy, because the frontier myth “provides a way for us to make sense of specific experiences—especially crisis situations” (Opt, 1996, p. 41) and serves as a means for presidents to “chart the course of change in times of stress” (Bennett, 1980, p. 168), specifically when the myths recount the feats of America’s pioneers and include the ideals of honesty, industry, and bravery.

In fact, Breen and Corcoran (1982) suggest that myth is “a vital link between culture and communication” (p. 127). They argue that myths allow audiences to assimilate unfamiliar situations into prior symbolic molds. When crises occur, myths provide a way for audiences to interpret and understand the newly created situation. Additionally, myths construct exemplary models for audiences “in a process that translates a single life-history into an archetype” (Breen & Corcoran, 1982, p. 129), thereby establishing discursive patterns that future rhetors can imitate when they write a similar speech. When new heroes emerge from unfamiliar crises, myths create

archetypal heroes whom audiences can admire. Finally, over time myths select events from historical experiences that take on a new significance for a culture. That is, myths become a “part of the cultural construction of the reality of that culture” (Breen & Corcoran, 1982, p. 131).

To fully appreciate the rhetorical strategy Reagan used in responding to the *Challenger* tragedy, as well as to offer a point of comparison for Bush’s *Columbia* address, critics must understand the rhetorical importance of the image that brought Reagan to the White House. As Rushing (1983) observed, “America elected a ‘cowboy President’ by a landslide” (p. 14). She attributed Reagan’s election to America’s need “not for a *real* Western hero, but merely for the appearance of one,” and found that Reagan’s “image is a masterful conglomerate of the frontiersman’s qualities” (p. 25). America longed for a president who could return them to a time when good prevailed over evil, when triumphs occurred more often than tragedies, and when heroes emerged victorious over their foes. In other words, Americans wanted to return to the West, and they elected a president who could lead them to that place.

In addition to longing for a president who had the appearance of a Western hero, the public desired a president who could rhetorically return them to the West. As Sarah Russell Hankins (1983) explained, “We do not expect Reagan to be the Western hero; we are content to have him play the part. We do not want to return to the 1950’s; we just need the comforting rhetoric of that era” (p. 42). In reality, Reagan both played the part and spoke the part. Reagan made use of the Western myth in many of his speeches (Hankins, 1983), and a “typical Reagan oration” contained heroes, nostalgia, and mythic visions (Sloan, 1996, p. 795), and Reagan’s speeches often utilized myth as a core element of his discourse (Combs, 1993; Erickson, 1985). Therefore, consistent with his image, his prior rhetoric, and continuing the presidential rhetorical tradition of alluding to space as the new frontier waiting to be settled by eager pioneers, Reagan comforted a grieving nation by leading them back to the frontier in his *Challenger* address.

While tragedies during space flight are a rare occurrence, when a tragedy does occur, the country expects a presidential response. Unlike other national tragedies, though, presidents view “the loss of astronauts [as] a personal loss, in a way that only other presidents truly understand” (Cannon, 2003, p. 438). Reagan, however, did not have a rhetorical eulogistic template to which he could refer for how he should address the nation following the *Challenger* tragedy. America had never before lost astronauts during

space flight. Prior to the loss of the *Challenger* and its crew, the only space tragedy America confronted occurred on January 27, 1967, when a fire killed the three astronauts aboard Apollo 1 while it sat on the launch pad in Florida (Shayler, 2000). In his memoir, President Lyndon Johnson (1971) said that tragedy “hit me like a physical blow” (p. 270) and that he “felt especially close to the astronauts, those brave pioneers who have blazed new trails across the untraveled wilderness of space” (p. 285). Rather than delivering a eulogy for the astronauts, Johnson issued a brief presidential statement on the loss of “the folk heroes of our time” (Johnson, 1971, p. 285).² Thus, the loss of the *Challenger* presented Reagan with an exigence dictating that his response, like the landing on the moon, would be an historical and rhetorical first.

Rhetorical Touchstones of the *Challenger* Address

Reagan’s *Challenger* address contains five rhetorical touchstones by which to judge Bush’s *Columbia* address. The first touchstone is the rhetorical posture that Reagan assumes in relation to his audience—that of head of the national family. A second touchstone of the address is the manner in which Reagan characterizes the crew of the *Challenger* as pioneers, a characterization consistent with previous presidential discourse. A third touchstone is the lens Reagan provides through which his audience can view the future of space exploration in light of the loss of the *Challenger*. A fourth touchstone is the historical allusion Reagan chooses for praising the astronauts’ mission. The final touchstone is the religious allusion Reagan uses for comforting a grieving nation and for concluding his address. These rhetorical touchstones, then, establish textual points of comparison for evaluating Bush’s *Columbia* address.

As Jamieson (1988) suggests, during a national tragedy presidents assume the role of head of the national family. While Reagan does indeed assume that presidential role, more importantly, he simultaneously situates himself as a member of the community of grievers. He opens the *Challenger* address by saying, “Today is a day for mourning and remembering. Nancy and I are pained to the core

² While calling the astronauts “pioneers” and “folk heroes” in his memoir, Johnson delivered a less than fitting response to the tragedy. Johnson issued a generic, impersonal statement: “Three valiant young men have given their lives in the Nation’s service. We mourn this great loss. Our hearts go out to their families.” (Johnson, 1968, p. 92)

by the tragedy of the shuttle Challenger. We know we share this pain with all of the people of our country. This is truly a national loss” (Reagan, 1986b). By assuming a rhetorical posture that includes a first-person reference, Reagan rhetorically places himself alongside others in the community who are mourning the loss of loved ones. He continues the image that he is a member of the community by saying, “We mourn seven heroes” and “We mourn their loss as a nation together” (Reagan, 1986b). Thus, by situating himself as another grieving American, he both sounds presidential and he positions himself as a part of the human family.

The second rhetorical touchstone of Reagan’s *Challenger* address is the manner in which he characterizes the crew of the *Challenger*. Beginning with Kennedy, presidents have referred to America’s astronauts as pioneers. By framing the nation’s space efforts through this mythic characterization, presidents have created expectations for their audiences. In fact, the public expects the president to characterize astronauts as pioneers and as heroes, for that is how the public sees them. Reagan continues this rhetorical tradition in his address by praising the “courage” of the *Challenger* crew and characterizing them as “pioneers” and “heroes” who were “daring and brave” and who had a “hunger to explore the universe and discover its truths” (Reagan, 1986b). By characterizing the *Challenger*’s crew and their mission in this manner, Reagan met his audience’s expectations and created archetypal heroes for them to admire.

The third touchstone in Reagan’s address is the manner in which he frames the loss of the *Challenger* in relation to the idea of space as the new frontier and how the public should view the future of space exploration in light of the tragedy. In other words, Reagan needed to console his audience and reassure them that the death of America’s “pioneers” would not end their dream of traversing and settling the new frontier. To successfully accomplish his mission, Reagan’s rhetorical strategy fused four frontier images. First, Reagan reminds the community that “we’ve only just begun” to explore space (Reagan, 1986b), assuring them that like the early exploration of the Western frontier, space exploration is still in its infancy and there is more to be done. Reagan then rhetorically unites the community and the astronauts, saying, “We’re still pioneers” and that “They, the members of the Challenger crew, were pioneers” (Reagan, 1986b). Next, Reagan consoles the community, and explains that while “painful,” like those setbacks the early pioneers encountered, the tragedy is “all part of the process of exploration and discovery. It’s all part of taking a chance and expanding man’s [sic] horizons”

(Reagan, 1986b). Most importantly, he assures the community that their “pioneers” did not perish on the frontier, but instead, as leaders forging the community’s way to the new frontier, “The Challenger crew was pulling us into the future, and we’ll continue to follow them” (Reagan, 1986b). He promises that America will “continue our quest in space” and that “nothing ends here; our hopes and our journeys continue” (Reagan, 1986b). By providing the grieving nation a lens through which to view the tragedy, and by offering hope for the future, Reagan successfully fuses the pioneer myth and the myth of space as the new frontier into a new construction of the reality of America’s culture. While the heroes of the *Challenger* sacrificed their lives for their community, their dreams did not perish along with them.

A fourth touchstone in the address is the historical allusion Reagan chooses for praising the mission of the *Challenger* crew and eulogizing their death. As Steven Weinberg (1985) suggests, “The exploration of the universe plays a role for us today somewhat like that played by the exploration of the earth in the time of Columbus,” and “these explorations awaken the imagination of the public” (p. 18). Consistent with this vision, Reagan (1986b) shares the story of another pioneer, Sir Francis Drake, who perished on the oceanic frontier:

There's a coincidence today. On this day 390 years ago, the great explorer Sir Francis Drake died aboard ship off the coast of Panama. In his lifetime the great frontiers were the oceans, and a historian later said, “He lived by the sea, died on it, and was buried in it.” Well, today, we can say of the Challenger crew: Their dedication was, like Drake's, complete.

Reagan’s story serves an important function for comforting a grieving nation.

By rhetorically situating the loss of the *Challenger* and its crew in the audience’s prior symbolic mold, his allusion allows them to interpret and understand the *Challenger* tragedy. Reagan’s story seems all the more fitting because NASA named the shuttle *Challenger* after the British Naval research ship *HMS Challenger*, which sailed both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans in the 1870s (“Space Shuttle Overview,” 2013).

The final rhetorical touchstone in the *Challenger* address is the religious allusion Reagan uses for comforting a grieving nation and for concluding his address. Reagan quotes several lines from “High Flight,” a poem written by John G. Magee, Jr., a Pilot Officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Magee composed “High Flight” in 1941 upon his return to Earth after a test flight at 30,000 feet in the

air in a Spitfire V (Magee, Jr., 2002). Reagan leaves the frontier of the ocean and returns to the new frontier of space to conclude his address:

The crew of the space shuttle Challenger honored us by the manner in which they lived their lives. We will never forget them, nor the last time we saw them, this morning, as they prepared for their journey and waved goodbye and “slipped the surly bonds of earth” to “touch the face of God.” (Reagan, 1986b)

By concluding his address with a religious allusion, Reagan’s responsibility as head of the national family is complete.

He successfully mourned alongside a grieving nation, he consoled them, and he promised them hope for the future. At the same time, he provided a lens through which a grieving nation could interpret and understand the tragedy, he eulogized the *Challenger* crew and made them archetypal heroes, and by depicting the *Challenger* crew as pioneers and space as the new frontier, he successfully fused frontier images and revived the frontier myth to provide a cultural construction through which his audience could make sense of the reality of the tragedy they watched unfold that morning on their televisions. The *Challenger* address and its rhetorical touchstones, then, provide an exemplar by which to judge Bush’s *Columbia* address.

Eulogies: Challenges, Communities, and Culture

While most Americans witnessed the explosion of the *Challenger* live on their televisions, many people learned of the *Columbia*’s explosion only after viewing televised news reports and the subsequent videotaped footage of the disaster. Regardless of how audiences learned of the tragedies, Kubey and Peluso (1990) suggest that the loss of a shuttle and its astronauts is comparable to the “sudden death of a major public figure,” and, therefore, “extra reality or emergency reality maintenance work” is required “to restore a sense of stability such that citizens can readily return to everyday life” (p. 70). In fact, “a disaster in space evokes a special kind of grief, a sense of having tempted the fates too far, a wonderment about whether it was meant for us to be straying so far from our planet” (Schorr, 2003, p. 11). As a result, a tragedy during space flight places additional rhetorical demands on the president.

After a person’s death, a public eulogy provides communal therapy for audiences. In their classification of a eulogy as a rhetorical genre, Campbell and Jamieson (1982) argue that eulogies must “acknowledge the death, transform the relationship between the

living and the dead from present to past tense, ease the mourners' terror at confronting their own mortality, console them by arguing that the deceased lives on, and reknit the community" (p. 147). Campbell and Jamieson's classification system allows critics to analyze most artifacts of eulogistic discourse. A space shuttle tragedy, however, creates both a unique rhetorical situation as well as two additional constraints. First, the rhetor must provide auditors with a lens through which to view and interpret the tragedy. More importantly, the rhetor cannot explicitly acknowledge the astronauts' deaths, for to do so means also to recognize that their dreams of exploring the new frontier, and the hopes and dreams of the American public, died as well.

Celeste Michelle Condit (1985) offers an alternative classification and interpretive system for eulogistic discourse. She argues that epideictic discourse serves three functional pairs: definition/understanding, display/entertainment, and shaping/sharing of community. In each pair, the first term indicates the role the discourse serves for the rhetor and the second term indicates how the speech functions for the audience. As the shuttle explosions were national tragedies, the definition/understanding and shaping/sharing of community functions are most relevant.

According to Condit (1985), when a rhetor employs the definition/understanding functional pair, that speaker's discourse serves to provide explanation and meaning for the social world. She writes:

Audiences actively seek and invite speech that performs this epideictic function when some event, person, group, or object is confusing or troubling. The speaker will explain the troubling issue in terms of the audience's key values and beliefs. Through the resultant understanding, the troubled event will be made less confusing and threatening, providing a sense of comfort for the audience. Meanwhile, the speaker has gained power through the power to define. (p. 288)

According to Condit (1985), the definition/understanding functional pair interrelates with the shaping/sharing of community pair.

Through a speaker's discourse, the speaker can revivify the community's heritage and identity. Thus, epideictic discourse, through the use of myths, symbols, and values, provides a method for expressing and reformulating the community's shared heritage. A speaker's discourse helps the community "discover what the event means to the community, and what the community will come to be in the face of the new event" (Condit, 1985, p. 289). In other words, the

eulogistic rhetoric allows audiences to interpret and understand the event while at the same time the rhetoric reconstructs the community's cultural reality in light of the tragedy. Therefore, by utilizing elements of the frontier myth as a rhetorical strategy in their eulogistic address, presidents can fuse the historical past, the recent past, and the future into a persuasive narrative that comforts, consoles, and provides hope to a grieving nation, because "[d]uring national crises, the need for a shared sense of identity is especially keen" (Bostdorff, 2011, p. 299).

The Shuttle *Columbia*: Death of a Dream, Part Two

At the 2000 Philadelphia GOP convention, a biographical film introduced the country to Governor George W. Bush, the cowboy from Texas. The video, shot at Bush's soon-to-be completed ranch in Crawford, Texas, was the Republican Party's answer to then-Governor Bill Clinton's successful biographical film, "The Man from Hope," at the 1992 Democratic convention. Benjamin Soskis (2000), who covered political campaigns, described the myth the video propagated:

[Bush] spoke about his hometown. "There used to be a slogan in Midland that said, 'The sky is the limit,' which really is such an optimistic slogan," Bush mused. "It's how I feel about America, really." Clad in blue jeans and a cowboy hat, he extolled the virtues of the Texas frontier. He waxed lyrical about "dreamers—the doers who take risks and sometimes failed, but then rose above failure to achieve greater good things." Then he climbed into his blue pickup truck and, passing a well-placed calf, drove off toward the horizon. (p. 23)

The video successfully depicted Bush as the candidate from a rural Texas town, and more important, as a Washington outsider. In fact, according to Soskis (2000), as the presidential campaign progressed, Al Gore, the Democratic Party's nominee, struggled to prevent the American public from "buying into...the Texas frontier myth" (p. 24).

As with Reagan's victory, America elected a cowboy president, though not by a landslide. Like Reagan, Bush brought images of the Western hero and frontiersman qualities to Washington. Though he played the part, he failed to speak the part when it mattered most—the morning the space shuttle *Columbia* disintegrated over his own Texas frontier.

The *Columbia* tragedy forced Americans to face the realities of the dangers of space travel, just as they had when they witnessed

the *Challenger* explode on live television. As one journalist reported, “Americans froze as events unfolded on television, once again confronted with images of a clear blue sky filled with smoke and death” (Mishra, 2003, p. A1). According to Stevenson (2003), Bush played the role that Reagan played on the day of the *Challenger* tragedy, and like Reagan before him, Bush assumed “the role of comforter in chief” (sic) and he became “spokesman for and healer to the nation” (p. 32). In fact, according to astronaut Gordon Fullerton, who flew shuttle missions on both *Challenger* and *Columbia*, “Recovery from the shock of this event and the loss of seven fine crew members . . . will be the greatest challenge the American space program has ever faced, even greater than Apollo 1 and the loss of the Challenger” (Antczak, 2003). With the loss of the *Columbia* and its crew, then, Bush assumed the role of head of the national family to comfort the “bereaved” and “to give the nation a larger context for a sudden and macabre tragedy” (Allen, 2003, p. A06).

Rhetorical Touchstones of the *Columbia* Address?

Bush (2003) begins his 373-word address with the phrase “My fellow Americans,” a phrase that began six of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s fireside chats; a phrase that President Harry S. Truman spoke in twelve of his radio addresses; a phrase that up to that evening had been spoken 650 times in presidential discourse.³ A phrase, in other words, overused in presidential speeches and impersonal as a rhetorical choice. While Bush does position himself as a member of the community of griever, he rhetorically fails to assume the role of head of the national family. Moreover, while Reagan made a first-person reference to himself and Nancy, his wife, Bush did not refer to either himself or to Laura, his wife. As one aide said of the deliberate omission, “It would have personalized it too much, and put himself too much into it when this was directed at the nation and the families” (Allen, 2003, p. A06). Yet as Reagan’s address demonstrates, to successfully comfort and console a grieving nation, the public expects the president to immerse himself in the magnanimity of the event; they not only want him standing alongside them, they want him leading them as more than their president.

Bush’s rhetorical strategy takes on greater import when recognizing that friends close to Bush maintained at the time that

³ Numbers gathered from the University of California at Santa Barbara’s “The American Presidency Project” database, keyword search “My fellow Americans” with the date range January 1, 1789 to January 31, 2003.

Bush “retains his generation’s fascination with space travel” (Walsh, 2003, p. 22). And Bush was not alone. According to Matthew Dowd, the director of polling for the White House, America shared Bush’s fascination with space and the public still viewed astronauts as “the last of the untainted heroes” (Walsh, 2003, p. 23). Bush, though, creates an additional rhetorical challenge for himself through the manner in which he describes the *Columbia*’s explorers. Not only must he characterize the astronauts as pioneers, he also must console his audience and reassure them that the death of America’s pioneers will not end the dream of settling the new frontier. Bush, however, fails to characterize the astronauts as pioneers or as heroes; instead, he refers to them as “[t]hese astronauts,” as “these men and women” (twice), and he praises the “crew of the shuttle *Columbia*” for “their courage, and daring, and idealism” (Bush, 2003). While those are traits worthy of astronauts who “had a high and noble purpose in life” (Bush, 2003), Bush’s impersonal descriptions of the crew fail to continue the presidential rhetorical tradition that makes use of the mythic portrayal of astronauts as pioneers, the necessary characterization from which archetypal heroes are created. For as space historian John Logsdon (2003) argued before the *Columbia* tragedy, the space program in the twenty-first century needs “new heroes and heroines” (p. 233). Unfortunately, in his address Bush fails to cast the deceased astronauts as heroes or heroines; instead, they were “a crew of seven” (Bush, 2003).

Bush’s address also textually strays from the exemplar in how he frames the loss of the *Columbia* and its crew. In a sharp contrast to Reagan’s address, in which Reagan never directly spoke of the deaths of the *Challenger* crew, Bush explicitly acknowledges the deaths of the *Columbia* crew. In fact, Reagan refers to the deaths of the *Challenger* crew as being a “loss” three times, and he twice refers to astronauts as being “lost” rather than as having died (Reagan, 1986b). When the *Challenger* exploded, most viewers assumed the explosion killed the crew, yet the public neither needed nor wanted Reagan to confirm their fears. Simply saying as Reagan said, that the crew was “lost” in space—similar to an explorer who is lost at sea—sufficed. With the *Columbia*’s disintegration, viewers confronted those fears once again. Bush, however, in the opening paragraph of his address says, “The *Columbia* is lost; there are no survivors” (Bush, 2003). According to Bush, the shuttle *Columbia* was “lost” in space—not the astronauts; instead, America’s pioneers—and heroes—were dead. Bush promises that space travel will not end, saying, “The cause in which they died will continue” and “Our journey into space will continue” (Bush, 2003), but again,

he fails to make use of the myth of space as a frontier and to characterize the astronauts as pioneers exploring it.

As a result of his failure to characterize the *Columbia's* astronauts as pioneers and space as a frontier, Bush creates another rhetorical challenge for himself—his rhetorical strategy cannot fuse the frontier images in the manner Reagan fused them for framing the loss of the shuttle and the crew in relation to the idea of space as the new frontier and how the public should view the future of space exploration in light of the tragedy. Reagan acknowledges that the new frontier of space is dangerous, “But they, the Challenger Seven, were aware of the dangers, but overcame them and did their jobs brilliantly” (Reagan, 1986b). Bush, too, acknowledges that the *Columbia's* “astronauts knew the dangers, and they faced them willingly” and he adds that “it is easy to overlook the dangers of travel by rocket, and the difficulties of navigating the fierce outer atmosphere of the earth” (Bush, 2003). For Reagan, America’s “pioneers” conquered the new frontier even in their deaths. For Bush, though, the new frontier is a hostile place that took the lives of seven “astronauts.” Unfortunately, while providing the grieving nation a lens through which to view the tragedy, and by providing an assurance that the shuttle program will continue, Bush fails to fuse the pioneer myth and the myth of space as a new frontier into a new construction of the reality of America’s culture—that while the heroes of the *Columbia* sacrificed their lives for their community, their dreams will not perish as well.

Notably absent from Bush’s address is a historical allusion praising the astronauts’ mission. This omission is notable because the shuttle *Columbia's* namesake was an 18th century ship, the *Columbia Rediviva*, the first American sailing vessel to circumnavigate the globe in 1790 (Howell, 2013). So Bush, like Reagan, had an oceanic frontier image to which he could allude. More significant, however, is that *Columbia* was the Apollo 11’s command and re-entry module that safely returned heroes Buzz Aldrin, Neil Armstrong, and Michael Collins from Kennedy’s new frontier, the moon, back to Earth. The module *Columbia* splashed down in the Pacific near the recovery ship the U.S.S. *Hornet*, where President Nixon stood and “smiled broadly and waved spontaneously with obvious, unrestrained joy” (Walsh, 2000, p. 94). As Nixon (1969), whose remarks were televised live to a global audience, said to America’s newest heroes aboard the ship, “I was thinking, as you know, as you came down...that this is the greatest week in the history of the world since the Creation...I only hope that all of us...as a result of what you have done, can do our job a little better. We can reach for the stars just as

you have reached so far for the stars.” Unfortunately, the *Columbia* tragedy denied Bush the opportunity to welcome home America’s newest heroes, and his omission denied him the opportunity to rhetorically situate the loss of the *Columbia* and its crew in his audience’s prior symbolic molds.

Perhaps the rhetorical touchstone of Bush’s *Columbia* address is the scriptural reference Bush uses for comforting a grieving nation and for concluding his address.

While Reagan frequently made use of myth in his speeches, Bush’s rhetoric included a “spiritual vocabulary [that] is a frequent feature of his public speaking” (Allen, 2003, p. A06). Bush was often the “pastor in the bully pulpit,” (Fineman, 2003), and Bush, a born-again Christian, frequently turned to religious imagery in many of his speeches (e.g., Coe & Domke, 2006; Keller, 2003), especially those he delivered during crisis times (e.g., Loven, 2003; Nolan, 2003; Walsh, 2003), when he had to become the “preacher in chief” (Fineman, 2003).

Bush’s longtime confidant and then adviser Karen Hughes was asked to assist in writing Bush’s *Columbia* speech. She wanted to echo the religious allusions in Reagan’s *Challenger* address, but she knew that Bush would be more comfortable quoting scripture directly. She e-mailed the Bible verse Isaiah 40:26 to Michael Gerson, Bush’s chief speechwriter (Walsh, 2003, p. 23). The verse paralleled the theme of Reagan’s “High Flight” conclusion:

Lift your eyes and look to the heavens. Who created all these? He who brings out the starry hosts one by one and calls them each by name. Because of His great power, and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. (Bush, 2003)

Explaining why she selected scripture for inclusion in Bush’s speech, Hughes noted, “It’s a part of the tradition of our nation that in times of turmoil and times of tragedy, our presidents and our people have turned to faith as a source of strength” (Allen, 2003, p. A06). Gerson incorporated Hughes’ verse into a draft of Bush’s address, which Bush “accepted immediately” (Walsh, 2003, p. 23). Bush quoted the scripture in his speech and he concluded his address by saying, “The same Creator who names the stars also knows the names of the seven souls we mourn today. The crew of the shuttle *Columbia* did not return safely to Earth; yet we can pray that all are safely home” (Bush, 2003).

By concluding his address with scripture and a religious allusion, Bush’s responsibility as head of the national family was complete. While Bush attempted to mourn with and to console a grieving nation, he rhetorically failed to promise them hope for the

future. By straying from the rhetorical touchstones in Reagan's exemplar, Bush did not provide a lens through which a grieving nation could interpret and understand the tragedy, nor did his eulogy for the *Columbia* crew make them archetypal heroes. By failing to depict *Columbia*'s astronauts as pioneers and space as the new frontier, he was unable to fuse frontier images and to revivify the frontier myth to provide a cultural construction through which his audience could make sense of the reality of the tragedy they watched that morning on their televisions. Arguably, Americans now live in an age where "no single person can serve as the national voice," though the 21st century does require "a leader who understands how to use words wisely and well" (Gelderman, 1995, p. 79). Whereas Reagan's *Challenger* address was a fitting response to the tragedy, a textual comparison to Bush's *Columbia* address reveals that Bush's rhetorical response to the tragedy was a less than fitting response.

Conclusion

Presidential discourse frequently describes space as the new frontier and characterizes astronauts as pioneers. This essay has examined two rhetorical artifacts, one in which those descriptions and characterizations were used to console and comfort a grieving nation, and the other which largely excluded them as a rhetorical strategy for framing a national tragedy and for providing audiences a lens through which to view, interpret, and understand the tragedy. A close reading of each text reveals several relevant observations for scholars interested in studying presidential eulogistic discourse as a response to a national tragedy, especially one involving the nation's space program.

The most important discovery is that prior presidential rhetoric creates expectations within audiences that, when a tragedy occurs, requires the president to return to that rhetoric to satisfy the audience's expectations. This is especially true when the aim of the eulogistic discourse is to explain what the tragedy means for the audience and what their future will be in light of the tragedy. When presidential rhetoric fails to take into account these constraints, the success of the rhetorical effort is minimized.

A second discovery is that when speech exemplars exist for a specific rhetorical situation, future speeches that address a nearly identical exigence should model that exemplar. As demonstrated in this essay, President Reagan's *Challenger* address is the exemplar by which to judge President Bush's *Columbia* address. Unfortunately, Bush's address failed to capitalize on the rhetorical touchstones established by Reagan's address.

A final discovery is that a national tragedy, especially one involving the nation's space program, requires a discursive response that exceeds the generic elements found in a traditional eulogy. While a eulogy must acknowledge the death, as Campbell and Jamieson (1990) suggest, it also must do more than that. The eulogy must incorporate an audience's prior conceptions of the deceased, the speech must eulogize the deceased consistent with previous rhetorical characterizations, and the eulogy should rhetorically fuse the historical past, the recent past, and the future into a persuasive narrative that comforts, consoles, and provides hope to a grieving nation. As this essay demonstrates, revivifying the frontier myth, where astronauts are characterized as pioneers and space is referred to as the new frontier, offers rhetors a rhetorical strategy for effectively responding to a national tragedy involving America's space program.

Americans never thought the nation would confront another tragedy in space flight, but they did. As the third decade of the 21st century begins, President Trump has taken the first steps toward making President Obama's rhetorical dream a reality, and NASA appears destined to resume space flights involving crew members—America's next generation of pioneers and heroes, some of whom hopefully will reach frontier destinies never before reached by astronauts. Of course, we pray that another tragedy will not occur. However, should a third tragedy happen, the next president who has to assume the role of head of the national family will have two rhetorical artifacts to which he or she can look for guidance in the effort to comfort and console a grieving nation. Understanding why Reagan's *Challenger* address was a more fitting response than Bush's *Columbia* eulogy is a first step in such preparation for the unexpected.

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Family Communication Patterns and Educational Orientations

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This research investigates the impact of family communication patterns on educational orientations. Two hundred and nine students completed an online survey assessing family communication patterns (conversation and conformity orientation) and educational orientations (learning orientation and grade orientation). Regression analyses revealed that both conversation and conformity orientation were positive predictors of learning orientation, while only conformity orientation was a positive predictor of grade orientation. The discussion highlights the need for continued research into the role of the family as an influence on college student motivations.

Introduction

The significant influence of family on members is inarguable; further, family has been described as “the crucible of society” (Vangelisti, 2003, p. ix). In this way, what goes on in the family can be said to contribute not only to members’ lives in academic environments (e.g., Bartle-Haring et al., 2023), but to social and cultural change as well. Higher education is not immune to these changes, as it faces challenges to adapt to changing demographics and the demands of college student populations, with innovations in pedagogy, delivery, and curricula (Hainline et al., 2010). In other words, the “educational values, motives, and habits” (Socha & Stoyneva, 2015, p. 387) cultivated within students’ families forms the environment for educators and administrators. They may, therefore, benefit from research examining student attitudes and behaviors and the factors that influence them in terms of their preparedness for and effectiveness in the college environment.

Socialization into basic competencies, including school readiness, devolves for the most part upon parents (Stafford, 2004). Research has demonstrated that parental involvement in childhood schooling makes a difference for children’s academic success (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Hill & Taylor, 2004). Thus, examining the communication practices that contribute to students’ orientations toward education is of benefit. The purpose of this investigation is to examine the relationships between family communication practices, as measured by Ritchie and Fitzpatrick’s (1990) family communication patterns, and university students’ educational orientations. The paper will begin by explicating the

constructs of said educational orientations and these family communication patterns. Following, analyses of data examining the relationships between these constructs will be presented and discussion of practical implications of the research will be forwarded, along with suggestions for future research.

Educational Orientations

Eison and colleagues (Eison, 1981, 1982; Eison et al., 1983) posit two orientations that students may have toward academic settings: the learning-orientation and grade-orientation. Students with a learning-orientation are more interested in the process of learning itself; they tend to see learning as integral to personal development, persisting on assignments until they have mastered the content, and are more willing to develop relationships with academic personnel. By contrast, students with a grade-orientation are more focused on performance outcomes; they tend to see assignments as benchmarks on the path to advancement, putting forth only as much effort as is required for completion, and eschewing opportunities to develop relationships with instructors (Alexitch, 2002;). These two educational orientations align more broadly with the mastery orientation, which is demonstrated by the goal of mastering material and exhibiting an intrinsic desire to learn, and the performance orientation, which is typified by the goal of performing well, often guided by extrinsic motivations such as grades (Meece et al., 2006; Meyer et al., 2019).

The differences between these educational orientations (and by extension, goal orientations) are meaningful. For example, having a strong grade-orientation, though goal-directed, has been found to be associated with lower academic success (i.e., lower grades and SAT scores) and focusing more narrowly on material, specifically material that is expected to be on exams (Beck et al, 1991; Page & Alexitch, 2003). Meyer et al., (2019) found that students with a higher grade-orientation seem to suffer diminishment in their ability to effectively learn material and suggest this lack may contribute to an inability to apply course material in applicable contexts, thereby affecting their grade outcomes.

Adams et al. (2000) argue that family socialization fosters internalized predispositions that continue to operate, despite a decline in direct parental involvement in school, even into the college years (see also Bartle-Haring, et al., 2023). In this way, cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and practical skills developed through communication behaviors in the family can be said to shape attitudes and practices that contribute to mastery and performance goals

throughout years of schooling. Therefore, there is sufficient rationale for examining the link between family communication practices for their associations with students' psychological approach to education.

Communication researchers have examined the educational orientations in college settings and have demonstrated their ongoing relevance to student motivations. In a study of out-of-class communication, Williams and Frymier (2007) found a higher learning-orientation was correlated with relational motives, specifically stronger desires to engage in communication with instructors outside of the classroom, whereas a stronger grade-orientation was related to excuse-making and sycophancy motives. Webber et. al, (2013) found relational learning-oriented motives and their aligning behaviors (e.g., communicating with faculty inside and outside of class about ideas, grades, and their future career) to be tied to higher cumulative GPA. Frymier and Weser (2001) found learning-orientation to be negatively related to teacher clarity; they forward that these students are more positively engaged when given the opportunity to process content rather than being instructed in such explicit detail that it negates cognitive challenging, thereby providing further rationale for the positive link between engagement and outcomes. Grade-orientated students, by contrast, were found to prefer more explicit teacher clarity; this is in line with the performance goal orientation, whereby students generally approach assignments as impediments that must be addressed (Center for Teaching Excellence, n.d.). Using canonical correlation analysis, Goodboy and Frisby (2014) found learning-orientation loaded with rhetorical dissent, while grade-orientation loaded with expressive and vengeful dissent. In this context, learning-orientated students appear to express disagreement while displaying a desire for greater mutual understanding, whereas grade-oriented students engage in negative and unproductive behaviors that demonstrate little concern for learning. Finally, in a study on student conversations about disappointing grades, Wright (2012) demonstrated that learning-orientation was related to more open influence tactics, but grade-orientation was associated with more manipulative tactics. Together, these data sketch a less positive profile for a strong grade-orientation, due to what appears to be a lower regard for the value, process, and function of education and a narrower focus on schooling as a means to an end. Though not exhaustive, this review establishes the salience of educational orientations to the college academic environment.

Examining students' motivations as they relate to educational orientation, however, may neglect the influence of the academic environment itself. In accord with Williams and Frymier's

(2007) contention that the origins of these two orientations are not well understood, Pollio and Beck (2000) found that students wished they could be more learning-oriented and less grade-oriented, but they perceived instructors emphasized grades over learning in the classroom. Paradoxically, instructors in this investigation reported wishing their students were more learning-oriented and less grade-oriented. Williams and Frymier attribute this stalemate to two societal attitudes: 1) the view that numbers have validity, despite how they are produced, and 2) the importance of competition in our culture. According to this view, as numerical yardsticks, grades matter, and, in a competitive environment, grades provide a way of getting ahead. Although these factors may account for the origins of these two general educational orientations, the family is the likely nexus through which these attitudes are first developed (Socha & Stoyneva, 2015), becoming shaped into goals and motivations that students then continue to operate with, consciously or unconsciously. One specific form of family socialization involves family communication; Koerner & Fitzpatrick's (2002) family communication patterns theory offers a relevant lens through which to examine family's influence on educational attitudes through communication.

Family Communication Patterns

Family communication patterns (FCPs) theory (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002) delineates a coherent, well-researched framework for exploring the role of the family in the development of cognitive structures and orientations. In the theory, FCPs are conceptualized along two dimensions: conversation orientation and conformity orientation. Conversation orientation refers to the degree to which family communication is open. Families high in conversation orientation display a predisposition to discuss topics openly and cultivate an environment where family members' individual opinions are valued. Conformity orientation, on the other hand, refers to the degree family homogeneity is expected, whereby family members are influenced to conform to values and attitudes that reflect the parents' perspectives. In high conformity families, expressions of differing individual opinions are discouraged, as are discussions of topics not conducive to family harmony. Prior research has established that FCPs are relevant to the college context (cf. Orrego & Rodriguez, 2001).

One academic context that has been investigated using FCPs is a student's willingness to communicate with an instructor, specifically, out-of-class communication with an instructor. Out-of-

class communications include office visits during office hours as well as spontaneous visits, discussions in hallways or other locations on and off campus, emails, telephone calls, and (non-greeting) contact before and after class. Students who are willing to interact with instructors have been found to fare better academically, report higher motivation, and have higher satisfaction with their institutional experience (Jones, 2008; Milem & Berger, 1997; Webber et al., 2013). In their investigation of students' willingness to engage in out-of-class communication with instructors as related to FCPs, Miller-Ott (2016) found students whose families were higher in conformity orientation reported less interaction with instructors outside the classroom, whereas students whose families were higher in conversation orientation reported more interaction with instructors outside of class.

As engagement with instructors has been established to impact students' academic performance and their satisfaction with their academic environment, the relevance of students' educational orientations to college student retention can also be considered. Here, too, FCPs have been found to be a significant factor. Jowkar et al. (2011) examined the relationship between FCP orientations and a measure of academic resilience, specifically levels of student interaction with others at home, at school, and in social and peer groups. Those students from families with a high conversation orientation reported significantly higher involvement with their "communities" than did those from families who were higher in conformity orientation, thereby placing them in a better position to show resilience in facing the transition to college and challenges in the college academic setting. These results dovetail results from Webber et al., (2013) demonstrating, "in general, students who reported more frequent engagement in academic and social activities earned higher grades and reported higher levels of satisfaction with their college experience" (p. 604), variables that increases their likelihood of resilience in the higher education environment.

Additional support for the relevance of family communication patterns to the academic setting is seen in the literature on helicopter parenting. Described as overly protective and overly involved in their children's lives, helicopter parents are receiving greater attention by scholars for their impact on their children's life skills and outcomes (e.g., Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012; Segrin et al., 2012). In an examination of this phenomenon, Odenweller et al. (2014) found a positive association between helicopter parenting and the FCP conformity orientation but no significant relationship between this practice and the conversation

orientation. Further, these researchers argue that while this parenting style may often be “benevolent in nature, the results [of this study] related to neuroticism, interpersonal dependency, and coping efficacy suggest this parenting style is detrimental to children’s healthy development and interpersonal relationships” (Odenweller et al., 2014, p. 419). As such, there is mounting evidence that the reach of influence for family communication patterns is long, with measurable connections to students’ academic experience and efficacy (see also Bartle-Haring et al., 2023, for the link between parental relationship and college student persistence).

This investigation is framed by the view that college students from families high in conversation orientation should be used to articulating their ideas and attitudes, being open to differing opinions, and expressing their emotions. Such communication behaviors would seem to lay the foundation for a learning-orientation, as this family context typically promotes intellectual engagement in discussion of varied viewpoints and topics. On the other hand, students from families high in conformity orientation are apt to have learned that it is beneficial to accept what they are told without question, and have thus acquired skills necessary to manipulate the family system to get what they want while maintaining the appearance of harmony and cohesion. These abilities would seem to be more conducive to fostering a grade-orientation.

Based on the arguments laid out above, the following hypotheses and research questions are proposed:

H1: Conversation orientation is positively related to learning-orientation

RQ1: What is the relationship between conversation orientation and grade-orientation?

H2: Conformity orientation is positively related to grade-orientation

RQ2: What is the relationship between conformity orientation and learning-orientation?

Method

Participants

Participants were 209 college students enrolled in communication classes at a medium-sized Midwestern university. The sample was 70% female ($n = 146$) and 30% male ($n = 63$),

ranging in age from 18-48 ($M = 21.67$, $SD = 3.63$). Ethnic classification was 53.1% White/Caucasian ($n = 111$), 30.1% Black/African-American ($n = 63$), 7.2% Hispanic/Latin American ($n = 15$), 1.4% Asian American ($n = 3$), and 8.1% Other ($n = 17$). Seniors (47.8%, $n = 100$) and juniors (25.8%, $n = 54$) formed a majority of the sample, followed by sophomores (19.1%, $n = 40$), freshmen (6.7%, $n = 14$) and post-graduate students (.5%, $n = 1$). Participants were also asked about parental configuration: 72.2% reported on biological mother and father ($n = 151$), 10.5% reported on biological mother and stepfather ($n = 22$), 9.6% on biological mother only ($n = 20$), 3.3% on adoptive parents ($n = 7$), 2.4% biological father and stepmother ($n = 5$), and 1.9% on biological father only ($n = 4$).

Procedure

Following approval from the university's Institutional Review Board, an online survey using Qualtrics software was made available to students enrolled in communication classes. Participants first completed demographic items, including a question regarding family configuration (i.e., who they had in mind regarding references to "parents" and "family"). This was followed by survey measures of family communication patterns and educational orientations. The majority of students received extra credit from their course instructor for their participation.

Measures

Family communication patterns. Family communication patterns were assessed utilizing the revised family communication patterns instrument (RFCP; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). The RFCP is a 26-item scale consisting of two subscales: conversation orientation (15 items; e.g., "My parents and I have long conversations about nothing in particular") refers to the degree of family openness and participation, and conformity orientation (11 items; e.g., "When anything really important is involved, my parents expect me to obey without question") indexes the extent to which hierarchy and homogeneity of family attitudes is emphasized. All items were assessed with 5-point Likert-type scales with endpoints 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"). Both scales were reliable: conversation orientation ($\alpha = .88$, $M = 3.73$, $SD = .72$) and conformity orientation ($\alpha = .77$, $M = 3.37$, $SD = .68$).

Educational orientations. The LOGO II (Eison et al., 1983) is composed of two subscales: learning-orientation and grade-orientation. The learning-orientation subscale contains 8 items

assessing attitudes/preferences (e.g., “I find the process of learning new material fun”) and 8 behavioral items (e.g., “I do optional reading that my instructors suggest even though I know it won’t affect my grade”) reflecting an interest in learning for its own sake. The grade-orientation subscale also contains 8 attitude/preference items (e.g., “I dislike courses which require ungraded out-of-class activities”) and 8 behavioral items (e.g., “I get irritated by students who ask questions that go beyond what we need to know for exams”) assessing a focus on graded performance indicators. Attitude/preference and behavioral items are combined in both subscales to provide a measure of each orientation. Both combined subscales exhibited acceptable reliabilities: learning-orientation ($\alpha = .73$, $M = 2.95$, $SD = .56$) and grade-orientation ($\alpha = .73$, $M = 3.02$, $SD = .61$).

Results

Demographic Variables

Age. Respondent age was positively correlated with learning-orientation ($r = .17$, $p < .05$), and negatively related to grade-orientation ($r = -.25$, $p < .01$).

Sex. An independent sample t-test revealed no significant differences between males and females on learning-orientation, $t(207) = -.64$, $p = .52$, or grade-orientation, $t(207) = -.07$, $p = .94$. The means for both groups were similar: learning-orientation (males $M = 2.92$, $SD = .54$, females $M = 2.97$, $SD = .56$) and grade-orientation (males $M = 3.02$, $SD = .54$, females $M = 3.03$, $SD = .53$).

Education level. The sample was divided into lowerclassmen (freshmen and sophomores) and upperclassmen (juniors, seniors, graduate students). An independent samples t-test revealed no significant differences between the groups on learning-orientation, $t(207) = -.30$, $p = .76$, or grade-orientation, $t(207) = .82$, $p = .41$. The means for both groups were similar: learning-orientation (lower classmen $M = 2.94$, $SD = .56$, upper classmen $M = 2.96$, $SD = .56$) and grade-orientation (lower classmen $M = 3.08$, $SD = .61$, upper classmen $M = 3.00$, $SD = .62$).

Ethnicity. Given the small number of respondents for some categories, three groups were created: African-American (30.1%), Caucasian (53.1%), and Other (13.7%). A one-way ANOVA revealed a significant effect of ethnicity on learning-orientation, $F(2, 206) = 3.60$, $p < .05$, but a nonsignificant effect of ethnicity on grade-orientation, $F(2, 206) = .22$, $p = .80$. Tukey post-hoc tests suggested a significant difference between African-Americans and Caucasians on learning-orientation: Caucasians ($M = 3.10$, $SD = .51$) reported

higher learning-orientation scores than African-American ($M = 2.87$, $SD = .56$).

Family configuration. To examine the impact of family structure on educational orientations, three groups were created: biological mother and biological father ($n = 151$), single parent ($n = 24$) and a step-parent or adoption situation ($n = 34$). This variable was then utilized in conducting two one-way ANOVAs with educational orientations as the dependent variables. Results indicate that the groups did not differ on either learning-orientation, $F(2, 206) = 1.67$, $p = .19$, or grade-orientation, $F(2, 206) = 2.46$, $p = .09$.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

It was hypothesized that conversation orientation was positively related to learning-orientation (H1) and that conformity orientation was positively related to grade-orientation (H2). Research questions were posed to further explore relationships between FCPs and the non-hypothesized educational orientations.

Simple bivariate correlation analyses were initially employed to address the hypotheses and research questions. As is evident in Table 1, conversation orientation was not significantly correlated with either learning-orientation or grade-orientation.

Table 1
Correlations between Family Communication Patterns and Educational Orientations

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Conversation Orientation	--			
2. Conformity Orientation	-.22**	--		
3. Learning Orientation	.10	.18*	--	
4. Grade Orientation	-.02	.31**	.06	--

Note. $N = 209$; ** $p < .01$.

On the other hand, conformity orientation was positively associated with both learning-orientation and grade-orientation.

To further explore the data in relation to the hypotheses and research questions, two regression analyses were conducted (see Table 2 and endnote).

Table 2

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Educational Orientations from Family Communication Patterns

Predictor	Learning Orientation		Grade Orientation	
	R ²	β	R ²	β
	.05**		.10**	
Conversation Orientation		.15*		.05
Conformity Orientation		.21**		.32**

Note. $N = 209$. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

In the first analysis, FCPs were utilized as predictors of learning-orientation. The model was significant, $F(2, 206) = 5.68, p < .01, R^2 = .05$. Both conversation orientation ($\beta = .15, p < .05$) and conformity orientation ($\beta = .21, p < .01$) were significant predictors of learning-orientation. Thus, H1 was supported in that higher conversation orientation predicted higher learning-orientation. In answering RQ2, the data suggest that higher conformity orientation also predicts higher learning-orientation.

The second regression model, testing grade-orientation, was also significant, $F(2, 206) = 11.39, p < .01, R^2 = .10$. Conformity orientation was a significant predictor of grade-orientation ($\beta = .32, p < .01$), though conversation orientation was not significantly related to grade-orientation ($\beta = .05, p = .48$). Thus, H2 was supported; higher conformity orientation was associated with higher grade-orientation. Regarding RQ1, scores on conversation orientation did not systematically associate with grade-orientation.

Discussion

The purpose of this investigation was to examine the role of family communication patterns in influencing college students' educational orientations. The results of this study bear out the connection between family communication practices and students' interaction with the educational environment, even after those students have entered the arena of higher education. The two hypotheses were supported, in that students reporting a family environment that cultivated the open expression of ideas and attitudes described a learning-orientation, while students reporting an environment of homogeneity and enforced harmony presented views with a grade-orientation. With regard to the research questions addressed, conversation orientation was not found to predict a grade-oriented perspective of education, however, an unexpected finding

emerged, showing that in addition to a family's conversation orientation, a family's conformity orientation was also found to be a positive predictor of having a learning-orientation.

Family Communication Patterns and Educational Orientations

That students who come from a family culture, where an exchange of differing opinions and a more open forum for a wider range of topics is the norm, would espouse a learning-orientation fits logically. Conversation orientation captures the extent to which family members share thoughts and feelings, with one goal being to take an interest in each other's lives, thereby learning from one another. We would argue this environment creates a normative learning approach to new ideas and experiences, even bolstering students' confidence to ask critical questions so as to gain clarification on content not yet mastered.

This quality of persistence in learning, and its alignment with the mastery goal orientation, would appear to be key in achieving cumulative success not just in the college environment, but in professional contexts as well (e.g., Aherne et al., 2010). For example, employees with a learning-orientation are found to show perseverance and adaptation in the face of failure, which translates to measurable benefits to their organizations (Aherne et al., 2010; Porter & Tansky, 1996; Wang et al., 2021). This compares to a performance goal orientation (akin to the grade orientation), whereby avoidance of challenging tasks and an affinity for easier tasks is typified, due to the risk of being seen as incompetent and falling short of pursued goals (Wang et al., 2021). As such, the finding that the conversation orientation FCP predicts a learning-orientation in students, a mindset that has been shown to be a benefit in higher education as well as in the workplace, provides affirmation of the family's influence beyond the family circle.

The results demonstrating that the conformity orientation would engender a grade-orientation, based on the idea that such families exhibit a commitment to hierarchy, structure, and harmony, fits with the prediction that these students would be concerned with success as defined by good grades and performance markers. However, the finding that conformity orientation was also positively related to the learning-orientation was unexpected.

Hesse et al. (2017) argued that the traditional conceptualization of conformity orientation emphasizes the negative aspects of conformity, the idea of coercive disciplinary practices intended to squelch dissent and freedom of thought. Without

disputing the reality of such practices (that they refer to as cold conformity) they argue that such a view is one-dimensional. That is, there is a warm conformity that involves creating expectations and setting boundaries that foster, rather than inhibit, the developing competencies of the child. In the academic sphere, the concept of parental demandingness has been explicated differentially as either parental pressure perceived by the child (Paulson, 1994) or the discrepancy between a parent's expectations for their child and the child's own expectations for self.

While these differing descriptions may well be signifying separate sets of parental behaviors that fall into the categories of cold and warm conformity, such demandingness might take the form of parents setting rules, boundaries, and rewards in the home that promote a certain attitude toward homework and study habits (e.g., completing homework before engaging in recreation, working in a distraction-free environment, receiving money for getting good grades), thereby helping to cultivate children's competencies versus instituting rigid obedience. As we did not use the scale created by Hesse et al. designed to differentiate these two types of family conformity, we can speculate the possibility that there may be more than one form of conformity operating in the educational context, and that this form may not exclude patterns of communication in the family in keeping with the conversational orientation. This issue deserves to be addressed in future research, perhaps more directly with academic outcomes measures.

Future Directions

The goal of this study was to examine the general relationships between family communication patterns and educational orientations. The results both reinforce meaningful ties between these variables and provide direction for further research. First, family communication patterns are general, whereas family discussion and parental modeling of academic and education-related issues are specific. That is, more attention should be given to the specific ways parents communicate with their children about education and learning.

Second, another direction of interest would be to examine how FCPs influence the self-determination needs of children. According to SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2008), humans have fundamental needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness that must be met for optimal functioning and flourishing. A great deal of research has been conducted to show how aspects of education- and school-environments contribute to SDT needs, in particular competence and

autonomy (Furlich, 2014; Goldman et al., 2017; Guay et al., 2008; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009); however, parental education-related practices may also play a role in how well children, including college students, come to perceive academic settings as able to meet their needs. For example, parents who express and model positive attitudes toward learning may convey to children that school can help meet their needs for meaningful engagement (see Jowkar et al., 2011).

Third, researchers could explore how college settings and administrative policies and practices contribute to student's education orientations (Adams et al., 2000). Much of the research seems to assume that the educational orientations are somewhat fixed, using scores on the two orientations to examine communicative practices (e.g., out-of-class communication, instructional dissent). However, the orientations may be context-specific, such that certain tasks activate one orientation to predominate (Center for Teaching Excellence, n.d.). This could offer some explanation for students in families with the conformity orientation demonstrating both educational perspectives.

Practical Implications

It is probably fair to say that generally, parents want their children to be successful. For some parents, that undoubtedly means getting good grades as a gateway to getting a good (i.e., well-paying) job. However, again, most parents also probably want their children to be satisfied with their lives, to make a contribution to their communities, and to be prepared to meet the demands of their societies (Socha & Stoyneva, 2015). As parents' involvement in their children's schooling diminishes, parents may often wonder what they can do to foster those qualities. The results of the current investigation are heartening insofar as they suggest that the general family communication climate makes a difference. Elements of both the conversation and conformity orientations show evidence of fostering a learning-orientation for students.

We would suggest that some of the advice given to educators about how to create an active learning environment can also be used by parents as part of the broader family communication environment. At the heart of active learning is the notion of student engagement in the classroom and with the learning material (Bonwell, & Eison, 1991; Keegan et al., 2017; Michael, 2006; Prince, 2004). Some of the proposed techniques of active learning include student reflection of material during class time, having students collaborate to review content, having students devise their own examples for application and illustration, and fostering exploration of

multiple viewpoints on a topic. Implementing such practices, for example, rather than only asking about grades, parents can probe children's answers to questions about class activities and covered topics. Although they may not feel adequately qualified to evaluate the correctness of every answer, the exercise still benefits the child who is encouraged to coherently describe what was learned earlier in the day and reflect further on those descriptions. This may have the added benefit of encouraging parents to increase their own pool of knowledge, if they are challenged to learn something about the topic themselves, offering opportunities for both the parent and child to pursue more knowledge on the subject matter. Another form of active learning is the use of examples and case studies. Parents could cull examples from personal experience, current events, or from the media and then ask the child to explain or analyze them using concepts learned in class. Though by no means an exhaustive list, practices like these could enhance student preparedness and effectiveness through their college years and beyond.

Finally, student educational orientations should be responsive to structural and social features of academic departments. For example, when departments highlight students who get good grades (by for example, placing their names on a wall or publishing them on the department web page), they may inadvertently be sending the message that high grades are respected above other aspects of learning. Or again, departments that emphasize career fairs may also be emphasizing performance outcomes. Obviously, students need jobs, and faculty should be proud of students who do well, but what often appears to be missing is a countervailing emphasis on activities related to the learning orientation.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations to the study. First, demographic characteristics were not hypothesized, rendering us unable to incorporate meaningful sample sizes to truly test the impact of demographic characteristics on educational orientations. Second, a convenience sample of students in communication classes was utilized, and little is known about the traits and motives of such students (though see Crawford et al., 2013, for a comparison of news media and strategic communication majors). Third, though it remains widely used, as noted, there is ongoing debate about the meaning of the conformity subscale of the RFCP. Finally, these data were collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Research suggests that the rapid alterations in learning environments following in the wake of lockdowns had an impact on student motivations (Aguilera-

Hermida, 2020; Davis et al., 2022). Not only are we unable to speak to the impact of the pandemic directly, we also did not include items referring to the modalities of student learning (e.g., fully face-to-face versus fully online).

Conclusions

In the United States today, colleges and universities face unprecedented challenges, including changing demographics, the impact of technology, concerns over revenue, and maintaining student engagement (Barnes & Noble College, 2018). Research on active learning and problem-based learning has shown that these are effective techniques in capturing student attention, stimulating reflection, and creating engaged students. Less attention has been devoted, however, to the differing educational orientations that college students bring with them to the classroom, differences that make them more or less receptive to “best practices.” This neglect may be due, in part, to evidence that parental involvement declines over the early school years, with the implication that only school experiences shape educational orientations in a closed feedback loop. The growing awareness of the ongoing impact of parental support through college and the years of emerging adulthood opens the door to research examining the ways that the family contributes to shaping attitudes toward learning and education. By focusing on family communication patterns, this investigation is one small step in that direction.

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Endnote: Two additional sets of regression analyses were performed. In the first, age and ethnicity were included on the first step as covariates. In the second set, nine participants over the age of 29 were removed from the data. In both cases, the modification produced minimal changes to the results. Therefore, the results presented include the full sample without the covariates.

Chastity and Celibacy: A Rhetorical History of a Rhetoric of Sex and the Priest in the Catholic Church

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts.
~Funeral sentence from the *Book of Common Prayer*

Teresa Morales

The seemingly never-ending instances of reported sex abuse by Roman Catholic priests is commonly thought to be a matter of deviancy and crime. This is true; but there is more to the story. The RC Church has, for two thousand years, known of the sexual behaviors and deviancies of its priests, yet has accomplished little in controlling the situation. The rise of the lawsuit against the Church has led, finally, to the need to examine more deeply the reasons for this ongoing criminal behavior. This paper uses a method of rhetorical history to uncover and understand how and why this might have happened. The rhetoric of secrecy that has been the stronghold of the confessional is part of the problem, but seeking the historicity of the language of sex reveals how deeply ingrained the problem is and how deeply honest one must be with the rhetoric of chastity in a highly sexualized society.

Introduction

The Archdiocese of New Orleans announced on May 1, 2020, that they had filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy due to the continued acceleration of child abuse litigation and the effects of COVID-19 in church giving (In re Archdiocese Of New Orleans Chapter 11, 2020; Sledge, 2020). The process, as offered by Archbishop Gregory Aymond, is meant to get legal funds more directly to abuse victims rather than tied to the constant litigation costs. Additionally, Archbishop Aymond spoke to the abuse crisis as this crisis is “associated [with] prolonged and costly litigation, together with pressing ministerial needs and budget challenges, is simply not financially sustainable” (Archdiocese of New Orleans, 2020, para 4). As the abuse cases continue to pile in, going through both Church and secular legal processes, the only entity seeing remuneration is the legal system. The Archdiocese of New Orleans is not alone. By the end of 2020, twenty-nine dioceses nation-wide have filed for bankruptcy (Bankruptcy protection in the abuse crisis, 2020). In any case, one must question whether justice can really be achieved for any of these victims considering the long history of abuse and its cover-up within the Roman Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church has sustained an enormous caseload of sex abuse cases in the last four decades. In April 1986, the (*Baton Rouge*) *Morning Advocate* posted an article stating that the Roman Catholic Church was facing great challenges in the sharp increase of cases alleging priestly sexual abuse against children (Bajak, 1986). The rise in cases was attributed to a Lafayette, Louisiana priest who confessed to raping or sodomizing at least thirty-seven children and was sentenced to twenty years, leaving the diocese responsible for damages of about \$240 million (Bajak, 1986; Friendly, 1986). The trial revealed that this priest had admitted to abuses in prior assignments, known to Church superiors, before being transferred to Lafayette. Despite Fr. Thomas Doyle, (then) of the *Apostolic Nunciature*, or Vatican embassy in Washington, advocating the Church be open about its communication to the public regarding the situation, especially since at that time, in 1986, he knew of “about 40 to 50 priests” in reported cases of sexual abuse in the years between 1984-1986 (Friendly, 1986, p. 26), the Church remained obstinate in its tendency to keep all abuse claims private within the Church system. Doyle further stated that the habit of shuffling priests was counter-effective and guaranteed the problem could not and would not be resolved (Friendly, 1986). Yet, almost forty years later, we know the Church continued its muffling and shuffling practice.

This paper explores the *rhetoric of sex* and the priest as a matter of *secrecy* in both public and private Church documents as well as by tradition. The two-thousand-year history of Church canon law reveals the problem lying with two expectations regarding sex and the priest; first, priests should remain chaste and holy in their embodiment as Christ’s representatives on earth, and second, should a priest fail in chastity, the ensuing investigation remains in secret along with the confession. These two rhetorics, of chastity and secrecy, regarding religious behavior underscore the need for analysis in understanding the stance of the Church. I will begin the story with Adam and Eve, but move quickly through the Bible and the nineteen hundred years *anno domini* to arrive at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The rhetoric of chastity or celibacy has received little academic attention, and celibacy among the priesthood has received none. For academics, celibacy is reduced to abstinence-only instruction, often becoming confusing (Manning, 2015), punitive (Cooke-Jackson, et al., 2015), and short-term in usefulness (Busse, et al., 2010). On the topic of priests and sex, the literature flourishes more abundantly, albeit, still, with considerable limitation showing a

stronger presence of periodical editorial pieces rather than academic research. The pain of studying the sex abuse scandals by religious around the world most likely prevents a large research pool. Besides, getting to the source of the issue—the priests, both the abuser and the bishop who hides the offense—is mostly not readily available to the academic. Media, besides, have treated religion as something to relegate to the back pages just before the want ads, unless there is scandal to report. By way of example, one study examined several major newspaper stories on the Boston priest scandal from the early 2000s finding the focus on five themes: (1) Sexual Deviance frame focusing on deviant actions by priests; (2) Church and state frame that highlighted secular (crime) and nonsecular (moral sin) responses to the incidents; (3) Children frame highlighting children as victims; (4) Blame frame assigning blame to the offending priest and to the church; and (5) Health Terminology frame positioning the problem as medical (Boynton & Straughan, 2003). Celibacy, as a required aspect of the priesthood is nowhere in the article, and what sex the priest has, is, of course, referred to as ‘deviant.’ The (perhaps) purposeful agenda-setting of some major media outlets often show the priest abuse scandal as not only criminal (which the situation truly calls for), but also as context for legitimizing crimes against the criminals [as deviants] rather than on the judicial process of the crime (Baker, 2015). Considering the overwhelming evidence of a profound sexual criminal underworld existing within the Catholic Church, research has been sparse. There is a reason for this, a reason that does not hold up much value in a secular world but holds much value within the Church.

The Roman Catholic Church has always upheld her sovereignty both in faith and law (CAN 129-144). The Church takes this responsibility gravely and is not prone to abuse of power; however, in this one specific kind of case of religious sexual immorality, the Church has failed most miserably.

The rhetoric of secrecy is not a well researched topic, mostly limited to Joshua Gunn’s rhetoric of the occult. Gunn (2005) claims that occult texts are characterized by secretive and esoteric (supernatural) forces that use language in a way that “harbors secrets” (p. xv). Occult texts tend to use its own brand of language and references in the attempt to “guard secrets, thus separating insiders from outsiders” (Meyer, 2007, p. 117). But there is more to secrecy than creating in-groups and out-groups by being esoteric, certainly as far as the Catholic Church is concerned. Even for the occult, however, secrecy serves as a means of protection against the larger social forces in safeguarding the legitimacy of the group. For

the massive Roman Catholic Church, protection of its entire structure, theology, doctrine, and function is such an incredible goal that not to work mightily to protect the institution stands to destroy that which has defined the entire Western heritage of morality and spiritual belief. The role of secrecy is a matter of, for the Church, that sublime understanding of human nature in relationship with God. Accordingly, to begin the exploration of the role of secrecy in the Catholic Church, an understanding of the Church's own rhetorical history in doctrine and theology, especially regarding sexual behaviors is in order.⁴ To understand the important role of secrecy regarding sex and the priesthood, an investigation of the rhetorical history of sex and religious is necessary, for I agree with the claim that "rhetorical history 'takes rhetoric as its subject matter and perspective,' [concerning] itself with the role of persuasion in the history of ideas, politics, and society" (Goldzweig, 1998, pp. 143-144). Although the Church is renowned for its seemingly ascetic perspective of sex, the subject is not without high regard, as is evidenced by Pope St. John Paul II's *Theology of the Body*. Still, there does seem something occultist about those who engage in religious aspects of the Church and sex.

Rhetorical history is the primary focus of importance in this paper because, as Turner (1998) states, rhetorical history allows scholars to understand rhetoric as a process that occurs over time rather than simply a product to be studied and analyzed. Doing rhetorical history shows the process of social construction of meaning over time and context. This means that doing rhetorical history reveals "how rhetoric [enables], [enacts], [empowers], and [constrains]...human action and reaction" (p. 8). The history of the rhetoric of sex and the priest in its secrecy has not yet been explored in association with one of the largest religious institutions on earth.

Ball (1998) aptly defended the use of rhetorical history as primary to the study of the rhetorical simply because all aspects of our history and decision-making is a matter of communication, thus agreeing with Vico's basic argument defending the study of rhetoric. The incredible volume of Church documents over the course of two thousand years, both from within the Vatican and through many theological treatises by saints and religious, provides enormous potential in uncovering the decision-making process regarding the role of all religious, their ethical and moral requirements, and the practices of pastoring. With the millions of pages available for

⁴ A second paper is required to look rhetorically deeper into the rhetoric of secrecy.

research for decisions made regarding unruly priests and other religious, choosing a focus for a single analysis is certainly overwhelming. As Barthes (as quoted in Ball, 1998). reminds us, rhetoric “must always be read in the structural interplay with its neighbors—it is the play of the system which is historically significant” (p. 70). Leaving out that vital element is to get the interpretation wrong. The focus here, on priestly chastity and on the later ecclesiastical secrecy of investigations, serves to begin a potentially long search for understanding this particular crisis.

Theological Sex

[Do] not associate with sexually immoral people...[or] anyone who claims to be a [fellow believer but is sexually immoral or greedy... (NIV, 2011, 1 Cor 5:9,11

For those who follow in Christ’s path, we know that “In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God; and the Word was God” (John 1:1). Although John was referring to Jesus as “the Word,” one can consider that Word as preceding all creation because that creation was from the wellspring of God. The Bible begins the origin story of a particular people, a chosen people, from that one act of sublimity by the fiat of God. Becoming the “people of God” is the heart of biblical faith—the whole reason for the Bible (Kaiser, 2009). As the chosen people of God, procreation was the most natural aspect of nature, for Adam and Eve, in the beginning, knew no shame in their nakedness being told to be fruitful (Gen 1:28). After the fall, however, our natural state became filled with shame and great pain making the act or procreation a matter of “knowledge” rather than nature and lives of begetting and murder (Gen 5, 6). After Noah and the great flood, God said, “Be fruitful and multiply” (Gen 9: 1). And the chosen people obeyed.

Close to 800 years before Moses, God commanded Abraham (living some 4000 years ago, perhaps around 2165 BC — 1990 BC) that all males should be circumcised, a command that acted as the outward symbol of their chosen nature, to mark the Hebrews as a separate and covenanted people. By the time of Moses, the Hebrew people had moved from the Euphrates region through Syria, Israel, and into Egypt (courtesy of Joseph, the one of the coat of many colors). Hebrews, by this time were reduced to slaves for Pharaoh’s building projects—often starved, horrifically punished for all misdoings, and considered little more than beasts of burden. Moses’ leading of the Hebrew slaves out of Egypt signaled the defining nature of Judaic existence in the Holy Land, the “land of milk and honey.” God’s reaffirmation of claiming “his people” came

through the patience God displayed providing the Ten Commandments, as well as the necessity of those forty years in the Sinai desert. That relationship, between God and “his people” is called a covenant, of which there are two types—covenant of promise and covenant of obligation (Kaiser, 2009). In the most basic sense, without covering deeply the concepts in Hebraic Law, a covenant of promise approaches God’s promise of giving the descendants of Abraham a specified land and God’s protection; while the covenant of obligation approaches a “blood understanding,” in that if the covenant is broken (by humankind), blood is shed (Weinfeld, 1975). When God handed down His Commandments and Laws, he was obligating his people to keep strict obedience to the Law and Commandments.

When Moses led them out of captivity, they quickly complained of every little thing, got tired of waiting for God’s word from Moses up on that mountain, and made their golden calf god,⁵ behaving in the more common behaviors of the non-covenanted and recognizing the common gods of the Mediterranean world, especially of Egypt. Aaron’s reasoning for the mayhem resulting from Moses’ long absence at Mt. Sinai was simply, “You know how prone these people are to evil” (Exo 32: 22). Thus, Leviticus is written (presumably by Moses) on the authority of God.

Leviticus, written for the Levites, the priestly caste formed after Moses received the Word from God on Mt. Sinai, is the Book of Laws dealing with sacrificial laws. Leviticus includes law for the inauguration of the priesthood and laws governing their office, laws for ceremonial purity, laws governing the people’s holiness, and a supplement concerning offerings to the sanctuary and religious vows (Duignan, 2023). Biblical scholars estimate that Chapter 18, part of the Code of Holiness, was written in (approximately) 1400 BCE (Duignan, 2023; Fairchild, 2019). Hidden in the rulebook is the acknowledgement of what kind of sexual practices people engaged in at that time. Leviticus 18 contains sex morality laws that declare the

⁵ Isis was the Egyptian goddess of fertility and was often represented with an empty 'throne' headdress, the moon disk with cow's horns, the sycamore tree, the kite hawk, and outspread wings. In some rare scenes, she is a woman with the head of a cow. Isis was referred to be the mother goddess where she represented the maternal spirit in the purest form. She was the divine life-giver and was honored as the mother of one of the most powerful gods, Horus. She was said to be the mother of all the pharaohs and entire Egypt. See <https://ask-aladdin.com/egypt-gods/isis/>

(immoral) behaviors of the Egyptians, the people of the land from whom the Israelites just escaped. Both Egyptian and Greek history and mythology reveal the sexual practices that long preceded the Exodus, including incest, prostitution, same sex practices, and bestiality. However, the Jews were no prudes; they believed in the gift of sexual relations given by God to humans for the sake of procreation. Genesis 1:28, and reaffirmed in Gen 9:1, that pronounces God's command to "Be fruitful and multiply," was considered a moral obligation (Aroh, 2014). Leviticus also includes rules of that holy practice of which all were expected to eventually engage. In fact, one aspect of Judaism was the matter of divorce in the case of a barren wife who could not become pregnant. Men were obligated to produce children, including the Levites, as this caste was hereditary. The Bible is rife with sex and begetting of descendants. Seeing and admitting to the obvious choice of heterosexuality as the understood appropriateness of sexual relations in the Bible is not to deny that other sexual practices did not exist. Heterosexual practices, one can admit, was the one way to increase God's people in order to fulfill God's covenant. The first reference to immoral sexual behavior occurs in Gen 18 and 19, when God declares his intent to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Here, Lot encounters two angels (in the form of men) who he immediately invited to stay at his house.

Before the household retired for the night, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house [asking Lot] 'Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that that we can have sex with them.' Lot denies the townsmen, of course, but oddly offers his two virgin daughters to "do what you like with them." (Gen 19:4-8)

The two angels protected Lot and his household by striking the city men blind. God then destroys the two towns. If these towns were the only towns consisting of men wanting to have sex with men, then their destruction should have taken care of the situation; we know this did not happen. When Lot left, accompanied by the angels, he took his daughters to live in a cave. Lot was getting old, and the daughters understood that they were as well; their biological clocks were ticking in isolation in the cave. The older daughter had the idea to get their father drunk on wine, then seduce him, thereby becoming pregnant (Gen 19: 31-38). No punishment is heard in the Bible for this incestuous act. What seems to be the lesson is that sex with men is bad and sex with one's father is fine. Not only does Genesis contain sodomy and incest, but concubinage, slavery, sexual affairs, prostitution, and child sacrifice. In the midst of so much sexual

immorality, Solomon's book of Song of Songs offers an intimate and sensual poem devoted to love, courtship, and marriage. What is not mentioned as a sexual norm or goal, until St. Paul speaks of it, is celibacy, or bodily chastity—remaining like Jesus by living according to the spirit rather than the flesh (1 Cor 7:25-40).

Where for art Thou, Celibacy?

Before he was elected pope, Karol Wojtyla spent great effort in studying the sexual aspect of our human nature and that relationship with God's moral code. Pope St. JPII (1961) writes that the Church traditionally sees marriage as providing three roles: *procreation, mutuum adiutorium, and remedium concupiscentiae* (procreation, mutual aid, and remedy for concupiscence) (Wojtyla, 1981/1962, p. 66). St. Paul, in his first letter to Corinthians spends generous time exhorting the new Christian followers to be mindful of their ultimate purpose, which was eternal salvation, thought to be imminent, rather than to engage in any kind of sexual practice. He adds, however, should a man find himself 'burning,' he would be best to engage in marriage (1 Cor 7:8). If a man and woman were already married, they rightfully should "fulfill their marital duty (1 Cor 7:3). Because the end times were thought to be near, Paul mandated a pure state of virginity mainly so that people would not then feel obligated to reject Christianity in order to protect their loved ones and family (1 Cor 7:25-40). The Catholic Church has since placed considerable value on chastity and virginity, in brief stating, "Christ is the model of chastity. Every baptized person is called to lead a chaste life, each according to his particular state of life" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2016, section 2394). Chastity, however, is considered a vocation, just as marriage is considered a vocation—a calling.

Priestly Celibacy and Sexuality

Those who enter the priesthood have, presumably, received a calling to this vocation rather than to a secular vocation. This calling, or discernment, is considered only with great council (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2016, sections 1578 & 2121). As St. Augustine confessed, "You commanded me not to commit fornication, and though you did not forbid me to marry, you counselled me to take a better course" (Augustine, 1961, p. 233). As he put away his lover, he also put away other temptations to live a more ascetic life, a most difficult enterprise because he had always lived sensually enjoying all the blessings of life. Augustine, however, understood the need for asceticism—his concupiscuous nature.

Let us begin the conversation of priestly chastity with the context of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) on sexual matters. Section 2, Chapter 2, Article 6 of the CCC covers the Sixth Commandment: Thou shalt not commit adultery. First, God made man and woman in his own image imbued with the special vocation of love and communion (section 2331). This vocation toward love and communion means that each was created to be a part of the other, in spirit and in body (for the purpose of procreation). This harmony and complementarity are aimed at stabilizing the family life as well as society (sections 2333). Preceding marriage, chastity deigns to stabilize and integrate the interior spirit with the external genitality and sexuality of the body; and is, therefore, considered a moral virtue (sections 2337, 2345). The catechism teaches the offenses against chastity include lust, masturbation, fornication, incest, pornography, prostitution, and rape (sections 2351-2356). Note that these acts focus on selfish desires. Not included in the offenses list is homosexuality. Not that homosexuality is not considered in the catechism, but the Church regards homosexuality as more than the sexual act, of which the other offenses constitute.

Per the catechism, homosexuality is a “disorder” of sexual attraction that does not necessarily have the goal of selfishness in the sex act, and true love is often seen between the persons. As a disorder, however, homosexual acts do not lend themselves to the procreative act that heterosexuality intuitively contains, and, as such, do not follow natural law (section 2357). The Church is pained to see this frustration and strongly rejects all forms of unjust discrimination for peoples who deserve the same respect, compassion, and sensitivity as all others (section 2358). Notwithstanding this frustrated pain of the Church, the Church finds the homosexual “called to chastity” (section 2359), willingly or no.

Yet, denying one’s basic (and legitimate) human sexual urges, demonstrated through attraction and desire, often leads to disorder (Aroh, 2014). Priests are no less human than any other, although called to God’s ministry; these men are defined by their sexual nature (the genitals are always kept intact; the Church does not advocate castration). Our sex organs, after all, once awakened in puberty, determine a great deal of our personality, our decisions, and actions. Certainly, one of God’s greatest gifts to humankind, the sex act, by itself, does not satisfy the whole person; thus, there is no “one last time for all time” kind of sex. This means, of course, that those called into the priesthood cannot go into the priesthood “with a bang,” having gotten the sin out of the system. The goal of life, after all, is not (and should not be) the pursuit of sexual gratification or

genital pleasuring. The goal is communion with another person (or God, for the religious) in complete selfless love and trust. This goal is warped when the sex act is met with selfishness and concupiscence (Aroh, 2014). Despite one's take on Catholic teaching on sex and sexuality, despite forgiving our own desires to act selfishly with our bodies, despite our thriving support of essentially pornographic representations of the human body, the indecent sexual acts on so many youths by priests, who should be God's representatives on Earth, is easily understood as especially heinous if for no other reason than its selfish, concupiscent, nature. That so many priests committed this selfish act should be a call for greater understanding of what being *chaste* means, to understand being called into chastity and celibacy.

Celibacy in religion is not a novel idea the Catholic Church created. Many, if not all, religions recognize a form of either asexuality, dual-sexuality, celibacy, or castration (eunuch). Jesus remained celibate his entire life, as did his many disciples, busy as they were proselytizing the Good Word. The Church has maintained the good and useful concept for its priestly ranks. As mentioned earlier, St. Paul is known to have advocated celibacy, and absent celibacy, a man should marry rather than burn (NIV, 2011, 1 Cor. 7:8-9). Yet, well known is that several Popes, including St. Peter, were known to have been married, and several Popes were sons of Popes (Popes, 2015). Like Augustine, grappling with "sins of the flesh" is well known in the Church.

In 304 AD, the Council of Elivira (near Granada, Spain) stated that all "bishops, presbyters, and deacons and all other clerics" (equivalents to the tribe of Levites) were to "abstain completely from their wives and not to have children" (Barns, n.d./1909). In 325, Canon 3 of the Council of Nicea, convened by Constantine (and attended by St. Augustine), stated "The great Synod has stringently forbidden any bishop, presbyter, deacon, or any one of the clergy whatever, to have a *subintroducta*⁶ dwelling with him, except only a mother, or sister, or aunt, or such persons only as are beyond all suspicion" (Percival, 2021, p. Canon 3). The reasoning for this rule was because priests (and nuns) embody a sacred intimate relationship with God that substitutes for earthly marriage. Sacramental marriage, whether earthly or spiritual, has as its purpose the goal of achieving heaven; religious vows offer the priest (and nun) direct communion with God. The sexual act authorized within marriage as

⁶ *Subintroductae* are life partnerships of male and female ascetics without sexual contact.

the means of representing God's love for His Church is not necessary for religious.

Over the next 1500 years, the Catholic Church dealt with its issues regarding sexual practices, but the overall goal was toward an appeal for priestly chastity. Certainly, the most famous example of the rogue priest is Martin Luther who, once the Church had taken issue with his infamous theses took a nun to wife (Hendrix, 2015). There were so many others to the extent that jokes are not uncommon regarding the sexual behaviors of priests and nuns.⁷

When, finally, Pope St. Pius X decreed that a uniform policy be made regarding the collective laws of the Church in 1917, canon 132, of the 2,414 canons, stated clerics are prohibited from marriage and are obligated with chastity (Aroh, 2014). Chastity, as a moral and sacred virtue, is considered a gift from God to help the supplicant control sexual expressions. Just as in the Sacrament of Marriage, the Sacrament of Holy Orders obligate the priest until death parted him from the Church. This means that even if the priest leaves Holy Orders, he is still under moral obligation to continue the sacred act of chastity (Aroh, 2014), unless he makes a new vow of Holy Matrimony. This is because once a priest is consecrated into Holy Orders, as a Sacrament, an indelible spiritual character has been made permanently marking the man as Christ's own representative (CCC, 1581-1583). The Church takes holy vows quite seriously. The priesthood is a ministerial vocation; in the strictest sense, a service marrying Christ to humankind (CCC, 1551). This sacrament, one of seven the Catholic Church holds,⁸ communicates a sacred power as the representative of Christ on earth, and as the representative of Christ, Holy Orders is the representative of the holy Mother Church.

Avoidng Remdium Concupiscentiae

Misrepresenting the Church and Christ by violating canon law is most grievous. Therefore, once the 1917 Code was conferred, the Church followed with the resulting penances and punishments for violating priestly chastity. Known as the Pio-Benedictine Code Canon Law, the 1917 formulation was a considerable project. Begun in 1903, when Giuseppe Sarto assumed the papacy as Pope St. Pius

⁷ Not that this is a joke, for these occurrences definitely happen, and have long happened (Marcel, 2007).

⁸ The seven sacraments are baptism, confirmation, Holy Eucharist, penance and reconciliation (often called confession), anointing of the sick, Holy Orders, and matrimony (CCC, section 1210).

X, the writing of this version of canon law required consideration of what had essentially functioned as ecclesiastical discipline for nearly one thousand years, and then tracing roots back at least an additional five hundred years (Peters, 2001/1918). Needless to say, fifteen hundred years of piecemeal additions and changes became “a vast and confusing collection of canonical materials” (Peters, 2001/1918, Curator’s Introduction, para. 2). Consistently written in Latin, the codes had never been translated or published as one piece called *Canon Law*. Even so, the 1917 Canon Law was also written in Latin, and at the time, was forbidden translation into any common vernacular. After all, most of the men who needed reference to the Law knew Latin anyway. As part of the 1917 Canon Law code, now translated because this older code no longer is in order, is Canon 2175, Title 31, dealing with priests found in concubinage. The law states,

An Ordinary shall warn a cleric who, against the prescription of Canon 133,⁹ has a suspicious woman with him or in any manner keeps company with her, that he should dismiss her or abstain from being with her, mentioning the penalties established in Canon 2359¹⁰ for concubinous clerics (p. 548).

⁹ Canon 133 (Peters, 2001/1918, p. 64) states,

§ 1. Clerics should take care not to retain or in other ways to frequent women upon whom suspicion can fall.

§ 2. It is permitted to them to cohabit only with the sort of women whose natural bond places them above suspicion, such as a mother, sister, aunt, and others of this kind, or others whose upright way of life in view of maturity of years removes all suspicion.

§ 3. The judgment about retaining or frequenting women, even those who commonly fall under no suspicion, in particular cases where scandal is possible or where there is given a danger of incontinence, belongs to the local Ordinary, who can prohibit clerics from retaining or frequenting [such women],

§ 4. Contumacious [clerics] are presumed [to be living in] concubinage.

¹⁰ Canon 2359 states,

Further,

If a cleric neither respects the precept nor responds to it, the Ordinary, after he has proven to himself that the cleric could have responded:

1. Shall suspend him from divine [things];
2. Deprive a pastor, moreover, of his parish immediately (p. 549)...

The sheer volume of the 1917 law, 876 pages, with the vast majority covering crimes of the priest is stunning. Other faults than concubinage found in priests are simply referred to as *dereliction*. In any case, the accused priest has the rights of the confessional. Canon 2144 states,

Examiners and consultors, as well as the notary, by an oath interposed at the beginning of the process, must observe secrecy concerning everything that they know by reason of their office and especially concerning occult documents, discussions held in committee, and the number of and motives for votes (p. 542).

Note the very specific language of secrecy.

Later, in 1922, an informal document, unnamed, more specifically dealt with those offenses more deviant than concubinage. This document was held in secret, only given to bishops, and never placed in the Vatican library (Doyle, 2008). Although the 1922 document remains unnamed, unseen, and unavailable for general study, the punishments for solicitation (in the confessional) and other sexual deviancies, were quite rigorous, and included removal,

§ 1. Concubinous clerics in sacred [orders], whether secular or religious, previous warnings not being heeded, are to be coerced into giving up their illicit relationship and to repair scandal by [being] suspended from divine things [and by suffering] the loss of the benefits of office, benefices, and dignities, the prescriptions of Canons 2176-81 being observed.

§ 2. If they engage in a delict against the sixth precept of the Decalogue with a minor below the age of sixteen, or engage in adultery, debauchery, bestiality, sodomy, pandering, incest with blood-relatives or affines in the first degree, they are suspended, declared infamous, and are deprived of any office, benefice, dignity, responsibility, if they have such, whatsoever, and in more serious cases, they are to be deposed.

deprivation of benefices, excommunication and exclusion from the clergy, and prohibition to serve the laity (Aroh, 2014).

Pope Pius XI later offered the *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii* (ACS) to deal exhaustively on celibacy and its violation. This 1935 document reminds that,

The priest is the minister of Christ, an instrument, that is to say, in the hands of the Divine Redeemer. He continues the work of the redemption in all its world-embracing universality and divine efficacy that work that wrought so marvelous a transformation in the world. Thus, the priest, as is said with good reason, is indeed "another Christ;" for, in some way, he is himself a continuation of Christ. "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you," is spoken to the priest, and hence the priest, like Christ, continues to give "glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will (para 12).

The power residing in the priesthood is magnificent because he deals with the human soul. From birth and Baptism to Last Rites and burial, the parish priest acts as the conduit between man and God. Priests

have a duty which, in a certain way, is higher than that of the most pure spirits "who stand before the Lord." Is it not right, then, that he live an all but angelic life? A priest is one who should be totally dedicated to the things of the Lord. Is it not right, then, that he be entirely detached from the things of the world, and have his conversation in Heaven? A priest's charge is to be solicitous for the eternal salvation of souls, continuing in their regard the work of the Redeemer. Is it not, then, fitting that he keep himself free from the cares of a family, which would absorb a great part of his energies (para. 45)?

Passing through the corruptions of the world, hearing the manifold sins and wickedness of the confessional, seeking love in spouses who profess hate, finding the precious soul of the criminal, and trying to explain pain and suffering to those who experience extraordinary pain and suffering, all require a kind of detachment in the effort to always find the divine. Therefore, Pope Pius XI recommended the priest be watchful of his behavior, to understand the lure of women and be wary, stay clear of undue familiarity with women, and wear the priestly habit and collar to designate his calling to God. The language is at once authoritative and beseeching. Those who are called into the priesthood are also called to beware the bewitching aspect of woman intent on defending the sacredness of the family

unit—perhaps, because that is what Jesus would, and calls his holy helpers to, do. Still, there has not been a loud or profound sex scandal incorporating priests beyond the nun/lonely woman trope (Marcel, 2007).

Sex and the 20th Century

Then Vatican II happened amidst the sexual revolution of the 1960s. Clerical celibacy was not on the agenda, but was in the mind of many, including media outlets. The outcome of Vatican II did not do what many thought the Catholic Church should undo regarding sexuality. *Lumen Gentium* [LM] (Pope Paul VI, 1964), the primary document coming from Vatican II, acted as the Dogmatic Constitution of the 1964 Synod. Most profound was the call to holiness by everyone according to Christ's command "Be holy as I am holy" (NIV, 2011, 1 Peter 1:16). More so, the state of holiness is "conducive to a more human way of living...doing the will of God in everything, they may wholeheartedly devote themselves to the glory of God and to the service of their neighbor" (LM, Ch 5, 40)—in accordance with the Great Commandment given by Jesus. Specifically for priests, the (Pope Paul VI, 1965), holy orders binds to the grace of Christ. A priest's "weakness of his flesh" (part 12) is redeemed by Christ's own sacrifice as "holy innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners (NIV, 2011, Heb 7:26). Humility and obedience before all, the priest is called to seek the will of God rather than the will of the self (part 15). The call to celibacy, though, is voluntary, offered by the free will of the priest as a glorious gift from (and to) God. Despite the arguments against celibacy in the priesthood, Vatican II confirmed the 1917 Order of Chastity for Holy Orders.¹¹ In the end, celibacy in the priesthood acts as a means of offering full love and devotion to God without being tied down or constrained by marriage or family obligations (as clerics in other religions face). Due to internal disruptions in (especially) the Episcopal Church, Pope St. John Paul II authorized in the 1980 *Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*, a means and process that allowed for not only entire congregations to enter the

¹¹ Arguments against celibacy include (1) there is nothing scriptural specifically advocating celibacy; (2) some people might feel called in vocation to both marriage and the priesthood; (3) the priest shortage could be solved if the Church allowed married priests; (4) celibacy is contrary to healthy psychological development; and (5) the promise to a celibate life is made by men too young to understand or appreciate the sacrifice (Aroh, 2014, p. 118).

Catholic Church, but for the Episcopal priest, even if married, to also be incorporated into the Catholic priesthood (Saunders, 1994). The priest, after going through the catechism and training, despite his marriage vows, would then vow celibacy. Marriage vows might get in the way, but once the priest was widowed, celibacy is expected absolutely, as for any Catholic priest.

A somewhat unfamiliar practice now, concubinage has been associated with the priesthood for over a thousand years. Despite attempts by various Popes to value the virtue of celibacy, married priests still served the Church through the 12th-13th centuries, allowing clerics “to be married but required them to practice complete continence. Because of this psychologically abnormal situation, the law of continence remained ... a dead letter” (Parish, 2010, p. 90). The Church did not authorize these priests to marry or be married; however, European landowners, often in far out rural places without the attention of the Church in gaining clerics for their communities, appointed men to serve as clerics, leading a life almost indistinguishable from that of their parishioners (Parish, 2010). Eventually, the Church was obligated to deal with unmarried priests who chose *to live in sin*, in a state of holding one or more concubines. Priests refusing celibacy and chastity could not move upward in the Church hierarchy, but the Church often found difficulty placing chaste priests in rural and far away (from Rome) areas (Parish, 2010). Suddenly, unexpectedly, the 1917 Canonical Code 1395 dealt first with priests still insisting on either incontinence with their married wives or holding onto unchaste behaviors such as concubinage, as an egregious fault against the Catholic Catechism regarding the Sixth Commandment, and could be suspended, and, possibly, dismissed (Aroh, 2014). Then, second, the Code prescribes, for the first time, offenses against the Sixth Commandment of the Decalogue, in committing “by force or threats or publicly or with a minor child below the age of sixteen years,” would also be punished accordingly with “just penalties” (Aroh, 2014, p. 155). The scandal of concubinage or other offenses of the Sixth Commandment of the Decalogue was required to be external, or in evidence, because a purely internal offense (wicked thoughts and desires) cannot be punished by Church law (Aroh, 2014). The issue of priest abuse of minors was considered in the 1922 document of no name, without definition of “child”, and without firm definition of the constitution of “just penalty.” Presumably, the Vatican was dealing with more than the bewitching woman in the confessional of the past. Something far more serious is beginning to be recognized, no doubt around the globe, evil enough to be mentioned albeit surreptitiously.

Beginning in 1962, Pope John XXIII opened the twenty-first ecumenical council, referred to as Vatican II, with the intent to update the Church considering the growing secularization of (especially Western) civilization. Not included in the official list of Vatican II documents was the now named *Crimen Sollicitationis*. Not only is the document not on any list of Vatican II documents, the document is also not contained in the Vatican Library. The document exists only by name and reputation in dealing with priests having unnatural sexual behaviors, especially with minors. Another secret document exists dealing with abhorrent priest behaviors.

Remaining in force until 2001, the 1962 document, *Crimen Sollicitationis*, offered procedural norms for cases involving minors. Pope St. John Paul II decided in 2001 to increase the age of the minor from under sixteen years to eighteen years of age. Pope Benedict XVI added to the 2001 document in 2010 to include clerics caught in the acquisition, possession, or distribution of pornography involving minors under the age of fourteen (Aroh, 2014). The abuse scandals of the late twentieth century, especially against young boys rather than against females, caused numerous closings of parishes and churches, bled enormous amounts of money, and saw the rapid decrease in not only long-term parishioners, but also young adults in the faith. As the Internet bloomed, so did the opportunities to engage in more private forms of unchaste behaviors using online pornography.

Homosexuality in the priesthood

Not the first papal document covering matters of homosexuality in the Church, a 2005 document, formally titled *Criteria for the discernment of vocations with regard to persons with homosexual tendencies in view of their admission to the Seminary and to Holy Orders*, reified the Church's stance on homosexuality as applied to applicants for the priesthood. The document affirmed the "affliction" of homosexuality that many men and women endure as a most painful and unasked for kind of suffering. The people enduring this undeserved trial deserve the Church's utmost respect; however, the Church requires those so afflicted to recognize their "call to fulfill God's will in their lives and to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter" (Pope Benedict XVI, 2005). The Instruction recognizes the differences outlined in the Catechism between homosexual acts and homosexual tendencies. The *Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments*, states clearly that the Church,

While profoundly respecting the persons in question, cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practise (sic) homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called "gay culture." Such persons, in fact, find themselves in a situation that gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women. One must in no way overlook the negative consequences that can derive from the ordination of persons with deep-seated homosexual tendencies (Pope Benedict XVI, 2005, para. 2.5).

Further, the document states as each seminary applicant requires a spiritual director with whom he must offer complete honesty regarding his sexual proclivities, that spiritual director "has the obligation to evaluate all the qualities of the candidate's personality and to make sure that he does not present disturbances of a sexual nature, which are incompatible with the priesthood" (para. 3.6). To hide this component of the self from the Church in order to gain a vocation in the Church is most deceitful and "does not correspond to the spirit of truth, loyalty and openness that must characterize the personality of him who believes he is called to serve Christ and his Church in the ministerial priesthood" (para. 3.7).

Seemingly homophobic to the 21st century mind, Pope Benedict XVI argued in the book *Light of the World* (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI & Seewald, P., 2010) that "[the homosexual] attitude toward man and woman is somehow distorted... Their sexual orientation estranges them from the proper sense of paternity, from the intrinsic nature of priestly being" (p. 152). Since 1986, the Church has recognized that although homosexuality, as an inclination, is not a sin, the condition is seen as a tendency toward an intrinsically evil behavior—from a moral point of view (Pope John Paul II, 1986). In a fraternal organization, such as the Catholic priesthood, absolute trust in one's "brothers in Christ" is paramount since the priesthood is considered as spouses of Christ (the same applies to the nun). The religious wear wedding bands to symbolize this unity with God. The Church takes these vows quite seriously. Our next quandary naturally leads us to ponder why, in the name of all these documents and considerations, the Church has been so unbelievably slow and reluctant to acknowledge and handle this sex abuse crisis more expeditiously. She has had two thousand years. After all, as the argument flows,

The Lord Jesus promised, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free" (Jn. 8:32). Scripture bids us speak the truth in love (cf. Eph. 4:15). The God who is at once

truth and love calls the Church to minister to every man, woman and child with the pastoral solicitude of our compassionate Lord. It is in this spirit that we have addressed this Letter to the Bishops of the Church, with the hope that it will be of some help as they care for those whose suffering can only be intensified by error and lightened by truth. (Pope John Paul II, 1986, p. 18)

Yet, a 2020 Vatican report revealed an internal investigation that the Holy See repeatedly downplayed or dismissed reports of former Cardinal and Archbishop of Washington, D.C. Thomas McCarrick's alleged sexual transgressions involving both minors and adults. Stunningly, the report offers that "Pope John Paul II, who was made a saint in 2014, appointed McCarrick to the position of archbishop of Washington despite a letter from the late New York Cardinal John O'Connor in 1999 detailing allegations against him" (Neuman, 2020, para. 4). Apparently, the Vatican knew of allegations dating to 1987 by a priest who said he "observed sexual conduct between McCarrick and another priest, and an anonymous letter charging the McCarrick with pedophilia with his "nephews" (Neuman, 2020, para. 5). This 461-page report covered an investigation of McCarrick from 1930-2017. This is not to say McCarrick engaged in these behaviors for this entire time, but that the investigation covered McCarrick's life to understand what happened both to McCarrick and the Church's response to allegations of immoral behavior. One of the affected priests of McCarrick's misdoings, in his report to the Holy See cried for justice in this way:

For once, it might be healthy if the ecclesiastical authorities were to intervene before the civil authorities and if possible before the scandal erupts in the press. This would restore a little dignity to a Church so tried and humiliated for so many abominable behaviors on the part of some pastors.

(Secretariat of State of the Holy See, 2020, p. 285)

Ultimately defrocked and shamed, McCarrick was charged on July 29, 2021, with sexually assaulting a 16-year-old male in 1974, during a wedding reception for the boy's brother on the grounds of Wellesley College in Massachusetts (Murphy, 2021; Vann & Givetash, 2019).

The Truth Shall Set You Free

Common practice as best practice, until recently, was to remove the priest from his congregation, send him to therapy and restoration, and place him elsewhere in hopes that he has seen the Light (deBoer, 2019). Whereas the issue until the late 19th century mostly prevailed

upon women, as even Erasmus (1466-1536) is noted to have said, the faithful [women] “often fall into the hands of priests who, under the pretense of confession, commit acts which are not fit to be mentioned” (deBoer, 2019, para. 14). Chastity, even, or especially, for priests, has been difficult from the outset. The rhetoric of the Church, however, has historically focused on the language regarding the relationships between priests and women, or females in general. As painful as any woman finds this, this most recent rash of abuse committed against children, most often boys and young men, including young seminarians, is even more so. Unknown to this author is the process of discernment, preparation of, and education in the priesthood, but acknowledged is the Church’s stance on unchaste sexual behavior, especially homosexuality. A fraternal order choosing to remain holy as Jesus is holy must rely on a very strict sexual code that enables holiness of both body and spirit. The Church is not of a mind to allow for a married priesthood and takes seriously the sacredness of the confessional. In fact, every state has enacted laws protecting the priest-penitent privacy of confession (Vile, n.d.). The New York Supreme Court ruled on this in *People v. Christian Smith* (1817), a case involving murder. As a key witness took the stand, argument was made regarding the man’s testimony in which “auricular confessions made to a priest of the Roman Catholic church [sic] were inadmissible as evidence against a prisoner. Justice Van Ness, however, drew a distinction between auricular confessions made to a priest during the religious rite of confession and those made to a minister of the gospel in confidence, merely as a friend or adviser.” In 1828, New York legislation adopted a bill providing that “No minister . . . or priest . . . shall be allowed to disclose any confessions made to him in his professional character” (Walsh, 2005, p. 1051). The ruling garnered acceptance in several other states such as Missouri (1845), Michigan (1845), Wisconsin (1845), California (1851), and Iowa (1851) (Vile, n.d.). Finally, in 1953, the American Bar Association and the National Conference on Uniform State Laws adopted Rule 29 of the Uniform Rules of Evidence providing for priest-penitent privilege (Cornell Law Legal Information Institute, 2011).

The truth is that the Church should not have had to engage in centuries of a rhetoric of sex and its priests because priests should have been working on the holiness of their bodies and spirits along with working for their congregational holiness of bodies and spirits. The truth is that priests are human people that have sexual desires and urges, and the secrecy of their nature is clouded by secrecy within the confessional. The truth is that the Church has

(unsuccessfully) addressed within its institution this situation of sex and the priesthood through its own judicial tribunal processes. The truth is that the Church must now consider a different way of understanding the sexual nature of their priests, especially when the secrecy of the confessional has allowed so many abuses to occur. The truth is there is a tremendous dearth of men desiring or being called into the priesthood, and many priests are now aging out. Truthfully, this is a problem not easily solved simply because both the Church and its adherents are led by flawed beings. Easily said is that just as parents ought to have, by now, gotten how to parent justly and rightly after so many centuries of parental practices, priests ought to have gotten by now how to be holy priests. We all know that this expectation is patently unfair. Parenting books are still written with new advice. The priesthood deserves the same rhetorical treatment. Remembering back to the two forms of covenants mentioned earlier, of promise and of obligation, the Catholic Church is undergoing a “bloodletting” of a broken promise to its adherents. Even though the number of immoral priests is low compared to the number of moral priests in the Church, the rhetoric of chastity and celibacy ring dully. In a society of lush sexual images and language, the issue of sex and the priest is of vital importance, if for no other reason than to stop the blood sacrifice of a torn covenant. The purpose of the Church is to proselytize the Gospel, but this scandal has displaced the good work needing doing with bad work having been done. The cost of secrecy and denial is high, not only in finances, but also in lost souls of both priests and parishioners.

This paper has shown that, historically, the unwillingness and inability to deal with sexual misbehavior among priests over the course of two thousand years shows clearly when so many Church fathers have written on these misbehaviors in spineless calls to reform. Spineless because, although the rhetoric of chastity and celibacy are beautiful in their theology, the move from abuse of vulnerable women in the confessional, to abuse of nuns, to the abuse of minors, to the abuse of pornography, is continuous with the tendency to sweep under the rug the sad condition the fallen nature of the human priest. There is great need to look honestly at Church history to see why this current situation so unendingly exists by ploughing through Church documents, decrees, canon codes, and papal instructions, as well as calling for greater insight and oversight. Forgiveness is good. Privacy is good. Forgiveness and privacy understood as secrecy, however, can, and has, created a stunning loss of ecclesiastical beneficence these past two thousand years.

Of course, because this is an ongoing conversation and crisis within the RCC, more can always be added. In an interview with Pope Francis celebrating his tenth anniversary as the Bishop of Rome, Pope Francis responded to a question on priestly celibacy by saying, “There is no contradiction for a priest to marry” (Petri, 2023). Celibacy, he further elaborated, is a “temporary prescription” inasmuch as “it is not eternal like priestly ordination, which is forever” (Petri, 2023). The comment is not meant to suppose that celibacy will soon go away. Doctrine based on this crisis studied theology has crystallized the meaning of the priesthood to include celibacy and chastity. The devil is always in the details.

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Book Review

Joy Daggs

Dougherty, D. S. (2023). *Sexual harassment in organizational culture: A transformative approach*. San Diego, CA: Cognella Academic Publishing.

Introduction

Over the past 20 years, Debbie Dougherty has emerged as Communication's leading sexual harassment researcher. Her first book on sexual harassment is not only a culmination of the work of the last 20 years, but the development of a theoretical framework to apply to identify, address, and repair organizational cultures that perpetuate predatory sexual harassment. The book positions sexual harassment as an organizational culture issue, not just an individual perpetrator issue. The text can extend Organizational Communication courses' discussion of the importance of organizational culture and how it can be changed. It could not be a standalone text for a traditional Organizational Communication course but could be taught as a special topic (as Dougherty herself did in Spring 2023).

Content of the Book

The book's nine chapters are content-rich with excellent examples with high-profile sexual harassment cases from organizations. The book gives an overview of the definition of sexual harassment, communication, and organizational culture, foundational concepts of the text. In Chapter 4, Dougherty (2023) reveals the lynchpin of the book, the Transformational Model of Organizational Communication (Trans-MOC). The model consists of four layers that create the framework for Chapters 5-8. Each chapter explores a layer of the Trans-MOC, starting at the outer layer of Larger Cultural Meanings, moving into Organizational Enactment, Meaningful Organizational Values, and finally Core Organizational Meanings. The final chapter explores Evolving Organizational culture and gives tools and caveats for those attempting to create cultural changes.

Highlights of the Book

One of the most unique contributions of the book is re-examining the traditional models of communication that most communication textbooks address. The traditional models are mentioned but presented as building blocks on each other to add a dimension of "Communication as meaning making" to create a more holistic model of communication, rather than comparing each

model's strengths and weaknesses (Dougherty, 2023, p. 35-36), as is frequently done in other communication textbooks. By using each block to build on each other, it allows each model's strength to connect and build on each other. The new model does not oversimplify the process of communication, but allows for the nuances of interactions to be studied in better detail.

After defining Communication, the chapter continues by exploring traditional definitions of Organizational Communication such as the Classical Theory, Human Relations, and Human Resources theory. The building block model of Communication lays the foundation for a new fourth model: Communication Constitutes Organization (CCO) model. The CCO model's core tenet is that organizations do not exist outside of the people that create them. Therefore, communication creates the organization. Dougherty's work focuses on the *Communication as Meaning Making* portion of the theory, which is currently not as well studied. Dougherty (2023) states, "Meaning-CCO closely ties meaningful communication and organization together, suggesting that they are inseparable. You cannot have an organization without enacting meaningful communication." (p. 46). Communication is not the mere dissemination of information, but the interpretation of the messages and information by organizational members. Communication also creates connection between the members of the organization, thus creating the organization through the messages and interactions of the individuals.

Dougherty states that organizational leadership sometimes thinks that simply making the information available or providing training will eliminate predatory sexual behavior. However, the mere existence and sharing of information is enough to solve the problem. The Trans-MOC's four layers address the process of cultural change and then the last chapter gives some early procedural advice for creating organizational cultural change. It is important to examine what the organization's values are (or what they state they are) and how they are enacted in the organization. Once the values are identified, how members interpret and apply those values in the organization helps the members create the organization's culture.

Overall Evaluation

This book provides accessible examples while tackling serious subject matter. Examples from Dougherty's own personal hobbies such as gardening provide imagery that helps the reader to understand the unwanted issue that predatory sexual harassment can be. There are also "Think About It" boxes that allow the reader to

scan a QR code and watch a video or simply read a vignette that illustrates the concept discussed. Some are examples from Dougherty's own research; others highlight work by other scholars.

Dougherty's text allows readers to explore the reasons sexual harassment can exist in an organization. The emphasis on the CCO model of Organizational Communication helps the reader understand that organizations and organizational culture are not fixed "things" that simply exist with people inside the organization. People are the organization, and the organization is people. The way that the people interact creates the organizational culture. By emphasizing that organizational culture is not fixed, but malleable indicates that a culture that supports predatory sexual harassment can be created, and one that does not support predatory sexual harassment can also be created.

While cultures can be created, Dougherty emphasizes that it is a process that creates organizational culture. A one-time training will not eliminate predatory sexual behavior. An organizational culture that does not tolerate or allow predatory sexual behavior to happen is the best way to make a change. Stopping sexual harassment requires systemic changes, and while the text does not provide a quick fix to change organizational culture, it shows the ways that culture can be recreated. By emphasizing the procedural nature of cultural change, Dougherty gives the reader the tools to make long-lasting change instead of relying on a one-time training or memo. Creating a changed organizational culture is much like personal health. Eating one carrot does not make one healthy. It takes several lifestyle changes over time to create a healthy lifestyle and lower the risk of disease. Organizational cultural change requires time, commitment, and several changes over time to create a healthier organization.