

# *Carolinas Communication Annual*

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# ***Carolinas Communication Annual***

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## **Editorial Policy (2013)**

The *Carolinas Communication Annual*, the peer-reviewed, state journal published by the Carolinas Communication Association, accepts the submission of scholarly articles on an ongoing basis. While articles by authors in the Carolinas and about topics relevant to the Carolinas and the surrounding region are certainly welcomed, the call is open to authors from around the country, and to a wide range of topics from multiple methodologies and perspectives within the larger communication/media studies disciplines.

Articles should be no longer than 4000 words in length and should follow the latest editions of either the MLA, Chicago, or APA style manuals. Authors should submit their essays electronically (in Word format) to the editor by April 4, 2013. Please include author identification information in the text of the email only.

The new *Carolinas Communication Annual* editor will be elected at the 2012 annual convention. Please look for a more detailed call for papers on the Carolinas Communication Association website and through CRTNET postings, membership emails, and Facebook postings beginning in late October 2012.

## Editor's Letter

Dear Members and Readers,

I hope this letter finds you well! This is the third and final year of my editorial tenure with the *Carolinas Communication Annual*, and I must say it's been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career and, certainly, my decade (plus one year) as a member of our Association. I want to thank you – members of the Carolinas Communication Association and readers (both members and general) – for all of your support, feedback, and invested time in helping to make the *Annual* the best it can be. The Editorial Board and Officers, with a little guidance on my part, have made some innovations, albeit slight, to the *Annual* since 2010; but one of the fantastic things about three years “gone by” is hindsight. And, I plan to work with the next editor on ways to improve the *Annual* in the next three years to come. Working toward more regional and national prominence by way of aggressive promotional strategies, negotiating with research databases to ensure that our hard work is catalogued for all time memorial, concretizing more special issues, and complementing our print edition with an online component are some of the many ideas we will consider.

In the end, my goal has always been to step in and continue our fine tradition of publishing accessible, compelling, enlivening, and productive work from Carolinas scholars and from those outside of the state(s) and region. I hope I have not disappointed.

This year's *Annual*, as always, spotlights that very variety of scholars and geographies. Concomitantly, I think you'll find a number of approaches represented here: from mass-mediated content analysis and ethnography to interpersonal/social influence theory and rhetorical studies. I am so very proud of being able to offer this assortment and cross-section of our field. Though such diversity is a dream come true, it's actually fairly organic. That is, reviews just happen to shake down into this broader spectrum of our field versus being retrofitted. Ultimately, there is something for everyone in this year's volume.

Our *Annual*, you'll notice, begins with an *in memoriam* section for our dear friend, colleague, and Past President Monica Pombo (Appalachian State University), who sadly passed away in May. Monica was an enduring light – a force, to be honest – for our Association and served as a mentor to many of us invested in leadership within our communities – both in the Carolinas and even in far-off places (like Alabama). In a way it troubles me to refer to her contributions in the past tense, for as many of us know and feel in our hearts, Monica's influence and warmth are *still* palpable. What's more, her legacy *will be* held, cherished, and borne-out for many, many years to come. Monica's passing reminds us of the precious contours of temporality ... of ephemerality. Her life, as a whole, heartens us and recalls for us the importance of community and, in the words of fellow Carolinian Michael Hyde (Wake Forest), our “dwelling together” in professionally and personally fulfilling ways. I think keeping Monica's passion for the Association in our hearts and remaining mindful of the best we can be (especially in her image) is how, in the end, we will best honor her life and legacies. I am proud to call our Association

home and I hope you are, as well. Monica helped to make our community just that – a “home,” a dwelling place, an ethos.

Thank you all, again, for the wonderful three years, and special thanks to my own Carolinas Communication Association mentors, Charmaine Wilson, Jason Munsell, and Jean DeHart, for the help and support. In addition to Monica’s memory, I dedicate this volume to them.

Most Cordially,

Jason Edward Black  
Tuscaloosa, Alabama  
September 2012

## **In Memoriam: Reflections on Our Friend and Colleague, Monica Pombo**

*Jean DeHart & Jason Munsell*

*In May 2012, the Carolinas Communication Association – and the communication field at large – lost a bright star with the passing of Monica Pombo, a long-time faculty member at Appalachian State University. Not only did Monica contribute robustly to her areas of study (electronic media, broadcasting, mass communication), but she professionally and personally touched students' lives, helped guide our Association to new heights as a Past President, and made us all better scholars and human beings based on her examples of hard work, humility, and gentleness. The reflections offered here by two of Monica's friends and colleagues – Jean DeHart and Jason Munsell – tenderly trace some of the silhouettes of both Monica's contributions to the Carolinas Communication Association and her impact on us all.*

### **“Monica Teixeira Pombo: More than a Name” by Jean DeHart (Appalachian State University)**

At the time I'm writing these words, it has been a little more than three months since my friend, colleague, and former Carolinas Communication Association (CCA) president, Monica Pombo, passed away. By the time you are reading these words, more time will have passed. It may be a matter of weeks, months, years, or decades. I sit here, in the office next to the one she once inhabited, searching for the appropriate words to memorialize one of my best friends. I take a break for a piece of chocolate candy and bemoan the fact that our favorite coffee shop closed for the night about 30 minutes ago.

Maybe I'll just say “To know her was to love her.” That pretty much sums it up. Students, coworkers, and other professional colleagues were drawn to Monica's quiet, calm spirit, and to her friendly smile. In the nine years I knew her, I never heard one student complain about her. Literally, not one! Monica's calm demeanor served her well in faculty meetings and in her leadership roles in CCA. Her kindness was felt by all whom she encountered.

Those of you who knew Monica will likely relate to the previous paragraph and be able to envision her smile or remember an example of her kindness or calm leadership. You may also remember her dedication to CCA and the initiative she took to revitalize the CCA archives. It seems fitting to me that Monica worked so hard on the archives. She loved the stories of others—of learning about their histories. Monica saw beyond someone's name or title to find what was unique about the individual.

As I stack and restack the candies from a pack of Sweetarts, I realize that I am hesitant to keep writing because I know Monica would be embarrassed by the thought that I was writing anything about her. As much as she loved photographing and interviewing others, she remained modest about her own uniqueness or accomplishments. I thought that by writing this so close to her office, I might receive some positive vibes from next door. Instead, I see her smile and twinkling eyes, as she giggles and says, "Oh, no. Go and write about somebody else."

Why do I keep writing? Because I want Monica to be remembered. I know I will never forget Monica, but I think about the times I've seen a name of someone I didn't know listed as a previous officer with an organization, as the donor or honorary of an award, or as the name of a building. At times, I didn't think past the name to think about the unique individual associated with that name. Lately, the chorus to the Statler Brother's song, "More than a name on a wall," keeps coming to mind as I think about Monica. In this song, a parent describes how much her son, a soldier, meant to her, saying: "All I have are the memories and the moments to recall; So Lord could you tell him he's more than a name on a wall."

I want others to see Monica as more than a name, whether they met her or not. If I wrote nine years' worth of memories, that would fill multiple journals. I try to think of three labels that describe Monica. I think, instead, of her story. The story of Monica is one of a brave young girl who left her native Brasil to study abroad in the U.S. as a high school student, bringing with her a love of Brasil that she shared with those around her. I have frequently referred to Monica as "Brasil's greatest ambassador." (She also taught me to spell "Brasil" with an "s" and not a "z.")

Monica loved all things Brasil. Each time she traveled there, she returned with gifts for friends and coworkers. (Thanks to her, I have become addicted to Acai soap and lotion.) Just months before Monica's passing, I was fortunate enough to travel with her to Brasil, to witness first hand the beautiful country she loved. One day while we were in Rio, I was in search of products made out of native Brasil nuts and cashews. Monica encouraged me to buy some peanuts that were encased in a round, white, crunchy coating. I said, "Monica, we have lots of peanuts in North Carolina. I don't need to buy peanuts here." Her response: "Oh, but you don't have peanuts like these." I wasn't convinced. Monica said, "I'll buy some, and you can try them." That night, sitting in her brother's apartment, I sampled the peanuts, and had to admit that I had never tasted anything like that. Monica just smiled, and said, "See, I told you." Typical for Monica, the words weren't said as if to imply "I told you so"; rather, they suggested "I'm so happy you like them. I really thought you would." The next day, she went with me to the store so I could stock up on bags of the peanuts. I am now addicted to ovinhos de amendoim. Each time I consume some of them, I think of Monica's quiet persuasion.

Monica also loved the United States, particularly the Carolinas, and was so proud when she became a dual citizen. Just as she shared Brazilian products with her U.S. friends, she also sent or took U.S. products to her family in Brasil. (Pringles were a favorite.) Before we left Rio, Monica was already trying to think of things to send her brother. She asked him, “What’s in the U.S. that you love?” His reply was: “You.”

Friends and family were central to Monica’s life. She adored her son and her partner. When talking about friends or family members, Monica’s language was filled with compliments and pride in the accomplishments of others. She did not brag. Instead, she celebrated and championed the successes of those around her. Monica displayed thoughtfulness towards her friends and colleagues—often bringing them gifts, sending postcards, or just stopping to ask how they were. When she found a new bagel place that she loved, instead of just telling coworkers about it, she showed up with a bag of bagels for us to try. (We were even happier when she made a similar gesture after discovering great chocolate croissants at a bakery.) I feel Monica’s spirit telling me that when I talk about her friends and family, I need to talk about her animals, too. ☺ Monica loved animals, especially cats. She and her partner served as a foster family for cats from a local rescue organization. Each week they would keep the cats during the week, then take them to a potential adoption location on the weekends. If the cats weren’t adopted, they brought them back home. I think they stopped doing this, after Monica ended up officially adopting about seven cats. ☺

Monica loved her career. Really, she loved her career! She delighted in talking about her students, a research project on which she was working, or a new book she was



reading. She enjoyed the interaction with colleagues at professional associations, especially CCA.

Monica was passionate about fairness, a concept that guided the decisions she made in her professional relationships, in her teaching, and in her interactions with anyone she met. She tried to give others the benefit of the doubt. Although I am usually able to follow this guideline in my own life, I recall one instance in which I was very frustrated with a fellow employee's behavior. I walked to Monica's office, sat down, and said: "Okay. I need you to convince me why I should not be furious with this person, and why I should not report this behavior to a superior." Monica, in traditional Monica fashion, said, "I would never tell you not to do that, but when I think about this individual, I think about . . . ." She went on to describe some difficult life circumstances the individual faced, and how the person had taken some steps to improving those circumstances. I left Monica's office in a calmer mood and with a different perspective toward the individual.

To this point, I haven't mentioned the disease that led to Monica's passing. For almost two years, she battled ovarian cancer. When I say "battled," I mean "battled." Monica underwent intensive treatment. The cancer claimed her physical life (at the young age of 45), but it never defined her. Monica remained true to herself and her loving, giving, dedicated spirit until the very end of her life. The night before she passed away, she was working on student internship forms from her hospital bed. Monica coupled exhausting chemo treatments with opportunities for new adventures—often culinary ones. Once when I was taking her to Charlotte for chemo, she delighted in showing me one of her favorite bakeries and a new Mediterranean restaurant she found.

On another occasion, we enjoyed lunch at a pizza place she wanted me to try. Monica praised the nurses, doctors, and technicians who cared for her at Carolinas Medical Center—and, of course, she took them small gifts or sent postcards to them. I was privileged to spend time with Monica during some of her most difficult days. I say “privileged” because that time allowed me an opportunity to see Monica’s amazing bravery and loyalty to her gentle, kind spirit. In the midst of her own suffering, she took time to express concern for others and to compliment them.

As I reflect on what I have written, I guess I have to admit that Monica does fit some labels. She was loyal; she was giving; she was passionate about fairness; she was thoughtful.

She was loving. . . and she was loved.

**“A Tribute to Monica” by Jason Munsell (Columbia College)**

I didn’t know Monica as well as some other folks including her family and colleagues in Boone. I can only imagine what her son and partner went through and are still going through in the wake of her passing. I’ll never share the same memories as her friends and students at Appalachian State. I can only share my humble thoughts as a friend and colleague of Monica’s through the Carolinas Communication Association (CCA). And perhaps this is fitting for our journal, the *Carolinas Communication Annual*. There has been a trend (I’m not sure if it is altogether current or not) in our journals to memorialize the significant contributions of our lost colleagues. Perhaps starting with an entire issue of *Southern Communication Journal* in 2006 paying tribute to Janice Hocker Rushing, it just seems appropriate and necessary to memorialize our colleagues in such a

way. I'm teaching Political Communication this semester and this endeavor reminds me of the genre of national eulogies in a way. There are certain losses that seem so significant that they call for a larger community's mourning and healing. Monica was – and is – bigger than Monica. Her loss is hard to bear in so many ways. She was and is a symbol of the CCA. So this becomes a moment to not only eulogize our sweet and steady friend, but to recommit ourselves to the purpose of our organization.

I met Monica (if I recall correctly) at CCA's conference in Charleston a few years back. We both seemed reluctant recruits to the ranks of CCA's leadership without having much experience with the Association. As First Vice-President of CCA following the Charleston conference, it was Monica's duty to organize the following conference in Boone. She was always on top of things, ever-committed to the success of CCA, and the conference was, simply put, wonderful. I don't have all the numbers, but I recall that membership was up, attendance was up—and there was great food and even a bluegrass band! For those readers who have organized a conference (big or small), you know it is a huge pain and there are countless little fires to put out before the conference, during the conference, even after the conference (why is this on the bill?). Monica, ever-steady, was on top of things constantly and consistently. In the ranks of leadership in academic organizations there are those you can depend on screwing something up or not doing their jobs well, but then there is a Monica: someone you have unwavering trust in to get the job done no matter what. Monica was my CCA mentor.

As President of CCA and beyond Monica did a fabulous job. I note particularly her work with the Association's archives. Our archives had been pretty much neglected for a good while it seemed. She did all the hard work to have our archives moved from

North Carolina State University to Appalachian State and worked with the librarians at Appalachian State very closely to offer CCA's membership a more complete and accessible archive. This was no small feat. This is something she really didn't need to do, but did so out of a love for the CCA community, its past, and its legacies. Our constitution doesn't give the President a whole lot to do. And, frankly, that's exactly what a lot of association presidents do writ large. But not Monica. Always diligent, seemingly commanded by a soul that needed to make things better, Monica did the hard work necessary to get the job done and more so.

Mine is a humble and spartan tribute. But, it is one written genuinely from the heart and motivated by a dear friend's enduring spirit. Monica lived a life that deserves to be remembered, recalled, and celebrated. I encourage readers to learn more about her lasting legacy and to carry it forward as we work fastidiously to improve the CCA.

I see Monica as the Ray Camp of my generation. More than anything, her hard work and spirit should fire us up to make our organization the best it can possibly be. It is as strong an organization as it has always been, but in states like South Carolina and North Carolina it should be and it will be stronger and bigger. We could easily double in size in light of all the Communication Studies programs we have in the Carolinas. We could possibly even move to a quarterly journal that is included on searchable databases. It is my hope that Communication Studies scholars in the Carolinas will see CCA as no rinky-dink outlet for their work, but rather seek out CCA's conventions and the *Annual* to showcase their best undertakings. I suppose submitting to corporate publication outlets associated with our national associations is sometimes required and – in the offing – becomes ranked institutionally “higher” in promotion and tenure processes. But, in the

end, our *Annual* is no less peer-reviewed than a *Quarterly Journal of Speech* or a *Communication Monographs*.

So let's renew our dedication to CCA. Let us recommit ourselves to do heavy labor on behalf of CCA in the name of Monica and make it the finest state communication association in the country. That would be the most fitting tribute to our friend, Monica.

## Face-Negotiation Theory across Cultural Groups: Analysis of a Measurement Model

*Kris Kirschbaum*

*The purpose of this study was to conduct an in-depth investigation of intercultural communication data collected for face-negotiation research. Previously collected data were analyzed to compare two national culture groups on a specified variable. The analyses produced surprising results that did not support previous face-negotiation research. The results provide insight for intercultural communication research and suggest directions for future research to help explain and integrate the discrepancies.*

The purpose of this study was to further investigate survey data collected for face-negotiation theory studies. Face-negotiation theory has been repeatedly used to measure and compare intercultural communication variables across cultural groups (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001, Ting-Toomey, 2005). Most commonly the studies compare individualistic and collectivistic national groups (Hofstede, 2001) on a variety of variables that support face-negotiation. One study, Oetzel et al. (2001) reported mixed findings for integrating conflict style, one of the key variables associated with face-negotiation theory research. These mixed results led to this current study, which is an in-depth examination of the variable that Oetzel et al. (2001) reported to have mixed results. Further investigation of these data offer increased knowledge of the variables used to measure intercultural communication and offer greater insight into national and cultural groups traditionally associated with individualism and collectivism.

### Face-Negotiation Theory

*Face-negotiation theory* is a quantitative approach that measures and explains communication variables across national culture groups. Variables are measured in national culture groups that represent collectivistic and individualistic cultures so that comparisons can be made between the two groups. Four national groups are commonly

selected as representative of collectivistic and individualistic cultures. Japan and China frequently represent collectivistic cultural groups and the United States and Germany frequently represent individualistic cultural groups (Hofstede, 2001; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001; Ting-Toomey, 2005). While other national groups are also represented in intercultural studies, these are four common representatives in face-negotiation research.

As a quantitative approach, face-negotiation studies measure and explore variables with survey data. The most common variables used to compare individualistic and collectivistic groups in face-negotiation research are (1) conflict management style, (2) face concern, and (3) self-construal. *Conflict management* is measured through survey items that present disagreement and incompatible goals and is divided into three categories: dominating, integrating, and avoiding. *Dominating* is defined as a style that is individualistic, competitive, and/or antagonistic (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 2005). *Integrating* is defined as a style that is collaborative, supportive of others, and pursuant of mutually favorable resolution (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 2005). *Avoiding* is defined as a style that attempts to avoid discussion of conflict, change topic and/or shift the focus of the conflict (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 2005).

In addition to conflict style, two commonly measured factors in face-negotiation research are face concern and self-construal. *Face concern* is measured through identity management strategies used during conflict episodes (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 2005). Three categories of face concern are commonly measured: self-face, other-face, and mutual-face. *Self-face* utilizes communication to protect one's own

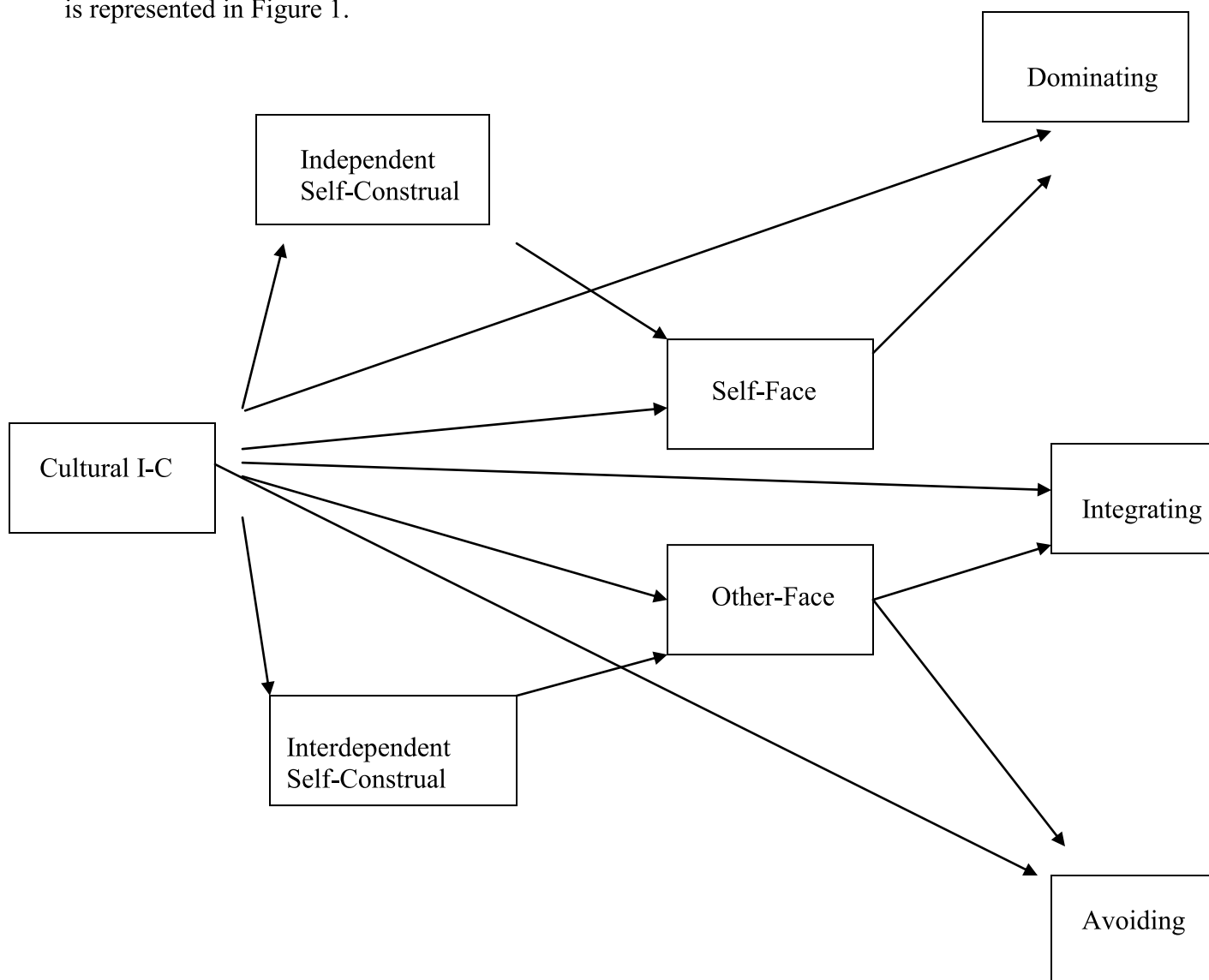
identity. *Other-face* utilizes communication to protect the identity of another. *Mutual-face* utilizes communication to protect the identity of the group (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 2005).

Self-construal is the third commonly measured variable in face-negotiation research. *Self-construal* is an individual level variable measured through communicative indications of independence or interdependence (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2001; Ting-Toomey, 2005). *Independent self-construal* indicates that an individual considers her/himself autonomous, unique, and distinct from others. Those who are independently oriented primarily act in accordance with self-interest and motivation (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994; Ting-Toomey, 2005). *Interdependent self-construal* indicates that an individual considers her/himself an integral member of a larger group. Status, roles, and harmony within the group are of central importance for those who are interdependently oriented (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994; Ting-Toomey, 2005).

**Structure of factors.** The three factors—conflict style, face concern, and self-construal—are interrelated and thus contribute to structural models. Previous face negotiation studies found variation in the structural models according to national culture groups (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001). Specifically, data from individualistic cultural groups—United States and Germany—showed strong co-variance with independent self-construal, self-face concern, and dominating conflict management style (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001). Data from collectivistic cultural groups—Japan and China—showed strong co-variance with interdependent self-construal, other-face concern, and integrating or avoiding conflict-management styles



(Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001). The structural model from these data is represented in Figure 1.



*Figure 1.* Face-Negotiation Theory Structural Model. This structural model is from previous face-negotiation research (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003) to depict relationships among factors. Each factor is predicted by a measurement model. Face-negotiation theory states that self-construal, face concern, and conflict management style are associated with cultural categories of Individualism (I) and Collectivism (C) as represented in the far left side of the figure.

Interestingly, Oetzel et al. (2001) found that the data associated with integrating conflict style showed mixed results. Specifically that individualists (United States and

Germany) used more *problem solve*, *respect*, and *private discussion* while collectivists (China and Japan) used more *apologize* and *remain calm*. The findings from Oetzel et al. (2001) motivate the basis of this current study. In order to better understand the discrepancy, the data are further explored through examination of the individual measurement models. The data are also further specified to isolate two national groups. Rather than examine the entire data set, this current investigation examines data collected from the United States and Japan on items that measure integrating conflict style. Although some recent literature notes that lines of distinction have blurred due to globalization, economic concerns, and advances in technology (Green, Deschamps, & Paez, 2005; Neuliep, 2012; Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002), the analyses conducted for this current study maintains face-negotiation research that delineates the two cultural groups along national lines.

In addition, the data were further specified to focus on integrating conflict style. Rather than examine intervening variables of face-concern or self-construal, this current study concentrates on conflict management style. Since Oetzel et al. (2001) found variance on integrating conflict style, that variable is examined as five separate measurement models: problem solve, respect, private discussion, apologize, and remain calm. These five subsets comprise integrating conflict style at the fundamental measurement level. The investigation and comparison of the data at this depth provide greater insight to the variable and how the national culture groups compare to each other.

The hypotheses that guide this current study follow specific results reported by Oetzel et al. (2001); to wit, that individualists used more *problem solve*, *respect*, and

*private discussion* than collectivists (Oetzel et al., 2001). Therefore, the first three hypotheses are:

**H1:** Data collected from the United States will demonstrate evidence of more *problem solve* than data collected from Japan.

**H2:** Data collected from the United States will demonstrate evidence of more *respect* than data collected from Japan.

**H3:** Data collected from the United States will demonstrate evidence of more *private discussion* than data collected from Japan.

Oetzel et al. (2001) also reported that collectivists used more *apologize* and *remain calm* than did individualists. Therefore, two more hypotheses are:

**H4:** Data collected from Japan will demonstrate evidence of more *apologize* than data collected from the United States.

**H5:** Data collected from Japan will demonstrate evidence of more *remain calm* than data collected from the United States.

A remaining purpose of this current study is to confirm the stability of the structural model used in face-negotiation research. Although fit indices are more commonly associated with structural models, model-fit indices are also an appropriate indication of good fit for data in measurement models (Byrne, 2006; Kline, 2005). Evidence of a strong measurement model will further support the soundness of the structural model. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis concerns model-fit indices:

**H6:** The measurement model that represents integrating conflict style for data collected from the United States and Japan will demonstrate good model-fit.

## Method

The data examined were collected from surveys administered to multinational cultural groups (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001). Since the survey was written in English, it was translated and back-translated to assure accuracy for administration in other languages. The data set includes 206 students from a large university in Japan, and 185 students from a large university in the southwestern United States. The Japanese sample included 128 females and 67 males (mean age = 19.96;  $SD = 1.97$ ). The United States sample included 116 females and 65 males (mean age = 23.55;  $SD = 5.58$ ) (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001).

## Assessment and Measures

The survey collected self-report data based on items that focused on recalled conflict. Respondents were asked to recall a conflict with a person of the same-sex and same national/cultural group (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001). Integrating conflict style was measured with items associated with five categories of behavior: *apologize*, *problem solve*, *respect*, *remain calm*, and *private discussion*. A total of 28 items measured integrating conflict style. Apologize was measured with five items. Respect was measured with six items. Problem Solve was measured with eight items. Remain Calm was measured with four items. Private Discussion was measured with five items. The individual items are presented in Table 1. All items were measured with a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from five (strongly agree) to one (strongly disagree). The survey items demonstrated high internal consistency and strong construct validity (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001).

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to test the first five hypotheses. Regression weights on each item were calculated for combined United States and Japanese data ( $n=361$ ), United States data only ( $n=169$ ), and Japanese data only ( $n=192$ ). In accordance with Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) criteria for standardized regression weights were set at .71 to indicate excellent factor loading, .63 to indicate very good factor loading, .55 to indicate good factor loading, and .45 to indicate fair factor loading.

Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was also calculated for internal consistency of the data. An  $\alpha$  of .70 is considered acceptable, but strong internal consistency or reliability is more often indicated by an alpha score of .80 or above. To test for internal consistency,  $\alpha$  scores were calculated for each of the three data sets: combined United States and Japanese data ( $n=361$ ), United States data ( $n=169$ ), and Japanese data ( $n=192$ ).

Fit indices were calculated to test the sixth hypothesis, regarding how the data fit the specified model. The fit indices included Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ). CFI assesses the relative improvement of a model compared to a baseline model. CFI values of .90 or greater indicate good model-fit (Kline, 2005). AGFI assesses the relative amount of variance in the model adjusted for degrees of freedom. AGFI values of .90 or greater indicate good model-fit (Kline, 2005). RMSEA assesses the relative amount of error variance in the covariance structure. RMSEA values of less than .06 indicate good model-fit (Kline, 2005).

Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) was also used to assess model fit. This fit index ( $\chi^2$ ) tests the null hypothesis to determine how accurately the data fit the model. Failure to reject the null indicates good model-fit. Kline (2005) asserts "This is backward from the usual *reject-*

*support* context where rejection of the null hypothesis supports the researcher's theory" (p. 136). Since the null hypothesis states that there is no variance between the specified model and the data, support for the null hypothesis indicates good fit of data to the model. As a model-fit index,  $\chi^2$  values indicating probability ( $p$ ) greater than .05 indicate good model fit.

## **Results**

Initial examination of the data displayed a pattern of missing data that suggested some respondents had failed to complete the survey. Fifteen cases in the United States data set and 5 cases in the Japanese data set were dropped due to patterned missing data. Further data screening indicated random missing data. The United States data were reduced by 14 more cases and the Japanese data were reduced by 8 more cases. The resulting data set included 169 United States cases and 192 Japanese cases for a total of 361 cases. Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) indicated internal consistency of the models with  $\alpha = .72$  for the combined United States and Japanese data ( $n=361$ ),  $\alpha = .72$  for the United States data ( $n=169$ ), and  $\alpha = .73$  for the Japanese data ( $n=192$ ). Cronbach's alpha of .80 or better is preferable, but these scores indicated acceptable model reliability.

### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using SPSS (17). Table 2 presents standardized regression weights for all three data sets: combined United States and Japanese data ( $n=361$ ), United States data ( $n=169$ ), and Japanese data ( $n=192$ ). The items are grouped by variables that measure integrating conflict style: *apologize*, *problem solve*, *respect*, *remain calm*, and *private discussion*. H1 sought to demonstrate that the United States data as representative of individualistic national cultures would show

evidence of more *problem solve* than the Japanese data as representative of collectivistic national cultures.

On *problem solve*, the same number of items had strong regression weights in both United States and Japanese data. Four items in each data set resulted in factor loadings from fair to excellent (Table 2). The specific items with highest regression weights differed in each data set, but this result was expected based on the face-negotiation theory that assumes individualists and collectivists approach conflict in different ways. Therefore H1 was not supported. In these representative data, individualists did not use more *problem solve* than collectivists.

H2 sought to demonstrate that the United States data would show evidence of more *respect* than the Japan data. On *respect*, the Japan data resulted in fair to very good regression weights for three items. Only two items in the United States data resulted in strong regression weights (Table 2). In accordance with theory, the specific items with high regression weights differed on *respect*, however, H2 was not supported. For these representative data subsets, individualists did not use more *respect* than collectivists.

H3 sought to demonstrate that the United States data would show evidence of more *private discussion* than the Japan data. On *private discussion*, the Japanese data resulted in excellent regression weights for two items. Items 61 and 72 had regression weights above .71. The United States data resulted in excellent regression weight on only one item. Interestingly, item 72 had strong factor loading for both data subsets (Table 2). This result contradicts the theoretical assumption that individualistic and collectivistic cultures vary on conflict style. Additionally, the Japanese data showed evidence of more *private discussion* than the United States data, therefore H3 was not supported.

H4 sought to demonstrate that data collected in Japan, as representative of a collectivistic national culture, would show evidence of more *apologize* than data collected in the United States, as representative of an individualistic national culture. On *apologize*, there were 2 items in both data sets with factor loadings above excellent (Table 2). Contrary to theoretical assumptions of face-negotiation research, the items that resulted in excellent regression weights were identical in both data subsets. Therefore the results did not support H4.

H5 sought to demonstrate that Japan data would show evidence of more *remain calm* than data collected in the United States. On *remain calm*, the Japanese data resulted in a fair regression weight (.45) for one item. All regression weights for the United States data were below the established criteria (Table 2). Since the Japanese data demonstrated evidence of more *remain calm* than the United States data H5 was supported. However, the majority of items on *remain calm* for both data subsets resulted in negative regression weights which suggests problems with items associated with this variable.

### **Fit Indices**

The sixth hypothesis sought to demonstrate that data from the United States and Japan would fit the measurement models that represent integrating conflict style. Four model-fit indices were used as indicators: CFI, AGFI, RMSEA, and  $\chi^2$ . Fit analyses were conducted on the combined United States and Japanese data set ( $n=361$ ), United States data ( $n=169$ ), and Japanese data ( $n=192$ ). None of the data resulted in good model-fit. CFI and AGFI results were well below the threshold set for criteria. RMSEA results were much higher than the threshold set for criteria, and all  $\chi^2$  results were significant at  $p<.001$ . The fit indices for all three data sets are presented in Table 3. None of the three



data sets demonstrated good fit of data to the specified model, therefore H6 was not supported.

### **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to further investigate a measurement model from cross-cultural communication research. Through further analyses of previously collected survey data, this study sought to better understand how individualistic and collectivistic national culture groups vary with regard to integrating conflict management. In addition the data analysis sought to confirm the stability of the structural model used for face-negotiation research (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001) through specific examination of measurement models that support the factor structure. However, results from this current study contradict earlier research.

Integrating conflict style was selected for more thorough examination to better understand mixed results from earlier face-negotiation research. Oetzel et al. (2001) measured integrating conflict style in multinational/cultural groups with five categories of items. Of the five categories that represented integrating conflict style, Oetzel et al. (2001) found that three were stronger in individualistic cultures and two were stronger in collectivistic cultures. To better understand how individualistic and collectivistic national cultures would vary on integrating conflict style, two data sets that represent each group were selected for examination as measurement models with confirmatory factor analysis.

However, the CFA conducted with the specified data did not support earlier results. Rather than show evidence of more *problem solve*, *respect*, and *private discussion* in individualistic countries as Oetzel et al. (2001) reported, data from the United States, as representative of an individualistic national culture, demonstrated less

*respect* and *private discussion*, and the same amount of *problem solve* as the data from Japan. The two variables that Oetzel et al. (2001) found to be stronger in collectivistic cultures were *apologize* and *remain calm*. In this current study, *apologize* was equally strong in both data subsets. *Remain calm* demonstrated evidence of stronger regression weights for the Japan subset in this current study; however, most of the regression weights were negative numbers on this variable, which indicates other problems with the measurement of the survey items on this category.

In addition to the discrepancies in the CFA results, there was also indication that the specified data did not fit the model well. In previous research (Oetzel and Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2001) the results reported good model-fit for data to the structural model. However, in this current study, data from the United States and Japan associated with integrating conflict style resulted in poor model-fit on all four fit indices.

Since the fit indices suggest that the data do not fit the model well, the validity of the model is called into question. Structural models are supported by measurement models (Benter, 1995; Kline, 2005), therefore misfit of data to a measurement model undermines the integrity of the structure that relies upon it.

### **Implications**

This in-depth investigation of previous face-negotiation research produced several unexpected results. In addition to lack of support for earlier studies, the analyses suggest two other interesting insights and implications. The first items concerns *remain calm* as a category of items that predict integrating conflict style. Items that predict *remain calm* resulted in negative regression weights for 5 of the 8 items with data from both the United States and Japan. Reverse coding is often indicated with these results, but

examination of the items did not indicate the items were incorrectly coded. (Table 1)

Another explanation may be that *remain calm* as a variable does not predict integrating conflict style. This possibility suggests further analysis of these data with the possible outcome that *remain calm* is eliminated as a category that measures integrating conflict style.

The second interesting outcome of this study that was unexpected concerns measurement issues of validity and reliability. Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) results proved an excellent example of the difference between validity and reliability. The CFA with Japanese data resulted in an alpha score of .73, United States data resulted in an alpha score of .72, and the combined data set resulted in an alpha score of .72. Although strong internal consistency or reliability is often indicated by an alpha score of .80 or above, an  $\alpha$  of .70 is considered acceptable. These data demonstrated acceptable reliability, but the fit indices did not demonstrate strong validity of the models. In other words, these data subsets will consistently result in measurement models that do not measure what they intend to measure.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

The findings from this in-depth investigation do not imply that the instrument is faulty. The results from this current study were surprising, but the analysis was minutely specified. Before any further conclusions are drawn, more analyses are required. The other two measurement models—dominating and avoiding—could also be investigated with comparative data subsets. For this study, integrating conflict style was selected because there were mixed findings in previous research (Oetzel et al., 2001); however examination of the other conflict styles could add further understanding of the

measurement contradictions. In addition, the United States and Japan data were selected because the data sets were of comparable size and similar distribution, however the same analyses could be conducted to compare Chinese and German data. Finally, an examination of the measurement models with a combination of all four data sets would likely add insight for the discrepancies observed in the current study.

In addition, the data were examined with CFA. If the same data were analyzed with exploratory factor analysis (EFA) the results may be different. It is possible that the variables include items that do not correspond or that have similar questions which skew the results (Kline, 2005). EFA could determine how individual items factor without a specified theoretical structure. Since items on *remain calm* demonstrated such high percentage of negative regression weights, it would be interesting to see how the items load using EFA.

Potential variability within cultural groups is another consideration that arises from this current study. Qualitative communication research suggests that culture is not a measureable entity (Green et al., 2005; Neulip, 2012; Oyserman et al., 2002). The qualitative approach is consistent with variability among cultural groups. It may be that not all collectivists apologize or remain calm more often than individualists. Perhaps not all Japanese are collectivists and not all United States residents are individualists. Although face-negotiation research takes a traditional quantitative approach, consideration of within-group variability may be an important consideration for future research.

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**Table 1**

*Items that Measure Integrating Conflict Style*

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Problem-Solve

- 15. I tried to meet the other person halfway.
- 18. I worked with the other to find a mutually acceptable solution.
- 20. I tried to use “give and take” so that a compromise could be made.
- 28. I proposed a middle ground for breaking the deadlock.
- 33. I tried to compromise with the other person.
- 57. I tried to combine both of our viewpoints in our discussion.
- 59. I tried to find a middle course to resolve the situation.
- 83. I suggested solutions which combined both of our viewpoints.

Respect

- 4. I showed sensitivity in respecting the other person’s feelings.
- 40. I tried to listen well to work on our problems.
- 42. I listened to the other person to show respect.
- 67. I tried to be considerate to show respect for the person.
- 74. I wanted to be open-minded to understand the other person’s situation.
- 77. I was attentive to the other person’s feelings.

Apologize

- 2. I apologized for my behavior.
- 35. I asked for forgiveness for my actions.
- 36. I apologized even though I didn’t do anything wrong.
- 47. I admitted I made a mistake and apologized.
- 66. I apologized for what was happening.

Remain calm

- 1. I tried to maintain my composure.
- 10. I acted like I wasn’t upset.

34. I tried not to get overtly angry.  
 48. I tried to remain calm.  
 56. I tried not to get upset when we discussed the problem.

Private discussion

7. I didn't argue with the other person in public.  
 32. I waited until we were by ourselves to talk about the problem.  
 45. I suggested that we should go to a place where we could be alone to discuss the problem.  
 61. I tried to keep our discussion private.  
 72. I tried not to discuss the problem in front of others.

**Table 2**

*Standardized Regression Weights for Confirmatory Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation for Items that measure Integrating Conflict Style*

Variable/ Item	U.S. and Japan	U.S.	Japan
Apologize			
2.	.07	.32	-.08
35.	-.02	.17	-.25
36.	.08	.27	-.02
47.	<b>.94</b>	<b>.88</b>	<b>.98</b>
66.	<b>.76</b>	<b>.78</b>	<b>.71</b>
Respect			
4.	<b>.50</b>	-.18	<b>.48</b>
40.	-.07	<b>.72</b>	-.06
42.	<b>.50</b>	.14	<b>.67</b>
67.	<b>.53</b>	-.12	<b>.52</b>
74.	.06	.33	.14
77.	.19	<b>.45</b>	.22
Problem Solve			
15.	<b>.71</b>	<b>.54</b>	<b>.82</b>
18.	<b>.57</b>	<b>.46</b>	<b>.55</b>
20.	-.23	-.16	-.26



28.	<b>.66</b>	<b>.71</b>	<b>.57</b>
33.	.30	<b>.50</b>	.05
57.	.26	.28	.22
59.	.05	-.08	.20
83.	.21	-.18	<b>.44</b>
Remain Calm			
1.	-.47	-.02	-.45
10.	-.30	.22	-.57
48.	-.09	-.56	-.04
56.	.28	.37	<b>.45</b>
Private Discussion			
7.	.15	-.05	.31
32.	-.00	.10	.04
45.	.21	.00	.30
61.	<b>.94</b>	.20	<b>.87</b>
72.	<b>.65</b>	<b>.75</b>	<b>.78</b>

*Note.* Wording of survey items that correspond to numbers are listed in Table 1.  
Regression weights >.40 are in boldface.

**Table 3**

*Model-Fit Indices from Confirmatory Factor Analysis on Integrating Conflict Style*

Data subset	<i>n</i>	CFI	AGFI	RMSEA	$\chi^2$
U.S. and Japan	361	.23	.51	.14	2835.58*
U.S.	169	.22	.49	.14	1534.31*
Japan	192	.26	.47	.15	1770.77*

*Note.* CFI = comparative fit index; AGFI = Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

\* $p < .001$

# **“As Long as You Live Under My Ocean, You’ll Obey My Rules”: A Content Analysis of the Portrayal of Authority Figures in Disney Animated Films**

*Tina McCorkindale & Lynn Dee Gregory*

*While most research concerning Disney animated films has investigated gender inequality, little research has examined interpersonal communication between authority figures and “others.” Results from a quantitative analysis of 285 interactions in 20 animated Disney films indicated the power of most authority figures was legitimate, intimating that few actually earned their positions. Typically, when women were authority figures they were often portrayed as villainesses. Also, most characters complied with the authority figure’s requests whether they agreed with them or not, and more than half of the interactions were negative. Based on social learning theory, these findings may affect modeling behaviors in children. Suggestions for future research are included.*

## **Introduction**

Disney is a significant cultural icon in the United States, whose power is virtually unmatched by any other entertainment-based organization (Giroux, 1995a). In 2010, the Walt Disney Company (Disney) earned \$38 billion in revenue thanks in part to its animated successes, such as *Toy Story 3* and *Tangled*. Not only does Disney support and boast theme parks and film franchises, it also owns other media-based companies including ESPN and Marvel Comics.

Disney’s power is tremendous and has become ingrained in American society. This “Disneyization” is somewhat similar to “Disneyfication” but different in that “Disneyization” includes artifacts that may not be instantly recognizable as Disney but still have an impact on society. One of the most powerful Disney artifacts children are exposed to is its animated films (Bryman, 2004, p. 1).

Giroux (1995b) argued Disney animated films should be analyzed in and of themselves, without analyzing the background of Disney as a corporation. He wrote:

The productive side of Disney lies in its ability to address in highly successful pedagogical terms, the needs and interests of children. Moreover, its films offer opportunities for children to experience pleasure and to locate themselves in a world that resonates with their desires and interests. (p. 30)

The social context of media analysis, including the codification of gender roles and models of power and authority, are important to a critical approach exploring the potential effects of media. This is especially true given children as Disney's target audience (Grace, David, & Ryan, 2008). While there may be some value in pursuing research that attempts to tie Disney's corporate belief system or politics to its media productions, the present research focuses not on Disney's intentions, but on its potential for impact.

Disney has had a tremendous influence on and over family life and how children develop due to its pervasiveness - the *Disneyization* of the public sphere (Mayes-Elma, 2011). Hurley (2005) suggested children's self-image is affected by the movies they watch, especially fairy tales, while others have suggested children may acquire their gender schema from cultural definitions of gender and its roles, which includes cultural myths (Bem, 1981; Matti & Lisosky, 1999). Disney's influence is seen not only in the United States, but worldwide (Giroux & Pollock, 2011). Though a great deal of critical research has been publicized around the world, it has been ineffective in the rewriting of the "princess trope [where] the spunkiest of *princesses* ... remain thin, beautiful, kind, obedient or punished for disobedience, and headed for the altar" (Gillam & Wooden, 2008, p. 3).

While researchers have primarily focused on gender and racial issues in Disney films, few have investigated the interaction and relationships between characters, such as power and its social influence. Power is defined as “the ability to influence the outcomes of other people, [and] is a key variable that regulates a wide range of human social interactions” (Maner, Kaschak, & Jones, 2010, p. 122). Power struggles are frequently seen in Disney films between heroes and villains, or even between parents and siblings. As previous gender research has indicated, there is evidence of gender stereotypes in Disney films in terms of the authority figures and their interaction (e.g., Tanner, Haddock, Zimmerman, & Lund, 2003). Given the target age group of these films and their wide popularity, analyzing the portrayal of authority figures in Disney films is important. Applying basic research in media influence and power/authority to an analysis of Disney animated features allows for the exploration of how authority figures are portrayed in general and how they interact with “others” in terms of their power and attitudes.

## **Literature Review**

### **Influence of Media**

According to Albert Bandura (1986), social learning theory involves imitation of a modeler, which affects learning based on observing, recalling, and imitating a behavior enacted by others. Children are especially susceptible as they learn responses from observing others either through personal experience or the media (Bandura, 2001; Seigel, 1992). Few studies, though, have been devoted to social learning in Disney films. One of these studies found that, when compared to television, indirect aggression in Disney films was low enough so that the researchers predicted it would not influence children’s

behaviors. (Coyne & Whitehead, 2008). However, their small and limited study is not enough to discourage continued research. Additionally, the nature of film versus television in terms of viewing frequency may mollify concerns about repeated exposure as a requisite of social learning. Lin (2009) points out that the popularity of Disney films on tape or DVD makes them as frequently watched as television cartoons.

## **Gender**

Many qualitative studies about Disney have focused on gender issues or disparities (Giroux, 1999; Schweizer & Schweizer, 1998; Towbin, Haddock, Zimmerman, Lund, & Tanner, 2003; Wasko, 2001;). Giroux contended that females in Disney films are frequently portrayed as subordinate to males and “define their power and desire almost exclusively in terms of dominant male narratives” (Giroux, p. 99). This is demonstrated in *The Little Mermaid* where Ariel gives up her voice for her male counterpart, but still is able to capture true love’s kiss based solely on her appearance and not her personality. In addition, she gives up her former sea life to be with Prince Eric. Similarly, Jasmine’s life in *Aladdin* was defined by men, including her father and the title character.

Other researchers have focused on the evolution of females in Disney films. Wasko (2001) discussed the fundamental character differences between *Snow White* and *The Little Mermaid* in that Ariel is “sensual, aggressive, and mischievous” while Snow White is “obedient, hesitant, and naïve” (p. 134). In spite of these differences, though, both are surrounded by men and are on the quest to marry a “prince.” With *Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella*, and *The Little Mermaid*, Zipes (1995) suggested that, even though the

heroines of these movies are beautiful, they are “pale and pathetic” compared to the evil and demonic female characters in the film who have such an overwhelmingly presence.

A co-writer of Disney’s *Pocahontas* suggested that the female heroines frequently have external problems, such as a male character who typically has created his own set of problems (Schweizer & Schweizer, 1998). Even though these heroines are strong in the beginning of the movies, they often require rescuing by stronger, male characters (Towbin et al., 2003). Therefore, the women are “helpless ornaments in need of protection” (Zipes, 1995, p. 37). On the surface, one exception to this rule appears to be *Pocahontas*, who has been regarded as an improvement to *Snow White* and *Cinderella*. However, this is merely a façade; under the surface, she can still be regarded as succumbing to gender stereotypes (Dundes, 2001). *Mulan*, who disguises herself as a man to fight in a war and is eventually celebrated by her country when her sex is revealed, appears to be a better exception. While Hoerrner (1996) agreed that gender stereotypes are reinforced in Disney films, she finds female characters were not passive, timid females as previous research has suggested. In fact, the females were “strong characters with problem-solving abilities and actions on a more equal footing with their male peers” (Hoerrner, p. 225). Other researchers see these strong female characters as a facade of girl-power (Dundes, 2011; Henke, Umble, & Smith, 1996; Marshall & Sensoy, 2009; Towbin et al., 2003). The question remains, however, of whether their abilities and actions translated to positions of power and authority.

In most Disney animated films, there is a struggle between a hero/heroine and a villain/nemesis. One study found men were presented as villains much more than would be statistically expected while women were more likely to be portrayed as adolescents or

young adults much more than statistically expected (Faherty, 2001). Also, men were more likely to be portrayed as strong and heroic figures, who are often rescuing women (Towbin et al., 2003).

Attractiveness, including the ideals of beautiful princesses and handsome prince charming, has also played a role in research about Disney. Usually, the heroes/heroines are attractive characters while villains are unattractive. In an analysis of Disney films and beauty stereotypes, research has found across animated movies, attractive characters were more likely to have higher intelligence, lower aggressiveness, and greater moral virtue than unattractive characters (Bazzini, Curtin, Joslin, Regan, & Martz, 2010). Previous research has included a range of attractiveness variables including facial features and expressions (Artz, 2012), weight, and exaggerated racial features (Towbin et al., 2003).

### **Race and Ethnicity**

The portrayal of race and ethnicity in Disney films has been studied with fairly consistent results critical of the stereotypical characterization of minorities (Cappiccie et al., 2012; Faherty, 2001; Koenig, 1997; Matyas, 2010; Towbin et al., 2003). While newer films may portray some positive portrayals, negative gender, race, and cultural stereotypes are still the norm (Towbin et al.). Faherty (2001) notes that, while Disney films often depict European folk tales, the white character majority does not reflect the diversity of modern society. Research by Matyas ties together the white majority and with the more recent introduction of minority leads, this makes the value of whiteness evident, which is inherent in the Americanization of heroes and the racial stereotyping of villains. According to Lacroix (2004), “Disney films work to maintain the invisibility of the construction of whiteness” (p. 227), and in fact many of the positive minority

portrayals begin stereotypically negative but are turned around when they are able to win over the white majority (Towbin et al.). The research seems to point to the inherent power of whiteness in Disney films.

Cappiccie and her colleagues (2012) used critical race theory and the racism in Disney animations to train students in recognizing the small “ways in which the media, as an influential social institution, make use of microaggressions to routinely oppress multicultural and minority groups” (p. 49). Defined as “brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to people of color because they belong to a racial minority group” (Sue et al., 2007, p. 273), these are insidious in perpetuating the power of whiteness and are often overlooked in studies of race and ethnicity. These subconscious and unconsidered messages may be particularly powerful for children whose higher-level thinking has not developed and whose construction of the world and the people in it are modeled in media (Bandura, 2001). The power of Disney media to frame understanding of social constructs such as race extends also to the constructs of age (Robinson, Callister, Magoffin, & Moore, 2007) and class (Artz, 2007), both of which have been infrequently considered.

### **Relational dynamics**

Studies have also investigated family dynamics in Disney movies, especially the parent/sibling relationship. Mothers are generally absent from many Disney movies while the princesses lack personal identity and individuality (Byrne & McQuillan, 1999; Haas, 1995; Worthington, 2009). Haas contended that the Disney mother lacks identity and is typically “absent, generously good, powerfully evil, or a silent other” (p. 196). Generally in Disney animated features, when there is the absence of a parent, most often the mother,



the step-parent fills in the role with negative consequences. *Cinderella* and *Snow White* are two examples of films where the main characters suffer because their beauty is envied by a stepmother (Kestenbaum, 1983) codifying the evil caricature into which Disney females may fall (Haas).

Murphy (1995) maintained the anonymous mother, as portrayed in the *Jungle Book* and other Disney animated films including the ones outlined above, reinforces dominant images of patriarchal power and autonomy. According to Sells (1995), “Of course, within Disney’s patriarchal ideology, any woman with power has to be represented as a castrating bitch” (p. 181)—a sentiment in line with Haas’s (1995) powerfully evil female. In the absence of any mother figure, the father becomes the primary caretaker.

Tanner et al. (2003) found the majority of time, fathers were portrayed as controlling and aggressive who expect their children to earn their love as opposed to granting it unconditionally, quite unlike the generously good female character described by Haas (1995). Wynns and Rosenfeld (2011) identified messages presented in father-daughter relationships in Disney movies. In most of these situations, the father is a king and the daughter a princess. The authors indicated these father/daughter portrayals display incongruity in their messaging between what the viewer sees in the movie and what is experienced in reality. One message depicted is “unselfish rebellion is good,” as shown in *Beauty and the Beast* when Belle sacrifices her happiness for her father. Another message is “fathers do not know what they are talking about” as evidenced in *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin*, and *The Little Mermaid* where fathers are dramatically wrong in their estimation of the object of their daughters’ love. Giroux (1995b) suggested

that, while *The Little Mermaid* appears on the surface to be about a woman-mermaid struggling against parental control, it actually becomes a story about a traditional “housewife-in-the making” (p. 37). Overall, research seems to indicate that Disney fathers are typically elevated and mothers marginalized while reifying traditional gender roles (Tanner et al.). This is especially evident in terms of power roles and authority.

Other scholars have found that power does lie with the fairy tale princesses in Disney animated films. DoRozario (2004) argued, “If the princess does indeed represent authority, if she is the key, after all, to the kingdom, the shift in her role is significant for she is now questioning and expanding the definitions of her role” (p. 57). However, the princess is still in a position where her father has “vested” power, though she has an active role in the outcome. According to Wasko (2001), feminist critiques on Disney have shown where power ultimately rests in society, and “unquestionably, it is with the males in these stories” (p. 136) where male power is viewed positively and female power is viewed negatively. In effect, in some cases the women appear strong, while in others they appear weak. In an analysis of *Shrek*, Marshall and Sensoy (2009) argued that, in children’s films, “[p]ower circulates through representations of femininity that are simultaneously empowering and disempowering” (p. 162). In other words, the power portrayed by these female characters is questionable at best.

## **Power**

Power is an important consideration when analyzing the interaction between an authority figure and an “other” whether in terms of gender or some other variable. Even though there are similarities between power and social influence, King (1975) distinguished the two by stating that “power is the potential to influence, and influence is

the result of actualized power” (p. 7). Therefore, power is an individual quality while influence is the action of using power over another. One definition of social influence is the “ways in which the opinions and attitudes of one person affect the opinions and attitudes of another person” (Martin & Hewstone, p. 347). However, for a power relationship to occur, there must be an effect-dependence; in other words, the person influenced must perceive the influencer as controlling important resources (King).

According to Debnam (1983), in describing the intention of power, an actor must be aware of the power he or she yields. However, in Disney animated movies, the authority figure is typically aware of his or her intentions. The intention of an authority figure is always in the forefront in personal reflections, asides to the camera, interpersonal discussions, or audible intrapersonal communication. Wasko (2001) found that all main Disney characters have a goal and must confront some issue, typically involving another character, to reach that goal.

There are different types of power characters can hold over one another. According to Roiger and Hellweg (1986), certain characteristics of power included: rewarding activity, punishing activity, expertise, activation of impersonal commitments, and activation of personal commitments. One consideration of power includes the qualities an authority possesses to persuade another to think or act a certain way. French and Raven (1960) applied five types of power in organization, which will be used to analyze the types of power in this study. *Coercive power* is forcing someone to behave against their will. *Reward power* is the ability of an authority figure to reward by giving an “other” what they want or to punish by withholding something. *Legitimate power* comes with an appointed role such as a king or police officer. *Referent power* is a

personality characteristic people have which makes them powerful, such as charisma.

Finally, *expert power* is derived from the knowledge or skill one possesses.

Power also influences the decision-making process. Matti and Lisosky (1999) examined decision-making of Disney characters and found command decisions (community impact with command authority) were primarily made by male characters while personal decisions (impact to self or one other but not in the form of a command) were made more often by females. The authors concluded “these characterizations reinforce the stereotype that women are incompetent as risk takers and powerful decision-makers” (p. 66). An important consideration when investigating the role of power in an interaction is to analyze the “other’s” response. The power of the authority figure may influence the reaction of the other, which may be obedience. The classic example of obedience to authority was the experiment in which Stanley Milgram (1963) demonstrated how people could commit atrocities on other people based on the influence of an authority figure.

Nearly three-quarters of Disney animated feature films contain “evil” references, which in part represents some sort of power struggle between characters (Fouts, Callan, Piasentin, & Lawson, 2006). Power is typically viewed in the hands of an evil woman, as opposed to the heroine of the film. Bell (1995) indicated that Disney movies are filled with femmes fatales or wicked stepmothers who are typically middle aged and draw their power and authority from their “thinking only for themselves as sexual subjects” (p. 116). This is in stark contrast to the stereotypical grandmother role of a plump, pear-shaped woman who is soft-hearted and kind. One study analyzing how older characters were portrayed found a large number of negative portrayals; mainly, characters were seen as

grumpy or evil (Robinson et al., 2007). Also, a disproportionate number of these characters were white and male.

Downey (1996) studied the paradox of feminine empowerment in *Beauty and the Beast*. In the first half of the movie, Belle resisted the masculine dominance of the Beast. However, in the end, “The Beast has learned that he must give up power to have power; Belle has learned that her emergent power was a valuable resource she possessed all along” (p. 206). Downey contended *Beauty and the Beast* challenges traditional patriarchal power in a way, though her findings could be read with a more socio-critical perspective as Belle’s power only exists in terms of her relationship with the Beast.

Films, such as *Snow White*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *The Little Mermaid*, base their plots on some type of reward coming from true love. In fact, in many Disney films, there seems to be a crisis in which the heroine must get married in a short amount of time, which carries qualities of a shotgun wedding (Byrne & McQuillan, 1999). *Beauty and the Beast* is one exception to this. In many cases, the heroine may be the focus of the narrative, but in some, she is not as in *Beauty and the Beast*. Here, Belle is portrayed as more of a “mechanism” for solving the Beast’s “dilemma” (Jeffords, 1995, p. 167). Jeffords concluded these films suggest that the “happiness and well-being of society as a whole depends upon the condition of these men” (p. 172). Beres (1999) suggested that *Beauty and the Beast* gives viewers who are in an abusive relationship the sense if they “act in a loving way toward her abusive partner, he might learn from her how to be loving and turn into a prince” (p. 198). In both cases, any power or potential power residing in the females is defined in terms of her usefulness to the male character’s personal growth or achievement. This is especially alarming in its potential to perpetuate abuse.

Research has also linked power and aggression (Tedeschi, 2001). Research into aggression in children's cartoons found physical aggression, displayed by more males, exceeded social aggression, carried out more by females (Luther & Legg, Jr., 2010). Research has also found men primarily use physical means to express their emotions in Disney movies (Hoerrner, 1996; Towbin et al, 2003). On the other hand, Coyne and Whitehead (2008) did not find any differences between male and females and their displays of indirect aggression. The most commonly found form of indirect aggression in their study was social exclusion, defined as "malicious gossip or excluding others from a group" (p. 387). Interestingly, characters with high socioeconomic status were more likely to be portrayed as indirect aggressors perhaps because their social status places them above the crudeness of direct aggression.

Though there is a great deal of research on media, power, and even Disney, there are still topics that have yet to be explored. While most Disney movies typically delineate between classes where the upper class gives orders to people of lower classes and often portrays supervisor/subordinate relationships with kings and servants, little research exists examining either of these relationships. In addition, like most media analyses, most research about Disney has been conducted qualitatively and is subject to the researcher's interpretations (Faherty, 2001).

Therefore, researching the interaction of authority figures in Disney animated films using methods that include quantitative analysis is important. Based on the literature review, the following research questions were posited:

RQ1: How are authority figures portrayed in Disney animated films?

RQ2: What is the reaction of the "other(s)" to authority figures' actions?

RQ3: What gender differences, if any, exist between how authority figures and “others” are portrayed?

### **Method**

To determine how authority figures were portrayed in Disney movies, 20 animated Disney movies were coded. This purposive, nonprobability sample was chosen based on several criteria: gross sales, animation, and human characters. Movies, such as the *Lion King* and *Bambi*, were excluded because the characters were animals even though they portrayed anthropomorphic characteristics. Therefore, all Disney animated movies with human characters were considered.

The primary researcher along with undergraduate students developed the codesheet. Before the movies were coded, a pretest was conducted to ensure that the category system was clear and well defined. Minor revisions were made and coding performed. Fifteen trained coders in an advanced communication research methods class coded the 20 movies.

### **Unit of Analysis**

In the 20 movies, there were 285 interactions between authority figures and “other(s)”. The unit of analysis was an entire scene in which two actors were engaged, one acting as an authority figure and an “other” in the interaction. An authority figure was operationally defined as “a person who has the power or right to give orders, make decisions, or have control over others. These individuals may be experts or anyone regarded as an authority by someone else.” The term “other” was deliberately chosen to describe those interacting with an authority figure because sometimes they were submissive while other times they were not.

### **Intercoder Reliability**

Manifest variables coded included: sex, age, status, relationship between authority and “other.” Latent variables included: type of authority, attitude of authority figure toward subject, attitude toward authority figure, methods of influence, motive, and an “other’s” response to authority figure. Two movies were coded for intercoder reliability. Using Scott’s Pi, all the manifest variables had 1.0 intercoder reliability except for relationship between authority figure and other (.75) and age of authority figure (.89). For latent variables, Scott’s Pi formula determined the following intercoder reliabilities: type of authority (.75), attitude of authority figure toward subject (.66), attitude toward authority figure (.75), methods of influence (.83), motive (1.0), and an “other’s” response to authority figure (1.0).

### **Results**

The first research question asked how authority figures were portrayed while the second one asked how others in this interaction were portrayed. The last research question was posed to determine if any sex differences existed between the authority figure and an “other.”

In analyzing the movies, one would expect the main character to be present in most of the 285 interactions. Interestingly, while the main character appeared in 74% of interactions, he or she was identified as the authority figure only 14% of the time.

#### **Sex**

In 71% of the interactions between two characters, the authority figures were male. On the other hand, 64% of the time, male characters were the “others” while 31% were female. In less than 5% of the cases, both male and female characters were present.



## **Age**

Authority figures most frequently (39% of the time) were perceived to be between the ages of 31 and 55, followed closely by young adults (22%) and those over the age of 55 (21%). In only 13% of the cases were the characters under the age of 18. However, the “others” in the interaction were found to be younger with most seen as under the age of 18 (39%) and young adults (31%). Only a small number were older than 55 (5%).

## **Status**

Interestingly, the authority figure was more likely to be perceived as upper class (46%). Only 16% were lower class while the middle class (23%) rounded out the rest. In 15% of the interactions, the status was unable to be determined. On the other hand, the “other” of the interaction was more likely to be lower (37%) and middle class (29%). The “others” were upper class only 20% of the time.

## **Types of authority**

In nearly half (44%) of all interactions, the authority figure held a position of legitimate authority (defined as an appointed position). Coercive authority (defined as punishment or threat is used to control the “other”) also frequently appeared (20%). Other types of authority that occurred less frequently included expert (14%) and defined as one having knowledge or expertise); referent (11%) and defined as one who earns respect through charisma, personality, or charm; and reward (6%) as defined by the power to reward the “other” through praise or money.

## **Relationship between Authority Figure and “Other”**

The relationship between the authority figure and the “other” was most likely to be employer/employee (21%). Some of the other relationships included enemy/nemesis

(16%), parental (12%), stranger (12%), and friend (9%). Mentor/teacher relationships as well as significant other relationships comprised only 7% each of the total interaction.

#### **Attitude of authority figure toward the “other”**

Most frequently, the attitude of the authority figure to the “other” was negative, comprised of anger (24%) or malicious intent (16%). Other negative attitudes included arrogance (10%), indifference (5%), irritation (10%), and disappointment (2%). Fewer scenarios showed positive behaviors, such as loving attitude (15%), happiness (8%), or gratefulness (3%).

#### **Attitude toward authority figures**

The most common response of the “other” toward the authority figure was fear (13%), and indifference (13%). “Others” were also defensive (9%), sad (8%), grateful (8%), cautious (7%), angry (5%), loving (5%), and disappointed (4%).

#### **Methods of influence**

Close to half (44%) of the authority figures used authoritative power to wield control over the “others” (defined as exercising absolute authority using verbal communication). Passive (23%) and physical force (16%) were also popular methods of influence to get the “other” to comply. Supernatural (9%) and manipulation (8%) were least likely to occur in the films studied.

#### **Motives**

To gain power (32%) and encouragement or helping the “other” (32%) were the most frequent motive for the interaction. Other motives included disciplining the “other” (17%) and embarrassment (3%).

#### **The “Other’s” Response to Authority Figure**

More than half the time, the “other” complied (59%) while 20% of the time, the “other” defied the authority figure. Other responses included the character doing nothing (9%) or other (3%). Coders were unable to determine the reaction 9% of the time.

### **Differences**

There were only minor differences between female and male characters in terms of authority figures. A Chi-square test of independence indicated a significant relationship between sex and age ( $\chi^2$  (12, N = 284) = 55.05,  $p = .00$ ). Women in authoritative roles were more likely to be under 18 while men were more likely to be young adults or older adults. A chi-square also found differences between the observed and expected frequencies of the socioeconomic status of the authority figure and the “other.” The most frequent interaction between two individuals was when the authority figure was upper class and the subject was working class, followed by interactions between an authority figure and other who were both upper class ( $\chi^2$  (9, N = 285) = 55.45,  $p = .00$ ). Differences between other variables were not found.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The purpose of this research was to explore how authority figures were portrayed in 20 animated Disney films. Three research questions were posed to this end. The first of the three focused on identifying the qualities of Disney authority figures, and the third explored differences between the authority figure and the “other.” There appeared to be a general portrait of the authority figure in the Disney films analyzed. Authority figures were most likely to be males, perceived to be between 31 and 55, and of the upper class. “Others” were described most often as males who were both younger and of a lower social class than the authority figure. These characterizations align with current power

structures and reflect the traditional role of males in power positions and of females in more passive roles as neither the authority nor the “other.” This supports past research that notes female disempowerment (Bell 1995; Wasco, 2001) perpetuating a stereotype and potentially affecting children’s self-image (Bazzini, 2010; Hurley, 2005), their overall sense of acceptable gender roles (Bem, 1981; Giroux & Pollock, 2011; Matti & Lisosky, 1999), and their beliefs/behaviors (Bandura, 2001; Seigel, 1992).

Females in authoritarian roles were more likely to be under eighteen. On the other hand, female “others” were more likely to be young adults (18-30) while males were more likely to be older. Most of the “others” were under the age of 18, such as Ariel in *The Little Mermaid*. Older adults were more likely to be portrayed as authority figures over adolescent characters indicating perhaps experience may an important quality of authority. Arguably, other characteristics may be related to age as attainment of position and wealth is likely related to the passage of time.

Male authority figures were more likely to be lower class while females in similar positions were more likely to be upper class: Female power and authority is likely to be derived from external sources such as money or social position. Cinderella’s stepmother is able to order the compliance of even those who love the girl and were devoted to her father because of the power derived from wealth and social class. The fact that the overwhelming majority of authority figures depicted in the films tend to come from the upper class while the “others” tend to come from the lower to middle class reflects only a portion of reality and can send a dangerous message that wealth is a primary indicator of rational authority. Admittedly, emphasizing extreme class distinctions (prince vs. pauper) is a classic dramatic device, however, it may only serve to further the divide between

authority figures and “others” especially in the minds of young viewers. More critically, it may even prescribe social reality (Bandura, 1986; 2001) similar to the *beauty equals good* formula identified by Bazzini and her co-investigators (2010).

Authority figures were most likely to be someone other than the film’s main character. This isn’t surprising given the almost formulaic plotline of a majority of Disney movies—the main character as the underdog. What is interesting is the additive effect that this might have on decreasing the likelihood that females, even female leads, would be represented as authority figures. This may further relegate princesses and female heroines to more passive roles where any potential for power is dependent on males (DoRozario, 2004; Matti & Liosky, 1999; Wasko, 2001;). In the end, no matter how powerful or where that power derives from, female power is much more likely to be equivocating (Marshall & Sensoy, 2009).

Authority figures were depicted in various roles. The parent-child role is a Disney standard. In these films, authority figures as parent were primarily fathers. The mother was only present in *Mulan*. Ariel’s father in *The Little Mermaid* holds power over her in the early part of the movie while Ursula holds power over her in the latter part by capturing her voice. The patriarchal influence is also seen in *Beauty and the Beast* (as well as the influence of the Beast himself) and *Aladdin*. Similar to previous studies (Haas, 1995), the mother was not present in all films studied. Therefore, there is a lack of female parental role models for children.

Authority may derive from a range of power types (French & Raven, 1960). The most common power type in the films analyzed was *legitimate*, not surprising given the number of monarchical and parental roles. *Expert*, *referent*, and *reward* power were also

used, but perhaps the most impactful in terms of social learning may be that of *coercive* identified in coding by an authority's use of punishment or threat. There is a definitive relationship between power and aggression (Tedeschi, 2001). The male typically exhibited an angry demeanor and even physical violence towards loved ones. King Triton in *The Little Mermaid* is perhaps the prototypical example. When he finds that Ariel has disobeyed him and collected artifacts from the human world, he rages and destroys her collection while she cowers.

For females, coercive power tends to take the form of social aggression (Luther & Legg, 2010) and there is no better example than that of the stepsisters in *Cinderella*. Female authority's physical aggression is perhaps more evident in the Disney films than in others, according to Luther & Legg, because of the supernatural nature and evil character of the Disney witches. For example, Snow White's stepmother who, not only uses her legitimate power to order the huntsman to kill Snow White, but also battles Prince Charming using magic. Females fell into categories of characters, identified in work by researchers such as Bell (1995), who used sexuality or physical appeal, feminine sacrifice or nurture, or female wickedness. When women were the authority figures, they were often portrayed as villainesses, such as the wicked stepmother in *Snow White* or Ursula in *The Little Mermaid*. And, like Ursula in *The Little Mermaid*, the evil female character also appeared in *Sleeping Beauty* and *Cinderella*.

Overall, the portrayal of authority figures in the selected films is quite negative. From evil spell-casting and social undermining to physical and verbal rages, the overall impression of the viewer is likely quite negative. In many cases, this fit into and was even the engine of dramatic device. This was evident in the analysis of the Disney films where

the use of both coercive power including Ariel's fear of her father/king, Jasmine and Aladdin's retreat from Jafar, and Mulan's interactions with her father and his military leaders. This is concerning, first and perhaps foremost, because of how authority is modeled for young viewers. According to Bandura (1986, 2001), these models can provide a framework for identifying authority and for building those behaviors identified as empowering. It is also concerning because of the way that the films tend to portray interactions between authority figures and "others" in ways that may perpetuate the use of more negative power types.

The interaction between authority figures and "others" has the potential to build egalitarian, democratic exchange or to build a society based on domination and social stratification through obedience and social influence (Milgram, 1974). Reminiscent of Milgram's experiment, in the selected Disney films, authority figures typically expected full obedience from the "other," and "others" were portrayed as submissive, weak, and vulnerable. The queen in Snow White had no doubt that her huntsman would return with the heart of Snow White and his initial intention was to do just that. While most of the characters obeyed the orders of the authority figures whether they agreed with them or not, those who did not, like the huntsman, met quite negative consequences. One study by Michener and Burt (1975) found that participants were more likely to comply when coercive power is high rather than low, certainly supported in this research. This may send a message that compliance is the best response, regardless if the authority figure was right or wrong and especially when they wield coercive or legitimate power.

In some cases, negative behaviors were used to get the "other" to comply including physical force and supernatural power. Only in a small number of cases were

positive behaviors employed. The primary way authority figures exercised their authority was *authoritatively*, meaning they used their power to verbally gain compliance as in a command to a subordinate or a parental dictate. This was true in the aggregate and reflects all types of power figures and relational situations. Arguably there were still some underlying power types that may support negative interactions, such as coercive, and that devalue more valid forms of power, such as expert. In other words, verbal exchanges were likely to be one-way and not those that truly build consensus and are the earmark of mutually fulfilling interactions. One example of this is the lack of mentorship/teacher interactions in the films, which is a primary positive influencer according to Social Learning theory (Bandura, 1986).

Disney movies also portrayed the power and attitude of the authority figure over the “other.” One of the most significant findings relates to the attitude of the authority figure toward the subject. More than half the time, the interaction was negative with more than a quarter portraying the authority figure as having malicious intent. Therefore, more often than not, the intentions of the authority figure were not in the best interest of the “other,” but rather motivated by selfishness. An example of this includes the sea witch, Ursula, in *The Little Mermaid*, who manipulated Ariel into giving up her voice with the hopes of gaining King Triton’s kingdom. Unfortunately, in only 15% of the interactions was there a positive attitude motivating the authority figure. Together with expectations of total obedience and the use of commands or dictates, this may model a rather helpless, and hopeless, power differential that aggrandizes authority and further subjugates the “other.”



The responses of “others” in the Disney films analyzed tended to be overwhelmingly negative, with one of the most common being “fear.” Seperich and McCalley (2006) stated, “the most common use of fear comes from those who enjoy using their entitled power” (p. 10) and the number of legitimate power-based authority figures in these films certainly supports that. Fear is a passive reaction further disempowering the “other.” Because the majority of time the authority figure’s intent was negative, it is disconcerting that nearly half of the “others” complied. However, the number of characters who defied (20%) does give hope, even though the consequences may lend themselves more to supporting compliance. According to Imai (1991), strategies to gain compliance should include reasoning, promise, or hinting compared to the use of a threat or invoking a role. As Beast grows into his humanity, he employs more of these alternative strategies as opposed to aggression.

In conclusion, many of Disney’s stories reflect social vulnerability, defined as “any life situation or condition that makes a person susceptible to being hurt or disadvantaged in some manner, whether physically, emotionally, or economically” (Faherty, 2001, p. 4). Even though these films are not the primary source of influence for how an authority figure engages in an action with an “other,” there is evidence of the influence of the media on children’s perceptions of society. Thus, children who view Disney films could come away with a distorted view of how to act or to manage power when in positions of authority. Rather than relying on stereotypes and tired dramatic devices, Disney could explore more fully the development of positive regard between the powerful and their interactants. As Giroux cautioned (1999), the appeal of Disney should not “blind us to the fact that they are about more than entertainment” (p. 5).

### Limitations and Future Research

Future studies should build upon content and thematic analyses by exploring impact. Bandura (1986) and other researchers have found a relationship between modeling and behavior through social learning theory. And, as Seigel (1992) attested, children are especially susceptible when observing the media, including Disney films. Through surveys and studies as to the effect of these films, especially as it relates to social learning theory, they may further society's understanding of media effects. Tailoring the Read Aloud to a "Watch" Aloud, may provide some insight into how children are interpreting what they see on the screen. Behavioral observation would also be an appropriate method for investigating outcomes.

In addition, the content of these films may change with Disney's 2006 acquisition of Pixar, which has recently produced films such as *Up* and *Finding Nemo*. It would be interesting and perhaps of some social significance to investigate whether time and changing gender roles, as well as depictions of race and ethnicity has had any impact on the way that power and authority are derived or depicted. Despite any limitations, this study provided support for existing research and a starting point for future investigations.

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## Strict Father or Nurturant Parent? President Jimmy Carter's Rhetoric of Morality in Support of the Panama Canal Treaties

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*Many politicians defend their policies and actions through the use of moral appeals. President Jimmy Carter provides a useful example for studying meanings of morality in political discourse. This essay analyzes Carter's public statements on an issue that he defined and discussed in moral terms—the Panama Canal Treaties. Drawing from George Lakoff's work on morality and politics, I applied to Carter's Panama rhetoric Lakoff's notions of Strict Father Morality and Nurturant Parent Morality and found that Carter's discourse contained elements of both kinds of morality. As a result, President Carter presented himself as a moral, but authoritarian, leader while demanding that the U.S. public experience the new treaties as an exercise in moral nurturance. This disconnect in Carter's Panama rhetoric may explain why, despite the broad appeal of morality-based arguments and the fact that Carter ultimately achieved ratification of the Panama Canal Treaties, the public embraced neither the new pact nor Carter's brand of presidential morality.*

On the evening of September 7, 1977, helicopters carried television sets and electric generators to the remote villages of Panama. Such an unusual sight was precipitated neither by the destruction wrought by a natural disaster nor the pleasant distractions of a World Cup soccer finals. Excited Panamanians in outlying areas huddled around their screens to watch...a treaty signing. The historic occasion was the signing of the Panama Canal Treaties, a pact that profoundly changed the status of a key international waterway and the relationship between the United States, Panama, and the rest of Central America. In spring of 1978, President Jimmy Carter had won Senate ratification of the new agreement that would eventually cede control of the Panama Canal to its host nation after decades of U.S. management. The treaties marked a hard-fought and impressive foreign policy and political victory for Carter. The triumph came in the face of strong opposition from the U.S. public and Congress. Moreover, several previous

administrations had attempted—and failed—in their efforts to peacefully resolve the long-festering canal controversy.

For Carter, the canal issue had quickly emerged as a top priority in his new administration. He perceived the need for a new agreement as a moral issue. According to Zbigniew Brzezinski, Carter's national security advisor, “[T]his occasion represented the ideal fusion of morality and politics: [Carter] was doing something good for peace, responding to the passionate desires of a small nation and yet helping the long-range U.S. national interest” (Hargrove, p. 124). Carter realized that not everyone shared his belief that the canal issue represented a moral cause worthy of political sacrifice. During remarks to the National Education Association Board of Directors, Carter stated that “many of the Members of the Senate tell me privately that they know that [treaty ratification is] a right and proper and decent thing to do, but they are fearful about the political consequences at home” (Carter, February 10, 1978, p. 297). To convince Congress and the U.S. public to do what was “right and proper and decent,” Carter made dozens of public statements about the treaties, including a nationally televised primetime speech.

Applying George Lakoff’s concepts of Strict Father Morality and Nurturant Parent Morality, I will analyze Carter’s use of morality in his rhetoric about the Panama Canal Treaties. I argue that Carter’s combined rhetorical use of both models contributed to a political and moral incoherence that undermined the President’s ability to achieve popular support for the treaties, despite his use of moral appeals and ultimate legislative success in achieving the treaties’ passage. In structuring the essay, I first present a brief outline of Lakoff’s ideas about morality and politics. In the next section, those ideas will

be applied to Carter's Panama Canal discourse. Finally, I discuss the implications of the analysis. As politicians continue to use "morality" as a rhetorical resource in responding to and persuading about issues such as abortion, global warming, and war, rhetorical critics must develop more sophisticated ways to study the complex intersection of rhetoric, politics, and morality. This essay offers one such approach.

### **Carter's Moral Rhetoric**

Numerous commentators have written about Carter's rhetorical emphasis on religion, ethics, and moral transcendence during the 1976 campaign. Daniel Hahn (1980), for example, concluded emphatically that the candidate's emphasis on religion was a deliberate political strategy. Christopher Johnstone (1978) argued that Carter presented himself as a reflection of what was good about our nation. Voting for him in 1976, therefore, presented a way for people to reaffirm faith in themselves and to alleviate the collective guilt felt over their selection of prior unethical leaders, perhaps such as Richard Nixon. Keith Erickson (1980) agreed that Carter's use of "religious-political discourse" strengthened "civic piety and faith in America," but he also argued that the candidate's spiritual emphasis was strategically significant because it bolstered his own credibility and generated media attention (p. 222). On the other hand, John Patton (1977) opined that "Carter's [1976 campaign] rhetoric does not function chiefly in a pragmatic, instrumentally strategic sense, but rather that it operates symbolically to affirm the possibility of newness transcending present conditions" (p. 249). Patton concluded that Carter's transcendent rhetoric articulated an "ethical grounding for politics" (p. 255). J. Louis Campbell (1979) contended that the candidate's religious campaign rhetoric made Carter appear extraordinary to voters and, therefore, contributed

to his charisma. These analyses represent scholars' mostly positive assessment of candidate Carter's use of religious and moral rhetoric.

Scholars generally became much more discerning in assessing Carter's morality-based rhetoric following his election. In analyzing his controversial 1979 energy speech, for example, Hahn (1980) pointed out parallels between Carter's words and the experience of born-again Christianity and concluded that Carter's faith heavily influenced the preparation of that speech. The author labeled the speech a "sermon" in which "Carter discovered that the people were self-indulgent, materialistic, and morally dispirited" (p. 586). In another article, Hahn described the President's inaugural address as "preachy," containing "overweening piety," suggestive of an "unbending fanaticism," and bearing the tone of "a Southern preacher's eternal moralistic generalization rather than that of a presidential policy-maker" (1984, pp. 268-269).

Similarly, in his 1979 study of Carter's public statements about the Panama Canal Treaties, Ronald Sudol argued that the President, during his nationally televised address about the canal issue, erred in justifying his position with the "rhetoric of high principles." Instead, Carter should have relied more on the "common sense rhetoric of retreat" found in his more extemporaneous remarks made during media briefings about the canal. Carter, Sudol argued, emphasized the virtue of fairness in dealing with Panama over the strategic advantages that would flow from such fairness: "Exclusive appeals to spiritual powers and symbolic values are misplaced here...how has maximum advantage been assured?" (1979, p. 389).

Denise Bostdorff (1992) offered one of the more sophisticated analyses of Carter's focus on abstract moral principles in her article about the President's rhetorical

response to the 1979-1981 Iran hostage crisis. That analysis looked at Carter's idealism as more than a simplistic campaign maneuver or as a single, ancillary component of a broader rhetorical strategy. Carter's ability to act effectively to free the hostages, Bostdorff argued, was constrained by his rhetorical choices, which "relied too heavily on idealism and displayed far too little pragmatism" (p. 15). Carter argued, for example, that he wanted to bring the hostages home in a way that was consistent with our principles of compassion and respect for human life and, therefore, would not engage in conduct that would bring harm to those being held. As a result, for months Carter refrained from attempting a rescue mission or a military invasion in order to rescue the hostages and end the crisis.

His embrace of abstract idealism, Bostdorff contended, contributed in two ways to a public impression of Carter as passive and inert. First, the public had no concrete measures for determining whether the administration was achieving its lofty goals. Second, Carter insisted that his pragmatic goals (freeing the hostages and ending the crisis) and idealistic goals (upholding national honor and integrity) were compatible when an increasing number of people believed that they were not. Bostdorff concluded: "Although citizens want to hear that their government's policies are consistent with the nation's moral principles, they desire relatively swift results and discourse about those results as well" (p. 24).

The above discussion provides useful insights and critiques regarding Carter's public discourse. However, some of the studies blur the distinctions among morality, religion, spirituality, and ethics. Moreover, regarding Carter's use of morality, the studies gravitate to the same general conclusion: that morality was employed excessively

or used disproportionately to more pragmatic appeals. Although that finding is well supported and probably accurate, the literature does not go far enough in investigating the idea of morality itself in Carter's rhetoric. In other words, how did Carter go about constructing a moral rhetoric? What *kind* of morality emerged from his statements on those public issues that he defined as moral? The answers to these questions can offer a deeper understanding of both Carter's Panama Canal rhetoric and the richness and complexity of morality as a rhetorical resource in presidential discourse. For some of these answers, I turn to George Lakoff's concepts of Strict Father Morality and Nurturant Parent Morality.

### **Lakoff's Strict Father Morality and Nurturant Parent Morality**

Analyzing moral rhetoric through the lens of parenting and fatherhood has specific salience to the communicative acts of the U.S. President. Early on, members of the U.S. civis learn the mythic status of George Washington as "the father of our country." Michael Nelson (1998) writes, "Americans attitudes about the presidency, like presidents' actions are psychologically as well as politically rooted. Studies of schoolchildren indicated that they first come into political awareness by learning of, and feeling fondly toward, the president" (p. 202). A parallel can be drawn to children's awareness of the world in general being significantly affected by what they learn about their parents. To U.S. citizens, presidents symbolize predictability and stability and provide reassurance (Pika, Maltese, & Thomas, 2002, p. 77), qualities sought in parents as well.

In thinking about the interplay of morality and politics, George Lakoff (2002) turned to American mythological models of the ideal family. With those models as a

starting point, Lakoff extrapolated “corresponding sets of metaphorical priorities, each of which constitutes a distinct moral system” (p. 65). In doing so, he has presented two different ways to envision, define, and discuss morality: Strict Father Morality and Nurturant Parent Morality. Each model will be briefly summarized below.

### **Strict Father Morality**

The Strict Father Morality involves a traditional nuclear family with a strong father as the primary supporter, protector, and disciplinarian of the other family members. He eschews spoiling the children and encourages them to become self-disciplined, self-reliant, and respectful of authority. Once children grow into adults, they must compete on their own in the world with no interference from the strict father. Lakoff argues that “this model of the family comes with an idea of what the right kind of person is and what kind of world will produce and sustain such people” (p. 70). Moreover, the Strict Father model comes with a set of “moral priorities” that flow from it; these priorities are communicated through the importance placed on key metaphors within the model. Applying metaphor theory from cognitive linguistics, Lakoff demonstrates that Strict Father Morality prioritizes numerous metaphors including:

1. Moral Authority – This metaphor envisions a leader knowing what is best for a community more than other individuals in the community.
2. Moral Essence – A person develops a fundamental “character” during childhood and that “moral essence” remains through that individual’s life.
3. Moral Wholeness – Morality is viewed in terms of a natural, predictable wholeness while immorality is seen as the whole decayed, eroded, or ruptured.

4. Integrity – Moral Wholeness and Moral Essence combine to form integrity, a predictable character of acting consistent with one’s moral principles and the ability to resist social or political pressures.

### **Nurturant Parent Morality**

A second version of an ideal family, as identified by Lakoff, is the Nurturant Parent Model. As the author describes it, “this model is one of being cared for and cared about, having one’s desires for loving interactions met, living as happily as possible, and deriving meaning from mutual interaction and care” (p. 108). Children learn responsibility, self-discipline, and, self-reliance through both the caring provided by their parent(s) and caring they give to others in the community. The parent’s caring and respect, not the threat of punishment, fosters obedience, while open communication legitimizes parental authority. The ultimate aim is for children to model the parent’s behavior and become nurturant themselves, to develop empathy for others, to learn cooperation, to connect to the community. A nurturant parent aids the child’s self-actualization so that she may realize her fullest potential. Under this model, children develop a social conscience by being self-reflective and honest with themselves, especially about their own faults and flaws and those of their parents. Just as with the Strict Father Model, these children emerge as “the right kind of people.” However, the priorities of the Nurturant Parent Family’s moral system result in a vastly different conceptualization of morality than that emerging from the Strict Father Model. Those priorities are expressed through a number of metaphors, including several discussed below:



1. Morality as Empathy – According to Lakoff, the ability to feel what others feel, along with the desire to feel successful and happy, should lead the empathetic individual to take action to make others feel successful and happy, consistent with *their* values.
2. Morality as Social Nurturance – Unfair dealings between members of a community can lead to a breakdown in social cohesiveness within the community. For empathy and nurturance, central to this model's conception of morality, to continue, broken social ties must be mended and maintained, even if sacrifices must be made on doing so.
3. Moral Strength to Nurture – The moral strength to nurture must be consistent with the metaphors of morality as empathy, nurturance, and happiness. Specifically, moral strength here includes the capacity to nurture those with values different from one's own and, therefore, not view the world in strictly good-versus-evil terms. Other moral strengths in the Nurturant Parent Model include social responsibility, respect for the values of others, inquisitiveness, open-mindedness, ability to communicate, honesty, sensitivity to feelings, cooperativeness, kindness, community-mindedness, and self-respect. Specifically linking inquisitiveness to honesty in a manner relevant to this essay, Lakoff explains their place in the model: Inquisitiveness and honesty jointly characterize the passion for truth and knowledge--even truth and knowledge about ourselves and our society that may not be pleasant. The ability to nurture successfully requires that we

know and understand ourselves and our society—especially the dark side—  
as deeply and truthfully as we can. (p. 128)

Lakoff concludes his Nurturant Parent Model arguing that nurturance produces leaders (parents or political) deserving of moral authority. He explains: “[I]n a nurturant morality, moral authority is not the ability to set rules and the responsibility for setting them. Rather, it has to do with trust, the trust that a leader will communicate effectively, arrange for participation, be honest, and have the wisdom, experience, and strength to succeed in helping” (p. 134).

### **The Panama Canal Treaties and Carter’s Rhetoric of Morality**

Under the original 1903 Panama Canal Treaty, the United States had the right to build a canal across Panama and would retain perpetual administrative authority over the structure’s operation. The United States would also control, in perpetuity, a ten-mile wide Canal Zone, again stretching across the entire country. Although the agreement recognized that the new nation still maintained a technical “sovereignty” over the zone, the United States was granted authority over the canal and adjacent land as if it were sovereign (Summ & Kelly, 1988). The treaty strongly favored the U.S. government and disadvantaged Panama, and U.S. government officials at the time understood that dynamic.

Along with the unfair substance of the treaty, Panamanians disputed the underhanded manner in which the agreement, particularly those provisions making the biggest concessions, was negotiated and signed. Philippe Bunau-Varilla, a French businessman with a financial interest in the canal’s construction, maneuvered himself into a position from which he acquired some general authority to negotiate a canal treaty with

the United States. It was Bunau-Varilla who, in an effort to seal the deal with Washington and prevent the U.S. government from taking their canal plans elsewhere, added many of the Panamanian concessions, including the controversial sovereignty language discussed above. The Frenchman's gambit was successful. The new government of Panama unanimously ratified the Panama Canal Treaty on December 2, 1903. The U.S. Senate approved the pact on February 23, 1904, and construction of the Panama Canal was completed ten years later. For decades, however, Panamanians believed that the treaty was unfair in both its negotiation and its ultimate terms.

Serious discussions between the United States and Panama finally occurred in 1974 as a result of the work of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Panama's Foreign Minister, Juan Tack. The Kissinger-Tack Agreement called for a new treaty that would end U.S. sovereignty rights within the Canal Zone and surrender control of the canal to Panama while guaranteeing joint responsibility for the canal's operation and defense. The breakthrough agreement, however, provoked intense political opposition in the United States, both in Congress and among the candidates during the 1976 presidential campaign. In particular, Republican candidate Ronald Reagan's criticism of the canal negotiations prompted President Gerald Ford to take a hard-line stance himself, distancing himself from the Kissinger-Tack initiative. Even Democratic candidate Jimmy Carter, who would later champion a new canal agreement, explicitly argued that he would not give up control of the canal if elected President.

After winning the 1976 election, however, President Carter changed his mind and supported continued negotiations between the United States and Panama consistent with the Kissinger-Tack principles. Those negotiations eventually led to an agreement in

principle on two treaties on August 10, 1977. The first agreement was named the Panama Canal Treaty. Under that treaty, the U.S. would continue to operate the canal until December 31, 1999, after which Panama would take complete control over the canal's operation and assume sovereignty over the Canal Zone territory. The second treaty, the Treaty Concerning the Permanent Neutrality and Operation of the Panama Canal, was more commonly known as the Neutrality Treaty. This pact required that the waterway forever remain open to the ships of all countries, although Panamanian and U.S. vessels alone were guaranteed expeditious passage through the canal (Hogan, 1986, pp. 87-88). Under the Neutrality Treaty, both Panama and the United States maintained the right to defend the canal's neutrality. The two treaties each addressed a primary concern for each party. The United States had explicit authority to protect its interests in the canal and Panama at last was assured a more meaningful sovereignty.

During 1977 and 1978, the President, combining public appeals with congressional deal making, campaigned hard for Senate ratification of the two agreements. As a close Senate vote approached, Carter kept the stakes high, declaring that the Senate's decision would be "perhaps the most important vote that I will face during my own term of office" (Carter, February 10, 1978, p. 306). The effort paid off as the Senate ratified the Neutrality Treaty on March 16, 1978, and the Panama Canal Treaty on April 18 of that same year, both by the narrow vote of 68-32 (a two-thirds majority vote was required for passage). Carter prevailed on, what he considered, an important and moral issue.

## **Carter as Strict Father**

Interestingly, Carter discussed the canal issue in ways that were consistent with some of Lakoff's Strict Father Morality metaphors. The specific metaphors emerging from this discourse are Moral Authority, Moral Wholeness, and Integrity; those concepts are discussed in more detail below.

As noted, Lakoff's Strict Father Morality prioritizes Moral Authority, in which a leader believes that his or her ideas about what constitutes the "good of the community" are superior to those of others. Also, a community maintains Moral Wholeness by identifying and eliminating immorality that ruptures or erodes the whole. Third, a Strict Father demonstrates Integrity by remaining true to his moral principles while remaining immune to social or political influence. These ideas emerge intertwined in the President's public statements about the canal issue.

Many people expressed surprise when Carter decided to make the negotiation and ratification of a new Panama Canal pact an early priority in his administration. The initiative was deemed too controversial and too costly in terms of the President's newly won political capital. Senate opposition to a new treaty was well-established and public opinion polls ran strongly against any diminishing U.S. role in Panama. That criticism was typified by an American Legion member addressing the President during a question-and-answer session: "[The treaties] would result in the greatest economic, geographical, and sovereignty loss that our country as a republic has endured in the last 200 years" (Carter, October 22, 1977, p. 1893). Yet, Carter firmly believed that the new treaties needed to achieve two goals that U.S. citizens and many of their elected representatives

abhorred: (1) relinquish U.S. control of the canal, and (2) acknowledge Panama's sovereignty over the Canal Zone.

The new chief executive was keenly aware of the extent of voter and congressional disagreement with his Panama policy. Fighting against such influence is the hallmark of a Strict Father's Integrity. In his memoirs, Carter wrote that he anticipated "a terrible political fight" with Congress over the treaties (Carter, 1982, p. 155). In fact, advisers urged him to postpone the issue until a second term. Carter however, believed that he was correct on the issue and he grounded his position primarily upon what he perceived as a superior cognition of the importance of righting a specific wrong:

[Despite the public and congressional opposition] I believed that a new treaty was absolutely necessary. I was convinced that we needed to correct an injustice. Our failure to take action after years of promises under five previous Presidents had created something of a diplomatic cancer, which was poisoning our relations with Panama. (p. 155)

The characterizations of the U.S. government's broken promises and inaction as "cancer" and "poison" suggested a decay in the nation's Moral Wholeness, an erosion that Carter's own moral consistency could rectify. The certainty in Carter's beliefs and language expressed above also was consistent with the Strict Father concept of Moral Authority. The treaty was "absolutely" required; no grey area existed. The loss of public approval and political capital was envisioned at the outset, but Carter "decided to plow ahead" (p. 156). On this issue, the President argued that he knew what was right more so than Congress and the public.

Carter's self-proclaimed status as the primary provider of facts and accurate information about the canal issue also reinforced his sense of Moral Authority, especially as he also painted treaty opponents as purveyors of deception upon the public:

To change [the public's] concept based on facts and explanations is my responsibility--not to mislead, not to pressure, not to cajole, but in a way to educate and to lead. And I would like for you to join with me, if you can in good conscience, in that effort. (Carter, August 30, 1977, p. 1526)

References to canal opponents' "misinformation" and "distortion" peppered Carter's discussions of the canal debate (Carter, October 22, 1977, p. 1886, 1888; Carter, February 1, 1978, p. 259). At another briefing session with citizens, the President articulated a stark contrast between himself and the treaty foes:

So, in every aspect of the controversy, there's a good and responsible and truthful answer. But the distortions and the incorrect information that has been put out about these treaties is very, very damaging to the truth. (Carter, October 22, 1977, p. 1888)

Here, Carter explicitly aligned himself on the side of "truth" and his opponents as those who inflict "damage" upon the truth.

On June 16, 1978, President Carter flew to Panama to exchange ratification documents with Panamanian officials. Earlier that day, in a speech to the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, Carter talked at length about leadership in facing what he defined as "moral problems." With the Panama issue foremost on his mind, Carter explained:

Leaders also have to be careful not to be too timid. Sometimes we are reluctant to deal with complicated issues or a contentious issue; controversy scares us.

There's no doubt in my mind that adopting a commitment for a bold mission program is fraught with difficulties and the prospect of failure, and no one likes to fail because you bring upon yourself, if you obviously fail, a bad reputation, derision, scorn, embarrassment. And sometimes the best way to avoid failure is not to try very hard, not to be in the center of a noble effort, or to quit soon enough so you will not be associated in the end with disappointment. (Carter, June 16, 1978, p. 1116)

These ideas are consistent with the Moral Integrity of the Strict Father model. A weak, fear-driven leader abandons principle in the face of disagreement, challenge, or outright public rejection. The Strict Father remains steadfast to one's core beliefs about right and wrong conduct, even with the looming prospects of "failure" or "derision, scorn, embarrassment." After all, it is that consistency that Lakoff has in mind when including Moral Essence as a component of Moral Integrity. On the canal issue, Carter certainly demonstrated the integrity of the Strict Father. He refused to waver from his core principles, despite enormous criticism and opposition from Congress and much of the U.S. public.

During the grueling eight-month push for Senate ratification of the treaties, Carter refused to downplay the controversy of the canal issue and at times felt the need, during his public statements, to expound on the unpopularity of his stance. During remarks to the National Education Association Board of Directors, he explicitly characterized the canal debate as "a difficult political issue" (Carter, February 10, 1978, p. 297). He



revealed to the educators that “many of the Members of the Senate tell me *privately* that they know that [treaty ratification is] a right and proper and decent thing to do, but they are fearful about the political consequences at home” (Carter, February 10, 1978, p. 297, emphasis added). Here, Carter’s touts his perceived exceptionalism. Other politicians not only compromise their principles to avoid public controversy and voter alienation, but they also are unwilling to publicly admit such capitulation. Unlike Carter, they failed to exhibit the Moral Integrity of the Strict Father. During an earlier briefing on the canal situation, Carter had already associated such integrity with presidential leadership. He acknowledged the controversy swirling around the canal treaties and articulated the responsibilities of a leader in those circumstances:

There are times in the life of any public official...when a position *must* be taken that’s not completely compatible with the public view. There’s been a great deal of legitimate concern about the Panama Canal expressed in the past. (Carter, August 27, 1977, p. 1513, emphasis added.)

For Carter, there was no choice; moral leadership *required* a president to seek out and address heated, contentious public questions and take unpopular stands. In choosing the Panama Canal Treaties as one of his first presidential tasks, he could not only act in accordance with his moral principles, but also *publicly discuss* the significance of that choice in light of his integrity in the face of intense political pressure. In this way, Carter presented himself as the Strict Father—a leader who could both discern the morality underlying difficult issues and remain true to his own moral character while doing what was right. In other examples of his public statements, however, the President projected a Nurturant Parent image.

## **Carter as Nurturant Parent**

Carter's Panama speeches contain several elements of Lakoff's Nurturant Father Morality. Those elements—Moral Strength to Nurture, Empathy, and Morality as Social Nurturance are discussed below.

### **1. Moral Strength to Nurture**

Lakoff argues that the Nurturant Parent possesses Moral Strength for facilitating the care and tolerance of others in need. Two strains of this strength are inquisitiveness and honesty. A leader must seek, embrace, and share the truth, even if that truth reveals darkness and error.

In his Panama discourse, Carter did not shy away from his nation's misdeeds in the negotiation of the original treaty and its long-standing refusal to substantively rework the pact. He sought to present the new treaties as the final redeeming chapter of a decades-long story of injustice—a story many citizens had forgotten or had never learned. Although the Panama Canal often was heralded for its strategic significance or as a symbol of U.S. engineering superiority, the waterway's dubious origins were much more obscure. A U.S. history textbook from the era explained the origin of the 1903 treaty with a single innocuous statement: "Bunau-Varilla, who was now the Panamanian minister despite his French citizenship, signed the Hay-Bunau-Varilla treaty in Washington" (Bailey & Kennedy, 1979, p. 596). The deceit and improprieties at the heart of the original agreement were ignored entirely, symbolic of many Americans' ignorance of U.S. manipulation and exploitation.

Carter sought to provide a somewhat more detailed, balanced, and accurate story regarding the origins of the canal. During an October 1977 question-and-answer session

in Denver, for example, he directly raised the unfair negotiations surrounding the original treaty: “The fact is that no Panamanian has ever signed it. Before it was signed in 1903, no Panamanian ever saw it” (Carter, October 22, 1977, p. 1886). In his national address about the new treaties, on February 1, 1978, Carter discussed the original pact:

[T]he people of Panama have been dissatisfied with the treaty. It was drafted here in our country and was not signed by any Panamanian. Our own Secretary of State who did sign the original treaty said it was ‘vastly advantageous to the United States and...not so advantageous to Panama.’ (Carter, February 1, 1978, p. 258.)

Those statements were not isolated instances. On at least six other occasions, Carter emphasized the fact that Panama’s government did not sign or see the treaty, a detail that would offend most citizens’ fundamental notions of honesty and fair dealing (Carter, February 18, 1978, p. 378; Carter, December 28, 1977, p. 2195; Carter, October 22, 1977, p. 1886; Carter, September 15, 1977, p. 1597; Carter, September 7, 1977b, p. 1545; Carter, August 30, 1977, p. 1526).

In other public statements, Carter hinted at even seedier details of the original negotiations. He reminded listeners that the treaty was signed “hastily,” and “in the middle of the night, when the Panamanian leaders, including the President, were trying to get to Washington before the treaty was signed” (Carter, August 30, 1977, p. 1526). On several occasions, the origin story showcased the treachery of Bunau-Varilla, whom Carter characterized as “a Frenchman who benefited financially from the terms of the treaty” (Carter, December 28, 1977). Again, such references to unsavory administration dealings could resonate strongly with a public still recovering from the cloak-and-dagger

deceptions of Watergate. The element of Moral Strength to Nurture is further intertwined with Lakoff's Morality as Social Nurturance, as will be discussed in more detail below.

## 2. Empathy

The Nurturant Parent places great value on empathy and models for her/his children the ability to feel what others feel. The thought is that hopefully these children will understand the suffering and wants of those around them and act to relieve those misfortunes. Carter's rhetoric in support of the Panama Canal Treaties also strived to bolster the public's empathy for the Panamanian people.

To persuade the U.S. public to view the situation more from the Panamanian perspective, Carter relayed a narrative of a much stronger nation toying with the emotions and expectations of a weaker nation. His speeches referred to the protracted length of the treaty negotiations and the growing expectations of our southern neighbors:

Had we never started the negotiations 13 years ago, the consequences of not having a treaty would be much more manageable. Now the expectation of Latin American people that we are going to have a resolution of this question has built up hopes of new friendship, new trade opportunities, and a new sense of commonality and stature between their governments and our government that never existed before. (Carter, August 27, 1977, p. 1513)

Again, the above passage was not an isolated occurrence; Carter, on other occasions, mentioned the increased expectations that the United States had created during the lengthy negotiation period (Carter, January 16, 1978, p. 84; Carter, October 22, 1977, p. 1887). Because of the U.S. government's duplicity in the creation of the 1903 treaty and its colonial bullying since, Panama had to wait six decades for the start of earnest,

substantive discussions on a new treaty. According to Carter, however, the second chapter of the story was more insidiously cruel but just as potentially damning to U.S. credibility in Central America. The President painted a vivid picture of a great superpower “leading on” a small nation for years, toying with the latter’s quest for justice and dignity from its powerful former benefactor. By creating such a picture, Carter made it easier for Americans to empathize with the Panamanians’ strong desire for resolving the canal issue in a more fair manner.

### 3. Morality as Social Nurturance

In order to maintain the possibilities of nurturance and empathy, Lakoff opined that the Nurturant Father leader will endeavor to mend broken social ties within a community, even if such reconciliation demands sacrifice. Carter argued that the canal treaties offered an opportunity for such mending. Regarding the relationship between the United States and Panama, the President, in his nationally televised address, touted that “there is already a new sense of equality, a new sense of trust and mutual respect that exists because of the Panama Canal treaties” (Carter, February 1, 1978, p. 261). The President expanded on this idea during a town hall meeting a few months before the ratification votes:

Now it’s up to the Senate to act, and I believe that the Senate will ratify the treaties. However, if the treaties are not ratified, I think the Panamanian people will indeed doubt our good intentions and good faith. I think the Latin American nations, and indeed the developing nations all over the world, will doubt that what we say about basic human rights and fairness prevails with our large and powerful country. (Carter, January 17, 1978, p. 86)

Here, the President went beyond the immediate situations with Panama and Central America; he linked the canal treaties to the United States' relationship with all developing nations. The ties connecting the U.S. government with these smaller nations had been broken by the former's reluctance to treat the latter more fairly throughout the years. For Carter, the Panama Canal Treaties emerged as an important step in mending those ties and reestablishing the United States as a moral and nurturing influence.

Carter also associated the certain aspects of the canal treaties with the concept of U.S. national strength. That approach responded to one of the primary criticisms of the canal policy, that the relinquishing of canal control would be an unprecedented sign of U.S. weakness and deteriorating international stature. The popular characterization of the treaties as a "giveaway" also presented the administration as soft. In response, Carter repeatedly associated the pact's fairness, decency, and cooperative spirit with national strength or stature. Upon reaching agreement with Panama on the treaty terms, Carter noted that the agreement would improve the U.S. government's "position in the world as a *strong* and *generous* nation" (emphasis added) (Carter, August 12, 1977, p. 1463). On another occasion, the President stated: "I look on the ratification of the Panama Canal treaties as a show of strength and as a show of national will and as a show of fairness" (Carter, October 22, 1977, p. 1890). During the nationally-televised speech, this approach continued: "We believe in good will and fairness, as well as strength" (Carter, February 1, 1978, p. 262). Throughout the ratification effort, descriptions of the treaties invoked the qualities of strength, fairness, and kindness.

Lakoff's Nurturant Parent also sees these ideas as consistent as elements of a Moral Strength to Nurture, a strength needed for a leader to care and empathize. Indeed,

Lakoff argues that the Nurturant Parent's moral strength must be consistent with other aspects of nurturance. In many of Carter's speeches, this connection is made more explicit as fairness and generosity became a type of strength and a source of national pride. At the treaties signing ceremony, Carter observed:

And I believe that the American people are big enough and strong enough, courageous enough and understanding enough to be proud of what has been accomplished. It's not an easy thing to accept a change which has been so profoundly balanced in our favor and which can now be of equal benefit to both countries. But ours is a great country, and it's great enough to be fair. (Carter, September 7, 1977, p. 1545)

Here, fairness, understanding, and equality generated strength, greatness and courage. Rectifying the inequity of the original pact improves the ties between Panama and U.S. (Morality as Social Nurturance), which increases our country's Moral Strength to Nurture. Furthermore, Carter invokes notions of cooperation and open-mindedness to argue that the moral strength demonstrated through the treaties evidenced a new and improved type of national strength. As the President stated: "It's much *better* for us to show our strength and our ability by not being a bully and by saying to Panama, let's work in harmony, let's form a partnership" (Carter, October 22, 1977, p. 1890) (emphasis added).

### **Implications and Conclusion**

Many politicians defend their policies and actions through the use of moral appeals. U.S. presidents are no strangers to this argument strategy, and indeed many chief executives have defined an issue as one of morality. President Jimmy Carter,

however, had a reputation for seeing politics in moral terms more than many of his predecessors. Consequently, he provides a useful example for studying the meaning of morality in political discourse. In fact, numerous scholars have weighed in on Carter's rhetoric of morality. As discussed above, that literature generally falls into two camps regarding Carter's use of morality: (1) His moralizing was excessive per se, or (2) his use of moral appeals failed because Carter failed to subordinate those appeals to more pragmatic or strategic arguments. Although such findings are certainly relevant and useful, the question remains: What *is* moral rhetoric? Beyond whether a rhetor uses too much or too little morality, what is the meaning of a president's rhetoric of morality?

This essay takes a step toward answering those questions. Drawing from Lakoff's work on morality and politics, I applied to Carter's Panama Canal Treaties rhetoric Lakoff's notions of Strict Father Morality and Nurturant Parent Morality. As demonstrated above, Carter's discourse contains elements of both kinds of morality. From the Strict Father metaphors, Moral Authority, Moral Wholeness, and Integrity can be found. Carter believed that he, more than others, ascertained the moral need for the new canal agreement and that he possessed the moral consistency to resist political pressure to abandon the Panamanians' plight. In terms of Nurturant Parent Morality, the President's public statements relied on examples of the Moral Strength to Nurture, Morality as Empathy, Morality as Social Nurturance, and Moral Self-Interest. In other words, Carter sought to educate the U.S. public about the Panamanians' feelings of betrayal, our nation's role in that betrayal, and how the new canal treaties could repair the broken ties between the two countries. On the Panama issue, therefore, President Carter presented himself as a moral, but authoritarian, leader while demanding that the U.S.



public experience the new treaties primarily as an exercise in moral nurturance. However, as Lakoff contends, in the Nurturant Parent Model, children learn nurturance by modeling the nurturing of the parent. This relationship suggests a disconnect in Carter's Panama rhetoric that may explain why, despite the broad appeal of morality-based arguments and the fact that Carter ultimately achieved ratification of the Panama Canal Treaties, the U.S. public embraced neither the new pact nor Carter's brand of presidential morality. In fact, the most favorable reaction to Carter's efforts in faraway Panama may have come from those villagers watching the treaty signing on their helicopter-delivered television sets.

This study also builds upon and expands Alan Cienki's qualitative and quantitative analyses (2004, 2005a, 2005b) of Lakoff's Strict Father and Nurturant Parent Models. Cienki is particularly interested in testing Lakoff's political argument that "conservatives have a rhetorical edge over liberals (in the United States) because of the coherent way in which they use SF (Strict Father) metaphors in political talk, while liberals do not necessarily employ the NP (Nurturant Parent) metaphors coherently in their rhetoric" (p. 285). In a 2004 article, Cienki examined the nominees' language and gestures during the 2000 presidential debates between George W. Bush and Al Gore, concluding that "their language does not express many of the SF or NP metaphors themselves, but shows various other expressions, metaphorical as well as non-metaphorical, which logically follow from the SF or NP models as *entailments*" (p. 415-416, emphasis in original). After accounting for these entailments, Cienki found that Bush and Gore both made extensive use of SF and NP language. Although Cienki does not explicitly connect his findings to specific outcomes of the debate, I argue that the

combined rhetorical use of both models, and the political and moral incoherence that comes with it, can help us better understand President Carter's inability to achieve popular support for the Panama Canal Treaties, despite his use of moral appeals and ultimate legislative success.

Moreover, Cienki rightly points out that the context in which the discourse is created matters. Therefore, he suggests that Bush and Gore's melding of Strict Father and Nurturant Parent language and gestures during the debates was more acceptable in the context of a political debate in which the candidates are attempting to appeal to as many voters as possible. My study investigates this interplay in the context of an elected president pursuing a specific and important policy initiative, where the perception of coherent and strong leadership is arguably more valued than in the overheated arena of electoral politics. Further studies are needed to apply Lakoff's two models to different political and presidential contexts.

This study demonstrates the critical utility of more deeply interrogating morality in political discourse. Applying conceptual frameworks that study morality to political public address, especially on issues defined as or perceived as "moral," encourages the use of those frameworks in new and productive ways. For example, Lakoff created his two parental models as means for better understanding the differences between liberals and conservatives in American politics. This essay, however, examines the implications of those two models existing in the discourse of a singular political actor. As a result, scholars also increase their understanding of the complex and multiple meanings of morality in presidential and political public address.

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## **White Girls in Schools, White Women in Society: Socializing Docile Bodies through K-12 Education**

*Amanda Szabo*

*Through the communicative lenses of socialization and agency, white women's complicity with and enmeshment in systems of race, gender, and class oppression is explored as a function of school socialization via Foucault's (1977) analysis of panoptic institutional relations and the production of docile bodies. Autoethnographic analyses are combined with Girls, Inc.'s (2006) "Supergirl Dilemma" study to offer insight into the process of internalizing docility. A discussion of the impact of docility in society is offered, as well as a conclusion proposing critical pedagogical approaches as a liberating solution to the panoptic production of docile bodies.*

From slavery beginning in the 1600s (Zinn, 2003), to the eugenics movements in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20th century (Vigue & Vigue, 1982), to the recent overcrowding of prisons with vulnerable and minority groups (Jorjani, 2010), the United States has a sordid past with race. That sordid past is tied up in class-based relationships, and, although less well recognized, to patterns of capital accumulation that privilege a rich few. Behind acts of racial, class, and gender oppression are hegemonic structures that condone the entitlement of some and the oppression of others. The U.S. system of economic social organization does not provide for everyone (Zinn, 1990), and the way that people are chosen to be provided for or not falls, largely, along color and class lines (Aronowitz, 2009; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2009).

In these socioeconomic conditions, each person has a role to play, including white, middle- and upper- class women. White women in group settings often are unconsciously socialized into specific positions that maintain and promote hegemony (Brazaitis, 2004). According to Brazaitis (2004), these positions are determined by the unconscious projection of specific traits from other race and gender groups onto white women, "because doing so serves the group in some way" (p. 109). Specifically, white

women are expected to be “selfless, nurturing, passive, and quiet” (Brazaitis, 2004, p. 109). When white women take on these qualities, it protects the status quo and allows whiteness and capital accumulation in the hands of the rich to go unquestioned. However, women bear heavy psychological burdens in adopting those “docile” attitudes—so much so that Girls, Inc. (2006) has named this pressure to conform to hegemonic roles the “Supergirl Dilemma,” synonymous with the pressure to be [a] superwoman that Wood (2009) documented.

The academic study of communication offers a unique perspective on this socialization process. Given that people come to know their role in the “individual–organization relationship” through socialization (Bach, 1989, p. 4), they are socialized into specific class positions. In this essay, I reveal how the communication systems alive and active in schools are influential (although not deterministic) mechanisms for advancing white women’s complicity in the status quo after they graduate. I compare the process of socializing young girls into specific class, gender, and racial positions through schools to Foucault’s (1977) panopticon, which uses surveillance and evaluation to mold individuals into tools for capital accumulation, and who, by adopting docility, are distanced from individual desires and power. By doing so, this essay reveals the interconnections of educational environments, power, socialization, and identities, to offer glimpses of socialization into docility such that its occurrence can be recognized and intervened upon for the purpose of social change.

I begin with a review of literature on racial, gender, and class preferencing in schools; the socialization process in schools; white women’s place in society; pressures facing girls; and docile bodies and panopticism in education. I then present



autoethnographic accounts of my socialization through schooling to unpack the theoretical operation of docility, gender oppression, and race and class privileging. I ground this essay in studies about stresses facing modern girls—specifically, the Supergirl Dilemma (Girls, Inc., 2006) study, which documents physical, psychological, social, and achievement expectations for girls. The discussion relates my educational experiences to costs paid for this “docile” socialization as a society. In the conclusion, I offer a vision of an education that enables agency instead of docility, suggesting that teachers embrace critical pedagogy, which enabled my critical reflection on the status quo and illuminated my agency in society.

### **Literature Review: A Framework for Implicating Docility in School Socialization**

To analyze the socialization of white girls in schools demands looking at how race, gender, and class are addressed directly or indirectly in schools. The socialization process and the institutional influence that schools enact through evaluative and disciplinary systems also must be investigated. Together, systemic approaches to particular identities and authoritative systems colored my socialization experience through schooling. The socialization process as a concept explains why I unquestioningly adapted to expectations that schools had for me, particularly at a young age. Later, the Foucauldian analysis of panoptic power explains how, in high school and against my preferences, I succumbed to my school’s expectations out of fear.

Ladson-Billings and Tate’s (2009) critical race theory of education demonstrates how white children’s school performance differs from the school performance of those who are black or other students of color. They explained that the difference is that white children own one piece of property that distinguishes them from other groups—

whiteness. This pattern of privileging whiteness is extended into a cultural binary wherein the more that one can align with whiteness (through speech, behavior, etc.), the better one seems to fit in culturally and socially in schools, and, consequently, the more one is rewarded and applauded (Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Vera, Feagin, and Gordon (1995) showed how perceived superior intelligence is characteristic of whiteness, with this perceived intellectual superiority often built into educational institutions. This condoned superiority entitles white children to a different educational experience *in front of* other groups, facilitating for white students a public identity of entitlement and superiority. Schools, by allowing or promoting this identity, naturalize racial superiority and unearned privilege. Thus, whiteness becomes a positive and beneficial trait that all students should try to attain, to the best of their ability.

Prioritizing whiteness is not directly taught through lessons but through a hidden curriculum that encodes education into a process of “rules of conduct, classroom organization, and the informal pedagogical procedures used by teachers with specific groups of students” (McLaren, 2009, p. 75). This hidden curriculum teaches social expectations and value systems to students, and oftentimes stays with students much longer than do classroom lessons (McLaren). This hidden curriculum also socializes students into class roles, ensuring that students leave the school system prepared for the same class of work that their family had (Staton, 1990). In fact, schools further this socialization and class-crystallization process more than any other institution in capitalist societies (Aronowitz, 2009). Additionally, Staton claimed that for most students, schools also reinforce gender expectations. School socialization ensures that power, race, gender and class structures in the larger society stay the same, which ensures privilege for those

of privileged positions and maintains unequal economic structures, as their influence goes unchallenged.

People do not come to this socialization out of choice but out of a need to integrate. Bach (1989) recognized the socialization process as motivated by newcomers' desire to mitigate uncertainty and to communicatively "fit in." Bach claimed that organizational newcomers (in this case, kindergarten and first-grade students) feel self-conscious about their communication and, consequently, they engage in close inspection of the communication environment to understand which roles they must adopt to fit in effectively. Newcomers fear the challenge of adapting to the organizational atmosphere and potential face-to-face blunders. Thus, they concern themselves with the task of communication, their role as communicators, and the impact of their communication on others (Bach). Motivated by feelings of self-consciousness, it becomes imperative for newcomers to adopt communicative norms of their surroundings to avoid future self-consciousness, embarrassment, or exclusion. Staton (1990) reiterated that the socialization process for newcomers is motivated by uncertainty reduction and communicative concern, adding that it also is motivated by status passage, as the crossing of developmental milestones and the management of change implicit in everyone's existence requires frequent attention to socialization. Although common and inescapable, these developmental passages often are stress-inducing, involve risk of failure, and deeply affect developing persons' approach to how they present themselves in changing environments (Staton).

A large part of how people navigate periods of change relates to their *agency*, or their "capacity to act or cause change" (Gunn, 2009, para. 1). Gunn (2009) defined a

person with agency as “a subject who self-consciously acts or causes change” (para. 4), which requires that individuals have the ability to choose amongst various actions. Organizational contexts, however, both constrain and empower people’s choice of actions, and, thus, their agency. Agency is offered through education when teachers help students to “become social, moral, and political actors in the public sphere and in private life” (Gunn, para. 8), by revealing multiple social choices and providing students with tools to make empowered social decisions. Agency means that a person feels in control of his or her life and is able to create a role for him or herself in society. Without agency, students would just replicate social standards that they are presented.

If institutions that support student agency reveal choices of action to its members, disempowering institutions limit students’ awareness of choices of action, often by imposing rigid expectations and minimizing opportunities to reflect on (or consciously realize) those expectations. Foucault (1977) saw the 18th-century prison as a poignant example of modern technologies of control, designed such that prisoners were completely separated from their peers but forever in view of a surveillance tower. The feeling of being completely seen (pan-optic) by authority led prisoners to internalize their authorities’ perspectives and expectations of them. Constant, panoptic surveillance meant that prisoners would control themselves with the mere suggestion of authoritative power.

Foucault (1977) recognized that these panoptic techniques, designed for prisons, also are used by schools. Panoptic surveillance of students in the classroom is facilitated by rows of individual desks that separate students from each other and expose them to constant observation by teachers. Continual, unrelenting evaluation causes students to be

on edge, to strive for better and better evaluations, and to internalize a constant struggle to meet standards of evaluation (Foucault). Furthermore, the division of time into smaller and smaller increments, with specific expectations for each moment, and the integration of students at younger and younger ages into these expectations comprise “microphysics of power” (Foucault, 1977), which engrain students even deeper into authorities’ expectations. The microphysics of power can be seen through regimented class periods, specific learning expectations that must be achieved within the period, routine standardized testing and evaluation, and increasingly standardized expectations for young grades. These techniques quiet individuals’ agency by increasing the volume of their authorities, such that individuals barely detect their options and see only authorities’ expectations. If these expectations constitute class, race, and gender expectations, authority through panoptic power could impose feelings of (racial, gender, and/or class) superiority or inferiority, entitlement or submission into vulnerable students.

White girls, thus, have specific traits that they are expected to adopt, with Brazaitis (2004) finding that white women are expected to be “selfless, nurturing, passive, and quiet” (p. 109), and Girls, Inc. (2006) pointing out that these expectations are set up for young girls as they grow up. Following and being socialized into these expectations maintains not only white girls’ class and race positions but also all other class and race positions (Brazaitis). If white women were to collectively acknowledge white privilege, or even rebel against the cultural messages about who to be, whiteness as a culturally dominating force would be exposed (Brazaitis).

It is important for white women to reflect on how their socialization formed their sense of self and position in society such that they may become agents who promote

equality. Frankenburg (1993) researched just how much race “colored” the lives of white women that she interviewed, finding that whiteness had three dimensions: a structural advantage based on race; a standpoint from which we view ourselves, our social world, and society; and “a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed” (p. 1). She found that white women, antiracist or not, often have a hard time explaining what it means to be white. This inability to see how race shapes their lives, or to see their culture as anything but “normal,” secures white privilege and hegemony. However, according to Frankenburg, “analyzing the connections between daily lives and discursive orders may help make visible the processes by which the stability of whiteness—as a location of privilege, as culturally normative space, and as standpoint—is secured and reproduced” (p. 242). Frankenburg judged analyses of white women’s lives as racial processes to be a productive *political* step towards an antiracist future. By sharing their everyday “raceness,” white women can expose racial processes engrained and previously invisible in their lives, and, in the process, can expose a chance to be different and a stronger sense of agency in their lives and society.

The traits that white women adopt to serve the status quo never are connected to maintaining societal power when they are taught. Socialization of white people often teaches color blindness (Frankenburg, 1993), but when schools do not make white students aware of the social iniquities, it develops students who are ill-prepared for the “real world.” Vera et al. (1995) stated that “through a process of ‘misrecognition,’ or not acknowledging what is really there, Whites accept the dominant culture simply as the way things are, a perspective that obscures unequal power relations and reproduces them” (p. 297). The silence of color blindness and lack of awareness of racial injustices create

complicity with oppressive systems and a false confidence (read: entitlement). This false confidence/entitlement bleeds into society in multiple hazardous ways, such as in economic realms (wherein already rich chief executive officers pull economic strings to get even richer just because they can), the natural environment (when people take more than they need without replenishing resources), and into relationships (when a person feels entitled to the emotional labor of a partner or family member, unaware of the need to reciprocate).

By encouraging girls to adopt traits simply because those traits are expected of them, white women are disempowered because of a lack of options for self-development, and they are disconnected from social, economic, and political impacts of those options. Furthermore, when girls resist adopting specific traits, they oftentimes are made to feel crazy (Brazaitis, 2004). Lorde (1984), as a black, socialist, lesbian woman spoke about the pressures affecting white women's conformity:

With the defeat of the ERA, the tightening economy, and increased conservatism, it is easier once again for white women to believe the dangerous fantasy that if you are good enough, pretty enough, sweet enough, quiet enough, teach the children to behave, hate the right people, and marry the right men, then you will be allowed to co-exist with patriarchy in relative peace, at least until a man needs your job or the neighborhood rapist happens along. (p. 591)

By adopting feminine, sweet, silent, mothering, and obedient roles, white women often get the message that as long as they maintain their usefulness to patriarchy by obeying "the rules" (being sweet, mothering, obedient, etc.) they will be taken care of and accepted into the "cloud of privilege." To divert from this path is uncertain scary, and

they are discouraged from being bold and facing their fears. White women's position to patriarchal capitalistic power, thus, is one of dependency. What white women do not hear is that even in this social arrangement, they are invested in a system that provides for only some of their needs, and extracts other needs, including their emotions (Weiler, 2009), as well as ignoring and neglecting other needs, such as their sexuality (which also is fetishized; see Lorde) and personal desires (Fine, 2009, Lorde).

White women pay a high price for complying with the status quo. They, along with many more women of color, often fill unpaid or unappreciated emotional labor positions in mother and wife roles (Weiler, 2009). This work often denies them economic empowerment, and can further implicate many of them in cycles of self-repression, unexpressed potential, and unfulfillment (Fine, 2009). Additionally, schools often prepare women (including white women) to maintain hegemony at the cost of individuality and self-fulfillment (Weiler). Girls, Inc. (2006), which conducts extensive sociological research about girls in the United States, identified this pressure to meet cultural standards as one of the biggest issues facing modern girls. This "Supergirl Dilemma" keeps girls striving to be everything to everybody, with little regard for meeting their desires. Specifically, the pressure to be sensitive and caring, to dress right, to take care of others, and to excel in school distracts girls from personal goals. Similar to the pressure that Lorde (1984) referred to for white women to be "good enough, pretty enough, sweet enough, quiet enough, teach the children to behave, hate the right people, and marry the right men" (p. 591), young white girls have a laundry list of social expectations that come with their access to racial privilege (which, clearly, is not afforded to women/girls of color) most of which implicate them in roles that serve hegemony.



Wood (2009) pointed out the pressure exerted on female students to “be [a] superwoman”—that is, to have it all by being good mothers and wives and housekeepers, becoming successful business women, and being pretty, smart, and nice, and to make doing so appear effortless. For women, responding to these pressures is physically, psychologically, and emotionally draining. The issues that face girls at school prepare them early for social demands, and this early socialization into others’ expectations lessens their ability to prioritize and manifest realistic and rewarding goals for them.

Critical analyses of the costs that white girls pay for their socialization can illuminate girls’ agency to make conscious decisions about their behaviors and position in society. To explore those costs further, I now share how I developed the ability to critically analyze my experiences through autoethnography.

### **Methods**

Autoethnography uses personal narrative accounts of one’s life to demonstrate cultural processes at work (Warren, 2009). Closely linked with critical theory, autoethnography often seeks to illustrate how “the speaking self is constrained or enabled by its participation in society . . . [and] how a self is implicated in maintaining the very structures that we live within” (Warren, 2009, paras. 5, 6); specifically race, class, and gender structures. Rather than prove the existence of a cultural “truth,” autoethnographers often illustrate the workings of cultural phenomena on a personal level by offering and analyzing narrative personal experiences (Warren, 2009).

In discussing how racial, gender, and class positioning is internalized through schools, autoethnography offers insight into how this process occurs internally, over a lifetime of schooling. My memories are noted by the italicized sections. I also analyze

my experiences more fully through layered accounts (in the intermittent, non-italicized parts) by relating my moments to the quantitative and qualitative research documented by Girls, Inc. (2006), and to other social-scientific research. In doing so, I hope that readers may “observe and, consequently, better testify on behalf of an event, problem, or experience” (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 280). I try to use the language that my kindergarten, middle school, and high school self would have chosen to show the passage of developmental stages, although I employ the past tense throughout because this is a reflective process. In assuming a personal tone and using the pronoun “we” to refer to white female students, I invite readers, particularly white women, to reflect on their schooling personally. I share these autoethnographic accounts to trigger reflections in women about how raced, classed, and gendered schooling has implicated them and others in power structures. By illuminating subtle patterns that socialized us subconsciously, we may consciously revive our agency to choose different values, behaviors, social positions, and attitudes that could work toward our liberation and that of others.

### **Autoethnographic Exploration: Socializing a Docile Body**

For students, school is our social life, with students spending 40 hours or more a week in school; and success in schools matters a lot to people’s future (Aronowitz, 2009). Combining this time with the large exposure to peer school networks and the pressure to succeed, schools become a powerful social stage. For me, kindergarten marked the first time I understood that a social system outside of myself was more important than my enjoyment. Unlike the school supply list that my teachers gave me each summer, there were hidden expectations I had to manage, much like the hidden curriculum of which McLaren (2009) spoke, to avoid feeling ashamed and stupid. I became motivated to meet

social expectations, despite what I wanted for myself, based on my anxiety and my need for uncertainty reduction. My nervousness made me cling to cultural norms, as Bach (1989) revealed. This pressure to fit in set the stage for me to absorb communication patterns through schools, and began my dependence on social conformity in school. I tried hard to understand school's hidden curriculum. I even became a "mean girl" if it meant freedom from shame and social success:

*In kindergarten, I listened and watched my mom, other moms, and my schoolmates very closely. I did NOT want to look silly, again. I felt better if I thought that other girls looked silly, or if they felt silly. I realized that wearing a skirt and a cute dress is something that moms and teachers would celebrate in their daughters at school, so I started evaluating my friends' clothes every morning. If they didn't wear a skirt, I would call them a boy. One day, I wore pants, and they called me a boy. I was angry! How could they do that?! I was the decider! I told them that because I had a flower on my pants, I still was a girl, and if they didn't know that, they were stupid.*

I was not trying to be mean; I was trying to survive the social pressures and vulnerability that I felt. Looking back, that behavior is exactly the type of mean girl behavior that results from competitive social environments. Once thought to be an issue only for "urban" girls (read: girls of color from low-income families), this vicious girl fighting is a class issue for upper class girls that has long been ignored or seen as essential to girls' nature (Brown, 2003). However, that behavior is not innate. For me, my mean girl behavior was the result of my desire to avoid embarrassment and try to reduce uncertainty, to which Bach (1989) referred: I needed to protect myself from being

ashamed if I dressed wrong, but nobody would give me a list of what to do; consequently, I became a mechanism to enforce others' feminine conformity.

The pressure to be feminine already exists in most girls. The Supergirl Dilemma study (Girls, Inc., 2006) identified the top three pressures facing girls: The first was the pressure for girls to care a lot about shopping, with about 90% of girls acknowledging this social expectation for them; the second was that girls are under a lot of pressure to dress right, with about 85% finding that to be true; and the third most common pressure was that girls must please everyone. All three of these perceptions mean that girls understand that society expects them to not only conform but to become dependent on external validation through consumerist attitudes, social codes of dress/beauty, and service to others. The need for external validation in these areas of girls' lives makes criticism about attitude, dress, and shopping behaviors via "mean girls" into quite a wicked offense.

Brown (2003) showed that girls enact this indirect violence to one another because they lack a sense of control in their lives. Indirect violence allows girls to escape being noticed as a problem by those in control, and still exert social power. Girlfighting is "ultimately more profitable for girls" than taking their anxieties and fears out on boys, "or [on] a culture that denigrates, idealizes, or eroticizes qualities associated with femininity" (Brown, p. 6). Wood (2009) argued that the root of indirect female aggression stems from internalizing a culture that devalues women, and that they choose indirect expressions rather than anger or dislike because girls understand the pressure to be nice. Wood found that girls can internalize societal expectations and throw them at other girls, becoming "highly critical of other girls who are not pretty, thin, and otherwise

feminine” (p. 181). Girls often put down other girls to maintain or improve their social status, based on the oppressive expressions of “status” for females. They aim that fear and anger not at systems that devalue girls but at those girls devalued alongside them. At 7 years old, I knew I *needed* to wear a skirt to avoid shaming, and I would do anything else needed to avoid that feeling.

Schools also expect girls to follow feminine roles. Teachers gave me nonverbal clues, and even verbal clues, about when I had gotten my dress “right” throughout all levels of schooling. Those teachers, therefore, implicated me into a system of hegemonic approval, as the next example illustrates:

*After having spent the summer before my senior year of high school in Europe, I had grown curious about social expectations. I saw that there were different ways women could be, and that it might be okay to defy some of the expectations for U.S. women. I wanted to test how superficial my peers were, so I created an experiment that one of my female friends helped me with: We were going to see how my peers reacted to me not wearing makeup and not dressing nice for a week, and then compare that response to how I was treated in the second week when I wore cute dresses, makeup, and heels. I was excited to see the results!*

*The first week, I wore simple khakis, polos and other simple tops, and plain shoes. I didn’t wear makeup, and I would just wear my hair in a ponytail. Nobody gave me a hard time; I was mostly just ignored by everyone, except my close friends. I was really just left alone.*

*The second week was different: I dyed my hair blond, wore shoes with a heel, skirts or dresses, and artfully applied makeup. My male peers*

*would tease me a bit jokingly, and females would ignore me, but in a different way that acknowledged my improved status. My good friends didn't really act any different, other than giving me compliments. But surprisingly, teachers acted the most different, as they were more willing to recognize me, open doors for me, and accept my comments in class as being valid.*

This informal social experiment suggests that the school staff did not enforce socialization directly, but indirectly, which deprived me of their immediacy when I did not fit their expectations. If I wanted their full support, I would have to meet their physical (and gender) expectations. Plax and Kearney (1999) stated that students who feel immediate with their teachers feel more interested in the class, the subject matter, school, and the teacher; they also focus and behave better in class, and they become more motivated to learn and stay in schools. Given that success in schools has a major influence on gaining higher status in society (Aronowitz, 2009), teacher immediacy also matters to social status.

Teachers, thus, socialized me into their idea of what a successful student should be. I had no say in the matter, further making me dependent on a system of external validation that related to my appearance and promoted cultural compliance panoptically. When puberty hit, and I experienced even more of a loss of control in my life, I clung harder to ideals of beauty to avoid the unhappiness and uncertainty I felt.

*Things became hard in my family during middle and high school. My brother would get into trouble, and my parents would not know what to do. Things were really hectic in the house. I tried to avoid the whole situation; my parents wanted*

*me to, too. I also did not know how to do the advanced math I was assigned. For the first time, I—an A/B+ student—was making F's. I would sit in my room for hours at night, trying to do my math and just cry. I knew something was wrong with me, but I had no idea what it was. I couldn't talk to anyone about it. It wasn't like there was anyone to talk about things with anyways, except counselors, but I also didn't want anybody to know that something was wrong with me, and I didn't have the words to talk about it. I made plans to stop or cut down severely on eating. I would not usually do it for longer than a day but many of my peers would talk about not eating when they were stressed; it's what females did when they just had enough and didn't know what to do. Even my friends' moms would do that. It was like a silent suicide, appropriate for a "sweet" girl like me. When I asked, 8 of 10 of my friends said that they had thought about suicide. I knew it wasn't right that things felt like this but I didn't know what else could be done. I just suffered silently.*

Eating disorders, such as anorexia and bulimia, are connected to white values and standards of beauty (Bagley, Character, & Shelton, 2003). Insecurities about whether we fit the standard of beauty set for our social position plague our intrapersonal communication, and when others give positive enforcement about our slim appearance (as would happen throughout school), the issue becomes worse (Bagley et al., 2003). Girls, Inc. found that body weight is a concern for 52% of girls, and Eaton et al. (2005) found that 36.7% of young women mentioned feeling so sad or hopeless that they had stopped doing a normal activity. These numbers of depressed/suicidal behavior continue across the board, and are significantly more of an issue for females than they are for

males: For example, 16.2% of women have, at some time, made a suicide plan versus 9.9% of males (Eaton et al., 2005). Admittedly, adolescence was a terrible time in life for me and for many of my female peers, but how are schools implicated in this social issue?

For one thing, many teachers and schools, despite a genuine concern for students, are ill-equipped to deal with students' emotional issues. Most teachers prefer passive (docile) misbehaviors, such as sleeping during class, not coming to class, or not listening to active misbehaviors that include confrontation and fighting (Kearney, Plax, & Burroughs, 1991). Girls, particularly middle- and upper- class girls, because of their expectations to be docile, are more likely to communicate through these silent misbehaviors, but there can be real issues that cause these behaviors, and teachers ignoring students will not create the strong student–teacher relationship (Kearney et al.) needed to address issues facing girls. By schools ignoring the very real concerns of girls, they ask that girls deprioritize their emotional and physical well-being in favor of obedience to schools' priorities, and, thereby, make schooling a potentially dangerous force in girls' lives. Although teachers could not be expected to know that there was an issue with me, and I trust that they were concerned with my welfare, the consistent lack of attention to students' wants or needs during the school day gave me the impression that as long as I could function in school, my problems were insignificant. I experienced this insignificance when I was dying inside, yet struggled to do my math homework instead of seeking comfort.

Darder (2009) mentioned Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's insistence that a liberatory education also must be emotional:



Freire exposed how even well-meaning teachers, through their lack of critical moral leadership, actually participate in disabling the heart, minds, and bodies of their students—an act that disconnects these students from the personal and social motivation required to transform their world and themselves. (p. 568)

By being silent witnesses to the emotional desperation of teen girls, my teachers made me feel that my contentment was insignificant, and this idea further molded me into a docile body. By not acting out against my suffering or that of my peers, teachers taught me that silent suffering was acceptable.

There is a relation between the learned and the physical. The message that my suffering was acceptable was physically realized when I stopped eating, and the pressure on girls to meet external expectations (Girls, Inc, 2006), including schools' expectations, also has physical realizations. Some of the expectations that I understood explicitly were for women to not question authority or schooling structures. According to Shapiro (1999), these expectations are etched into women through schools' physical control of their bodies. In line with Foucault's (1977) observation of the manipulation of bodies in military schools, Shapiro saw the molding of the female body into patterns of conformity and submission as a part of the educational process. By schools owning girls' bodies for 8 hours per day, they create situations that enmesh hegemonic narratives that schools breed in girls' physicality (Shapiro). Combining this perspective with the pressure on girls to physically look a certain way, it makes sense that upper class girls embody stress through eating disorders.

In discussing external expectations on girls, it becomes impossible to avoid the pressure of academic performance. In particular, white students are expected to be smart and studious, often to the neglect of students of color:

*I was in sixth grade, and my class took a trip to the public high school that my school would likely feed into the next year. By that time, I was an honors student, separated for the past 2 years from my non-honors peers. In elementary school, I had students of all colors in my classroom, but in middle school, because I was in the honors track, I had no Latin-American students and hardly any African-American or Asian/Asian-American students in my classes. Even during free time, I didn't play with them, as their games, talk, and social circles were just different. Although we had sat next to one another in elementary school, now, I barely would say "hi" when I passed them in the halls, although most of the students of color from my elementary school didn't come to this school with me.*

*The high school we toured was pretty clean, and I saw that I probably would be in the International Baccalaureate [IB] classes (the really honors classes). My friends a year older than me had gone into IB classes, and my honors teachers told me I probably would. I thought I would be challenged. Still, my parents decided that I would go to a private seventh- and eighth-grade academy. I went to tour the school with my parents. The school showed a video of a teacher allowing her students to come to her house to ask about homework, and the character education and access to competitive colleges that it provided. The school even bragged about a 100% acceptance rate to college, the honor code that is enforced on every assignment, and access to a college counselor. I*

*do not know why but my parents really wanted to make sure I went to college, and were willing to invest the \$20,000 a year extra, for the next 6 years, to increase my already decent odds of attending college.*

Girls, Inc.'s (2006) study showed that school success is a main area of concern for girls, with 60% of those with a high quality of life and 71% with a low quality of life being concerned with grades. When I tutored kids in a homeless shelter, I found that a majority of them were getting all A's and were quite sharp, although I do not remember any of them being in honors courses.

Even though there were heavy economic costs for my family, my parents invested in this private school that basically told them that when I graduated, I would go to a top-tier college, and, more subtly, that I would be trained to be a lady. Furthermore, this school had even less diversity than did my intermediate school, where I also was separated from my peers of color. I excelled (at least academically) with the challenge honors courses offered, but many of my Latin-American and African-American peers would have, too, I believe. Sapon-Shevin (1993) demonstrated that parsing out the privileged into academically challenging courses is not an accident, and that gifted education (and I include honors education) is socially constructed. Sapon-Shevin stated that the label of "being gifted" is artificially created through semiscientific methods, and it is implemented to instantiate U.S. ideologies that the best and brightest just happen to be white and that by investing in these gifted children, all of society benefits. If other kids are not found to be gifted, it is just because they are not good enough and, consequently, they deserve less. Sapon-Shevin stated that it is the silence around this tracking system that maintains the meritocracy of public education.

I did not know why I was not in the same classes anymore with the students of color from my elementary school. I did not really think about it either but I did feel somehow “special” and worthy of praise. In fact, although I would never say that I was better than the peers of color left behind (I barely even remembered them at all), I felt like who I was and what I represented was somehow more important. It was the subtle actions in schools that lead me to this conclusion. If I were left with classes that contained more students of color, I knew that would be a bad thing. Teachers were not excited about teaching those classes, but they were excited to have the mostly white honors students, and they celebrated our thoughts and expressions of self, which unconsciously lead me to think my expressions of intellect and self were somehow better. Even more subconsciously, I attached the celebration that teachers had for us white, middle-class students, and the dread that teachers had for the students of color to judgments of racial and class superiority and inferiority. Vera et al. (1995) explained that whiteness, based on false beliefs of racial superiority, normalizes a false self-concept that is based in entitlement. Because there was no mention in schools about why one person is entitled and another is not, my entitlement to the best teachers and classrooms was just accepted, as was the demand that I accept what I was given without questioning it.

This experience shows Frankenburg’s (1993) three dimensions of whiteness at work. At school, I had the structural advantage of being tracked into honors courses, where I received praise for being a nice (docile) girl. In those classes, I was allowed the standpoint from which I thought that if I just worked hard, I would get good things (blind of any structural advantage), and that I had some intrinsic nature that made me smarter and better than others who did not get where I was. I also was allowed to live in the

cloud of privilege because my dominant, accepted, and normative culture was unnamed and seen as standard. My ability to fit in without having to defend or be judged for my culture allowed me protection from seeing my “whiteness”; my easy inclusion into the best that school had to offer gave me feelings of entitlement and superiority, and all of this came with no explanation—it was just the way that it was. I, thus, was able to live out my education blind to forces stacked in my favor.

Beyond just receiving messages about and being socialized into racial superiority and a “nice, sweet” girl, my schools’ systems of control exacted my conformance with and submission to social order.

*At my private high school, I constantly was being watched and judged. It was done more through the demerit system than through the teachers individually. The demerit system allowed teachers and staff a systemic level of authority over my hourly actions. If I walked on the grass, they had a say in my action; if I didn’t have a belt around my waist, they had authority over what should be there; if I said a cuss word, they had the power to overrule my choice of words; and if I was late, they had the ability to penalize me. I began to be ruled by the bell. Every morning, I woke up and unconsciously was thinking about how to make it to school before that bell rang. If I was late, there was a feeling of “do or die,” and I would run traffic lights, stop signs, speed limits, and go without breakfast to make it there on time. There never was any discussion about why the demerit system was put into place. The teachers and administrators did, however, often compare it to “the real world” where people are judged on their actions. They*

*were doing us a favor by “breaking us in” before the “real” punishments began.*

*But for what were they preparing us?*

When I started my high school, I entered a time and a space where my body, thoughts, priorities, and needs were secondary considerations. All of these phenomena were subject to inspection and domination by a larger system with a weak rationalization: that to survive in this society, I must conform to the rules. As the bells and belts and codes of conduct became my prime consideration for 8 hours a day, I began to erase myself as a consideration in my life. Nowhere, however, was this deprioritization of me considered to be abnormal. In fact, not only did people never notice that I was suffering but I actually was applauded for sacrifices that I made in my personal development—the time that I spent studying or shopping, improving my grades, or trying to respect authority received many compliments. However, the time that I spent analyzing the point behind any of these expectations or choosing what I wanted in life enmeshed me in cultural ideas of insanity, asexuality, disobedience, and weirdness.

Even as a young child, the order of kindergarten was hard for me to follow, and I was seen as too impulsive. A physician diagnosed me with attention deficit disorder and put me on a steady progression in dosage of medicine (Ritalin) until I was in high school. When I would forget to take my medicine, I would be creative, clear thinking, critically thinking, passionate, physically hungry, and alive! On Ritalin, however, all I could do was focus, do my homework, and behave. I could not even eat, as I had no appetite. However, as my parents said, I needed this medicine if I was going to stay in school. They probably were right, which raises the question of why I would need to suppress my critical thinking, passion, and creativity to survive in schools? My brother told me later

that Ritalin is the same chemical compound that Hitler used to make his Nazi armies obedient.

Although I do not believe that most schools are overtly fascist, most schools do expose students to structures of control and force them to fit within these structures in nondemocratic and disempowering ways. According to Ayers (2009), the fascist nature of our education depends on:

little mechanisms of control (from the regularity of bells to the obsession with routines and schedules), the repetition of tasks and the strict reliance on external judgment and evaluation . . . it banishes the unpopular, squirms in the presence of the unorthodox, hides the unpleasant. There is little space for skepticism, irreverence, questioning, or doubt. (p. 2)

Overwhelmed with the inane details of a school day, I had no energy left for creative thought or self-reflection. Having extracted all my energy, I was left with none for which to take self-development into my hands. I became a product of schools, developed completely in their mold. Even then I noticed having the life sucked out of me; in this institution, I was denied energy, access to diverse ideas, and time for resistance.

Foucault (1977) stated that schools, for centuries, have focused on the production of docile bodies. These docile bodies are made to increase people's productivity, and, simultaneously, to extract their agency, and to focus it on compliance to external expectations and regulations. Foucault's focus on gestural domination relates to the way that my moves were regulated by sitting in class, by controlling the way that I dressed through strict codes, and by outlining where I could and could not walk. Even more direct a correlation is Foucault's idea of the microphysics of power—that authorities

control people by dividing each moment into smaller and smaller intervals, and by dividing each task or concept into smaller and smaller divisions, such that authority can enforce expectations more intimately into people's daily lives. By embedding these demands closely into people's lives, they exact intimate control over people's time, values, and goals. My high school operated through the mechanism of the ringing bells, and through the dividing social expectations into detailed social codes. My school, thus, panoptically produced my docility. Even if I was unwilling to accept femininity, docility, or racial superiority in the beginning, the constant exposure to authority's enforced yet often hidden expectations eventually would make me accept them.

### **Discussion**

Schools, through their hidden curriculum, processes of socialization, lack of critical thinking and social and emotional awareness, tracking of white students into honors courses, and mechanisms of discipline increase the odds that (white, upper class, heterosexual, or male) privilege is adopted and that (racial, class, gender, or homosexual) inferiority is embedded. My schools were well intentioned, in that they did not seek to disable agency in their students or to exact panoptic control over students' inner lives but through their strict adherence to status quo values, processes and behaviors, along with the goal of shaping students to fit into society, those schools paralyzed my ability to develop beyond the status quo.

As students accept status quo values and behaviors (which, for white women, means accepting docility), their ability to transform reality is maimed, and, consequently, they become complicit with the status quo. Just as a runner must develop the potential of muscles needed for peak physical performance, schools develop people's muscles for



social performance. In the schooling that I experienced, my muscles of agency, power, personal rights, self-knowledge, equality, critical thinking, and justice atrophied and became useless for developing a fulfilling and socially just life for myself upon graduation.

As individuals are systemically socialized into accepting and being complicit with the status quo, society suffers. In the name of compliance, docile bodies accept exploitative iterations of capitalism, which privilege a rich few whose superiority must be accepted and defended, and docile bodies accept the repressed representation of rights for persons of color (or for women, or various “others”) in the social world. Without diverse individuals who can accept a diffusion of social power, power is allowed to be concentrated in the hands of an homogeneous few, which undermines equal rights, justice, diversity, and democracy.

To resist “rule by a few,” people must develop subjectivities that are strong enough to cling to and protect personal rights against the patterns of capital accumulation. These strong subjectivities can and should begin in schooling.

### **Conclusion: Liberation through Critical Pedagogy**

U.S. society currently begs for the docile bodies, inferior “others,” and “supergirls” that schools create, but I hope for a society that desires real democracy, wherein citizens actively create a society that represents them, and where they collectively manifest a just social, political, and economic vision. Consequently, schools, rather than suppressing democratic subjectivities, can and should develop them. In fact, my awareness of privilege, power, control, and democracy also was honed in school. Although I do not believe that each course must be engrained in social critique, the

education process should develop strong social subjectivities that can understand what has and what has not worked about the current social order, and that it should facilitate the development and application of a new generation of solutions. During this process, students can develop skills, perspectives, and personalities that can realize an improved social order.

I believe that my college education provided one vision of education (amongst many) that promotes democratic subjectivities:

*In my Quaker college classroom, I reeled every day, reading Audre Lorde, and being challenged and pushed harder than I ever had before to write original thoughts. I also cried every day, uncovering a connection with my body, with nature, and with emotions and personal power.*

*Every day blew my mind.*

*As the semesters pushed on, the emotionality of every day persisted, and I had to forge a relationship with a part of me that could accept that emotion.*

*Compared to what I previously had thought was “right,” I was experiencing a new form of power, a new set of emotions, and new perspectives on life. I thought I was going insane, yet I persisted.*

*Although I had never even heard the term before college, I engaged critiques of “white privilege.” I worked past white guilt with professors who illuminated capitalistic gains.*

*I engaged a spiritual connection with my body, energy, and nature.*

*Through tai chi and feminist writers, I found a power that was located within me,*

*one that was uniquely mine. As I disentangled myself from a web of greed and oppression that had entrapped me, I noticed similar struggles in my friends.*

The words of Audre Lorde (1984) and many others gave a voice to my realities, but I never would have engaged those words if it were not for guidance from my professors to locate meaning inside their words and inside my own interpretations, and to articulate something new. Shor (2009) discussed how critical literacy engages the most personal inner worlds of people's lives by naming, as part of education, social and political features that created them. With critical literacy, through exposure to writers and in-class discussions that deconstructed societal features, I was able to understand why social order was the way that it was, and through this understanding, I had agency in my surroundings, and I was encouraged to become part of a world that I co-created.

I believe that the ideal educational environment for white women resisting docility provides an affirming backdrop for students to empower themselves—allowing them to own their feelings, explore their desires, understand their social worlds (including the ugly parts), and equip them with tools to manifest goals and to navigate their social worlds authentically. If docility stripped (or drastically limited) pleasure, fulfillment, emotion, gestural freedom, and agency from me, liberation reintroduced me to them. Darder (2009) and Palmer (1998) recognized that liberation is an emotional process: Education must acknowledge emotional dimensions of students' lives and learning. Liberation also involves embodied expression of people's internal power and ways of knowing (Shapiro, 1999)—yoga, swimming, and tai chi enabled gestural liberation and physical empowerment for me. Through reading Lorde's (1984) words, I embraced the erotic, not through college hookups but by recognizing a source of personal energy that

fueled my passions, guided me toward life's pleasures, and provided me with sustenance and the ability to resist oppressive influences (Lorde).

Giroux (2009) defined *student empowerment* as “the process whereby students acquire the means to critically appropriate knowledge existing outside their immediate experience in order to broaden their understanding of themselves, the world, and the possibilities for transforming the taken-for-granted assumptions about the way we live” (p. 448). When they become empowered, students regain agency through their awareness of informed choice for their actions. An empowering education provides knowledge with the intent to illuminate the individual. Foucault (1977) described panoptic power as constituted within the individual through the internalization of authorities' expectations. If panoptic power multiplies within people when they internalize authorities' expectations, it follows that it is squelched within people by a stronger sense of agency and self-care. Freire (1994) spoke of the main difference between a liberatory education and an oppressive one as being rooted in students' experiences, not “banked” into them as if they were blank slates. In Freire's model of critical pedagogy, my experiences, bodily sensations, confusion about racial privileging, and feelings of vulnerability would receive value in classroom conversations and would not be pushed aside for regulations and external expectations.

Teachers can play an important role in illuminating the potential of students' agency. To alleviate the Supergirl Dilemma, Girls, Inc. (2006) recommended listening to girls' feelings as *the most important thing* that adults can do to help modern girls face heavy expectations that are put on them. For me, it took adults who cared about what I wanted in my life, trusted my vision for myself, believed that I could handle the harsh

realities of oppression and privilege, and honed my sensibilities about how to make myself and society more just. These teachers openly talked about my personal development, sometimes their identities (as white, male, homosexual, etc.), noticed when something disturbed me, saw the best in me, pushed me hard to recognize issues of social justice, addressed my questions seriously, and guided me towards contributing to social goods and developing a life that would fulfill me. Through their care for my quality of life and the betterment of society, I could prioritize my happiness, own and express my feelings, take creative risks, listen to understand others, and find power in self-expression. The multitude of teachers who cared more about me and my desires and ideas than about conformance to cultural norms and authority enabled a relationship between us that resisted domination and oppression. These relationships created a social, emotional, and educational space that allowed me to acknowledge and own my agency in the world, to develop solutions for social ills, and to become a social actor.

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## **Conflicting National Identities and Ideologies: A Rhetorical Analysis of the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II**

*Kaori Yamada*

*This essay is a rhetorical analysis of the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II in Washington D.C. It was erected in memory of Japanese internment camps and Japanese-American soldiers. The analysis of the Japanese American Memorial illustrates how the memorial embraces conflicting identities and ideologies: identities as Japanese descendent, identities as U.S. citizen, identities as Japanese pacifist, and identities as U.S. patriot. I argue that the seemingly self-reflective memorial still reproduces stereotypes of Japanese Americans and reduces them to passive victims or Others. The inclusion of a mistake by the nation might be a unique rhetorical feature of the memorial; however, such inclusion does not resolve the distance between visitors and those who are memorialized. The analysis suggests that (1) a single memory site can represent contradicting identities of a minority group, (2) a simple inclusion of a dark history of the country does not resolve a distance between a minority group and the U.S. mainstream, and (3) a seemingly communal memorial can silence diverse voices within the community.*

With the increasing sentiment against Japan because of the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942. It gave the military the authority to remove Japanese Americans from their residential areas and into internment camps. As a result of the evacuation program, approximately 120,000 people moved to relocation camps in the United States (Ng, 2002, p. 38). Japan surrendered on August 15, 1945 and the relocation program concluded when the war ended.

After the end of World War II and the relocation program, Issei (the first generation of Japanese Americans) and Nisei (the second generation of Japanese Americans) attempted to move on with their lives and forget the past (Ng, 2002, p. 110). However, Sansei, the third generation of Japanese Americans, were more interested in memorializing the relocation, which they had not experienced. Many Sansei Japanese

Americans tried to force the U.S. government to acknowledge that “the evacuation and incarceration had been unjust” and argued that the government needed to provide “some form of financial compensation” (de Nevers, 2004, p. 275). Because of a group of Sanseis’ efforts, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which provided 1.25 billion dollars for individual payments of 20,000 dollars to each surviving internee (de Nevers, 2004, p. 292).

The National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II is a part of such works of remembrance. It is a form of remembrance the younger generation of Japanese Americans constructed. It was erected on November 9, 2000, memorializing Japanese Americans who were forced to move to the relocation camps and Japanese American soldiers who died as members of the U.S. armed forces during WWII. It is located at the intersection of New Jersey Avenue, Louisiana Avenue, and D Street in Washington, D.C.

Public memory sites have been studied as multivocal texts that “reflect diverse readings of both dominant and marginalized interpretations of the past” (Dunn, 2011, p. 440). As Dunn (2011) summarized, resistive reading, in which audiences gain a measure of power by developing a contrary meaning of a text than intended by its producer, is an effective tool for minorities to counter official public memory (p. 440). Identifying the complexity of identity representation in memorials, especially national memorials that inevitably embrace authoritative directions by the government, would be important for studying public memory. This would allow critics to understand a memorial as a “fragment” of larger conversations about U.S. history, national identity, racism,

patriotism, or any others (McGee, 1999, p. 76), and memorials for minority groups are distinctive cases that internalize those power relations and ideologies.

This paper addresses the multiple identities represented in the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II as an exemplar of identity and ideological politics in national memorials for minority groups in the United States.

National memorials for minority groups face a unique conflict for determining its design and meanings. For example, the analysis of the Plains Indian Museum by Dickinson, Ott, and Aoki (2006) revealed that a reverential appreciation of the past and the minority group can maintain a distance from the group, while also acknowledging them as Others. This particular memorial of the experiences of Japanese Americans is significant for understanding the complexity of identities that memory sites for minority groups often embrace. As Anderson and Domosh (2002) clarified, creating and maintaining U.S. national identity demands an acknowledgement and a concurrent denial of the colonizing past of the United States. Inclusion or exclusion of negative or dark parts of national history is an issue memory sites for minority groups need to deal with and memorials are one such way.

The Japanese American Memorial is a national site of remembrance located in the Capitol, “one of America’s most symbolically charged venues, a public space that embodies the national discourse of democracy, freedom, and the ideology of equal access” (Benton-Short, 2006, p. 297); however, it does represent dark side of the country, interment, which contradicts the U.S. ideal of freedom for all. The analysis of the Japanese American Memorial illustrates how the memorial embraces conflicting identities and ideologies: identities as Japanese descendent, identities as U.S. citizen,

identities as Japanese pacifist, and identities as U.S. patriot. I argue that the seemingly self-reflective memorial still reproduces stereotypes of Japanese Americans and reduces them to passive victims or Others. The inclusion of a mistake by the nation might be a unique rhetorical feature of the memorial; however, such inclusion does not resolve the distance between visitors and those who are memorialized.

The following sections argue: first, the use of cranes in the memorial presents Japanese Americans' identity as Japanese descent. The memorial adapts cranes, a very Japanese symbol, as the motif for its central sculpture. The memorial also represents pacifism, Japan's ideology found in post-war contexts. Second, the stone walls in the memorial represent Japanese Americans' identity as U.S. citizens. The messages on the stone walls illustrate Japanese Americans as U.S. citizens who seek to protect democracy, freedom, and equality. These messages represent patriotism, a U.S. ideology found in traditional war memorials. Third, the memorial embraces both Japanese pacifism and American patriotism, which oftentimes contradict each other. Such a contradiction affects the meanings and consequences of the memorial's rhetoric. I conclude that the conflicting representation of identities and ideologies in the memorial functions as a rhetoric of reverence, which evokes both a profound sense of respect and a distance, observational gaze (Dickinson, Ott, & Aoki, 2006, p. 28). The analysis suggests (1) although a single memory site can represent contradicting identities of a minority group, it does not always counter a dominant understanding of national history; (2) a simple inclusion of a dark history of the country does not resolve a distance between a minority group and the U.S. mainstream, and (3) a seemingly communal memorial can silence diverse voices within the community.

## **Public Memorials and National Identity**

Public monuments, in general, are rhetorical. Blair, Jeppeson, and Pucci (1991) argued public commemorative monuments are rhetorical products because “they select from history those events, individuals, places, and ideas that will be sacralized by a culture or polity” (p. 263). By its substance and style, as interpretive and symbolic acts, a public commemoration is a “significant site of struggle over the nature of the past and its meaning for the present” (Mandziuk, 2003, p. 272). Although memory sites deal with events in the past, critics of public memory should investigate how meanings of the past are constructed for the sake of present and future. Blair, Dickinson, and Ott (2010) summarized that memory is activated by present concerns, issues, or anxieties (p. 6). Following those perspectives, this analysis examines how the Japanese American Memorial functions for visitors and the larger U.S. nation in the present and future, rather than how accurate it demonstrates the past event.

Public memory functions as narrating a common identity (Blair, Dickinson, & Ott, 2010, p. 7). As Gillis (1994) clarified, group identity or a sense of sameness over time and space is sustained by remembering; and what is remembered is defined by the assumed identity (p. 3). However, in the United States, constituting a single national identity is difficult due to its diverse nature (Beasley, 2004). For example, Moss (2011) insisted that regional identities of the South maintain white hegemony although they appear to be inclusive. I argue that racial or ethnic identity of minority groups can function in the same way. A memorial or artifact that seemingly celebrates a unique experience or culture of a minority group can reproduce stereotypical understandings of the group.

Discussing race and spaces of remembering, Dickinson, Ott, and Aoki (2006) clarified a rhetoric of reverence for examining the Plains Indian Museum as an experiential landscape. They argued that the rhetoric of reverence, which evokes both a sense of respect and a distance to those remembered, “invites visitors to respect and even celebrate Plains Indian culture and traditions, but without asking them to consider the social and political implications of Western conquest” (pp. 30-31). The rhetoric of reverence also encourages audiences to see the Plain Indians culturally, naturally, and historically distant as Others (p. 33). The Japanese American Memorial, on the other hand, seems to avoid falling into the same trap by remembering Japanese Americans as patriotic U.S. citizens, not Others – at least not singularly. However, the close reading of the Japanese American Memorial reveals that the seemingly self-reflective and inclusive memorial still reproduces stereotypes of Japanese Americans and reduces them to passive victims or Others. The inclusion of the internment scenario (or vestiges of regret by the nation) might be a unique rhetorical feature of the Japanese American Memorial. But, such inclusion does not resolve that the dilemma rhetoric of reverence creates for the American public. The following analysis of complex and contradicting representations of identities found in the Japanese American Memorial suggests that a memorial for a particular group can reduce its members to Others or to a marginalized status and also can ignore diversity within the group itself.

### **Represented Identities and Ideologies as Japanese Descendent**

#### **Cranes as a Japanese Symbol**

Cranes are a symbol commonly used in Japanese culture, and the cranes sculpture, the seemingly main artifact in the Japanese American Memorial (“Memorial” from here

on), contains multiple meanings, including the so-called publicly “intended” meaning and alternative meanings. The “intended” meaning here refers to the ways the creators wished to be associated with the Memorial. In contrast, the alternative meaning refers to that which is beyond the creators’ intent, yet can still materially affect audiences. Memorials are open to multiple interpretations since “rhetoric has material force beyond the goals, intentions, and motivations of its producers” (Blair, 1999, p. 22). Foss (1986) also clarified that meanings of an art object result “only from a viewer’s creation of an interpretation of the visual object” (p. 330). Such multiplicity tells us that the Memorial can internalize controversy in the representation of minority groups through its rhetorical features, which I will discuss later.

The intended meanings of the cranes sculpture represent freedom for all people, happiness, longevity, and patriotism of Japanese American communities. The National Japanese American Memorial Foundation explains their intended symbolic meaning of the cranes sculpture on their website. The height of 14 feet symbolizes “rising beyond limitations” (NJAMF, n.d.). The mirror image position of the two bronze cranes represents “the duality of the universe” (NJAMF, n.d.). The cranes each grasp a strand of barbed wire in their beaks, and this represents “an attempt to break free” of the bivouac that circled the camps (NJAMF, n.d.). As a whole, the monument is meant to present “the Japanese American experience as a symbol for all peoples” (NJAMF, n.d.). Therefore, the intended meaning of the sculpture seems to communicate “happiness and auspiciousness” embracing patriotism and the bitter memory of the war and the internment camps (National Public Radio, 2001). The Memorial is a rhetorical artifact that directs “the attention to one field rather than to another” (Burke, 1983, p. 116), and



the cranes sculpture and the website direct visitors/viewers to these alleged intended meanings.

In addition to the intended meanings, the cranes sculpture also represents a Japanese way of remembering the war, and this interpretation can be an alternative mode of understanding context. More than just a simple wish for personal happiness and longevity, paper cranes symbolize a wish for eternal peace in Japan, peace being a condition for happiness and longevity. This is especially true when cranes are used in contexts of remembering World War II. Cranes in the milieu of the war function as a medium of constructing public memory, which remembers the war as devastating and not to be repeated.

This link between cranes and peace was embedded in the story of Sadako. The most famous monument joining paper cranes to war memory is the Children's Peace Memorial in Hiroshima, the city where the first atomic bomb brought the most devastating suffering to non-combatants. This memorial was dedicated in 1958 to Sadako, who was two years old at the time of the bombing and died when she was a twenty-year-old girl in 1955 of leukemia, an after-effect of the bomb's radiation. Believing the Japanese tale that she could make a wish come true if she folded more than a thousand paper cranes, she continued to fold cranes until the day she died (Yurita & Dornan, 2009, p. 230). This Sadako sculpture lifts up a large paper crane with both of her arms. A number of paper cranes sent from schools around Japan are displayed around the sculpture.

As the tradition of folding paper cranes makes clear, generally the cranes are a familiar motif for good luck among Japanese people, but the cranes in the contexts of war

memory specifically signify a wish for peace. I call it an alternative reading because the Memorial as well as its website make no reference to paper cranes and the tradition of paper folding. One might argue that there was no way to establish a connection between paper cranes and the memory of internment, since the story of Sadako came to be known after the war and the relocation camps ended. Therefore, this alternative reading is not reflected in a popularly circulated history of Japanese Americans. However, I argue that the cranes sculpture can represent Japanese Americans' identities as of being of Japanese origin by using cranes. Use of cranes can be a reconstruction of racial identity for the Sansei (third generation) who took the initiative in creating the Memorial, even though they did not experience the camps. Memory is activated by present concerns (Blair, Dickinson, & Ott, 2010, p. 6). And, the remembrance of the past does not always reflect some antiseptic body of positivistic facts of history. Although paper cranes as a symbol for peace became popular in Japan after the time of the relocation, the Memorial tells the story for the sake of present and future generations.

### **Pacifism, Japan's Key Ideology**

The Memorial represents not only Japanese American's identity as being of Japanese descent but also presents pacifism as an ideology that is unique to modern Japanese history and culture with the cranes sculpture and victimization. Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan expresses "the basic points of Japan's pacifism" (Maki, 1990, p. 73). It reads that "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes" (The Constitution of Japan, 1946). The United States drafted this particular Constitution after Japan surrendered in order to avoid imperialism and militarism that led the country to its

devastating invasions and wars (in the past). Although the Japanese Constitution was originated by the U.S. government, pacifism has become one of post-war Japan's fundamental values through narratives of war memory and education.

Japan initially embraced the pacifism codified in Article 9 because of its regret and fear related to its militarism and nationalism. However, by the 1960s, peace movements in Japan came to rely increasingly on "images of the Japanese people as war victims" (Orr, 2001, p. 3). Such memory of war as "the suffering of civilian Japanese" has invited "sympathy for civilian casualties" and has substantiated "Japan's constant postwar assertions that it would never wage war again" (Fujiwara, 2005, p. 53). Pacifism in war contexts directs people's perception of Japan not as being an aggressive invader, but as being a victim. Japan's pacifism is a denial of weapon use and a wish for eternal peace for all, based on its war-time experience as a "national victim." The cranes sculpture in the Memorial, which commemorates experiences during WWII, can represent Japanese ways of pacifism, as cranes are a symbol of the wish for eternal peace in Japanese war memory. As the alternative reading of the sculpture suggests, visitors who are familiar with post-war Japan, can experience the space as a representation of Japanese Americans' identity as Japanese, rather than Americans.

In addition to the sculpture, the memory of internment presents victimization, a feature of Japan's pacifism. Around the symbolic cranes sculpture, the ten stone panels inscribed with the placements of the relocation camps and the number of the internees forms a half circle. The placements and numbers silently depict Japanese Americans' experience from a victim's perspective. There are no descriptions of individual internees. Although some of them resisted the internment, some agreed with the removal, and some

just accepted the situation, the panels reduce a variety of internees to the numbers and the placements of the camps and present them as innocent civilian victims. Unlike the stone walls in the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial that include individual names of dead on the stone wall, it is difficult to imagine the individual experiences of the internees only through the numbers. The wall with names of the dead "preserves references to the veterans as individuals and as a group" (Blair, Jepperson & Pucci, 1991, p. 278). On the other hand, the Memorial's stone walls that only display the locations of each camp and the number of internees housed there might not provide references to remember individual internees.

Moreover, narratives that justify the internment are completely eliminated in this space. It is possible to argue that the relocation was a good policy to protect Japanese Americans from hate crimes, but the Memorial does not offer any clues for such an interpretation. Across from the sculpture, on the wall of the reflecting pool, the official apology of President Ronald Reagan is inscribed. It reads: "Here We Admit a Wrong," taken from his speech as he signed the legislation. This quotation directs visitors to understand the interment as a wrong policy and Japanese Americans as victims of said policy. A visitor who stands in front of the cranes sculpture surrounded by the ten stone panels may experience this site as a representation of freedom and eternal peace for all based on Japanese Americans' experience as innocent victims. With such rhetorical features, the Memorial internalizes pacifism, a modern Japanese ideology.

## **Represented Identities and Ideologies as U.S. Citizens**

### **Identity as U.S. Citizens**

Although the Memorial represents Japanese Americans' identities and ideologies as imbricated in/with Japanese descent, it also represents their identity and ideology as U.S. citizens. The following analysis of the messages on the stone walls forming the perimeter of the Memorial reveals that the collection of messages emphasizes the importance of democracy, freedom, and justice, which all underscore a pledge to U.S. citizenship. In the east part of the Memorial, the stone wall's ten panels stand facing the reflecting pool. Among the ten panels, the three placed at the center are inscribed with the names of the Japanese Americans who died during the military service in the war. The other seven panels convey messages from Japanese American veterans and leaders.

The message inscribed on the first message panel is by Norman Y. Mineta, who was a U.S. Congressperson. It reads: "May this memorial be a tribute to the indomitable spirit of a citizenry in World War II who remained steadfast in their faith in our democratic system." Mineta, a second generation Japanese American who experienced the internment as a youth, describes democracy as "our" system. Visitors can easily decode his intent to identify himself as a U.S. citizen. The message seems to celebrate Japanese Americans' loyalty to the U.S. government and the larger American nation during the war. Mineta's words also imply that even though democracy faltered momentarily with the camps, Japanese Americans knew the system would correct itself and restore their full democratic citizenship. In this sense, Japanese Americans are remembered as U.S. citizens, who fought against the fatal violation of human rights and democracy (the internment).

The message on the second panel is from Mike Masaoka, a staff sergeant of the 442nd regimental combat team. It says: "I am proud that I am an American of Japanese ancestry." This sentence shows that he identifies first as an American. The message continues: "I believe in this nation's institutions, ideals and traditions. I glory in her heritage. I boast of her history. I trust in her future." As a U.S. citizen, he honors American ideals and traditions. This message positions him as more American than Japanese. Here, the message seems to construct a "group identity" or "a sense of sameness" of Japanese Americans by remembering Masaoka as an American who truly respects the country's ideals (Gillis, 1994, p. 3). Identity as an American seems to be a group identity that the Memorial sustains writ large.

The message on the third panel is from Robert Matsui, a former internee in Tule Lake camp, and it says: "Our actions in passing the civil liberties act of 1988 are essential for giving credibility to our constitutional system and reinforcing our tradition of justice." The use of the word "our" reveals that he is a part of the United States. The civil liberties act in which the U.S. government officially apologized for the internment camps as a wrong policy was "our action." This message seems to reinforce Japanese Americans' identity as U.S. citizens and recalls Moneta's statement; Japanese Americans' faith in the system is justified in the display of his utterance.

The message on the fourth panel is from Akemi Matsumoto Ehrlich. It reads: "Japanese by blood. Hearts and minds American. With honor unbowed. Bore the sting of injustice. For future generations." This message also illustrates Japanese Americans' national identity as American by telling audiences that their hearts and minds belong to America. Although they are Japanese by blood, they have American spirits. They respect

honor and justice as their American values. The key value the message celebrates seems to be Japanese Americans' honor for the country. Their spirits belong to the United States, not Japan.

The message on the fifth panel insists that democracy and equality are American values. A message from Spark Matsunaga, a former captain of the 100th infantry battalion, reads: "We believed a threat to this nation's democracy was a threat to the American dream and to all free peoples of the world." The word "a threat" here can read both as a threat of German and Japanese imperialism during the war and a threat of internment at that time. Either way, democracy is a crucial U.S. value. German and Japanese military attacks against the United States were a threat to U.S. values. The exclusion of Japanese Americans was a threat because it violated the U.S. way of democracy and equality. This message seems to center the U.S. ideals as core. The message also seems to establish identification between democracy (or U.S. values) and Japanese Americans. According to Burke (1969), person A identifies with person B when A recognizes B shares common characteristics and/or interests (pp. 20-21). In this vein, the message deemphasizes the uniqueness of Japanese Americans' identity as a minority group and emphasizes their shared values as American citizens. The shared value might help visitors internalize a sense of sameness or community with Japanese Americans. Such identification could be a way to resolve the dilemma that the rhetoric of reverence creates---a distance to those who are remembered.

The message on the sixth panel is different from the others, because it is not from a Japanese American but from President Harry S. Truman. It says: "You fought not only the enemy but you fought prejudice---and you won. Keep up that fight and we will

continue to win to make this great republic stand for what the Constitution says it stands for the welfare of all of the people all of the time.” This message celebrates Japanese Americans’ fight against discrimination in their own country. It includes Japanese Americans in the United States saying “we” will continue to win. The inclusion by the President might also create a sense of a community or identification between visitors and Japanese Americans. Citizenship of Japanese Americans is acknowledged in this instantiation.

The message on the seventh panel is from Daniel Inoue, a former captain of the 442nd regimental combat team who has been a U.S. Senator since 1963. It reads: “The lessons learned must remain as a grave reminder of what we must not allow to happen again to any group.” This message reminds visitors of one of the intended meanings of the crane sculpture. The Memorial remembers Japanese Americans’ experiences and represents the hope of freedom of all people.

These messages describe Japanese Americans’ national identity as U.S. citizens. The concept of democracy, which appears in the first and fifth inscribed messages, is definitive of U.S. ideologies. Justice and freedom for all also is part of U.S. identity, which appear on the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth messages. Calabrese (1992) described American democratic ideals as “the mythology of American individual freedom” (p. 62). Kemmelmeier and Winter (2008) also pointed out that “liberty and freedom constitute dominant themes in American national identity, where American history is often viewed as a struggle to attain and defend freedom, or where the American military is viewed as guarantor of this freedom” (p. 861). Freedom is one ideal that constitutes U.S. national identity, and the messages in the Memorial seem to let Japanese Americans fit into the



values respected in the country. In other words, the Memorial insinuates that Japanese Americans can assimilate a white hegemonic culture in the United States, since national identity or value of the nation is directly tied to white hegemony. White Americans have respected freedom as a value of the country, but it was white Americans who created the condition oppressed groups had to fight for freedom. Just as white Americans institutionalized slavery, it was white Americans who had to abolish slavery (Moss, 2011, p. 80).

Although this reading of the messages on the wall reveals how the Memorial intends to emphasize Japanese Americans' identity as U.S. citizens, the relationship between national identity and citizenship for Japanese Americans is far more complicated. Even though young Japanese Americans at the time of the war willingly contributed to military service as U.S. citizens, they were not allowed to join the same combat teams with other U.S. soldiers. The government engaged in loyalty screening for internees in relocation camps. The answers of adult respondents were used to determine their eligibility for enlisting in the military (Ng, 2002, p. 56). Japanese Americans had to be judged as loyal enough to participate in the military of their home country. This was confusing especially for the Nisei, the second generation who was U.S.-born and were who were young enough to join the military at that time. Although young Japanese Americans faced a national identity conflict, more than 33,000 of them served in the U.S. military during World War II (Ng, 2002, p. 55). They fought for the nation and they identified themselves as U.S. citizens, but the government regarded them as outsiders or potential enemies living in the United States. These experiences complicate Japanese Americans' national identities. From their perspective, they were U.S. citizens; however,

from the government's perspective, they were outsiders. The Memorial does not offer detailed descriptions of such identity struggles young Japanese Americans experienced. The absence of the struggles can diminish an opportunity for understanding the unique social and cultural background of their sacrifices.

Such representations of Japanese Americans' identity as loyal U.S. citizens can explain why the names of the dead are put in the middle of the seven messages. This centered position of the dead may intend to suggest that the Memorial honors them as a representation of Japanese Americans' identity and their citizenship. They sacrificed their lives in order to protect the nation's ideals, democracy and freedom, even though the U.S. government restricted their own freedom. The sixth message from Truman is placed next to the names of the dead, and it may intend to mean their patriotic contributions, which were not well recognized during war-time. The inscribed names honor the dead as U.S. citizens, rather than as people of Japanese descent. This might function to resolve a conflict U.S. national memory embraces. Some individuals want to forget the past, particularly painful and self-indicting past. Others want to remember the past, particularly the past dominant discourses of the nation (Dickinson, Ott, & Aoki, 2006, p. 40). By remembering Japanese Americans as loyal citizens, their sacrifices are honored while the discriminatory policy the nation enacted is overlooked.

The messages on the stone panels seem to intend to celebrate democracy and freedom, but it is the nation's democracy and freedom, not a people's. The panels describe internment as an injustice and a threat not because that policy was morally wrong, but because it was against U.S. basic values. Removal of Japanese Americans obviously violated the American ideal of individual freedom. However, the messages did

not describe how Japanese Americans suffered through their internment or military service. Instead, the damage to the nation as a whole, not just to one ethnic subgroup, is the emphasized theme. Such rhetorical features of the Memorial functions as rhetoric of reverence, a rhetoric that invites visitors to respect and celebrate culture and traditions of marginalized, but without asking them to consider the social and political implications behind (Dickson, Ott, & Aoki, 2006, pp. 30-31). For instance, the names of individuals direct visitors' attention to patriotic sacrifices of Japanese Americans and generate a positive attitude toward the dead and the Japanese American community. However, the history of the loyalty screening and struggles of identity the second generation of Japanese Americans experienced are absent in the Memorial. I do not argue the Memorial wrongly eliminates such narratives and history. Absence of a particular event is not always a sign of forgetting (Blair, Dickinson, & Ott, 2010, p. 18). Rather, I argue that the ways the Memorial presents identities of Japanese Americans, especially the selection of the messages, can reduce diverse experiences of Japanese Americans to a single label: patriotic U.S. citizens. Such rhetorical features can hinder visitors to understand complexities of Japanese Americans' identities and struggles.

### **Patriotism, a Key U.S. Ideology**

As its official name indicates, the National Japanese American Memorial for Patriotism During World War II is meant to celebrate patriotism. Li and Brewer (2004) defined patriotism as it is "connecting pride and love for country" (p. 728). In the context of memorializing past national events in the United States, patriotism especially signifies love and pride in the military defense of national values such as freedom and equality. Liberty and freedom have been dominant themes in U.S. national ideologies where

American history is viewed as a struggle to attain and defend freedom through military forces (Kimmelmeier & Winter, 2008, p. 861). Therefore, remembering a war fought for freedom with militaristic sacrifice especially entails patriotism, as well as a robust love and pride for a nation that protected freedom.

The Memorial embraces U.S. patriotism overtly. The messages from the service members inscribed on the stone panels represent Japanese Americans' identity as U.S. citizens who protected democracy, freedom, and equality. Japanese Americans who participated in military service during the war were remembered as patriotic. The three stone panels listing the names of the war dead standing in the middle of the seven stone message panels also make the Memorial patriotic. In contrast, the ten panels around the cranes sculpture list the camps' names and the numbers of internees, but do not list individuals' names. Blair, Jepperson and Pucci (1991) argued based on their analysis of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial that the wall with names of the dead "preserves references to the veterans as individuals and as a group" (p. 278). Visitors can read the listed names as a group because "the structural integrity of the wall unifies as a collective those who died" (Blair, Jepperson & Pucci, 1991, p. 278). At the same time, the names on the wall in the Memorial depict the military dead as honorable, individual defenders of freedom. Remembering sacrifices in military service promotes patriotism. The dead soldiers defended the nation and its ideals at the cost of their own lives, and their sacrifices must be meaningful. In order to make the sacrifices meaningful, the nation and ideals they protected should be meaningful. Through remembering the dead, people come to feel that they are proud of their nation and ideals. The inscribed names as well as

messages from veterans and former internees create a patriotic space, again as the name of the Memorial suggests.

### **Identity and Ideological Conflicts within the Memorial**

#### **Identity conflict**

The Memorial is a rhetorical artifact that internalizes Japanese Americans' identity conflicts. These complexities derive from power politics over the history of racial discrimination. First, the relationship between the government and Japanese Americans creates problems. During World War II, Japanese Americans were legally U.S. citizens and they were proud of being U.S. citizens, even though the government denied their civil rights because of their ethnic origin; but they were also proud of the Japanese culture that their ancestors brought to the United States. Second, oppositions within the Japanese American community also add another complexity of identity representation in the Memorial. Not all members of the Japanese American community agree with the design of the Memorial. For instance, the website of the Japanese American Voice opposes the content of the inscribed messages. They argue that the Memorial does not include "the resisters, the objectors, the 'no-no's,' the strikers, and those who fought against the camps in the courts" even though they are also part of Japanese Americans' legacy (Japanese American Voice, n.d. a). Such exclusion contributes to the reproduction of the Japanese Americans' image as passive victims, accepting authoritative orders without resistance. The absence of resistance in the Memorial constitutes the internees as passive victims of the relocation.

Moreover, such stereotypical images of Japanese Americans as passive victims enforces a rhetoric of reverence, regarding Japanese Americans as outsiders, or Others,

who are different from the majority of U.S. citizens. As histories of the Mainstream Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Suffrage Movement clarify, resistance against discriminatory policies is also one of the U.S. nation's values. Some Japanese Americans took action against the discriminatory removal just as other U.S. citizens had done, but their resistance was absent from the Memorial. Although the Memorial honors Japanese Americans as U.S. citizens, the absence of resistance puts them into the realm of "outsiders," people of Japanese descent who are different. Such rhetoric of reverence can hinder affiliation, which produces, mediates, and sustains emotional connection (Blair, Dickinson, & Ott, 2010, p. 16).

In addition to the exclusion of resisters, the Japanese American Voice also opposes the inclusion of "a modified 'quotation' taken from Mike Masaoka's 'Japanese American Creed,'" because he was a national secretary [of the Japanese American Citizens League] who supported the internment saying Japanese Americans "would go willingly when called upon to make this 'sacrifice'" (Japanese America Voice, n.d. b). This inclusion of Masaoka's message also suggests the Memorial enforces the image of Japanese Americans as passive followers, thus functioning as a problematic rhetoric of reverence. Although the Memorial is dedicated to the memory of Japanese Americans, they are not a united racial group. As this case of opposition from a Japanese American group suggests, even in the Japanese American community, which is regarded as a model minority group in the United States, voices from people in power (in this case, the Foundation) tend to be reflected more than voices from people who are not in authoritative positions.

### **Ideological conflict**

The Memorial seems to embrace both Japanese pacifism and U.S. patriotism, although its intended meaning is patriotism as its name suggests. However, the concept of pacifism and patriotism conflict with each other. In the United States, pacifists and patriots have been regarded as mutually exclusive. During the post-WWI era, U.S. government officials labeled peace workers “un-American radicals” and appropriated the terms *patriotism* and *loyalty* for “those who stood against pacifists” (Snider, 2005, p. 70). Government officials, military officers, and neopatriotic societies raised suspicions that “pacifism and internationalism were un-American” (Snider, 2005, p. 72). To be patriotic requires being anti-pacifist, and vice versa – at least oftentimes popularly. In Japan, honoring patriotism has been avoided after World War II because it reminds people of wartime nationalism and militarism. During the war, Japanese soldiers were forced to fight and die for the nation and the Emperor. Narratives of patriotism during the war entail the honoring of military sacrifices for the country, so patriotism can justify the use of force. Pacifism, which rejects use of force and wishes for everyone’s peace, cannot include patriotism because patriotism can justify the use of force under the name of protection of a nation. A victim’s perspective centers Japan’s pacifism and it also makes it impossible to integrate pacifism and patriotism. Patriotism implies active commitments in military service for a nation, so it remembers wars from a view of a defender having been attacked rather than of a passive victim. Celebrating the active use of force for settling a dispute cannot coexist with pacifism, which sees force as unacceptable because victims are innocent and do not have means to defend themselves.

The Memorial embraces both pacifism and patriotism even though they conflict with each other. The cranes sculpture and the ten stone panels with names of camps and

the number of internees around the sculpture stand in for Japan's prototypical pacifism. The circled space (the west side of the Memorial) remembers the internment focusing on Japanese Americans' collective experience as victims. The cranes standing at the center of the circle symbolize Japanese Americans' wish for freedom and peace for all, implying a Japanese use of cranes as a pacifistic representation. On the other hand, the names of the war dead and the seven messages inscribed on the stone panels embody U.S. patriotism. The line created by the stone panels (the east side of the Memorial) remembers and honors Japanese Americans' military sacrifices and contributions, both individual and collective, during the war. The honoring of the dead as defenders of the nation and its freedom is a feature of U.S. patriotism. Pacifism and patriotism exist in tension with each other, but the Memorial embraces both at the same time, even if not intended. This multiplicity is possible when one understands the west part of the Memorial as a space for Japan's pacifism and the east part as a space for U.S. patriotism. Although the combination of the two spaces has a single name, the National Japanese American Memorial for Patriotism During World War II, the Memorial actually honors the two different experiences (the internment and military service) and the ideologies (Japan's pacifism and U.S. patriotism) in the two separated spaces. This analysis suggests that multiple levels of identities and ideologies can be a rhetorical feature of memorials for minority groups, as a result of identity struggles members of a group experienced. Presenting multiple identities can be a way to resolve cultural distance.

However, embracing multiple, conflicting identities and ideologies is not a perfect prescription to memorials for minority groups. The ideological conflict makes the Memorial difficult to read in one consistent way for visitors, although they are capable of



developing a meaning of it beyond intention of the producers (Dunn, 2011, p. 440). To wit, visitors may experience the Memorial as precarious, going back and forth between pacifism and patriotism. As a consequence, such complexity blurs the original intention of the Memorial, a patriotic remembrance celebrating military contributions of Japanese Americans.

### **Conclusion**

So far the analysis of the Japanese American Memorial suggests that: (1) although a single memory site can represent contradicting identities of a minority group, it does not always counter a dominant understanding of national history; (2) a simple inclusion of a dark history of the country does not resolve a distance between a minority group and the U.S. mainstream; and (3) a seemingly communal memorial can silence diverse voices within the community. Although Dunn (2011) summarized that resistive readings or alternative readings are an effective tool for minorities to counter official public memory, conflicting identities and ideologies in the Memorial does not seem to counter official public memory. Rather, the Memorial reduces internees to passive victims or Others, accepting and reproducing stereotypical understanding of the minority group.

The conflicting national identity between Japanese and American, where the cranes represent Japanese identity and the inscribed messages represent American spirit, makes the Japanese American Memorial a rich but complex to read for visitors. It allows multiple interpretations but at the same time excludes and silences at least one particular interpretation. Although the Memorial can seemingly be an exemplar of resolving the dilemma rhetoric of reverence by emphasizing Japanese Americans' identity as U.S. citizens, it still reproduces stereotypes by presenting Japanese Americans as passive

victims. Dickinson, Ott, and Aoki (2006) argued that a problem in rhetoric of reverence is an absence of social and political implication. The Japanese American Memorial does include the internment and the official apology, which would be a social and political context helping visitors interpret the experiences of those remembered. In this sense, the Memorial would be read as a positive example of rhetoric of reverence. However, the inclusion of the dark history does not diminish the distance between the U.S. mainstream and the Japanese American community.

Beyond the specific work of the Memorial, this analysis suggests the necessity of identifying power politics embedded in identity representation in national memorials for minority groups. As this analysis shows, recognizing complexity of memorial sites is important especially for critiquing stereotyping and silencing minority groups in their own memorials. A memorial is a fragment of larger social contexts, and national memorials for minority groups are concrete exemplars of artifacts that internalize U.S. history, racism, patriotism, and power politics.

This study also suggests the necessity of identifying diversity within minority groups in order to understand memorials for/of/by those very minority groups. Racial minority groups tend to be regarded as univocal, with stereotypical images coming to coalesce around their public identities. When it comes to looking at a monument proposed by a minority group, viewers tend to understand the artifact as a result of the community's collective effort. This might not be a wrong enterprise; however, as the opposition from the Japanese American Voice suggests, memorials for minority groups can completely ignore diverse voices within the group. Public memory scholars should

pay careful attention to diversity within minority groups, as well as larger historical contexts and power politics interwoven in public memorials.

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