

THE RHETORICAL STRATEGIES OF LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON
PROMOTING EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

Rhetorical Strategies Used by Lyndon Johnson to Promote Education: From Congressman to President

The formal study of rhetoric began sometime in the sixth century B.C.E. in ancient Greece (Campbell xvii) when it was considered as “a necessary adjunct to receiving a quality education” (“Education, History of”). The next step in rhetoric’s trajectory came as it moved from being an oral discipline to a written one because “writing simply re-presents spoken language in visible form” (Saussure qtd. in Ong 17). Plato’s writings clarified that the major concern of the rulers (*Republic passim*) was education. As the noted rhetorical scholar Eric Havelock points out, the link between rhetoric and education became solidified (13); however, just as many have done, Havelock does not state the way in which the “link” between these two disciplines has been continued over the centuries.

Plato had certain ideas relating to educating specific people: he believed rhetoric was for the educated and education was specifically only for the guardians (or upper classes) in a democracy (Barker 31). The educated aristocracy would then be responsible for administering the Greek ideals relating to maintaining a democratic state to the rest of the inhabitants. Plato’s student, Aristotle, alternatively believed that all citizens could—and should—be educated to maintain democracy¹ (Barker 31). That is, he believed that rhetoric was an integral part of receiving an education. These two men epitomize two disparate points of view in which education supports a republic.

Centuries have passed and the debate regarding education (and rhetoric’s place in education) has not waned. Most people realize that education is necessary in a democracy;

¹ The Greek word *demos* means “masses” and “began in Greece in the fifth century B.C.” (Kennedy vii).

however, not everyone realizes the need for providing a “quality” public education—which includes offering rhetoric. This dissertation shows, through the way in which Lyndon Johnson uses his rhetorical abilities, that not only *what* is important—education—but *who* must receive education in a democracy in order for the democratic way of life to be maintained. That is, the “what” is education and the “who” encompasses all of the citizens in a democracy, not just a chosen few.

The Rhetorical Situation

Aristotle initially gave a definition of *rhetoric* in the fourth century B.C.E. as meaning not only a “mode of persuasion,” but also “is the faculty of discovering in the particular case what are the available means of persuasion” (1355b). To any of the more involved definitions of the term in use today,² we can appreciate the power rhetoric exerts over its listeners. However, we know that there is more than just a need to study the rhetorical act—such as a speech, a visual image, or a sound bite. By studying the entire make-up of an event, we can look at many aspects that impose themselves onto the speech and thereby more clearly understand *why* something was said versus *what* was meant in the moment.

Lloyd F. Bitzer argues that one needs to consider at least three ways to perceive an event when viewing an entire rhetorical situation (“The Rhetorical Situation” 1-14). First, there must be an “exigence,” which he defines as “an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be” (Bitzer, “Rhetorical Situation” 5-6). Significantly, discourse must be able to modify the exigence under discussion. For instance, Bitzer gives specifics relating to what discourse

² “Rhetoric is the study of effective speaking and writing, the art of persuasion, and many other things” (Burton “What is Rhetoric”).

cannot modify (and is therefore not related to what he speaks about) when he writes, "Death, winter, and some natural disasters, for instance—are exigencies to be sure, but they are not rhetorical" (6).

The second constituent of Bitzer's rhetorical situation is "audience," which he defines as those individuals affected by the exigence and as those persons—real or imagined by the speaker—"who are capable of being influenced by discourse and being mediators of change" (8). "Constraints" is the final constituent of Bitzer's rhetorical situation. These inhibitors are those elements that have the power potentially to "constrain [the] decision and action needed to modify exigence. Standard sources of constraint include beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, motives, and the like. . ." (8).³

³ Bitzer received critiques from several rhetoricians who questioned the constraints he offered. Primary among rhetoricians are two well-known scholars, Richard Vatz and Scott Consigny. Vatz argues with the homogeneity of a speech event, and instead argues for autonomy which leads to a form of creation by the rhetor. That is, what Bitzer sees as an externally existing phenomenon—situation—is, rather, an indication of the perspective of the perceiver. In short, writes Vatz, "No situation can have a nature independent of the perception of its interpreter or independent of the rhetoric with which he chooses to characterize it" (154). The implications of this for Vatz are two-fold: "rhetoric" and "situations" are not discreet, and situations are "rhetorical" in and of themselves (159).

Alternatively, Scott Consigny maintains that a rhetorical event does not arise autonomously. Rather, the rhetorical "act" arises from what is transpiring around it. Consigny continues by saying that in Bitzer's formulation, the rhetor is no different than the "expert or scientist who can solve specific problems by using well-formulated methods or procedures." This is simply not the role of a rhetor; rather, Consigny maintains that "the rhetor's task is . . . to be able to *ask* good questions and formulate or *discover* relevant problems in an indeterminate situation" (177). He continues by stating that rhetors are frequently placed in situations beyond their control or situations in which they must quickly alter their responses based on the constraints of the situation. If rhetors "fail. . . to take these constraints into account, spinning issues from (their) imagination, (they) may never get in touch with events or (their) audience, and may rightly be dismissed as ineffective and irrelevant" (179). As these two critiques have shown, even though aspects of Bitzer's rhetorical situation have been questioned, his overall presentation of the rhetorical situation remains a major way of interrogating the overall rhetorical event—or speech.

We can see how historical events lead up to the public speech a person delivers. The words used to persuade become more transparent and allow us—as analyzers—the ability to unite more aspects together in order to more clearly be able to understand. This inquiry into the means by which a result occurred (rather than focusing on results the event brought about) solidifies the realization that not only is the event *unique* but also the rhetoric leading up to the creation of the result—or event—is equally *distinctive*. The words reflect the attitudes and the time period in which the speaker employs them. Ideally, the rhetorical event is the symbiotic action of the speaker and the audience working together to come to the same conclusions about a topic.

The Rhetorical Situation as Controlled by the Person of Power

The impact that rhetoric has on a nation—and a world—can be monumental.⁴ Jeffrey Tulis (former speechwriter for President Lyndon Johnson) illustrates rhetoric’s fluctuating reputation when he talks of the rhetorical presidency: “The rhetorical presidency may have been generally ignored as an object of concern not only because it has become so familiar and comfortably democratic, but also because it is hard to believe that mere rhetoric could be of consequence to the development of American political institutions” (13) Tulis’s words reflect the low repute in which rhetoric was held for many years.

The public has now come to realize that rhetoric and specifically the rhetorical presidency to which Tulis refers is actually of vast importance. Most have come to realize that not understanding rhetoric—and the tools it offers the user to analyze what is being said—can lead to catastrophe. In short, ignorance is not bliss.

⁴ The words of Winston Churchill echoed the resolve of an England who would not give in to the Third Reich in World War II as he said: “We shall never give up We shall never surrender!” (Ingram 68).

Theodore Windt, chair of Communication at The University of Pittsburgh, observes that “Presidential rhetoric is a study of the fundamental power in a democracy: public opinion and public support” (3). Consequently, Windt makes the connection to rhetoric and the public. Windt also notes, “Politics is not an academic seminar. A president is not a distinguished professor occupying an endowed chair of American government. And the primary purpose of presidential rhetoric is not to educate, but to assist in governing” (3). Windt’s observation of the power of a president—that comes from the public acceptance of ideas—suggests the rhetorical acumen a president must have in order to effect change. We can study the rhetoric that presidents use and the history that surrounds these speeches in order to recover what Walter Ong referred to as the “intertextuality” of the creation of an entire event (172).

Several Rhetorical Acts: One Topic

Persuasion does not take place in a vacuum. Thomas Benson helps us realize the need for focusing on one specific idea and tracing it throughout what he refers to as a “rhetorical act” in order to comprehend persuasion and the various strategies employed to persuade.

Rhetorical acts are always in some important sense about ideas, which they may either simply advocate or actually bring into being, and about which they ask listeners to make judgments. A central issue in contemporary rhetorical criticism is to understand the ways in which knowledge is not simply conveyed but constituted. (*American Rhetoric* xvii)

Therefore, using specific public speeches delivered by an individual of power relating to one topic allows us to trace how persuasion occurs.

Analyzing Johnson's speeches offers several benefits to us. We can understand the specific strategies he used to persuade his audience to bring about a desired result in each speech. Additionally, we can see how each speech builds upon former ones to bring about specific results. In each chapter, I will examine one particular speech and the various events leading up to and surrounding its presentation to the audience. The conclusion encapsulates the importance of being aware of strategies employed to persuade on a particular idea. Johnson's use of rhetoric to bring forth his Great Society—having educational reform as an integral part—displays the need for becoming more aware of the ways in which speech acts work together to bring about a certain result. This dissertation is not about measuring the effect that Johnson's argumentative strategies may have had (because this task would involve too many variables with no way to retrieve the data). Rather, this dissertation is about the strategies he applied to bring about changes in the idea—or topic—of education for America.

Learning how individuals in positions of power wield the rhetorical sword is an obligatory responsibility for those of us who are the recipients of the sword's cuts. Johnson admits his quandary when he asked, "How does a public leader find just the right words or the right way to say no more and no less than he means to say—bearing in mind that anything he says may topple governments and may involve the lives of innocent men?" (Johnson OH LBJML).⁵ Johnson knew the importance of persuading; he also knew how to use persuasion in order to help him promote his ideas.

Previous Research

This study focuses on Johnson's rhetorical strategies, specifically in seven speeches he delivers publicly on the topic of education. I was unable to find a study that focused on

⁵ In the future Oral History Lyndon Baines Johnson Museum and Library will be abbreviated to read: OH LBJML.

how a politician promotes one single idea throughout a political career. Such a focus is important for study in order to garner more understanding of how a person in power promotes a specific agenda. Some of the areas that can benefit are rhetoric, politics, and presidential studies.

Since I was unable to find such a study, I had to search various sources to help answer the question posed at the beginning of this section. Johnson and his involvement in events have inspired much writing. However, scholarship has been limited, and with the addition of the term “rhetorical analysis,” the amount of scholarship dwindled even more markedly. First, establishing the need for an in-depth analysis of Johnson, I focused on the formation of Johnson’s ethos in childhood and later as an adult. In the first section establishing Johnson’s ethos, I used a variety of books, articles, and essays. Next, I examined this same pool of general knowledge to extract specific traits and to follow them as they developed into what became known as The Johnson Treatment. The third area relates to the historical make-up of America through the perspective of the Civil Rights Movement. The fourth area gives general information relating to education with specific emphasis placed on the early childhood programs. Johnson was a firm believer in educating children early in life. He carried this belief into the template he used to construct his Great Society. One specific program is entitled “Head Start.” The final section relies on scholarship that relates to the various topics of “Johnson,” “education,” and “rhetoric,” and uses published dissertations and theses. The reason I included this section was to show that, first, no scholarly focus has occurred on the topic I cover. Second, I incorporate this section in my work to show the use of various aspects of previous scholarly work to help establish Johnson, as a person, and

rhetorical strategies he developed in aspects of his political career. Research has not been done in this much-warranted area: this study fills this gap.

Background Information: Ethos Establishment

Johnson, as chronicled through various biographies, grew up believing that education offers a kind of power to a human being that he or she can draw on all through life. Robert Dallek's *Lone Star Rising* and *Flawed Giant* helped bring about a deeper understanding of Johnson's childhood. The education that Johnson received in his early childhood helped him to develop traits that turned into persuasive strategies he used while in political office. In turn, these traits helped to bring about the Great Society to which we, as Americans, still bear witness. Johnson's Great Society includes education in such a way as to evince Plato's early remonstrance of education's place in a good society.⁶ Former Speaker of the House of Representatives Jim Wright makes note of the fact in his book, *Balance of Power*, the fact that "Lyndon Johnson's *Great Society* . . . succeeded grandly. Because of its caring services, millions of illiterates were educated" (284). The linking of education, persuasion, and the creation of a Great Society become evident as the succeeding chapters unfold.

An examination of Johnson's life—from childhood through the various political offices he held—helps establish the ethos he demonstrates throughout the speeches we examine. Many books show various aspects of Johnson's character. Dallek's books help develop the sense of Johnson's beginnings as a boy and his later contributions as a politician. The sense of political acumen, dominance, and strength that Johnson maintained is reflected in the words that Dallek shares with us when he writes, "If Lyndon Johnson demanded much

⁶ "[T]he State, if once started well, moves with accumulating force like a wheel. For good nurture and education implant good constitutions, and these good constitutions taking root in a good education improve more and more, and this improvement affects the breed in man as in other animals" (Plato, Bk. IV).

and took much, he also gave much in return" (Dallek frontispiece). In *Lone Star Rising*, Dallek reconstructs Johnson's Texas childhood and the impact that education had on him (5-61), his early years in his political career (159-95), his "deceitfulness and skullduggery" (5, 7, 13, 51-52), and his overall need to dominate and be the best (*passim*). Dallek writes of Johnson's personality in such a way that we can construe him as negative, haughty, and rude in *Flawed Giant*. Dallek's subsequent biography, *Lone Star Rising*, shows how Johnson moves from being "the greatest Senate majority leader in history" (*Lone Star Rising* 10) to assuming the Presidential role. Dallek shows Johnson's "wheeler-dealer" persona and traces the origins of the War on Poverty and The Great Society in this second biography. He helps us realize that much of the "wheeling and dealing" was an expression of Johnson's genuine interest in helping the disadvantaged.

Alternatively, Robert Caro has portrayed Johnson in a pejorative way: from his book *The Path to Power* (1990) to his *Means of Ascent* (1991) and concluding with the *Master of the Senate*, Caro displays Johnson as a monster of ambition, greed, and cruelty. These characteristics are important to bear in mind as we examine what helped make the strong person who became President of the United States. In addition, biographies focusing on various aspects of Johnson's character help us acquire a depth of understanding regarding words that Johnson chose to use in his public speeches. Eric Goldman's *Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson*, Ronnie Dugger's *The Politician*, and Alfred Steinberg's *Sam Johnson's Boy* reflect on the meaning behind certain words, as well as phrases, that Johnson used to talk to his public.

There are several books that disclose further understanding of the person Johnson. One such book is the biography Johnson wrote with the ghostwriter Doris Kearns entitled

The Vantage Point.⁷ Randall B. Woods offers us a contemporary assessment of Johnson; Woods's *LBJ* offers sound reasons for Johnson's arriving at certain conclusions that historians have questioned.⁸ Woods is able to accomplish this feat due, in great part, to the recent release of thousands of hours of Johnson's White House tapes, along with the recent declassification of tens of thousands of documents and interviews with key aides. Johnson taped every phone call and conference he held (even in the privacy of the Oval Office). Woods's *LBJ* brings crucial new evidence to bear on many key aspects of the man as well as the politician known as Lyndon Johnson. Additionally, many of the voices used in this dissertation come from the vast storehouse the archives offer us.

The Johnson Treatment: a Confluence of Strategies of Persuasion

Johnson's persuasive powers can best grouped together and termed "The Johnson Treatment." Reporters Rowland Evans and Robert Novak described The Johnson Treatment in their book *Lyndon B. Johnson: The Exercise of Power*:

Its tone could be supplication, accusation, cajolery, exuberance, scorn, tears, complaint, the hint of threat. It was all of these together. It ran the gamut of human emotions. Its velocity was breathtaking, and it was all in one direction. Interjections from the target were rare. Johnson anticipated them before they could be spoken Mimicry, humor, and genius of analogy made The Treatment an almost hypnotic experience. (104)

In fact, Jack Bell used *The Johnson Treatment* as the title for his book. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak relate a much more negative aspect of the Treatment.

⁷ Johnson commissioned Doris Kearns to help him write his book, and she served as his ghostwriter throughout the entire process (Kearns Flyleaf).

⁸ Some of these were staying in Vietnam (Woods 609-11) and dealing with the student movement (Woods 535-36).

Civil Rights: A Movement Based on Education

The third area of importance is the Civil Rights Movement. Because of the impact of the Civil Rights Movement, many of the speeches that Johnson delivered were in direct response to its leader, Martin Luther King, Jr. The speeches Johnson delivered either implicitly or explicitly dealt with education. These speaking events were an active part of the rhetorical situation that the 1960s represented.

King envisioned that education was the major underlying reason for the success of the “movement” (“Remaining Awake,” 275-77). Garth Pauley writes of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 in his article in the *Southern Communication Journal*. Pauley offers a slightly different approach to the Act while he explains and defines the actions that King initiated. The concluding reaction from the politicians serves as precursor to the instigation of “better education for Negroes in general” (Pauley 19). Joseph Califano’s *Triumph & Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson* offers an intimate portrait of Johnson, especially relating to King’s requests to have more time given by the President for civil rights issues (183). Califano, Johnson’s top assistant for domestic affairs from 1965 to 1969, reveals insights into Johnson’s reasoning for some of his actions regarding education and the implementation of the Educational Act (258). Nick Kotz’s complete exploration of the relationship between Johnson and King in his *Judgment Days* gives heretofore undisclosed reasons for the rift that occurred between Johnson and King and the impact this had on the Civil Rights Movement (*passim*). Steven R. Goldzwig writes of the Affirmative Action programs that Johnson instituted and comments on the external events that “constrained President Johnson’s rhetoric and yet ultimately proved pivotal to the final realization of the [Affirmative Action Program]” (Goldzwig 30). Goldzwig’s study displays the fact that Johnson was limited in

what he said in certain areas and suggests that the same set of circumstances affected educational programs Johnson was seeking to implement. Considering what worked to promote the Affirmative Action program as well as what failed has aided in the assessment of Johnson's promoting specific educational programs, especially those targeted at children of the highly impoverished (Goldzwig 35). In addition, David Zarefsky—in his book *President Johnson's War on Poverty: Rhetoric and History*—looks at the similarities of the war on poverty relating to social movements in the U.S. Zarefsky writes about another aspect of Johnson's "war within the states" (363).

Result: Education Achieved

Johnson instituted over "1,932 bills which became public laws. In addition, there were 1,088 private bills which became law. Johnson only vetoed 13 public and 16 private bills" (Anderson email). However, the major fact that directly relates to this dissertation is that "altogether we [the Congress] passed 60 education bills [which] contributed to advances across the whole spectrum of our society" (Johnson *Vantage Point*, 219). Among these bills were laws promoting programs that he introduced *en masse* in his Great Society. He did so under the umbrella term of "many programs" when he states, "Our Government has many programs directed at those issues" (Johnson, *Remarks: 22 May 1964* 31).

Presidents and Rhetoric: Scholarship

Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson's book *Deeds Done in Words* offers insights into Presidential rhetoric. They formulate the cogent question: "How can one speak of Presidential discourse when, particularly in recent times, such discourse is crafted by speechwriters? How can one know what Presidents were trying to accomplish as they

chose from among the available means of persuasion?” (9). Theodore Windt, the noted rhetorician/politician, discusses the contentious point of Presidents having speechwriters:

There is a very real problem that scholars have to contend with [which is speechwriters; however,] speechwriters, for obvious reasons, seldom are willing to talk about what they do or how they do it. Conversely, few scholars ever have tried their hand at political speechwriting; fewer still have been professional speechwriters. (13)

Windt continues by stating that scholars are “denied the primary evidence or experiences they use in other areas of scholarship to form considered judgments” (13). Richard Goodwin, one of Johnson’s primary speechwriters (and the man Valenti attributes with having come up with the phrase *The Great Society*), adds to Windt’s defensive posture to speechwriters when he states:

It is not the prerogative of the speechwriter to insert his own ideas, mannerisms, and sensibilities into the President's mouth, to make him something other than what he is. Indeed, it can't be done. Not well. Not without sacrificing all hopes of effective eloquence. The gap between the man and his expression cannot be concealed and, inevitably, degrades the quality of the performance to the memo like prose that is now so dominant in American life. On the other hand, my job was not limited to guessing what the President might say exactly as he would express it, but to heighten and polish—illuminate, as it were—his inward beliefs and natural idiom, to attain not a strained mimicry, but an authenticity of expression. I would not have written the same speech in the same way for Kennedy or any other politician,

or for myself. It was by me, but it was for and of the Lyndon Johnson I had carefully studied and come to know. (328-29)

Therefore, Campbell and Jamieson's question relating to the "truth" of the authorship of a Presidential speech (9) is a question that will be addressed in this dissertation. Yet, the main question—What rhetorical strategies did Lyndon Johnson use to promote education as seen in seven publicly delivered speeches given at different stages in his political career?—will be the primary focus; however, the authorship of the speeches is also addressed. Campbell and Jamieson noted that they examined large topics (such as "Inaugural Addresses" and "Pardoning Rhetoric"). This dissertation diverges from their endeavor in two major categories. First, this dissertation will use the microscopic (detail-oriented) examination of seven speeches with focus on one specific topic (education). Second, Campbell and Jamieson did not engage in using rhetorical strategies as a tool to examine such a large corpus of work.

Kathleen J. Turner's book *Doing Rhetorical History: Concepts and Cases* offers a collection of eleven essays by various scholars in the field of rhetoric. Turner edits this volume focusing on commonalities—as well as unique attributes—rhetorical situations offer. Contributors suggest historically positioned ways different people utilize rhetoric's persuasive powers to promote a point. Noted academicians such as Bruce Gronbeck, James Jasinski, and Moya Ann Ball are a few of the individuals who join the previously listed noteworthy authors of Zarefsky and Goldzwig to help provide deeper understandings of rhetoric's explanatory power. Each author emphasizes the persuasive power contained within "rhetorical history's contextual construction" (3). By combining rhetorical criticism's "message-centered focus" (2-3) with the study of rhetorical history, each author observes that

one also fuses the study of the “suasory potential and persuasive effect” (2) inherent in rhetoric.

Theodore Windt’s *Presidents and Protestors: Political Rhetoric in the 1960s* adds an incredibly rich description of the way rhetorical scholars can uncover much of what Johnson was suggesting by studying what former Presidents had said in response to crisis situations. Windt notes, “Kennedy’s rhetoric was generally conceived and developed as a response, a reaction to situations” (84). Marie (Hochmuth) Nichols addresses the benefits that studying rhetorical criticism offers in her “Criticism of Rhetoric”

Orators, of course, have been agents in history and like all agents, must be supported to have effects. . . . To believe otherwise is to succumb to the notion that human effort counts for little or nothing. Along with the other arts . . . oratory has sometimes transformed abstractions into meaningful patterns and directives in our lives, has projected and given impetus to ideas that have become the values by which we live. (1)

Without analyzing what is said, how it said, and by whom it is said, we, the listening audience (public), may not be aware of what is actually transpiring. The following scholarship suggests alternative ideas that relate to this dissertation’s analysis of Johnson’s rhetoric.

Relevant dissertations from the database “Dissertation Abstracts International” (DAI) provide the basis for this inquiry. Varying aspects that related to, and yet were not specific to, the topics of “Johnson” and “rhetoric” and “rhetorical criticism” appeared. However, according to the DAI, no analysis has been completed matching the categories of seven

specific (publicly-delivered) speeches that Johnson gave relating to education, and the rhetorical strategies he employed to bring about the passage of such a bill.

A master's thesis by Michael Hopkins from California State University, in particular, relates to Johnson and his rhetoric. In his thesis of 2003, entitled "The Influence of Lyndon Johnson on the Origins and Politics of the War on Poverty: A Study of Presidential Strengths and Weaknesses," Hopkins lends a particularly hostile aspect to considering Johnson's programs. Focusing on antipoverty programs within Johnson's Great Society, he points out "paradoxes" that made "Johnson's promises" full of "self-deception and consensus politics [that] foreshadowed the OEO's [Office of Economic Opportunity's] folly of deception" (51). These self-deceptions exaggerated [the OEO's] successes to preserve its political survival" (Hopkins 51-52). Although former-speaker Wright points out the virulent nature of Hopkins's treatment of Johnson's actions, the thesis provides the needed purpose of forcing a deeper look at certain ideas that Johnson promoted, as well as the way in which he promoted them.

Alternatively, Theodore Howard Andrews writes in his 1998 Stanford dissertation that Johnson had intense interest in the in-depth sociological implications of various education programs—specifically Head Start (Andrews 12). Though he titled his work "John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, And the Politics of Poverty, 1960-1967," Andrews spends all of his chapters (except a brief one) talking about ways that Kennedy used to pass his bills aiding the impoverished.

In Paul Haskell Zernike's 1989 Wisconsin dissertation ("Presidential Roles and Rhetoric") he expresses ideas relating to "a President's depiction of the office as a rhetorical component designed to lead public opinion" (Zernicke). However, Zernike does not speak

about any aspect relating to education, specifically. What he focuses on, instead, is the mobilization that the President seeks through the public's support of his decisions "in response to political crisis and controversy" in an overall sense. The aspect of audience that Zernicke contributes is invaluable in terms of examining who constitutes the audience of the President.

In Russell Lynn Riley's dissertation "The Presidency and the Politics of Racial Inequality: Movements, Mobilization, and Manipulation, 1831-1965 (Virginia, 1995), he examines "the Presidential role" in the "pursuit of transformational ends" (89). However, the caveat has to do with what is actually studied—the "advancement from slavery to equal standing of African Americans" (Riley 21). Riley looks at "change" in terms of the "nation-keeping role" the Presidency maintains (59). Although there are some allusions to "racially-related" education needs, Riley does not discuss it.

Lisa Jo Goodnight's "The Conservative Voice of a Liberal President: an Analysis of Lyndon B. Johnson's Vietnam Rhetoric" (Johnson, Lyndon B. Vietnam War) offers insights regarding Johnson's rhetoric. Goodnight examines certain aspects of Johnson's rhetorical flair and the impact it had on Congress and the citizenry; however, Goodnight relates to the Vietnam War. Her argument—that Johnson abandoned the "balanced liberal-conservative ideological presumptions during 1967-68" because he needed to maintain the conservative status quo—is informative and useful to consider when examining Johnson's promotion of socially focused (which could have been construed to be liberally-based) educational programs for the marginalized.

The last dissertation to be included in the initial "Lyndon Johnson" search is entitled "Presidential Program Formulation in Education: Lyndon Johnson and the 89th Congress" by

Robert Eugene Hawkinson. Hawkinson's 1977 dissertation deals with the generic aspects of political science and public administration only, and does not interrogate the rhetoric of Johnson in passage of any educational programs.

Using the words "Lyndon Johnson" and "Education" gave 12 "hits." However, only two have any bearing—even peripherally—on the subject of my dissertation. The dissertation from Roosevelt Montgomery—written in 1985 and published at the University of Nebraska—is entitled "The Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and Affirmative Action: a Case Study of the Johnson Administration 1963-1969." Montgomery "focuses on the interplay between the Johnson Administration, the Congress and the Federal bureaucracy" in order to achieve "equal opportunity" (Montgomery), but he does not mention education *per se*.

Larry Lee Davis wrote his dissertation from Ball State University in 1980. His title is "An Examination of the Development and Implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 During the Johnson Administration." In his work, Davis examines the "educational administration" within government. He looks at the "obstacles of (1) congressional development, (2) implementation by [the] United States Office of Education, [and] (3) implementation support by Indiana Department of Public Instruction" (Davis). Davis's research focused on church-state separation as relating to segregation and the federal-funding (or not) of "public" schools and adds to the information Goodnight offers in her 1993 dissertation (see above).

Neo-Aristotelian Criticism: The Best Tool for the Job

Johnson's ability as a communicator is a well-established fact; however, this study focuses on the way he introduced a certain idea that would become law. Therefore, analyzing seven public speeches Johnson delivered relating to the generalized topic of

education helps us focus on the strategies Johnson develops over his political career. Sonja Foss, a well-known rhetorician, writes, “Criticism is . . . the critics’ way of apprehending the object [which] yields moral understanding of [the object under scrutiny]” (xii-xiii).

Consequently, by using rhetorical criticism to examine specific speeches delivered by Johnson, we have the tool we need for systematic analysis.

Rhetorical criticism has become a generic term that refers to the way in which a scholar/critic assesses any form of communication (Brock and Scott 18). The “traditional” form of rhetorical criticism (Brock and Scott 23) emerged in the United States in 1925 at the Cornell School of Mass Communication (Cornell School). This group offered a “systematic basis for *speech* criticism in rhetorical writing” (Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 271). The Cornell School “steadily appropriated” critical methodologies and perspectives that came from various classical civilizations and reconstituted a new “old” way to “furnish the foundations of mature judgment” (Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 272).

The initial members of the Cornell School were Everett Hunt, James A. Winans, Lane Cooper, Alexander M. Drummond, Herbert Wichelns, and Harry Caplan. Hoyt Hudson and William Utterback joined the group within a year. A few years later, Marie Hochmuth Nichols became part of the “group” (Kuyper and King 10). They applied ideas Aristotle had written about in his *On Rhetoric* in 360 B.C.E. to their “current-day scholarship of rhetoric and public address” (Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 273) and formed a way to study the “effect . . . a speech [works] as a communication to a specific audience” (Thonssen, Baird and Braden 273). The “heritage [of neo-Aristotelian criticism] start[ed] with the dictates of

the classical rhetoricians, especially Aristotle's famous definition" (Brock and Scott 34) of rhetoric.⁹

Wichelns points out that the Cornell School believed the most important part of an interrogation of a speech was "the public man." This "man," Wichelns continues, "served to influence the men of his own time by the power of his discourse" (qtd. in Brock and Scott 34; Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 271).¹⁰ Neo-Aristotelian criticism provided this vital aspect of interrogation. This form of criticism also led to a more thorough understanding of different aspects of an event. As Brock and Scott say:

[T]he element of a speaker's personality unites . . . [with] the public character of the man, . . . a description of the speaker's audience, and of the leading ideas with which he plied his hearers. These made up his topics, the motives to which he appealed, the nature of the proofs he offered . . . [as well as the] speaker's mode of arrangement . . . his manner of delivery from the platform, and . . . his style and the effect of the discourse on its immediate hearers.

(Brock and Scott 28-29)

Therefore, the neo-Aristotelian critic "studies the progress of any identifiable influence that originates with the speaker . . . [and is called] speaker orientation" (Brock and Scott 34).

That is, not only is the "interaction among the speaker, message, occasion, setting, and audience" interrogated, but also the "interaction is consistently viewed through the speaker's eyes" (Brock and Scott 35).

⁹ Rhetoric is "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" (1355b 26).

¹⁰ Although this group was not initially called "neo-Aristotelians," Edwin Black took what his teacher, Wichelns taught him and labeled this form of rhetorical criticism as "neo-Aristotelian" in his Dissertation that became a book *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (Black 27).

Neo-Aristotelian rhetorical criticism initially focused on the speaker, the speech, the occasion, and the audience (Brock and Scott 39; Foss 24-27). However, additional understanding comes about when one considers other avenues relating to the four focal points of this form of criticism. Wichelns counsels, “Throughout such a study one must conceive of the public man as influencing the men of his own times by the power of his discourse” (29). In addition to the historical consideration, the moral—or ethical—value system must be included.

Marie Hochmuth Nichols, a late-arrival to the Cornell Group of neo-Aristotelian scholars (Benson “The Cornell School of Rhetoric,” 37), brings this added consideration to the Group when she writes of the importance of this aspect: “The criticism of speeches, like the criticism of all art, involves both analysis and synthesis. It is concerned with naming and identifying its object, locating its connections with the culture of which it is a part, and seeing it in relation to other similar phenomena. It is ‘discriminating among values’” (6). Nichols adds to the historical aspects that criticism brings to rhetorical analysis by stressing the audience’s values, which is a major contribution to neo-Aristotelian criticism. She suggests tracing one idea throughout a speech for clearer analysis. This idea is expanded in this dissertation to encompass examining education as Johnson addressed it in seven of his publicly delivered addresses.

The first speech is delivered by Senator Lyndon Johnson, on August 7, 1957. Johnson does not explicitly discuss education in this oration; rather, he acknowledges the nationwide support for Civil Rights. The stance Johnson displays seems diametrically opposed to his previous Southern “anti-Civil Rights” position.

The second speech consists of remarks Johnson gives as Vice President of the United States on the battlefield of Gettysburg on May 30, 1963. Johnson reflects not only his growing belief in the need for the African Americans' accessibility to the American Dream but also his belief that America had reneged on Lincoln's promise of inclusion to the "freed slaves."

Johnson presents the third speech when he becomes President of the United States. Johnson delivers his words to Congress—and the world—on November 27, 1963. In this speech, he sets out not only how programs that Kennedy had begun were to be continued, but also how he, Johnson, plans to implement many more new programs.

Johnson delivers his fourth speech on May 22, 1964. He introduces his Great Society to the United States. In his Commencement Address at The University of Michigan, Johnson outlines many programs—with a foundational focus on education—for the audience and the listening public (Campbell and Jamieson 5).

Johnson delivers the fifth and sixth speeches at two locations; however, Johnson delivers the same message pertaining to his Great Society. Johnson delivers one speech to a predominantly African American university (Howard University) and another to the "folks" in his hometown of Johnson City, Texas. The comparison between the Howard University Commencement Address given on June 4, 1965, and the remarks Johnson gives in Johnson City, Texas, upon signing into law the Elementary and Secondary Education Bill on April 11, 1965, displays a force of will that Johnson exhibits in the words he uses in two different kinds of speeches. The Howard speech is quite formal and shows Johnson's reliance on past actions to help the audience realize his commitment to including the African American in the American Dream—starting with offering quality, early childhood education. The speech to

his old Texas friends reflects Johnson's commitment to bring education to other marginalized groups, such as the Hispanics.

Johnson delivers the seventh speech we analyze which is entitled his "Final State of the Union Address," given on January 14, 1969. We hear Johnson's perceptions of the successes—and the failures—of his Presidency. As in most of the previous speeches, Johnson does not make specific the idea of education; however, the foundational need for it is apparent in the results Johnson has seen—and which he hopes will continue for America. Because of the neo-Aristotelian form of examination, we are able to realize not only what motivated Johnson in one speech, but also what served to inspire him throughout his political career. Therefore, we will use the question—What strategies did Lyndon Johnson employ to promote education in seven public speeches scrutinized through the lens of neo-Aristotelian criticism?—as a way to perceive an added dimension to Johnson's speeches.

Speaker

The Cornell Group suggested focusing on the speaker as the first aspect of analyzing a speech (Thonssen and Baird 383-91).

As the speaker reacts to his world, the image represents the reflection of his total experience: special (the concept of his location in space); temporal (the identification with his experiences through an uninterrupted continuum from days gone by to the present hour); mental (the exercise of his intellectual powers in the successive conditions that call for choices); emotional (the behavior patterns as affected by his reactions to external and internal stimuli); ethical and axiological (the value judgments by which he estimates patterns of experience as "good or bad," "better or worse"). (460)

The words Johnson used in his speeches reflect his beliefs, experience, goals, and values. The way in which he dealt with each audience reflects the way in which he continuously expands his ability in the political arena to talk effectively to different audiences. The focus links Johnson to the topic of education. For this reason, we commingle our examination of experiences Johnson had as they relate to education in the section of “Speaker.” Three things immediately become apparent.

First, Johnson’s obvious focus was that education become must become accessible to all children in the United States—and especially to those of the “highly impoverished” (Barnett Interview). Johnson’s mature focus on the impact of education on a person stems from his first professional job. Johnson’s tenure as a teacher who worked with migrant workers’ children in an impoverished school in Cotulla, Texas, is practically legendary. In 1928, when Johnson was only twenty-years-old,

he had been hired to teach the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades in the two-year-old Welhausen School in the Mexican part of [Cotulla, Texas]. But when he came for his briefing, the school superintendent asked if he would mind serving also as principal. . . . Lyndon liked the idea and agreed. (Steinberg 46)

Consequently, when Johnson presented his Great Society, education was the underpinning upon which all programs rested. Robert Dallek, a biographer of Johnson’s life, notes the impact that teaching in Cotulla had on Johnson: “He [Johnson] remembered youngsters ‘mired in the slums . . . lashed by prejudice . . . [and] buried half alive in illiteracy’ (*Flawed Giant* 28).

A second aspect of Johnson was the attribute of taking responsibility. An example of Johnson’s entrenched feeling of “duty” is evident from an account his commanding officer

gives upon Johnson's taking over his naval duties right after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Not only did Johnson sign up the day after Pearl Harbor was bombed, but he also "took up the responsibility for [upping] war supply production" (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 222) immediately upon coming into the service. In fact, Johnson was "convinced that if he had enough authority, he could spark the enthusiasm and find the organizational means to meet the President's war production goals" singlehandedly (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 233).

The third aspect Johnson displayed was his ability to change to fit current requirements. That is, Johnson could alter his actions according to the need at the time (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 78-79). This aspect of "bending without breaking" was almost a prerequisite for becoming a politician, notes Ronnie Dugger, another Johnson scholar (137). The traits Johnson developed in early life intensified as he aged and offer a depth of understanding to many of the seeming vagaries of his future actions and decisions.

As Thonssen, Baird, and Braden note, "[T]o see a speech in its fullest context the critic must . . . follow [the] line of inquiry [which] seeks to understand the utterances as an expression of the speaker's personality" (366). They are quick to add, "What is important is not to view a speech apart from the speaker, for it [the speech] is a personal expression, his vehicle to stir or move listeners" (366). Therefore, not only must events affect the words Johnson says, but the three outstanding attributes of his personality are also considerations when reviewing the words used.

Occasion

The Cornell Group voiced its opinion regarding the part of the speech it called "the occasion" when it stated, "Speeches find their cause for being in the heat of the forum" (356). Members of the group noted the conditions of the speech as being "primarily a message

between speaker and listener” as well as the lack of “permanence and perfection of form . . . from which the speaker operates.” All of these aspects come together to form the “factors that shape the speech as it was delivered by the speaker to a particular audience at a particular time” (356).

We have come to call the time, the place, the purpose, as well as the current events leading up to the speech as the occasion or situation. Hochmuth Nichols addresses the rhetorical situation when she says:

[T]he inseparability of matter and form in any art . . . in “reflection” [must] consider the work in terms of constituents, arguments, broad structural pattern and particular stylistic features. . . . many elements are harmonized to give delight to an audience, so, too, in *the rhetorical situation* many elements contribute to the end of persuasion. The total organism is the concern of the critic. (*Rhetoric and Criticism* 21-22)

Lloyd Bitzer adds to Hochmuth’s statement by saying: “[T]he nature of those contexts in which speakers or writers create rhetorical discourse [and] the presence of rhetorical discourse obviously indicates the presence of a rhetorical situation” (“Rhetorical Situation” 1-2). He continues by defining the entirety of the rhetorical situation as being “a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence” (6).

Bitzer’s words¹¹ were immediately scrutinized and even countered. However, his

¹¹ Marilyn Young notes that “Bitzer’s “sin was publishing his essay at the dawn of the postmodern era, as the emphasis in critical assessment of rhetoric was shifting from the rhetor to the audience, though many of his critics relied on classical concepts to refute his

terminology remains part of the rhetorical lexicon frequently applied to contemporary discussions.

The rhetorical situation offers a way to examine specific current events that lead up to, surround, and are part of, the speech event in each chapter. The 1960s presents a time of turmoil on many fronts. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 1963 March on Washington focused the public's attention on the Civil Rights Movement (Levy 18-19). Students reacted on many campuses: first, to the fact that they felt excluded from the American Dream and, subsequently, when they felt wronged that they had to fight in Vietnam (Wright 139-50; Anderson 140). These events—the Civil Rights Movement and the students movement—seemed to come together in a confluence of events that took away from the gift Johnson presented to the American public. The Great Society promised “federal aid to education, Medicare, [which was] a program of health insurance for the elderly under Social Security and also Medicaid” (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 230). However, Johnson's “highest Great Society priority was to broaden educational opportunities and enrich the quality of school offerings” (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 201).

Audience

The Cornell Group maintained that there is a complex interrelationship between the speaker, the topic and the audience; however, the audience was always the major consideration. For example, the speaker delivers the address on a topic that the immediate audience relates to in some way. However, if a speaker is deemed to have no reason to be

ideas. In 1980 Bitzer responded to these critics, publishing (in Eugene White's *Rhetoric in Transition*) modifications to his original conception. These modifications took into account many of the analyses that had been offered early on” (272). For this reason, not only will the speaker receive emphasis, but also the audience will be considered more strongly in this study.

heard (Thonssen and Baird 383-86), or is not liked (387-79), or is addressing a topic that is not popular (Thonssen and Baird 60; 83), chances are slight that the speaker's words will be heeded. The Cornell Group made it clear that the focus was on the audience and the reaction from the audience.

Parrish and Hochmuth develop their list of what makes a speech eloquent when they consider the results the speech event elicits from an audience: "Typically, a speech is an utterance meant to be heard and intended to exert an influence of some kind on those who hear it. . . . [which can best be] described as persuasion" (3). Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg expand on the aspect of "persuasion" when they describe the first canon of rhetoric—invention—as the "search for persuasive ways to present information and formulate arguments" (3). The effect that Bizzell and Herzberg offer (persuasion) couples with Hochmuth and Parrish's (understanding) to give the completion of the speech-act.

Johnson had varying audiences he needed to address in order to persuade. Not only did Johnson need to consider the immediate, listening audience, but he also had to remember that the larger audience that television and radio added (Campbell and Jamieson 5). The Cornell Group's consideration of only the immediate audience served as a limitation to which Johnson did not choose to adhere. Herbert Wichelns, a prominent member of the Cornell Group, reminds us of such a limitation when he stated, "The effect of the discourse on its immediate hearers is not to be ignored" (29). Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca later expand the audience to be included in consideration as they make note of the fact that "argumentation aimed exclusively at a particular audience has the drawback that the speaker, by the very fact of adapting to the views of his listeners, might rely on arguments that are foreign or even directly opposed to what is acceptable to persons other than those he

is presently addressing” (31). Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca suggest inclusion of a “universal audience” for a speaker to consider because “everyone constitutes the universal audience” (33). Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca continue by stating that “each individual, each culture, has thus its own conception of the universal audience” (33). Therefore, the speaker must set a limitation on the audience by creating "presence."

According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, orators "select certain elements" within a given situation to focus attention by "endowing them, as it were, with a 'presence,'" a sense in which the subject being discussed by the orator seems "near to (the audience) in space and time" and thus more relevant (17). Perelman writes that the orator creates presence through a variety of literary and rhetorical figures of speech by choosing the proper categorization, selection, and description of "facts, truths, and values" to reach audiences. However, "presence" also seems to connote a powerful and/or charismatic speaker who is able to persuade an audience based on who the speaker is, as opposed to simply what figures he or she employs. Perelman's explanations of presence seem to imply as much [e.g., "well-known authors" occasionally use different language figures "at the beginning of a story in order to lend more *presence* to a character they introduce" (86, italics his)]. Perelman's theories regarding audience and "presence"¹² have strongly influenced the contemporary Bitzer/Vatz debate about rhetorical situation.

As was the case for the ancient Greeks and *kairos*, the point of conflict regarding situation for Bitzer and Vatz revolves around the perceived presence or absence of transcendent "truths" (though in the twentieth century, the "t" has been demoted to lower case). That is, Bitzer seems to rely on the implicit situation, whereas Vatz thinks the

¹² Perelman indicates in his use of “presence” (1) who is listening, and (2) the way in which what they are listening to is made relevant.

situation (since it exists autonomously) must have the values created by the speaker.

Nonetheless, the speaker must consider both the immediate audience and the universal audience (to whom a speaker has established a presence).

Johnson balanced on the razor's edge between Bitzer and Vatz. Johnson had to address the universal audience that he knew was listening, but he also talked directly to the immediate audience—in front of him. The ability to be both the speaker to the individual—as well as the speaker to the whole—is multifaceted. However, Johnson's ability to accomplish this complex task explains how Johnson managed to “touch his audience” no matter what size it was (Carpenter Interview). His ability to personalize his speeches—and yet still keep them general enough for national consumption—is a major accomplishment.

Speech

Thonssen, Baird, and Braden remind us that “public address functions within the framework of a social and political milieu . . . [because] rhetoric and politics, age-old partners, cannot be divorced” (349). In 1954, Marie Hochmuth and Wayland Maxfield Parrish undertook a project that examined the “eloquence from which our precepts and theories [are] derived” (v). They give several reasons for reviving the public speeches they examine: first, they wanted to offer the means by which to familiarize people with what they termed to be “good speeches” (Parrish and Hochmuth vi). Second, they wanted to offer analytical tools by which people could examine speeches; and, third, they wanted to offer a way to model materials effectively used by speakers to promote an idea or cause (Parrish and Hochmuth v). The rhetorical historian builds on the foundation that people such as Parrish and Hochmuth constructed in order to discover the meaning a contemporary audience might have derived from actually and directly participating in hearing the speech.

Some have pointed out that Johnson used words in his public speeches that were not all written by him. However, “no president since Woodrow Wilson has attempted to prepare his speeches without considerable assistance” (Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 332). A contemporary rhetorical scholar, Martin Medhurst, notes in his “Introduction” to *Presidential Speechwriting*, not until “the delivery of JFK’s Inaugural Address” did the tradition of having a Presidential speechwriter even become known to most Americans (9). Liz Carpenter (Lady Bird Johnson’s Personal Secretary), in a personal interview, helped clarify just how integral a relationship Johnson had with his speechwriters:

Jake Pickle [one of the President’s newly appointed speech writers] brought his first draft of a speech to Lyndon for approval. Lyndon started reading aloud, “For, as Aristotle says . . .”

And then he wheeled around on Jake and said, “For as Aristotle says . . .? Aristotle! Aristotle!! These folks don’t know ‘Aristotle!’”

And with that, Johnson snatched up a pencil and scratched through the words scribbling, “As my dear ole daddy used to say . . .” (Carpenter Interview: Wright Interview)

In a recent interview, Former Speaker Wright commented, “Jake Pickle is a very honorable man; however, he also knew a good ‘story’ and he knew how to make a story ‘better’.” For this reason, getting another point of view from someone who was “there” to witness Johnson’s use of speechwriters is imperative. Mr. Wright continued in his phone interview by stating he knew that “Johnson was an incredibly busy man. For this reason, he would have several people involved in writing his speeches” (Interview). He added: “I will say this—because I was there when he did this a lot of the times—Johnson read over his

speeches before delivering them and often made corrections! It is for this reason I know he took responsibility for the words he delivered in his speeches” (Wright Interview).

Wright’s words remind us that Johnson “always” knew what he was saying. Johnson moved from Congress to the Presidency and became more adept at expressing himself with each evolution: we see the results of the successful way he managed to employ words.¹³ Charles Roberts, a former Johnson speechwriter, adds further clarification to the point that Johnson was responsible for everything he said: “President Johnson’s first and number one speechwriter [was] the gifted Ted Sorensen, who had been President Kennedy’s top writer However, when it became obvious that the President [Johnson] liked to work with more than one collaborator on the same speech, Sorensen left” (99). In his book, Roberts does not mention the importance of the observation; however, with the vision that hindsight offers, we realize that Sorensen’s departure suggests the possibility of Johnson’s inability to accept criticism.

A whole team of writers took over for Sorensen, composing drafts of the Presidential speeches. Bill Moyers held “conferences” on writing the context of speeches (Roberts 99); meanwhile, Jack Valenti worked on the style by which Johnson presented his ideas to the audience (Roberts 99-100). There were, however, only four men allowed to work on writing speeches relating to the Great Society.¹⁴ Patricia Thompson states that Howard Cater is the sole writer of the “Remarks in Johnson City, Texas, Upon Signing the Elementary and Secondary Education Bill” on April 11, 1965 (209). Roberts corroborates this statement

¹³ Through funding Head Start programs, then funding elementary and secondary educational facilities which helped underprivileged students, to the Higher Education Act which allowed funding to individuals who had graduated from high school and needed federal aid to continue their education (Humphrey OH LBJML).

¹⁴ These men were Richard N. Goodwin, Douglass Cater, Lee C. White, and Harry C. Mcpherson (Roberts 100).

(103) but adds that “Francis Keppel, a U.S. Commissioner of Education” added the “most urgent needs in education” (Roberts 103). Many minds and words, then, went into the initial presentation of a speech for Johnson to consider. However, the final word—literally—was his.

Invention

The classical tradition sets forth the five “parts or canons of rhetoric” and begins with “invention” (Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 86). Each of the parts has a “distinctive function”: one of which is to attempt, on the part of the orator, to “find out what he should say . . . ” (Cicero qtd. in Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 86). Thonssen, Baird, and Braden continue by stating that the “concept of invention includes the entire investigative undertaking, the idea of the *status*, and the modes of persuasion—logical, emotional, and ethical—in all of [the speaker’s] complex interrelations” (86). Aristotle notes that the invention means a rhetor’s choosing a topic (1358a).

Theresa Enos suggests the most important aspect of invention is to decide how to persuade the audience as she states: “for those who believe they have the truth, problems of rhetoric become largely problems of presentation. And the role of rhetorical invention becomes the relatively modest one of helping us find ways of arguing the preexisting claim in a persuasive way” (Enos, McCracken, and Miller 164). Theodore Windt continues this idea by stating that since persuasion is an important adjunct to the analysis of any speech, “the lines of argument that people use to attempt to persuade provide a means of studying

both the techniques and the content of persuasive acts” (xi). Invention functions as a heuristic, which helps rhetorical critics, maintain focus on what the speaker discusses.¹⁵

Aristotle called the lines of argument the “species” (1355b). These are: *logos*, the appeal to reason; *pathos*, the appeal to emotion; and, *ethos*, the persuasive appeal of the speaker’s character (Aristotle 1356a). Although each term can be analyzed separately, these three appeals often work together to persuade the audience. Aristotle calls these “artistic” or “intrinsic” proofs—those that could be found by means of the art of rhetoric—in contrast to “nonartistic” or “extrinsic” proofs such as witnesses or contracts that are simply used by the speaker, not found through rhetoric (1355b). Through examining lines of argument, we can see the overall “truth” that the speaker attempts to promote in a speech (Windt xi).

Education, Johnson believed, could solve a lot of America’s problems; also, educating the citizenry would help America maintain its ideal of a democratic society. Johnson argued for education as an important part of the Great Society. I focus not only on the way Johnson addressed the immediate audience; rather, I focus on the larger public of Americans who indirectly heard—and were the implied target for—these speeches. The speeches chosen for this project were directed to those people who are important in constructing this Great Society. We can see how the particular audiences received the same message delivered in specific ways and how that plays out to the larger audience: America.

Arrangement

Arrangement (or disposition) is the next canon. The “orderly planning and movement of the whole idea, and the proportioning of the parts of a speech” (Thonssen, Baird, and

¹⁵ Corbett and Connors describe this aspect of invention—the discovery and development of the subject matter of a speech—more fully in their discussion of the heuristic of “invention” (201).

Braden 86-87) make up this portion of analysis. The rhetor substantiates the argument by structuring the words, phrases, and sentences in such a way that the lines of argument are strengthened. “Arrangement” concerns “how one orders speech or writing” (Burton). The arrangement is what the rhetor perceives to be the strategic ordering of ideas or appeals.

Style

The third canon is style. In rhetoric, the use of correct, appropriate, and striking language allows a speaker to influence an audience (Bizzell and Herzberg 3). Style concerns the artful expression of ideas. Invention addresses *what* is to be said; style addresses *how* this will be said. From a rhetorical perspective, style is not incidental, superficial, or supplementary. Rather, style displays how ideas are embodied through use of language. Style is not an optional aspect of discourse, although some suggest there is a "plain" method of speech. Style is essential to rhetoric, in that the guiding assumption driving the style is as much part of the message as is the content.

There are three major considerations to remember when analyzing the style of a speech: virtues of style, levels of style, and figures of speech (Lanham 174). The virtues of style were developed by Theophrastus and Demetrius—acolytes of Aristotle. Later, Cicero and Quintilian continued what Theophrastus apparently had begun in the lost *On Style* (Cicero 100-01). The virtues of style include those outlined by Aristotle: correctness, clarity, evidence, propriety, and ornateness (Lanham 173).

The concept of "levels of style" comes essentially from the Roman rhetorical tradition (Burton). There were three broad categories of style: high or grand, middle, and low. Cicero developed a partition of styles according to rhetorical purposes: high style deals with

“moving” the audience; middle style deals with pleasing the audience; and low (or plain) style deals with teaching (Burton).

The third area is called “figures of speech”; however, the name “trope” or “scheme” has become more common (Lanham 175). Although there are many kinds, the specific focus of tropes lies within these parameters: reference of one thing as word play and/or puns, substitutions, overstatement/understatement, and semantic inversions. Kinds of schemes variously are found within the following: structure of balance, change in word order, omission, and/or repetition (Lanham 175).

The style of Johnson’s speeches varies because Johnson considers the immediate audience and the way in which he wishes to “reach” it. Johnson’s skill as a speaker became more and more refined as he advanced through the various political offices he held. Campbell and Jamieson note that a President can influence an audience merely by the style of language he uses: “If they avail themselves of it [farewell address], they can, through skillful use of language, address history to influence judgments of their Presidencies” (211). For this reason alone, being able to understand what a President is truly trying to communicate is imperative.

Memory

Memory is the fourth canon. I extend the idea initially used in neo-Aristotelian rhetoric by including Lloyd Bitzer’s definition of *public knowledge*, which is located in his seminal essay entitled “Rhetoric and Public Knowledge.” Bitzer sees a strong relationship between memory and knowledge. He maintains that words or phrases become part of the mentality of the society and express contemporaneous events. He further observes that rhetoric helps to change the overall cultural mentality. Individuals reinforce (often through

reiteration) what a person in power wants to promote. The reinforcement of ideas comes in various forums, such as speeches, general conversations, and interviews. For Bitzer, public memory is a source of knowledge and, in this way, the alteration of public memory changes perceptions of reality.

In many speeches, Johnson relies heavily on the public knowledge of the American people. Bitzer describes public knowledge as currently being in a “transition from local and national publics to more universal ones” (“Rhetoric and Public Knowledge” 71).

Concurrently, Bitzer speculates on the way in which the “truths, values, and principles” would be, and could be, transformed to meet any alteration in perception by the society as a whole (“Rhetoric and Public Knowledge” 71). The knowledge a public (community or nation) shares allowed Johnson to draw from specific ideas. He was then able to expand the truths, values, and principles that were inherent within the national consciousness to such a point that they transcended the moment that Johnson addressed his immediate audience. Johnson added to the public “funds of values” (Bitzer, “Public Knowledge” 69-70). The knowledge of which Bitzer speaks (and from which Johnson pulls) comes from the shared history of Western Civilization—since Plato (Bitzer, “Public Knowledge” 69-70).

The public knowledge about which Bitzer speaks refers to a shared public perception. This knowledge is reflective of the American pool of values and views. As Bitzer points out, by recalling our reasons and values, we are reminded that public knowledge “may be regarded as a fund of truths, principles, and values which could only characterize a public, [while a public that possesses this knowledge] is made competent to accredit new truth and value and to authorize decision and action (“Rhetoric and Public Knowledge.” In her in-depth analysis of Bitzer’s essay, Marilyn Young suggests how and what can change the

public knowledge: “The flow of information—some confirmed, some speculative—that surrounds a crisis produces alterations in public knowledge that may become permanent, thus modifying the dynamic relationship among public knowledge, exigence, the rhetorical situation” (289). John Lyne, a noted scholar, adds an axiological consideration when he states, “Rhetoric trades on the insight that minds are the nexus between the actual and the possible. One holds in mind various possible arrangements of the world, in addition to apprehending the actual one. The tension between the two is what we call consciousness” (166).

The human involvement (e.g., the use of consciousness) that Lyne notes suggests that public knowledge is in constant flux. Rhetorical analysis allows us to have a concept of a chronological construction of events: first, knowledge of the past (Bitzer); second, knowledge of current events (Young); and, third, the possible make up of future events that are defined by development of consciousness (Lyne). In short, rhetoric allows us to view events through a lens that examines all aspects of a speech event. As Young notes, this knowledge helps absolve the “unstable context” of merely examining the speech (Young 289).

Delivery

The final canon is delivery. Andrea Lunsford notes that delivery offers the means by which the performance of a speech is studied (Lunsford). She means that the mannerisms, the words, and the inflection of the speaker make up the analysis of any speech (Lunsford).

The delivery is particularly revealing in that the actual presentation of what a rhetor intends to promote is usually obvious in the words he or she uses. Aristotle wrote that “expression . . . has some small necessary place in all teaching; for to speak in one way rather

than another does make some difference in regard to clarity, though not a great difference" (1404b).

Chapter Outline

Direct popular appeal is—and has been—a central political strategy that has produced a stunning string of partisan successes, including passage of bills on tax increases, military build-up, and various social reforms. Democrats and Republicans may seem often to have differing policies; however, beneath their external differences is a common understanding of what both sides consider to be the essence of the modern presidency—rhetorical leadership (Tulis 4). The chapters that follow outline the way in which a democratic president—Lyndon Johnson—packaged the idea of education for the nation and its citizenry. He used rhetorical strategies in such a way that not only did white Southerners accept his changes and additions, but so, too, did northern liberals and black Civil Rights activists.

Each of the speeches analyzed in this dissertation refer to various parts of Johnson's complex make-up and revolve around the construction of his creation—The Great Society. Chapter Seven serves as my forum displaying some of the discoveries made about Johnson. The individual analysis of these seven speeches yields some insight into the rhetorical strategies Johnson used in order to persuade the public. The analysis of Johnson's speeches as they relate to education does not pretend to be a comprehensive study of President Lyndon Johnson's rhetoric. It has been limited to his speeches on the same issue of education. This study suggests the power behind the rhetorical strategies inherent within rhetoric. Johnson used this power to alter the status quo.

In chapter one, I discuss how Johnson transformed himself from being a regional representative focused on only regional concerns into a national representative focused on

national concerns. The strategies Johnson had begun to develop in his early days in politics became more refined. Not only are the words Johnson uses part of the discussion, but also the persuasive manner Johnson uses becomes apparent.

I analyze portions of Johnson's past as he grows up in Texas as well as how education affected Johnson's life. We become aware of how subsequently Johnson came to believe that a good public education was mandatory for all U.S. citizens in order to continue a democracy. In one speech delivered when he was a Senator, he speaks not only as a Texan but also as a citizen of the United States who speaks to, and for, all Americans.

In chapter two, we see how Johnson moves from a Senator to becoming Vice President of the United States. In the "Remarks of Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson on Memorial Day, 1963," we begin to see the forcefulness and anger that almost break forth in the words Johnson uses. Johnson's strategies change from those he used as a Senator.

Johnson shows how his early feelings are really resonating now that he is in this position of more power. We see that the problem Lincoln addressed is one Johnson, too, recognizes. The problem is that even though America has advanced in many ways, the problem of providing an adequate education for all Americans still exists. Johnson, as had Lincoln, is in the position to bring the public awareness into focus in order to help resolve this problem—since America is made up of a public that makes decisions.

In chapter three, Johnson addresses the Joint Session of Congress for the first time as President of the United States. His repeated reminders to the audience of Kennedy's death help him maintain control over his audience while he gathers a momentum necessary to become a strong-willed President.

Up to this time, Johnson has had three clear phases. In each of these, he held a different political office. We see the correlation between a political office and the notion of authority and ability to make changes have evolved from each one of the previous occasions. Throughout these chapters, Johnson's views stay consistent on education; however, the rhetorical situations modify the audience, the constraints, and the exigencies of dealing with education. Consequently, as the problem continues, Johnson becomes more and more effective in seeking resolutions. In other words, what he can do as President is much more effective than what he could do as a Senator.

In chapter four, I examine how Johnson lays out the strategy needed to resolve many problems through what he terms The Great Society in a speech delivered at The University of Michigan graduation. Johnson publicly tells people how he wants to resolve the problem that he has consistently recognized as a challenge. He tells the initial—as well as the implicit—audience of the importance of education, and, more importantly, his commitment to it.

Johnson delivers his message, which encapsulates all the benefits that he sees America can achieve through becoming a Great Society. The previously analyzed speeches identify the problem, show the importance of the problem, and forecasts his continued commitment to resolving the problem; however, in this chapter, he actually offers ways to accomplish doing it.

Chapter five is made up of the analysis of two speeches: The Howard University Commencement speech entitled “To Fulfill These Rights” and “Remarks in Johnson City, Texas, Upon Signing the Elementary and Secondary Education Bill.” Johnson presents one idea to two different audiences. We see how Johnson serves as messenger: i.e., to take the ideas he has suggested in his “Great Society Speech” at The University of Michigan to the

people. That is, we become aware of the way in which Johnson manipulates his audience through word choice and presentation of ideas into arriving at the same conclusion: acceptance of his Great Society and the educational package inherent within it.

In chapter six, I analyze Johnson's final public address as president. He looks at what he has done in his presidency. He also suggests what is yet to be done for future presidents in order to keep America on course toward achieving the Great Society he envisioned and began implementation of during his Presidency. One large area that Johnson promotes is the importance of the continuance of good public education for a democratic citizenry to be maintained.

CHAPTER ONE

Lyndon Johnson: A Brief Political and Rhetorical Biography

Part of the force that drove Johnson stemmed from events that transpired during the early years of his life. Important events that influenced Johnson, and later a nation, make up the first portion of this chapter. The latter part of the chapter examines a speech that Johnson delivered as Senator from Texas. The rhetorical situation of this speech demonstrates how even the “early” Johnson effectively deals with issues that seemed beyond the scope of his being a Senator. Johnson speaks from the vantage point of one who understands many of the complexities of an issue and yet is able to offer a solution that is acceptable to factions—no matter how polarized they seem to be. In short, we are able to view a politician representing one state move into the position of a politico with the acumen required to understand a nation and its needs.

Johnson frequently reminisced about his early years—before he became involved in the political arena. In almost every instance—no matter what subject he initially talked about—he ended up speaking about education. He sums up his intense belief that education increases a person’s potential in the following passage:

Well, of course, I was young, and those years always seem to people in later life to have been the best. However, in those years, I was involved directly with education. You see, I have always been interested in education. There are those who say I’ve never had much [education] myself, and they may be right. But that doesn’t mean I don’t care about it. I do! (Johnson OH LBJML: Miller A. 41)

Everyone in Johnson's administration seemed to realize his belief in education and the positive results it could bring about. George W. Ball, Johnson's Undersecretary of State, remembers that Johnson always felt a little intimidated by Kennedy and all of those in the Kennedy administration due to the many diplomas attesting to their intellectual prowess (Ball OH LBJML). However, the force that he felt regarding the importance of education and the fact that all citizens of America "would . . . have a chance at an education, and not know the poverty he had known" (OH LBJML) helped him overcome his self-doubts and promote an educational package for America.

The entire time he held political office, he strenuously promoted the idea of providing quality education to everyone in America. The rhetorical strategies he developed from his days as a Texas Congressman and then honed as a Senator were more one-on-one. However, when Johnson became President of the United States, he had to change not only the style with which he presented ideas, but also the method of implementing these ideas in order to pass laws. Johnson waited only a month and a half after he had taken the office of the President (on November 21, 1963) before he presented an education package to Congress (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 36). On January 12, 1964, even before he unveiled his Great Society, Johnson presented an education bill that "included provisions for . . . a total of several billion dollars for schools, school libraries, scholarship loans, and university extension programs" (Miller, M. 496). In short, Johnson did not waste "any of the precious time that a President has in his first 100 days" (Miller, M. 497) by lounging in the honeymoon phase (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 126).

Johnson's Traits

Beginning from the time that Johnson held political office (back in the early 1940s), he displayed many traits that he honed more finely as his years as a politician advanced. Six traits helped Johnson as a child. He built on these to wield a considerable rhetorical sword. These six primary traits were: an intellectual curiosity, leading to a solid foundation upon which his common sense sprang; the ability to speak well; a force of will (which became later refined into The Johnson Treatment); a determination which Johnson initially developed on an individual basis and later transferred to a compassion for the entire population; a problem-solver; and, an “opportunist” (Caro, *The Path to Power* xix-xx), which others called “trailblazer” (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 36).

Intellectual curiosity

Even from his early childhood days, Johnson wanted to go to school and learn. His first “teacher” (Kathryn Deadrich Loney) remembered that “[Lyndon] would run away from home and attend school, day in and day out, beginning from age four” (Loney, OH LBJML). Rebekah, Johnson’s mother, had been taught by her preacher father to read early in life (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 26). In fact, she later told interviewers that reading was one of the few joys that made her early life on the Pedernales in Texas tenable (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 26, 32). Johnson was the product of two former teachers: Rebekah (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 27) and Sam, his father (Miller, M. 6). Sam had to give up teaching in order to farm the land (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 55-56), which left Rebekah at home teaching their young children. She taught their first-born son, Lyndon Baines, to read while he was learning to walk, and as Robert Dallek mentions in his biography of Johnson, “He [Johnson] learned the alphabet from blocks before he was two; he knew the Mother Goose rhymes and poems from

Longfellow and Tennyson by the age of three,” and Johnson could read and spell whatever he heard when he reached the age of four (*Lyndon Johnson* 32).

The intellectual expertise that Johnson exhibited as a child is something that was not clear to many people. This ability grew as he matured. If he did not know something, he would learn about it. In fact, a “chance encounter in the cloakroom [of the Senate] was more than likely a planned interview” (Woods 262), in which Johnson sought and exchanged information which he included in his knowledge base. When he became President, it was rumored that he actually “may have been the greatest intelligence gatherer Washington has ever known” (Woods 262). His ability to retain many facts in detail helped him attain leadership of an entire nation.

Adept Speaker

The ability to develop his rhetorical skills was not immediately available to Johnson as a child. The Johnsons lived apart from people for the first two years of Lyndon’s life. However, they could not remain on the Pedernales because crops would not grow on the land. Sam (Lyndon’s father) mortgaged everything; bought a farm in Stonewall, Texas; and waited for the cotton to grow. He wanted to take advantage of “cotton prices that were soaring to forty cents a pound in the aftermath of World War I” (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 55). However, “floods in the spring and searing heat in the summer of 1920 had limited the size of Sam’s cotton crop” (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 55), and almost all his investment was lost on a crop that never “made.” The family had to move into town—Johnson City, Texas—where Sam could at least find work as a barber (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 57). Lyndon began to find he had friends and could consequently refine his social skills—primarily as they related to speaking.

Rebekah continued to teach the children, even in the midst of the economic suffering they were undergoing as a family. One of their new friends, Simon Burg, commented on the “talent” the Johnson children demonstrated to the people in their new community by remembering that

We’d [the Burg family] go visit [the Johnsons] on a Sunday afternoon, and [Rebekah] would call the children up on the porch and each of them would recite a declamation or an extemporaneous speech. She was the type of person who wanted to teach the children how to meet a problem and how to speak on it. (OH LBJML)

Johnson did not forget what he had committed to memory. He also did not forget how to remember (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 51; 80). Along with remembering many of his early lessons in “declamation,” he remembered the hardships poverty brought to him and his family. The painful reminder that poverty had driven him away from his beloved Pedernales was a constant reminder of the sadness that poverty can bring. Johnson knew he needed to marshal his speaking skills and help promote becoming educated as a way to combat poverty.

Richard Neustadt, professor of political science at Columbia and then Harvard, remarks on Johnson’s ability to assess a person and use that knowledge to help him promote whatever it was he wanted to promote. Johnson knew people’s vulnerability “and looked for that soft spot and then he turned the knife in it as a means of attaching people more securely” (Neustadt OH LBJML). Jack Bell, the Washington correspondent and “stringer” for the Associated Press, continues:

Johnson exhibited a keen insight into human nature and an ability not only to judge men but to juggle them. He blended badgering with persuasion, flattery

with threats. He offered future favors and reminded recalcitrant of help given in the past. He promised campaign assistance, financial or otherwise, or hinted that it would be withheld. (35)

The keen insight that these men noted was a mere reflection of what Johnson seems to have adapted, and added to, as he proceeded along his political road.

Forcefulness/Will

Johnson developed his shrewdness of “pushing through obstacles” (Miller, M. 42) in his formative years. This trait is clearly visible as a fellow senior in high school, Willard Deason, recounts how Johnson made it possible for Deason to become President of the Student Body in high school (Deason OH LBJML). Deason chuckles as he sums up events leading to his becoming President: “I don’t know how he did it . . . but I won! It’s the kind of thing I guess Lyndon did later in the Senate when he was majority leader. Until the last vote was committed, you couldn’t get him to stop” (Deason OH LBJML).

Johnson did take this forcefulness with him as he progressed in political ascension. In fact, the trait rolled together with other aspects of Johnson’s self-will to form what became known as the “terrifying Johnson Treatment” (Evans and Novak 103-04). As Rowland Evans and Robert Novak explain:

The Treatment could last ten minutes or four hours. It came, enveloping its target . . . wherever Johnson might find a fellow Senator within his reach. Its tone could be supplication, accusation, cajolery, exuberance, scorn, tears, complaint, and the hint of threat. It was all of these together. . . . Its velocity was breathtaking, and it was all in one direction. Interjections from the target were rare. Johnson anticipated them before they could be spoken. (104)

As Johnson progressed from the Senate to the larger national arena, he expanded his Treatment, as well as the style in which he delivered it. The Johnson Treatment became one of the major rhetorical strategies in the Johnson arsenal: it recurs in various forms (from one-on-one badgering to cajoling a nation) throughout his political career. In fact, Hugh Sidey, correspondent for *Time* magazine, commented on Johnson's persuasive tactics:

My whole experience as a journalist was that Johnson was outrageous in some of the devices he used. He would lie, beg, cheat, steal a little, threaten, intimidate, but he never lost sight of that ultimate goal, and he never violated the law, to the best of my knowledge, to achieve it. . . . He'd go up to the edge, but he respected the system. (OH LBJML)

There was no doubt about it—Johnson's ability to persuade was becoming finely honed. In fact, his system of persuasion achieved being a name—The Johnson Treatment. And, as many noted, achieving a name was “proof positive” (Bell *Johnson Treatment*, 3) that Johnson had become what most people recognized to be the embodiment of a true politician. As Evans and Novak suggest—and Neustadt corroborates—Johnson's Treatment was something that could be counted on to elicit the response Johnson wanted—or else! “And no one liked to find out what ‘or else’ meant” (Evans and Novak 110; Neustadt OH LBJML).

Determination/Dominance

Education was something that Johnson attributes to helping him rise up out of poverty. For this reason, he was determined that what “saved him” could also help save many Americans. However, Johnson took a short hiatus between graduating from high school and entering college that changed his views on the need to continue one's education: Johnson “ran away to California” (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 57).

While he was in California, he worked as a car washer, “hasher in a café,” and elevator operator (Miller, M. 30-31). Johnson remembers that he “felt homesick all the time in California” (Miller, M. 31) so, he finally hitchhiked home (Miller, M. 31). Johnson recalls the difficulties he had in getting a job without having a complete education and talks about the day he decided to continue his education:

Mother kept urging me to go to [back] to school and finally one Sunday she came in and asked me one more time if I wouldn't go down and find out about enrolling at Southwest Texas State Teachers College.

I'd just gone through January on the road gang and it was cold weather, very cold. At that moment, the prospect of going to school . . . had some appeal. (qtd. in Miller, M. 31)

In essence, Johnson displays in this short remembrance the way in which he would dominate himself in order to bring about a result he was determined to achieve. He realized the need for education as a foundation in order to help him accomplish more at a job than merely receiving the manual-labor jobs at which he had been working up to the point he returned to college.

Problem Solver

The approach Johnson became known for as President was to find ways to resolve problems. This trait of “problem solving” is a more mature one, and therefore took Johnson until later in life to display and refine. The example of the ability with which he pursued and got himself educated is an example of the way Johnson saw a problem and concurrently found a resolution to it.

Johnson had not saved any money, and his family did not have any money either. This circumstance meant that in order to continue with his schooling, he had to borrow money from the bank to go to college. Wilbur Cohen, Johnson's 1964 Undersecretary of HEW, tells how Johnson seems to have remembered how "borrowing money to go back to school" affected him and his sense of self-esteem. The result, Cohen maintained, was that Johnson wanted to make it possible for all people to return to school without having to worry about getting financial aid. "Yup! All of his interest in offering financial aid to people who wanted to go to school and couldn't afford it came from his remembering the time he couldn't afford to get more education, and make more money," said Cohen (Cohen OH LBJML). Cohen continued, "Feeling good about oneself helps a person realize the ability to overcome economic problems as well as realizing the need to become more educated" (Cohen, OH LBJML), and Johnson applied this lesson he had learned in his early life to helping others not have to go in debt in order to help themselves. He did this through various programs he helped to get through Congress. Johnson expanded on the higher education bill to include aid to elementary and secondary schools in his Elementary and Secondary Act (examined in chapter five of this dissertation). He also made schooling accessible to children who were as young as two years old and "highly impoverished" (Barnett Interview) through the Head Start program. In short, Johnson offered educational aid to students of all ages who wanted to educate themselves.

Johnson took his first professional job as a "practice teacher" in a town with only four thousand people populating it—Cotulla, Texas (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 77). He taught children of migrant workers who came through Cotulla to "work the crops" (Dallek, *Lyndon*

Johnson 77). While he was teaching in Cotulla, he realized he could convince people to do what he wanted. He began to implement what he had learned in his formative years.

In an interview with a reporter, Johnson stated that the only way he could get the results he wanted was by force. “I disciplined ‘em, I gave ‘em hell,’ he said—‘I drove ‘em, and I whipped ‘em’” (qtd. in Dugger 1991, 115). The reason for Johnson’s sense of urgency “driving” the students to accomplish more stemmed from the fact that “the conditions for learning were almost non-existent,” writes a fellow teacher in Cotulla (qtd. in Schulman 8). Johnson remembers the desperate sense of hopelessness that he realized while teaching the students of Cotulla:

"[M]ired in the slums . . . lashed by prejudice . . . [and] buried half alive in illiteracy." Most of them came to school in the morning "without any breakfast, most of them hungry," with a look in their eyes and a "quizzical expression on their faces" that asked, "'Why don't people like me? Why do they hate me because I am brown?'" Most of them, who would only get two or three months' schooling a year, were "taught that the end of life is a beet row, a spinach field, or a cotton patch." (qtd. in Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 78)

He saw the way the children would end up if they had no education when he saw the older versions of these children—their parents. Consequently, “Lyndon unremittingly pursued helping those children,” remembers Louise Casparis Edwards, a former colleague. And “[a]lthough he knew these were primarily children of the Mexican immigrants who moved on with the crops they picked, Lyndon made those students learn” (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 77). Lyndon taught the children how to write and speak in English (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 78). For his efforts, Johnson was made principal of the school, while he maintained

the responsibility of being a teacher. However, he did not stop with these responsibilities: he organized a debate team as well as an athletic program (Woods 64). He even began a parent and teacher interaction in the “unheard of experiment” known as the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) in this little town in Texas (Kearns 74).

Johnson’s “dynamo-like” actions in Cotulla (Woods 64) served as precursors (on many levels) to what he would perform in his future political life.¹⁶ He also made sure that even the youngest children received education by making sure the Head Start Program was a well-funded part of his Great Society (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 227). One thing Johnson became sure of in his time in Cotulla was that education (in many aspects) could “cure” many problems (Kearns 47).

Opportunist: Trailblazer

Franklin Roosevelt began a program in 1935 entitled the National Youth Administration (NYA) designed to provide vocational training for unemployed youth and part-time employment for needy students (Miller, M. 63). Roosevelt’s advisor and lawyer, Tommy Corcoran, remembers that

there were still millions of kids out of work [because of the depression]. It didn’t take the Old Man [Roosevelt] long to see that those who wanted to continue school or training of some kind ought to have chance to do it, and that’s how the NYA started. (Corcoran OH LBJML)

Johnson had told the overall director Aubrey Williams that he “would like that job” (qtd. in Bardwell, OH LBJML), and Roosevelt appointed him as the Texas representative to the NYA. This job truly began Johnson’s political career (Conan). Johnson’s effectiveness as a

¹⁶ One of these became known as what Johnson instituted and called “the normal make up” of a President’s “double day” (Miller, M. 127).

leader of the NYA is reflected in the remarks he made to the press promising future “good times” for Texans:

The NYA will have twenty thousand Texas boys and girls either in schools or in part-time jobs, soon. The work in Texas is well under way and there is not a high school or county, which cannot have some of its young people in school or at work. (Johnson OH LBJML)

Also, Johnson “quietly called a meeting of local Negro leaders in the basement of the Austin Negro Methodist church” (Miller, M. 67). Although he promised, “He would, of course, be including Negro youths in his job program” (Miller, M. 67), Johnson did not hire any African Americans to work for and with him because of the customs that served to divide people in Texas (Johnson OH LBJML). However, for the “negroes in their own colleges—he’d do everything in the world for them, which in Texas—in 1936—wasn’t a small thing” (Miller, M. 67). The success rate of the NYA was astounding and led Roosevelt to “lay his hands on [Johnson] and exclaim, ‘This is my boy,’”signifying to everyone that Johnson was the “chosen son” for Roosevelt (Miller, M. 94).

Corcoran was an advisor to both Roosevelt and Johnson, and he saw the direct continuation of many of Roosevelt’s New Deal programs—which helped people get out of the Depression—and Johnson’s re-instatement of many of these programs during his Presidency in his Great Society. The formidable image that Johnson projected in his adult life came from experience he gained in his early years.

Johnson was elected to the United States House of Representatives and then to the U.S. Senate, where, in three short years, he became the youngest Majority Whip ever elected

to the Senate.¹⁷ Johnson watched, learned, and worked from his vantage point as Majority Whip. During Roosevelt's terms as President, he learned that (according to Johnson's judgment) Roosevelt's fatal mistake was to push his liberal agenda too far after the 1936 landslide election without building a consensus behind his proposals (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 36-37). Also, Johnson saw that during Dwight D. Eisenhower's term a confrontational strategy with Congress was not a sustainable posture (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 37). The ability Johnson offered was to bring opposing factions together. Bell gives a full account of the physical appearance of Johnson and the way he used that "bigger-than-life" presence to bring about results in Congress. His "inward drive" allowed him to accomplish "the amazing feat of rescuing many of Eisenhower's foreign-policy proposals from the abyss of defeat" as well as breathing life into Kennedy's plans (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 37-38). Johnson's "knack . . . of getting men together" allowed him to "head a party that was split down the middle on such issues as civil rights" and "somehow manage to convince all of his followers that unity could pay profitable dividends on special occasions" (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 38). The force of will and determination coupled to force writer Robert Carol to grudgingly concede Johnson's ability to get things done: "It was Lyndon Johnson, among all the white government officials in twentieth-century America, who did the most to help America's black men and women in their fight for equality and justice" (qtd. in Conan, 30 April 2002).

All the time that Johnson was proceeding along his road in politics, he held himself up as living proof of what education could do for a person—to leave poverty behind. The

¹⁷ Johnson became majority leader of the Senate at the unprecedented age of 46 (no one else before succeeded until almost 60). (Conan, Neal. Interview with "Robert Caro, Author of *Master of the Senate*." NPR: Talk of the Nation. April 30, 2002.)

way in which Johnson used his intellect to help him refine his art of persuasion is best seen as he moves rhetorically through public speeches that focus on the topic of education. The first example is Johnson's *Statement on August 7, 1957*. The speech is arguably one of the most important he gave as a Senator.

August 7, 1957: Speech by Senator Lyndon B. Johnson

Johnson took a Congress almost vitriolic against allowing Civil Rights and convinced it of the necessity to allow civil rights for all citizens of America in a speech he delivered to the United States Senate on August 7, 1957 (Miller, M. 173). Johnson was concerned about many issues; however, the overarching one for him was civil rights and the education that served as the foundation upon which those civil rights were built. As psychiatrist Robert Coles has written, Johnson was

a restless, extravagantly self-centered, brutishly expansive, manipulative, teasing and sly man, but he was also genuinely passionately interested in making life easier and more honorable for millions of terribly hard-pressed working class men and women. His almost manic vitality was intelligently, compassionately used. He could turn mean and sour, but . . . he had a lot more than himself and his place in history on his mind. (28)

He focused on getting the Civil Rights Bill through Congress. The Bill was signed on August 7, 1957, by the Senate of the United States, and was, in itself, not an allowance of many rights. However, the fact that a bill promoting the civil rights of minorities passed to become a law was a big factor in the establishment of equal rights for all Americans. The passage of this bill began the process of allowing freedom for minorities in American and helped to generate the Great Society, which Johnson implemented in 1964. Even after fifty

years, Johnson was able to recall the lesson his parents had taught him. As he told White House aide Joseph Califano,

The people I want to help are the ones who've never held real jobs and aren't equipped to handle them. They have no motivation to reach for something better because the sum total of their life is losing—and education provides that motivation. (75)

The notion of civil rights rested for Johnson on a realization that some form of education is necessary for a citizenry to maintain a democracy. Allowing all people the ability to access public education was a big part of allowing them rights as free individuals. Johnson's often colliding impulse was to be dissatisfied with modest or even ambitious achievements; rather, he wished to use his great tactical skill to complete the unfinished New Deal agenda. Johnson wanted "to pick up where FDR's New Deal left off" and become the greatest liberal activist President of the modern era (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 60).

Speaker

Johnson was politically ambitious. He knew what he wanted—to become President of the United States, and promote his agenda (which included education). In order to accomplish the next step of this political path leading to President, Johnson faced a real political dilemma: he had to resolve what seemed irresolvable. Robert Caro describes a part of the dilemma Johnson had to resolve: “Jim Rowe (a former attorney for the Securities and Exchange Commission) had told Lyndon Johnson that if he wanted to become President, he had to vote for . . . to pass . . . and to get the credit for [a civil rights] bill” (*Master of the Senate* 1010). Johnson had been known in the Senate as a Southerner, and “Southern

democrats did not want to have anything to do with a Civil Rights Bill being passed!” declared fellow Southern Senator, Richard Russell (OH LBJML).

The quandary Johnson faced was how to achieve getting his political ends while concurrently maintaining his image of being a political moderate. Even voting for the Civil Rights Bill could upset the fragile balance that voters would look at when deciding upon a President—and promoting the Bill might be considered political suicide (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 508). However, if he did not do something, the Bill was going to die. Even as freshmen Senators together, Humphrey recognized Johnson’s ability and summarized the situation that Johnson faced when he began to entreat the Senators to vote *for* the 1957 Civil Rights Bill:

I think Lyndon came to the Senate knowing what I had yet to learn, that the Eighty-first congress was really very conservative. Truman had won a great and as you know surprising victory in 1948. When the class of 1948 was sworn in, there were eighteen new senators, fourteen of them Democrats, But they were not necessarily Truman Democrats.

Lyndon was well aware of that, and he was, I think, biding his time . . . not breaking with the South but rather bending the southern attitude somewhat to his will, staying close enough to the southern leadership so that they trusted him and so that he could work with them. (OH LBJML)

Humphrey observed what Johnson had encountered and thrived upon since as early as his high school days when he had exclaimed to his friend Willard Deason: “This is a challenge, and a challenge is an opportunity” (Deason OH LBJML). The structure of the Senate did not change (politically) between 1948 and the time that Johnson gave his *Statement* in 1957.

Consequently, although he had to take the posture of seemingly being non-active, Johnson had to promote the Bill's passage to the Senators. In short, he would have to be “[l]ike FDR in 1932: ‘a chameleon on plaid’” (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 509).

Johnson's Forms of Arguing: Ethos, Pathos, and Logos

Ethos—the character and personality of the speaker (Aristotle 1356A)—is personified in Johnson. Dallek makes note of the persuasive way Johnson used his ethos in such a way as to not reflect his country-boy roots. As Dallek writes, “Lyndon’s election as majority Whip in January 1951 encouraged a belief among Washington insiders that he was a rising star in the Senate and Democratic party” (*Lone Star Rising* 392). He presented a force with which to be reckoned. The image Lyndon maintained was one related by the biographer Alfred Steinberg:

Well, right here in the Senate I have to do all of Boob McFarland's work because he can't do any of it. . . . And then every afternoon I go over to Sam Rayburn's place. He tells me all about the problems he's facing in the House, and I tell him how to handle them. So that's how come I'm running everything here in the Capitol,” he finished, gripping me [Steinberg] above the knee.”
(320-21)

Johnson was known in the Senate as the epitome of the successful politician: “As Democratic leader of the Senate he had been a cyclone blowing furiously against any obstacle he encountered” (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 49). The power he exemplified can be seen in the way he, as majority leader, would call for a voice vote. As bills came up for voice vote, if Johnson were “against” the passage of a bill, he would “make a kind of lasso over his head and nod to the clerk taking the roll call vote, thus indicating he needed to speed up the

reading of the names of the Senators” (qtd. in interview with Conan). When Johnson “wanted a bill to be accepted by the Senators,” Caro noted, “Johnson would make a ‘slowing-down’ motion with his hands to the clerk” (qtd. in interview with Conan). Much as the conductor of a huge orchestra, Johnson seemed to lead his fellow Senators; after all, he was the *Master of the Senate* (Caro *passim*).

Johnson uses the unstated fact that he is the youngest elected Majority Leader to support getting what he wants from the other Senators. First, he physically presents the speech himself. He does not have the speech read into the record. His physical presence serves to remind the Senators that they believed enough in him to elect him Majority Leader. And now, he is arguing, as their “Leader” to abide by what he is saying.

Johnson also suggests to the others the importance he places on the passage of the Bill. He offers legitimacy to the words he is pronouncing. He also presents the idea of the “justness” of allowing the addition of all people into the ranks of those considered human beings awarded their “civil rights” in the Constitution. Johnson displays an ethical appeal based on the utilitarianism that Jeremy Bentham began, and that John Stuart Mill expands in his book, *On Liberty* (1869).

Johnson uses the second mode of persuasion—pathos— which Aristotle defines as “putting the audience into a certain frame of mind” (1356A)—to attempt to assuage the anger of his audience at the outset. To accomplish the appeal of pathos, Johnson weaves the spell of words to feed the Senators’ vanity:

In all the history of the Senate, I doubt whether there has ever been a debate which has been conducted on a higher level. Senators have spoken to the

point. Senators have debated the issues. Senators have stuck to the facts. For this, all my colleagues are entitled to great credit. (Statement: 2)

Johnson immediately suggests he knows what the first response is to the Civil Rights question—“No!” when he argues:

I am aware of the fact that the bill does not pretend to solve all the problems of human relations. (Statement: 4)

But I cannot follow the logic of those who say that because we cannot solve all the problems, we should not try to solve any of them. (Statement: 5)

He quickly moves to the next area and reminds the members of the fact that he has constraints which are similar to theirs. That is, he suggests their similarities when he states, “I can understand the disappointment of those who are not receiving all they believe they should out of this bill” (Statement: 19). He quickly reminds the Senators to move beyond requesting their own personal needs and desires and instead to remember the constituency they represent while he simultaneously distances himself from those who are not “right” when he says “I can understand but not sympathize with their position” (Statement: 19).

Another ploy comes when Johnson uses the negative visual image of the “body politic” (Statement: 24) and immediately follows with a direct feeding of the Senators’ vanity as he praises them by saying:

But I believe the Senate has set a tone within which the commission can be a useful instrument. It can gather facts instead of charges; it can sift out the truth from the fancies; and it can return with recommendations, which will be of assistance to reasonable men. (Statement: 26)

Johnson knows what motivates the Senators: publicly, the needs of the constituency are first, while individually, the Senators are motivated by their vanity. Once again, Johnson reminds the Senators, of their patriotic duty: to be Americans. They must go beyond what they and only their constituents want, and they must consider the good of America.

Johnson had learned the value of the persuasive power of logos early in his life. As far back as the as the counseling from his mother, he had learned that rationality and its direct correlation to words are imperative to a speaker who wants to be considered “successful.” The best example of the need for clarity comes in using the following vignette from Johnson’s early years as a student at Southwest Texas State Teachers’ College. As students, we take many tests; oftentimes, we do not realize the value of the testing of our knowledge and understanding of a subject. Johnson took one specific test that influenced him individually and resonated throughout his lifetime—leading to changes within an entire nation.

The wording in the question on a test caused Johnson to realize the implicit nature of words and how personal perspectives can enable—or disable—comprehension beyond what is being overtly presented. More importantly, the grade that he received resulted from a perspective of which he had not been aware. He grasped the concept of being able to analyze critically a text: he understood what lay behind words. From this insight, Johnson realized he needed to add to the wording of the Constitution in order to have future readers understand the necessity of including all in the promise that the “Preamble” gives: “[T]o promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity (“Preamble”: Constitution):

I remember when I was at San Marcos and was given a test by this history professor or political science professor, I forget which. The question

he put on the blackboard was this, “Discuss fully what the federal Constitution has to say about education.” So I did. And it must have gone on for ten pages or so.

Well, I got that paper back with a big red F across it. And the professor wrote on the paper, “The Constitution doesn’t mention ‘education.’”
(Johnson OH LBJML)

When he explained his interpretation of the ideas that he believed were implicit in the Constitution—as he shows in the example—and he received the grade suggesting insufficient knowledge by the test-taker, Johnson knew there was a gap between transmission and comprehension—between knowledge and understanding. That is, a lot of information could be exchanged by simply understanding the external meaning of words; however, a greater amount of knowledge lay behind what words meant. A deeper, more value-laden way of interpreting what was truly being expressed comes from the embedded way words are understood.

Johnson did not have to go into how he learned the lesson; however, the fact that he recounted the experience suggests the significance of the event to him. He realized he could use the attribute—the suggestive meaning that was inherent in word structure—to promote ideas in an understated way. His understanding of the need to be specific and clear concerning what one means is clearly visible in all the speeches he delivered.

An outstanding paradigm of this can be seen in analyzing what is arguably Johnson’s most controversial speech. Johnson delivered his words as a Senator on August 7, 1957—when he did not mention education once; however, the foundation that education offers is implied throughout his speech. Johnson wanted to promote Civil Rights in order to satisfy

the larger audience to whom he addresses his words. He also wanted to promote his own personal agenda of education. His experiences verified that education helped him transcend Johnson City, Texas, and as a Senator, he realized that education is underlying cornerstone upon which the Constitution lies. People wanted to be free, and the Constitution declared exactly this freedom. In short, Johnson knew that education offered freedom. Freedom defined the Constitution, and yet Johnson understood the complex connection between freedom and education. He used a complex intertwining of the three modes of persuasion—ethos, pathos and logos—within the speech, itself:

Occasion

Events surrounding Johnson’s position as Majority Leader in the Senate suggested he would be totally against the upcoming Civil Rights Bill of 1957. As late as March 19, 1957, he had sent a letter to the people who had elected him. In this letter, he stated:

I do not know where you could have gotten the idea that I am supporting “the so-called bill for civil rights legislation now before Congress.” Certainly I have made no statement to that effect . . . the bill that has been introduced is one to which I am very much opposed as I do not believe it would advance any legitimate cause. (qtd. in Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 160)

Many of Johnson’s constituency believed he was denying Civil Rights and thought he was “doing the right thing” (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 161). However, as Merle Miller writes, “Technically, the letter was quite accurate. The Bill that stood before the Senate did not have his support, for the certain reason, among others, that he knew it could not pass” and would, therefore, be a different bill (Miller, M. 253). That is H.R. 6127 was a bill which was “no

longer the one that was introduced . . . to which [he was] very much opposed” (Miller, M. 253).

When questioned about this later, Johnson stated that he meant that he did not believe that the way the Bill was stated would pass “because it allowed too much latitude regarding trials and judges” (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 161). Johnson continued by stating that the letter referred (in Johnson’s viewpoint) to the “initial” Bill and was the one he opposed. However, Johnson maintained he was promoting the “newly revised” H.R. 6127 Bill. The background relating to the Bill displays Johnson’s ability to pick the “facts” he wants to use to “back him up” (Miller, M. 254-55). In short, he was using words to help “make the case” for whatever he believed to be the most expedient set of actions he needed in order to help him acquire the goals he wanted (Caro, *Master of the Senate* xxi).

Civil Rights: Johnson’s History in the Senate

In 1948, the “civil rights issue had come up at once”: the “rules of the Senate” were to be voted upon. Since the balance had shifted from conservatives to slightly “more liberals in the Senate” (Humphrey OH LBJML), many hoped that Rule 22, which allowed cloture—the vote to end debate—could be altered to lower the vote from two-thirds majority voting for cloture to three-fifths of the Senators (Miller, M. 173). In this manner, the addition of more Northern moderates could stop a debate and get on with a vote. Also, more liberal legislation could be passed because the conservatives would not be able to block its passage (Humphrey OH LBJML).

In 1949, Johnson spoke out against the change that seemed to be about to happen. He spoke out against Truman’s “liberal civil rights programs,” and, most of all, he “denounced” the more liberal ideas that many thought he had adopted since moving into the Senate

(Miller, M. 172-73). He wanted to show he was still a “good Southern politician” who “represented his constituency back home in Texas” (Russell OH LBJML).

The response to Johnson’s 1949 speech against Civil Rights was overwhelmingly negative. It served to “remind Lyndon that now, he was a Senator of the whole state of Texas, [and] he was responsible to a considerable number of black as well as white constituents” (Miller, M. 174). Monroe Billington, former chair of the History Department at New Mexico State University, notes that “although Johnson rationalized that he was not speaking against blacks, reaction from the minority races in Texas” was quick. The negativity was a shock to Johnson (OH LBJML). After the NAACP in Houston made the statement to Johnson that “there will be another election and we will be remembering what you had to say today” (qtd. in Billington OH LBJML), he began to re-think his stand on Civil Rights, among other issues. He then worked to resolve friction between the Southern Democrats and the Northern liberals in what was termed to be “a classic Rooseveltian compromise” involving satisfying everyone—just not completely (Janeway OH LBJML; Miller, M. 191) and began to truly exert a role of “mediator” (Miller, M. 254).

When the Civil Rights issue came up in 1957, Johnson knew he needed to show he had altered from his former conservative stance. George Reedy, White House press secretary and later special consultant to President Johnson, suggested that Johnson could promote a Civil Rights Bill if it dealt with voting rights: “One of the characteristics of southerners is they really do believe in the Constitution as written. And when they have to take some stand that is clearly unconstitutional [such as not being able to vote], it worries them” (Reedy OH LBJML). There were four parts or sections of H.R. 6127.

Parts I and II created a bipartisan commission empowered to investigate civil rights violations and proposed a special civil rights division in the Department of Justice under the charge of a specially appointed assistant attorney general. Part I was the section empowering the attorney general to seek a court injunction against anyone obstructing or depriving anyone else of his right to vote. (Miller, M. 253)

The Fifteenth Amendment guaranteed all Americans the right to vote (Amendment XV),¹⁸ and as Reedy had predicted did not cause problems for the Southerners. However, Parts III and IV were the problems. Part III gave broader power to the attorney general. Hubert Humphrey summed up this part by stating that “Title IV as proposed by the Eisenhower administration provided for trials by federal judges in cases involving civil rights contempt charges” (Humphrey OH LBJML). Part IV involved the American right of trial by jury, and the Southerners were opposed to allowing this portion through “because it allowed the African Americans the right to sit in a jury panel for starters” (Russell OH LBJML: Miller, M. 255-58) and would involve hearing cases involving civil rights contempt charges (Humphrey OH LBJML). The only person who could act as a “bridge between the South and the moderate elements of the North” was the Senate Democratic leader (Reedy OH LBJML). William S. White, the nationally syndicated political columnist, stated that Johnson performed the

most skillful single legislative job of leadership I ever saw, because [he] of course had to deal with his southern friends who had up to that point formed

¹⁸Amendment XV: Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation (Amendment XV).

the basis really of his constituency in the senate. And yet he left them on this in their view. (OH LBJML)

White continues by stating that Johnson pushed the Civil Rights Bill through with a truly bipartisan effort which “now [is not] recognized how enormously hard that was. That was, after all, with all its shortcomings, the first genuine civil rights measure since Reconstruction” (White OH LBJML). Johnson’s actions might have seemed—at the time—to be enigmatic; however, we, as rhetorical historians, understand where Johnson was going—the Presidency.

Audience

The Senate: A Divided Body Prior to Johnson’s Speech

His father had forewarned Johnson that “the Senate is not by nature a cohesive body . . . and most of them are not inclined to submit to any discipline” (qtd. in Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 35). Also, he knew he needed to get this Bill passed. The way he decided to bridge the gap spanning the space between his “non-cohesive audience” and what he knew needed to take place was to take a non-intrusive posture. He “folded his arms across his chest, [while he] sat at his front-row desk, and [merely] listened” to the oftentimes negative debates about the Civil Rights Bill (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 130).

Also, Johnson wanted to get the attention of the audience, immediately. Bell sums up the reason for his feeling a need for immediacy when he writes

In his Senate job, Johnson [was] a Southerner elevated to leadership by Southerners demonstrating the tactical superiority—with the help of Westerners—they always seemed able to maintain over the frustrated and leaderless liberals of the North. (49)

That is, as a “good Southerner” Johnson needed to have the audience (both the audience in chambers of the Senate, as well as people who elected the senators) to realize the need to assuage the members of the Civil Rights Movement (which is just beginning). Johnson also wanted to make the connection between passage of some sort of a Civil Rights Bill and promoting education for the underprivileged.

Johnson could not sit still for long because he knew “this Bill was too important” (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 36). So, although he did not seem to be counseling for or against the Bill, prior to the delivery of his address, Johnson “stalk[ed] the Senate floor, correcting extreme statements from both sides” (Rowland and Evans 138). For example, Richard Russell, the head of the Southern caucus, leveled dark predictions for the future when he stated that “the whole might of the federal government, including the armed forces if necessary, [would come] to force a commingling of white and Negro children in the state-supported schools of the South” (Russell OH LBJML). Immediately, Johnson strode over to Russell and corrected him (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 38).

Also, in his speech, Johnson incorporated words that were obviously directed at Russell’s claim when he said “[t]he last reconstruction statute was passed in 1875. Since that date, this issue has been agitated and has divided our Nation time and time again” (Statement: 17). The response Johnson used in his speech verifies how he was ready to confront his “old allies” of the Southern Caucus and how he dealt with his audience that he knows so well.

Johnson indicates a great familiarity with his audience and their motivations when he states:

There will be some, of course, who will seek to play politics. But I hope there are none such in the Senate. There is no compelling need for a campaign issue. (Statement: 36)

But there is a compelling need for a solution that will enable all American people to live in dignity and in unity. This bill is the greatest step toward that objective that has ever been made. (Statement: 37).

He draws on this familiarity when he continues by saying: “Political ambition which feeds off hatred of the North or hatred of the South is doomed to frustration” (Statement: 28).

Bill Moyers, who became a speechwriter for Johnson when he became President, suggests that the President’s attunement to his audience was oftentimes annoying to the speechwriters: “Johnson studied too much his effect on the audience of which he was . . . a member. He was on stage; he was in the act: he was in the drama and he worried too much about how he was appearing” (Moyers OH LBJML). However, as the previous brief exchange shows, Johnson “worked” his audience—both before and during a speech. That is, he made sure the ground was fertile for his speech, and then, after the words were delivered, the realization that they would take root and blossom into reality was assured. Johnson could get his way.

The Senate: Johnson Delivers

When Johnson stepped in front of the audience he had been monitoring, he immediately began his remonstrance against disallowing human beings their civil rights because, as he reminded his fellow Senators, “for the first time in my memory, this issue has been lifted from the files of partisan politics. It has been considered in terms of human beings and the effect of our laws upon them” (Statement: 23). Johnson pushed the Senators

to realize that division was a “bad thing.” Joining and presenting a cohesive group, representing an equally cohesive nation was what was necessary. He pushed for this unification when he stated:

I am aware of the fact that the bill does not pretend to solve all the problems of human relations. (Statement: 4)

But I cannot follow the logic of those who say that because we cannot solve all the problems, we should not try to solve any of them. (Statement: 5)

He continued to promote his points when he states that “during the 82 years since reconstruction, practically any one of the points I have enumerated would have been regarded as a history-making advance. Congress, without regard to political division, is going to be in a position to approve seven of them, I hope, tonight” (Statement: 17).

Also, Johnson suggests that these Senators want to be known as having accomplished something. In order to accomplish something, they had to work together, and passing the bill showed they were working together. Johnson uses circular reasoning in this regard. He tries to cajole the Senators to do what he wants:

- Major Premise: The senators have a job of representing the constituency who elected them.
- Minor Premise: The constituency wants America to continue.
- Conclusion: By voting as a group, the Senators are maintaining the idea of wholeness that the constituency wants. In short, the Senators are doing what the voters want, and working as a whole, to keep America strong.
- Implied: Voting for this Bill is what is best for America.

Johnson almost immediately tones down his rhetoric to take a more humble stance as he states his plans to accept the will of the people he represents (Rowland & Evans 15) and

vote to pass the bill. He shows that he is aware that he is one of those democratically elected officials (Rowland & Evans 21), and he relies on that realization to argue his point to the other Senators who also obviously need to be reminded of their place as elected officials. He states: “I shall vote for the bill. It is effective legislation. It is enforceable legislation. It seeks to advance the rights of all Americans. It is national rather than sectional” (Remarks: 3). Here., he uses repetition to make his point.

Johnson suggests empathy, but he also states that the Senators need to alter their points of view in order to consider the greater good: “I can understand the disappointment of those who are not receiving all they believe they should out of this bill. I can understand but not sympathize with their position” (Statement: 18). He then drives home the need for the Senators to see beyond their own individual goals and instead try to keep in mind that they are an elected—i.e., national—body and need to act (and pass laws) accordingly when he reminds them: “Many times in my life, I have failed to secure all that I considered proper and just and due. But I have learned to accept the will of my fellow citizens when they have deliberated earnestly and sincerely” (Statement: 19). The way in which Johnson works both sides of the audience (Southerners and the more moderate factions) reflects an ability that he uses consistently and effectively. Johnson suggests that the Senators can make sure that many who elected them will be mollified because actually the Bill allows the Senate to include all Americans into being allowed opportunities: his insight into “reading” his audience and then “addressing” their thoughts is almost uncanny (Humphrey OH LBJML: Moyers OH LBJML).

Speech

Invention

The subject Johnson alludes to in this *Statement* deals with one of the vast numbers of “problems of human relations” (Statement: 3)—allowing all people their civil rights. The topic of civil rights, even now in Johnson’s life, has the underlying aspect related to education. This right—to be educated—is one that Johnson has been fighting for since his teaching days in Cotulla (Miller, M. 174). It continues into the days he served as the NYA administrator in Texas (Miller, M. 174) and bears directly on the subject he is talking about to the Senators. He wants the Southerners to remember the Constitutional rights that are allowed (as per Reedy’s insights); moreover, he wants the Northerner contingency of the Senate to realize if the South yields—even slightly—the Bill can pass.

By using rational argument, Johnson relies on *logos* to persuade his audience. First, he demands that the Senators consider the positive aspects of the Civil Rights Bill: “[L]ook at what the bill does” (Statement: 3) and then he uses repetition to reinforce the outcomes “[it] has opened closed minds throughout the country” (Statement:: 21); [it] has made people everywhere reexamine hard and fast positions” (Statement: 21); and, possibly more importantly, this group needs to realize “there is no political capital in this issue” (Statement: 27). In short, he argues that this Bill and its subsequent passage is nation building, not divisive! After all, he stresses that there can be nothing gained by denying human beings their civil rights.

Second, he begins to hammer home what the Bill does. By using a format that “lists” the reasons to vote for the Bill Johnson displays to his audience—via the rational argument inherent in *logos*—their need to vote for the Bill:

First, the bill creates a Civil Rights Commission (Statement: 7);

Second, the bill creates the office of a new Assistant Attorney General (Statement: 8);

Third, the bill repeals a bayonet-type Reconstruction statute (Statement: 9);

Fourth, the bill insures the authority of the Federal courts [to protect citizens] (Statement: 10);

Fifth, the bill authorizes the use of the full power of Federal Courts [to enforce the right to vote] (Statement: 11);

Sixth, the bill guarantees to defendants in criminal contempt proceedings in Federal courts the basic right of trial by jury (Statement: 12); . . .

Seventh, the bill secures the right to sit on a jury. (Statement: 16)

The mode of persuasion that Aristotle termed “logos” (Aristotle 1356a) comes from the rational argumentative stands that Johnson presents. Throughout the *Statement*, Johnson forcefully strides through the words he delivers. He points out important areas by using the headers as titles for the various ideas he wants to set apart (that are apparent in the written version). These headers are “Progress For Our People; National Legislation; A Strong Bill; An Advance; Open The Closed Minds; Politics Or Progress; Dignity And Unity; A Fair And Just Senate; and The Rights Of The People” (Statement: Headers).

He exhibits his sense of how important this form of persuasion is as he presents one fact on top of another. First, he tells what the bill does: “I prefer, instead to consider what the bill does and then to make up my mind as to its value on that basis. In this concluding hour, let us look at what the bill does” (Statements: 6). Next Johnson turns the Senators’ attention to what the bill offers: “[A] compelling need for a solution that will enable all American

People to live in dignity and in unity. This bill is the greatest step toward that objective that has ever been made” (Statement: 37). Finally, he gives direct orders to the Senators to pass the bill “I shall genuinely support this measure, secure in the belief that it represents progress and that it assures an advance in the rights to which all our people are entitled” (Statement: 44). Throughout the entire speech, Johnson uses his ethos to promote his ideas. The forcefulness of the words reveals his belief in what he says. In short, he uses the implied subject of education as the issue while he employs persuasive methods via pathos, logos and ethos to ensure his audience cannot deny him.

Arrangement

Johnson’s presentation of his argument in favor of the Bill is analogous to the way in which he counseled the freshman Senator (Church) to act on his first day in Congress:

I had no sooner . . . started to walk up the central aisle to my seat . . . when I encountered this long arm of Lyndon Johnson reaching out and grabbing me as I passed . . . and saying to me, “Now, Frank, you are the youngest member of this Senate, and you have a great future. There’s lots going for you. But the first thing you ought to learn is that in Congress you get along by going along.” (OH LBJML)

Johnson begins his speech in a way that suggests remaining within the established set of decorum. By beginning this way, he demonstrates his acquiescence to the rules of the Senate. Reciprocally, he implies he wants the Senators to abide to the rules of another venue—the rules inherent within the rights belonging to human beings: “Mr. President, in 10 minutes the Senate will have spent a total of 25 days discussing the civil-rights bill. We will have used 121 hours and 31 minutes” (Statement: 1).

He also suggests via words, the well-known physical gesture of speeding things up. That is, on the Senate floor he uses an imitation of throwing a lasso in a circle over his head in a quick movement, that all the Senators knows mean to “speed it up.” As Campbell notes, “The authoritative tone, the dearth of enlivening aesthetic elements, and the concern for ‘correctness’ indicate . . . rhetoric in the oracular style at audiences already familiar with [a speaker’s] views” (“Introduction,” *Women Public Speakers in the United States, 1925-1993* 3).

Johnson then continues by simultaneously congratulating and admonishing the Senate for the length of time spent on this bill:

In all the history of the Senate, I doubt whether there has ever been a debate which has been conducted on a higher level. Senators have spoken to the point. Senators have debated the issues. Senators have stuck to the facts. For this, all my colleagues are entitled to great credit. (Statement: 2)+

Johnson’s prowess as both a visual and a verbal communicator is well-known. He keeps reminding the Senators of the inordinate amount of time the issue of civil rights takes out of every session as well as the reminder of the need to put aside their personal beliefs in order to help maintain America’s strength,

Never before has a bill been debated so thoroughly in this Senate. And out of that debate has come something more important than legislation. (Statement: 21)

This has been a debate, which has opened closed minds throughout the country. This has been a debate which has made people everywhere reexamine hard and fast positions. (Statement: 22)

Johnson concludes this segment by focusing on the patriotism that he knows each Senator has—as well as those he represents in the people who voted for him: “Mr. President, the majority of the Members of the Senate trust the people in the land that I love and from which I come. And, Mr. President, they will not be disappointed” (Statement: 43). Johnson has arranged his words in such a basic way that even the most confused Senator can find a way to justify voting for this bill to his constituents. In short, he calls attention to the fact that every session includes talking about this topic—and now the Senators must deal with finding a solution to civil rights.

Style

Johnson’s use of the more formal style that the Senate demands of its speakers (see “Arrangement”) is followed by the way in which he blasts forth the next set of words “I shall vote for the bill” (Statement: 3) and immediately follows with the quickly phrased, short bursts—suggesting gunfire: “It is effective legislation. It is enforceable legislation. It seeks to advance the rights of all Americans” (Statement: 3). The style of Johnson’s phrasing these words is not lost on the Senators.

Johnson suggests via the high style in which he addresses the Senators the need to get rid of this bill—by quickly voting for it, and moving on—when he states: “And we shall never get rid of the running sore in the body politic until we start thinking in those terms” (Statement: 24). Johnson obviously chooses the vivid metaphor to catch the attention of the Senators. He wants to call attention again to the fact that the Senators need to vote for this bill in order to allow America to remain the forceful nation it is. The succinctness with which Johnson states what he believes is a reminder to the Senators that they need to make a decision. Although many people have made guesses as to why Johnson took this opening

tack, even in his memoirs, Johnson did not offer an answer. However, the fact remains, Johnson's unbending posture regarding passage of this Bill helped make the Civil Rights Bill of 1957 become a law.¹⁹

Memory

The memory that Johnson resurrected over and over again in the 1957 Civil Rights Bill is evident in two of the passages he delivers:

First. The bill creates a Civil Rights Commission with subpoena power. This alone would justify terming the bill a constructive step, and it is more than proponents of civil rights asked the majority leader to have passed last year. (Statement: 7)

* * * * *

Seventh, and finally, the bill secures without discrimination the right of all citizens, of all races, all colors, and all creeds, to serve on Federal juries. (Statement: 16)

Johnson speaks directly to the events surrounding the need for establishment for civil rights for all Americans. In late 1955, Emmett Till, a black teenager from Chicago was visiting Mississippi. He was dragged from his relatives' home, beaten, mutilated, and murdered for allegedly whistling at a white woman. The Till murder provoked demands for Federal action.

¹⁹ One contemporary explanation comes from Professor Richard Shenkman, author of *Presidential Ambition: Gaining Power at Any Cost*, who states that there is almost an “abnormal level of ambition . . . that you can see and measure. It comes by seeing the extent of ambition in relation to the compromises they are willing to make to gain power and then, once in office, to wield that power” (qtd. in Conan interview).

In the winter of 1955-56, a non-violent black protest against segregated seating in Montgomery, Alabama, buses led to shootings and bombings of blacks that the police ignored while they arrested protestors. These actions exerted further pressure for Federal intervention. Eager to court the black vote in an election year and pressed by Attorney General Herbert Brownell to act, Eisenhower introduced a bill calling for a bipartisan commission to investigate civil rights abuses, a new Justice Department division to prosecute civil rights violators, additional powers to enforce voting rights, and amendments to existing civil rights laws to facilitate the protection of citizens (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 497). The purpose of this linking that Johnson performs allows a kind of shorthand in terms of the thinking required for the Senators. Johnson points out the division in the various classes in America and implies that the Senators do not want to contribute to further division between the “haves and the have-nots.”

Johnson specifically relies on public knowledge, which, as Bitzer charges, refers to memory and knowledge within the American construct (“Rhetoric and Public Knowledge” 73).²⁰ The debate on this Bill had lasted for “25 days. . . 121 hours and 31 minutes” (Statement: 1). Compounding the length of time the Senators had spent on the Bill, Thurgood Marshall had recently completed his argument that had engaged The Supreme Court. In it he had claimed,

segregation conferred a cumulative stigma on black children. Separation implied inferiority and the denial of access to any and all educational institutions purely on the basis of race violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. (qtd. in Woods, 266)

²⁰See “Preface” for further clarification.

The memory of the emancipation of the slaves with the answering “Reconstruction” measures in the South brought forth the vituperative attitudes of many Senators—and the citizens they represented.

Johnson directly confronted the angst that had been engendered as he talks of “Reconstruction” over and over again (Statement: 8). He then offered the Senators the fact that they could right the wrong because “Congress, without regard to political division, is going to be in a position to approve seven of them, I hope, tonight” (Statement: 17).

Johnson was depending on the memory of all of the members, as he resurrected this information, and he suggested that: “We do not have to reconstruct Reconstruction in order to have a bill. We do not have to reopen the wounds. Neither do we have to dispense with basic rights — such as the jury trial — in order to have effective legislation” (Statement: 31). Johnson offers a compromise that he hopes will ease the minds of Senators on both sides of the political aisle.

He continues to mollify the Senators when he suggests, “the Senate has dealt fairly and justly with this measure. This is legislation which I believe will be good for every State of the Union” (Statement: 39). Johnson depends on the public memory of all the Senators—and their constituencies—in order to explain why the Bill should be passed. All the while, Johnson reminds the Senators that there needs to be a resolution to the problem when he says, “[T]here is a compelling need for a solution that will enable all American people to live in dignity and in unity” (Statement: 36), and this solution comes in the form of the Bill that is in front of these Senators: “This bill is the greatest step toward that objective that has ever been made” (Statement: 36). How could these just men refuse the opportunity that is being offered to them that is a compromise that is necessary for the progress of the Nation?

Delivery

There are no recordings of Johnson’s 1957 speech, and delivery “concerns itself with how something is said, rather than *what* is said” (Burton). Therefore, for this portion of the speech, I rely on what others have to say about Johnson’s speaking ability. Bell notes two of Johnson’s habits that allow us, as rhetorical critics, access to entire written texts of all statements he delivered publicly. These two habits were, first, having a speech clearly and yet simply written, and second adhering to his preference of being able to “speak from a clean copy” of a speech (Bell, *Johnson Treatment* 23). We have copies of every speech he delivered during his political career—and they are all “clean.”

Hugh Sidey, correspondent for *Time* magazine, observed that Johnson was a Texan—and “was outrageous in some of the devices he used” (Sidey OH LBJML). The quality of style—and delivery—in Johnson’s manipulation of the decorum required of speakers on the Senate Floor is an excellent example of his outrageous actions.

Upon examining the copy from which Johnson gave his “Statement on August 7, 1957,” urging voting “for” passage of the Civil Rights Bill, the reader can see Johnson’s simple and yet quite effective ploy of a straightforward presentation. The areas that Johnson wants to highlight outline the dominant themes he wants the Senators to grasp. In the written copy, he separates, capitalizes and underlines them. Author Bell reinforces this point when he notes that “Johnson was cautious; he didn’t like ad-libbing” (Bell *Splendid Misery*, 52).

Conclusion

Johnson shares what he had acquired in his education with the citizens of the United States in this speech as Senator. By demonstrating how a good, solid, early childhood benefits a person, gets him elected to the Senate, and allows him to become a Majority

Leader, Johnson served as living proof of what he espoused. Johnson couples what he learned as a child with what he understands as an adult to help bring forth a person who speaks for all citizens of a nation.

This chapter examines how Johnson uses what he has learned in order to speak to his fellow Senators in such a way that he can promote an idea as a national figure. That is, he no longer speaks as a local, Texas, Congressman. Rather, he speaks as a leader who is interested in promoting what will benefit the entire nation. Johnson displays the fact that within this speech as a Senator, he can go beyond his individual considerations to the considerations of what will benefit the greater whole. As he states: “[W]e shall never get rid of the running sore in the body politic until we start thinking in those [more national] terms” (Statement: 24).

APPENDIX A²¹
STATEMENT BY SENATOR LYNDON B. JOHNSON TO THE SENATE²²
August 7, 1957

²¹ This is the verbatim rendering of the August 7, 1957, speech as archived in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Museum and Library (LBJML) in Austin, Texas. It has been transferred into the 8" x 11" format for this presentation, but retains the division markings in an attempt to maintain the integrity of the copied manuscript as used by Lyndon Johnson and presented by him to the Senate.

²² "Statement" is the reference for this speech throughout the dissertation.

STATEMENT BY SENATE DEMOCRATIC LEADER LYNDON B. JOHNSON
On the Floor of the Senate August 7, 1957

PROGRESS FOR OUR PEOPLE

1. Mr. President, in 10 minutes the Senate will have spent a total of 25 days discussing the civil-rights bill. We will have used 121 hours and 31 minutes.

2. In all the history of the Senate, I doubt whether there has ever been a debate, which has been conducted on a higher level. Senators have spoken to the point. Senators have debated the issues. Senators have stuck to the facts. For this, all my colleagues are entitled to great credit.

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

3. I shall vote for the bill. It is effective legislation. It is enforceable legislation. It seeks to advance the rights of all Americans. It is national rather than sectional.

4. In the past few days there has been considerable discussion about the things, which the bill does not do. The minority leader has just referred to them. I am aware of the fact that the bill does not pretend to solve all the problems of human relations.

5. But I cannot follow the logic of those who say that because we cannot solve all the problems, we should not try to solve any of them. That is a curious process of thought, indeed.

A STRONG BILL

6. I prefer, instead to consider what the bill does, and then to make up my mind as to its value on that basis. In this concluding hour, let us look at what the bill does.

7. First. The bill creates a Civil Rights Commission with subpoena power. This alone would justify terming the bill a constructive step, and it is more than proponents of civil rights asked the majority leader to have passed last year.

8. Second, The bill creates the office of a new Assistant Attorney General who can bring the full prestige of his office into the field of civil rights.

9. Third. The bill repeals a bayonet-type Reconstruction statute, whose very existence inflames passions and makes it more difficult to consider these problems dispassionately.

10. Fourth. The bill insures the authority of the Federal courts to aid individuals seeking remedial protections for their civil rights.

11. Fifth. The bill authorized the use of the full power of Federal Courts to secure the most important all rights—the right to vote.

12. Sixth, The bill guarantees to defendants in criminal contempt proceedings in Federal courts the basic right of trial by jury.

13. On this point, let us be absolutely clear, and let the record be clear.

14. No Federal judge will be required to call a jury to enforce compliance with his orders. He can resort to fines, to imprisonment, and to compensatory damages to compel obedience to his orders.

15. The one thing a Federal Judge could not do without a jury is to brand a man a criminal in the eyes of all his fellow citizens.

16. Seventh, and finally, the bill secures without discrimination the right of all citizens, of all races, all colors, and all creeds, to serve on Federal juries.

(more)
- 2 -

AN ADVANCE

17. Mr. President, I have served in Congress for more than 20 years. A long line of Texas Senators has preceded me, clear back to 1871, when my State once again received representation in the Senate.

18. The last reconstruction statute was passed in 1875. Since that date, this issue has been agitated and has divided our Nation time and time again. During the 82 years since reconstruction, practically any one of the points I have enumerated would have been regarded as a history-making advance. Congress, without regard to political division, is going to be in a position to approve seven of them, I hope, tonight.

19. I can understand the disappointment of those who are not receiving all they believe they should out of this bill. I can understand but not sympathize with their position.

20. Many times in my life, I have failed to secure all that I considered proper and just and due. But I have learned to accept the will of my fellow citizens when they have deliberated earnestly and sincerely.

OPEN THE CLOSED MINDS

21. Never before has a bill been debated so thoroughly in this Senate. And out of that debate has come something more important than legislation.

22. This has been a debate which has opened closed minds throughout the country. This has been a debate which has made people everywhere reexamine hard and fast positions.

23. For the first time in my memory, this issue has been lifted from the files of partisan politics. It has been considered in terms of human beings and the effect of our laws upon them.

24. And we shall never get rid of the running sore in the body politic until we start thinking in those terms.

25. Two months ago, I had grave misgivings about the value of the commission section. It seems to me that a commission -- operating in a heated political atmosphere -- could do nothing but inflame passions.

26. But I believe the Senate has set a tone within which the commission can be a useful instrument. It can gather facts instead of charges; it can sift out the truth from the fancies; and it can return with recommendations which will be of assistance to reasonable men.

POLITICS OR PROGRESS

27. There are, of course, people who are still more interested in securing votes than in securing the right to vote. There are, of course, people who are still more interested in the issue than in a solution to the issue.

28. But I state — out of whatever experience I have had — that there is no political capital in this issue. Nothing lasting, nothing enduring, has ever been born from hatred and prejudice — except more hatred and more prejudice.

29. Political ambition which feeds off hatred of the North or hatred of the South is doomed to frustration.

30. There have been times when feelings ran high. There was a time when the divisions within this country exploded into bloodshed.

(more)

- 3 -

31. When Texas was readmitted into the Union on March 30, 1870, two Senators took the seats since occupied by Rusk and Sam Houston. The judgments of those new Senators were not the judgments of the Americans of their time. They went too far too fast, and our State has never forgotten tha[t] period. Basic rights were ignored. Punitive measure were vio[la]ted. Since that time, men of their thinking have never again occupied the seats of Senators from Texas.

DIGNITY AND UNITY

32. We do not have to reconstruct Reconstruction in order to have a bill. We do not have to reopen the wounds. Neither do we have to dispense with basic rights — such as the jury trial — in order to have effective legislation.

33 Under this measure, a good judge can secure compliance for his orders. And it is compliance — not vengeance — that the Senate seeks.

34. It may be that experience will demonstrate the need for change in this measure. That is one of the reasons why we are voting to create a commission.

35. But the possible necessity for change is no bar to action. The Senate will not disappear after the vote tonight. We shall be present throughout the years to come.

36. There will be some, of course, who will seek to play politics. But I hope there are none such in the Senate. There is no compelling need for a campaign issue.

37. But there is a compelling need for a solution that will enable all American people to live in dignity and in unity. This bill is the greatest step toward that objective that has ever been made.

38. To destroy it now would be a tragedy that would haunt our consciences for years to come.

A FAIR AND JUST SENATE

39. I am aware of the implications of my vote. It will be treated cynically in some quarters, and it will be misunderstood in others. No Texas Senator has cast a vote to consider a civil-rights bill or a vote for a civil-right bill since 1875.

40. But the Senate has dealt fairly and justly with this measure. This is legislation which I believe will be good for every State of the Union -- and so far as I am concerned, Texas has been a part of the Union since Appomattox.

41. I could not have voted for the bill which came to the Senate, and I so told the Senate. But the bill now before the Senate seeks to solve the problems of 1957 -- not to reopen the wounds of 1865.

42. This is the result of the honest and candid debate in the greatest deliberative body in the world. I believe in playing fair with my colleagues and in doing unto others as I would have them do unto me.

THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE

43. Mr. President, the majority of the Members of the Senate trust the people in the land that I love and from which I come. And, Mr. President, they will not be disappointed.

44. Therefore, I shall genuinely support this measure, secure in the belief that it represents progress and that it assures an advance in the rights to which all our people are entitled.

45. When our other body makes it adjustments to the bill, I trust that it will be improved. I trust that it will be acceptable to the great majority of all our people. And I believe it can be truly said that this will have been a year of accomplishment for the Congress and a year of advancement for America.

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CHAPTER TWO

Vice President Lyndon Johnson: Stepping up to the Battlefield

When Marie Hochmuth Nichols and Norwood Brigance first met to begin their project offering clarification to audiences regarding *Public Address*, Brigance made the observation that he later incorporated into his prefatory remarks: “Literature in times of crisis becomes the words of men of action, of men who understand the power of words as weapons of warfare. The poets come afterwards. We are here concerned with men who have used words to direct the course of American history (vi). It seems that both the words “of the poets” and the words used in a public address still collide on the Battlefield of Gettysburg, where each Memorial Day notables attend, as well as participate in, public ceremonies.

Vice President Johnson attended and participated in this well-storied epideictic speech site in America. He set forth two goals which he had to accomplish: addressing race relations and doing so in such a way that not only the immediate audience heard and understood what he had to say, but also the larger public audience heard and understood the gravity of the problem that still existed in America. Johnson addressed the term education as being a cure for inclusion of minorities into the American Dream. Next, he addressed the way in which education had—or had not—become available to the African American population.

Johnson credited education with helping him rise above his life as a “poor farmer’s son” (Steinberg 7). He concomitantly believed getting a good education would help solve problems relating to poverty for all Americans (Labaree 42). For this reason, Johnson availed himself of the opportunity to give a speech at Gettysburg, on May 30, 1963, extending his plea for better education for all Americans.

The universality of the message that Johnson addressed on May 30, 1963, directly paralleled Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Both Lincoln's address (given in 1860) and Johnson's address (given only one hundred years later) were speeches that used same platform—Gettysburg—as a place to state specifics relating to observations on civil rights and freedom. Both men used the spiritual underpinnings of the Bible to promote their arguments.

Lincoln began his oration by using words that suggested a Biblical time period: “Four score and seven years ago” (par. 1). Johnson began his speech by overt reference to prayer when he stated: “We are called to honor our own words of reverent prayer” (Remarks: 3). Then, each man continued by suggesting acceptance of all individuals is being equal. Lincoln said, “Our fore fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation dedicated to the proposition that all men were created equal” (par. 3). Johnson stated: “. . . with resolution in the deeds we must perform to preserve peace and the hope of freedom” (Remarks: 3). Both of these inspiring deliveries, however, reflect a speech given by Pericles over twenty-three hundred years earlier he noted that “There is no exclusiveness in our public life . . . we are not suspicious of one another” (par. 3). The ideas that Lincoln and Johnson addressed were not new. When he delivered a “Funeral Oration,”²³ Pericles focused on the sustainability of a democracy through the continuation of knowledge within its citizenry: “For we are lovers of the beautiful in our tastes and our strength lies in our . . . knowledge which is gained by discussion” (“Pericles Oration” Thucydides). Pericles had taken the realization of the individual into the realm of the concrete, rather than maintaining it in the

²³ James Hurt says that Lincoln used "the ordinary coin of funeral oratory" at Gettysburg. Insofar as there was a standard coinage of funeral tribute, Pericles struck the master coin 2,394 years before Lincoln spoke (Wills 1).

ephemeral real of spirituality. Pericles had forged his belief in the need to develop and maintain knowledge of the citizens in a democracy in order for the democracy to continue.

When Lincoln spoke in his 1860 “Address” of the aspect of life worth fighting to maintain—democracy—he used the words “to dedicate” and “a final resting place” in order to celebrate “those who here gave their lives that that [democratic] nation might live” (Lincoln). In his book, Garry Wills suggests that even Lincoln was presenting facts that are echoes of critical beliefs held to be true in past democracies (Wills 41-42). Wills suggests that Lincoln’s words reflect those attributed to the Greek leader, Pericles, who linked education to patriotism (Wills 48). Pericles did this as he spoke over the ashes of the Athenians who had fallen in battle in 490 B.C.E.

And in the matter of education, whereas they from early youth are always undergoing laborious exercises which are to make them brave, we live at ease, and yet are equally ready to face the perils which they face. And here is the proof:

. . . The death of these is revealed by those [who] offer their lives for their country. (Thucydides)

Johnson joined the tradition begun on the Greek battlefield and continued by Lincoln when he used the American battlefield of Gettysburg to promote another “need” for continued life—education in a democracy. As Johnson said, “Until education is unaware of race, until opportunity is unconcerned with the color of men's skins, emancipation will be a proclamation but not a fact” (Remarks: 19). Each of the places about which Pericles, Lincoln, and Johnson spoke had one mutual philosophical ideal—a democracy worth fighting

to keep, and each of these men delved more deeply into what they felt the true meaning of “democracy” involved.

The ideas that Johnson gave voice to were important at the time he said them in Gettysburg; however, these same words suggested a deeper passion that Johnson felt regarding civil rights and democracy. While Johnson spoke of what would maintain the peace in a democracy, he also reminded the listeners of the need to “remember that justice is a vigil, too—a vigil we must keep in our own streets and schools and among the lives of all our people—so that those who died here on their native soil shall not have died in vain” (Address: 6). In short, Johnson told his audience, as he did in many public addresses, of the need to promote education in order to combat practically all that “ailed” America (Reedy OH LBJML). In fact, George Reedy, who later became the White House press secretary, continued by saying that “Johnson had an abnormal, superstitious respect for education. I believe he even thought it would cure chilblain” (Reedy OH LBJML).

The fact that Johnson decided to address the problems relating to race while at Gettysburg seems appropriate. Johnson delivered his Remarks on May 30, 1963:

We, the living, have not forgotten—and the world will never forget—the deeds or the words of Gettysburg. We honor them now as we join on this Memorial Day of 1963 in a prayer for permanent peace of the world and fulfillment of our hopes for universal freedom and justice. (Remarks: 2)

* * * *

As we maintain the vigil of peace, we must remember that justice is a vigil, too—a vigil we must keep in our own streets and schools and among the

lives of all our people—so that those who died here on their native soil shall not have died in vain. (Remarks: 6)

One hundred years ago, the slave was freed. (Remarks: 7)

One hundred years later, the Negro remains in bondage to the color of his skin. (Remarks: 8)

The Negro today asks justice. (Remarks:9)

Abraham Lincoln gave his Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863. Although slightly less than one-hundred years had elapsed since Lincoln had given his Address and Americans accomplished much, Johnson’s speech illuminated the point that little, or nothing, had been done to eradicate racism in America. In fact, Lincoln’s observation “that all men are created equal” (Lincoln) was still not a reality within America.

Pericles and Lincoln bemoan the loss of life because of the promotion of a *way* of life (i.e., a democracy) for all citizens. They both acknowledge the fighting that must occur to maintain the way of the life of freedom.²⁴ Lincoln expands on the idea of freedom that Pericles has introduced by focusing on those who shall be free—the people: “government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth” (Lincoln). Pericles talks of freedom being maintained by fighting, and the ones who maintain the freedom are the educated fighters. Lincoln expands freedom to embrace the idea of a government to do the job of maintaining freedom when he says, “It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us. . . that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom” (Lincoln).

²⁴ As Pericles stated, “Strive, then, with these [courageous dead], convinced that happiness lies in freedom (qtd. in Wills 253).

The critical point on which these two ideas turn is the term freedom and how freedom is maintained. For Pericles, freedom meant being shielded from the physical aggressors. In Lincoln's time, freedom was a more ambiguous term and depended for its definition on a particular context. In short, freedom was in a pivotal point of definition—which hinged on the education of the person using the word “freedom.” Freedom thus served as a motivation as well as a result. As Johnson presents his points, he makes clear this discrepancy—between how freedom can be maintained versus how freedom truly is maintained: “We are called to honor our own words of reverent prayer with resolution in the deeds we must perform to preserve peace and the hope of freedom” (Remarks 3).

For Johnson, maintaining the freedom of a different time meant critically analyzing aspects of a democracy, and this analysis came from an educated citizenry. Johnson points up the disparity in the words: “One hundred years ago, the slave was freed (Remarks: 7). One hundred years later, the Negro remains in bondage to the color of his skin (Remarks: 8). The slave was freed, but the individual person was not freed. Not only does Johnson immediately issue a challenge, but he also questions the ability of the “democracy” to maintain the idea of “justice” when some of its citizens are not free. Johnson says simply, “The Negro today asks justice” (Remarks: 9). Johnson seems to suggest the question: How is this justice to be reached? The implicit answer is education, which Johnson equates with opportunity (Remarks: 19).

Repeatedly, Johnson states that education is the underpinning of a stable democracy and, therefore, must be offered to all the citizens. That is, education not only helps maintain the democracy, but also keeps the ideas that reinforce democracy current and malleable. Pericles's armies were educated and fought for their state. The armies who fought in

America during the Civil War were educated in two distinctly different ways, which stemmed from the truth of the “facts” taught regarding “freedom.” This disparity in the concept of “freedom” resulted in a battle fought to try to maintain these two polarized points of view. Johnson suggests a way to stop the fighting in America that was occurring: he suggests a joining of all in order to make up a stronger whole. Johnson believed education would and could bring about a whole—one nation.

Historical Use of the Gettysburg Platform

The platform on the Gettysburg Battlefield launched many politicians who sought a resolution between Americans and African Americans. Franklin Roosevelt (FDR) employed the Gettysburg platform in his 1934 Memorial Address when he advocated a healing [which would be] made permanent . . . [through] understanding” (qtd. in Benson, “FDR at Gettysburg” 148). However, Roosevelt seems to have realized he had made an omission—and that was maintaining freedom. Consequently, in his 1938 Address on the same platform, Roosevelt attempted to rectify this oversight by stating that understanding could come about through battles “to maintain constituted government” (qtd. in Benson, “FDR at Gettysburg” 169; McDonald 1).²⁵

Johnson enters this rhetorically replete podium at Gettysburg to continue a tradition begun by those who had preceded him. For example, Roosevelt had used the Gettysburg platform to speak about the needs for federal financial aid to education.²⁶ He had also spoken of the need to “seek peace through a new unity” (qtd. in Benson, “FDR at Gettysburg” 169; McDonald 1). Johnson was not in the position to promise federal funding

²⁵ However, Roosevelt still maintained an evasive attitude toward defining a constituted government.

²⁶ The impending specter of World War II was looming, and there was no doubt regarding exactly what “battles” Roosevelt was suggesting.

for education; however, he could—and did—imply that unity would come from the expansion of a more literate citizenry when he stated that “until education is unaware of race . . . emancipation will be a proclamation but not a fact” (Remarks 19). Johnson continued, saying, “our nation found its soul in honor on these fields of Gettysburg one hundred years ago. We must not lose that soul in dishonor now on the fields of hate” (Remarks: 12). In this way Johnson indicates to his audience that another battle is imminent unless steps are taken to avert it.

His *war* was one the immediate audience could hear him mention, but they surely could not have known what kinds of battles were imminent.²⁷ Historical documents reveal that although Johnson was not yet President, as David Zarefsky, a noted rhetorical historian, writes: “[T]he poverty program had been in the planning stages well before Johnson took office” (xiii), suggesting Johnson was already arming his weapons for this war. Therefore, he knew he needed to prepare the public for allowing these educational programs that Kennedy had been considering. After all, Johnson’s focus on education was earlier than 1963 (Zarefsky 48) and this meant, specifically, programs targeted at bringing Americans out of illiteracy.

LBJ: Memorial Day, May 30, 1963

Johnson began his remarks in Gettysburg to a hushed crowd:²⁸ they were waiting to hear whether the Vice President would follow through with what a dignitary usually voiced—which was nothing, as evidenced by previous vice presidential speeches (Miller, M. 338). To that end, the crowd wondered if they were to hear the regular epideictic words of a

²⁷ The war Johnson planned was his “War on Poverty” (Zarefsky x), which was the precursor to the promotion of educational support in America.

²⁸ The LBJ Library and Museum has a collection of recordings of various speeches Johnson gave (Pre Pres 5/30/63).

commemorative address, or if Johnson were going to use this Gettysburg platform to build onto what Roosevelt had said— regarding “battles.” When Johnson began with “On this hallowed ground, heroic deeds were performed and eloquent words were spoken a century ago” (Remarks: 1), there was almost an audible exhalation from the crowd.²⁹

He continued in a similar vein as he said: “We, the living, have not forgotten—and the world will never forget—the deeds or the words of Gettysburg. We honor them now as we join on this Memorial Day of 1963 in a prayer . . .” (Remarks: 2). There is no evidence of an actual prayer’s having been given at this event. Therefore, what Johnson posits seems to be a kind of prayer that is inherent in the words he has intoned up to this point.

Johnson then offers his prayer: “[A] prayer for permanent peace of the world and fulfillment of our hopes for universal freedom and justice” (Remarks: 2). He joined with Lincoln by using the word freedom. However, Johnson adds more to the “prayer” and thereby follows Roosevelt’s words, which include actions making sure the prayer is enforced. Johnson does this as he perceptibly shifts his focus in the third paragraph: “We are called to honor our own words of reverent prayer with resolution in the deeds we must perform to preserve peace and the hope of freedom” (Remarks: 3). With these words, he alludes to the decision made in *Brown versus the Board of Education* and the need to uphold the Constitution. Johnson is intimating the instantiation of civil rights.

Johnson poses a kind of paradox that the rest of his “Remarks” endeavor to unscramble for the listeners: he asks that a prayer be upheld through use of necessary deeds (e.g., “battles,” if necessary) leading to freedom. First, he addresses the War in Vietnam specifically when he states: “we shall maintain our vigil to make sure our sons who died on

²⁹ Per the recording provided by the LBJML “Pre Pres 5/30/1963” compact disc recording.

foreign fields shall not have died in vain” (Remarks: 5). He brings the realization of the battle that must be fought at home to the audience’s attention when he counsels them to remember, “as we maintain the vigil of peace, we must remember that justice is a vigil, too—a vigil we must keep in our own streets and schools and among the lives of all our people—so that those who died here on their native soil shall not have died in vain” (Remarks: 6).

Roosevelt had been Johnson’s mentor³⁰ (Janeway x), and the protégé agreed with many of Roosevelt’s New Deal programs, especially since the programs had helped America rise out of economic problems (Janeway 192). Although the New Deal programs ended when Roosevelt passed, Johnson realized that Roosevelt had helped to “shape an activist government” (Janeway 219). Yet, Roosevelt had not put in place a support system promoting the kind of governmental structure needed to continue his programs. Johnson realized there needed to be a “building [of] a social democracy to engage with the government” in order for the needed growth to continue in America (Janeway 219). He knew the makeup of this type of a democracy, which would thrive in what became his “Great Society.” He did not know the precise name of what was needed, but he did know what needed to be the make up of such a society—an educated citizenry that drove the entire movement.

A world war cut short Roosevelt’s best laid plans. Johnson realized that he could institute Roosevelt’s idea on the same platform of Gettysburg where the idea of emancipation had been expressed in 1863. Johnson launched the reinstatement of his mentor’s plans on the same platform Roosevelt had originally used to promote freedom for all Americans, not just

³⁰ As Michael Janeway notes: “The last scene of the first act of Johnson’s career was a *New York Times* story the day after Roosevelt’s death in April, 1945, featuring a grief-stricken, cigarette-holdered, Johnson as a prototypical son of the New Deal, recalling that FDR had been ‘just like a daddy to me’” (Janeway 149).

some of them. Johnson perceived the Memorial Address at Gettysburg to be the place to promote what was right in maintaining freedom. Johnson continued what Roosevelt had declared when he said in 1938:

We are all brothers now, brothers in a new understanding. . . .

[W]e have many means of knowing each other. . . . It is . . . a simple fact that the chief hindrance to progress comes . . . from three groups. One of these groups seeks to stir up political animosity or build political advantage by the distortion of facts (qtd. in Benson, “FDR at Gettysburg” 148)

In stating these words, Roosevelt had identified the domestic enemy to be fought, and the enemy was made up of those who fomented division within America and among Americans. Roosevelt had thrown down the gauntlet—while espousing the need for all to work together to heal themselves as a citizenry from the individualism that held all back from understanding one another and making a united nation.

Johnson picked up the glove Roosevelt had thrown down regarding the distortion of facts. As he stepped in front of the crowd in 1963 to deliver the Memorial Day Remarks at Gettysburg, he belted out the words that “the solution is in our hands” (Remarks: 11).

Johnson had learned his lesson well from Roosevelt, who had instructed him never to show weakness (Janeway 146). Instead of being the Senator who had fallen from grace with the American constituency and settled for becoming only a Vice President, Johnson hurled the gauntlet Roosevelt had dropped at the crowd and began to deliver a speech promoting the need for actualizing Civil Rights. He displayed the vigor and dynamism of a vibrant leader who was going to promote equality and unity in the nation.

Speaker

Events Prior to Memorial Day, 1963, LBJ's Life

Historical events leading up to Johnson's taking the podium at Gettysburg bespeak his awareness that he had lost much credibility in the public's eye.³¹ In 1957, in the Senate, Johnson was working to set the stage to become the democratic hopeful for President in 1960. Now, in 1963, Johnson is Vice President.

Johnson had stepped down from the powerful position of Majority Leader of the Senate to become John Kennedy's running mate as Vice President in the 1960 national election. Many speculated on Johnson's being able to maintain the power he had amassed in the Senate. Some, including Ronnie Dugger, the political theorist, wrote that Johnson even "schemed to achieve the Vice-Presidency—the position from which he believed he had the best chance for the Presidency" (399).

Nonetheless, contrasting opinions citing Johnson's attitude of "giving up" came on the heels of reports of his reactions to the news that he and Kennedy had won the election in 1960 (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 3). Margaret Mayer, the Washington correspondent for the *Dallas Times Herald*, remembers the conundrum that Johnson seemed to be sad upon hearing he had been elected Vice President:

I don't think I ever saw a more unhappy man There was no jubilation.

Lyndon looked as if he'd lost his last friend on earth Now I've known

Lyndon a great many years, and I've never known him to act like that. It was

³¹ An article in the *Texas Observer* in October 1963, asked "What Is an LBJ?," and reported that comedians and newspapers were having a field day with Johnson's obscurity (Presley 8.)

clear to me and a lot of other people that even then he didn't want to be Vice-President. (qtd. in Miller, M. 334)

Some (which history shows includes Johnson) viewed the Vice Presidency as a position of loss, not of the continuation of the power and strength he developed in the Senate. An example of the ineffectiveness by which the Vice Presidential role was viewed comes from the words that Thomas R. Marshall, Woodrow Wilson's Vice President, stated when he disgustedly remarked that the Vice President "is like a man in a cataleptic state. He cannot speak. He cannot move. He suffers no pain. And yet, he is conscious of all that goes on around him" (qtd. in Evans and Novak 305). Although the truth seemed mixed regarding his feelings of becoming Vice President, all who were watching agreed that Johnson moved with "an audacity that astonished both friends and some confidential advisers" (Evans and Novak 305). That is, he immediately started to make things happen. Although reports were given that Johnson was "relaxing at his ranch in Texas" in December³² (Miller, M. 336), his aides knew that this "resting" was only "physical" relaxation. Johnson was actually mentally and "actively searching for an answer to the question that now most plagued him—how to circumvent the traditional powerlessness of the Vice Presidency" (Miller, M. 336). The reason for his discomfiture is elucidated by Robert Dallek who notes:

as the Vice President-elect in 1960, Johnson hoped to provide a measure of leadership uncommonly associated with that largely symbolic office. He knew how little his predecessors had accomplished But as a congressional secretary, an NYA administrator, a congressman, and a senator, he had achieved things others had not thought possible. (*Flawed Giant* 591)

³² Before taking office as Vice President in January 1960.

Merle Miller categorically states Johnson “was not going to be disloyal to his President, and there is no evidence that he ever was, publicly or privately” (338); however, he was still going to make the Vice Presidency a position with significance and influence because Lyndon Johnson “wanted to have power” (Caro, *Master of the Senate* xix-xx). Johnson had been overheard to state that there were many positions that had more power and prestige than being the Vice President of the United States. Nonetheless, he had accepted the position of running with Kennedy as his Vice President. Although Johnson traveled as a diplomat all over the world as Vice President, he still felt that he was not utilizing his political expertise (Miller, M. 334). Kennedy had understood and he asked Johnson to promote passage of the bills that Kennedy wanted passed (Miller, M. 339). Johnson had performed this task. However, it was obvious, that Johnson wanted to be more than just Vice President.

Occasion

Johnson returns to his initial stance of offering a homage to Lincoln’s words when he utters the phrase: “We keep a vigil of peace around the world” (Remarks: 4). These words suggest that the deeds insuring freedom within the borders of the United States must be maintained outside the United States. We know the problems these words foretell for Johnson—Vietnam. Consequently, when Johnson couples maintaining freedom outside the U.S. borders with the need to maintain freedom within the borders of the United States, we realize with hindsight the suggested task Johnson perceives as onerous in its scope.

He continues this form of posturing when he continues into the fifth paragraph of his speech, saying,

until the world knows no aggressors, until the arms of tyranny have been laid down, until freedom has risen up in every land, we shall maintain our vigil to

make sure our sons who died on foreign fields shall not have died in vain.

(Remarks: 5)

Johnson uses the occasion of giving his Gettysburg Remarks to an audience and offers a speech that is supporting “his” President—Kennedy. He uses words portraying Kennedy in a positive manner which connects to Roosevelt—and to him, Johnson. Once again, through an additional perception of the same set of words previously examined, the connection Johnson wishes to suggest becomes obvious. “We are called to honor our own words [those of Roosevelt crying to defend America] of reverent prayer with resolution in the deeds we must perform [reflecting Kennedy’s pleas that were offered over the Bay of Pigs debacle] to preserve peace and the hope of freedom [which directly refers to what Johnson is offering] (Remarks: 3). Johnson elicits ideas from two strong Presidents and then includes himself in order for the audience to subliminally connect him into the triumvirate.

First, Johnson re-connects Americans to the words that Kennedy had uttered relating to The Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962: “To halt this offensive buildup, a strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being initiated (“Cuban Missile Crisis”). Since Kennedy referred to the Missile Crisis as "quarantine" of Cuba rather than using other words that might have explained the situation better, Johnson promotes the connection. Kennedy's choice of language reflects a reminder of the policy that the well-respected Roosevelt had outlined in his “Quarantine Speech” given in October 1937, when Roosevelt called for an international "quarantine of the aggressor nations" (Roosevelt).

Johnson was strategically placing himself between his mentor—Roosevelt—and “his” President—Kennedy—at the well-known Lincoln site.³³ Johnson was actually using the Gettysburg site as a place to connect himself with great leaders—Lincoln, Kennedy, Roosevelt. That is, since he had evoked such notables, then, the audience could connect him to the list and make sure to add him to as being noteworthy, also.

Johnson directly parallels Lincoln who stated that:

it is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before, us,—
that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to the cause for
which they here gave the last full measure of devotion,—that we here highly
resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain. (Lincoln).

Johnson quickly moves from the epideictic tribute of praise for the *fallen* at Gettysburg to a change in oratorical style. The racial tension that had been rising in the South had begun to spread throughout the nation. In the month before Johnson delivered his Memorial Day speech, the activities contesting the disparity between what the law *said* and how the law was being enforced had begun to expand exponentially. Kennedy’s calling in the federal marshals to defend James Meredith who wanted to enroll at “Ole’ Miss” had not been enough—an angry crowd killed two marshals. Kennedy responded and sent in 30,000 troops to Mississippi to make sure there were no more “incidents.” These “incendiary” events (Hart and Kendall 78) consisted of protests, demonstrations, and various other forms of what many in the white community terms “civil disobedience” (Hart and Kendall 79)

³³ Lincoln had waited to deliver this speech until the North had won a battle. He did this because so many who counseled Lincoln had warned him that if he delivered the speech when the North was losing it would look like a plea for retreat (“Lincoln at Gettysburg”).

Some of these protests demanding implementation of civil rights rose up from Birmingham, Alabama (fittingly, on Good Friday, April, 12, 1963). Over four hundred activists—including Martin Luther King, Jr., and Reverend Ralph Abernathy—staged a demonstration. Many, including King and Abernathy, were thrown in the Birmingham Jail (Levy 20). Two weeks later, two thousand blacks protested and were met with police who clubbed them as the blacks attempted to protect themselves (Hart and Kendall 78). By the beginning of May, the summer was heating up.

Eugene (Bull) Connor held the appointed position of “the commissioner of public safety” in Alabama (Hart and Kendall 78). He ordered the use of police dogs and fire hoses to “brutally turn back protesters” (Levy 21) who were involved in sit-ins, boycotts and public demonstrations spreading from Birmingham to South Carolina, North Carolina, and other southern states (Hart and Kendall 78). All of these events were seen on the newly invented form of media termed “television.”

Television had recently gained a foothold in America and was in almost every home: the pictures of police beating women and children and spraying people “with water from high-power fire hoses, spilled out of the screens and onto the floors of America’s living rooms” (Cronkite “Civil Rights Era Almost Split CBS News Operation”). The images that Connor specifically was responsible for were portrayed to America—and “shocked the nation” (Levy 21) and “emboldened the black community” (Levy 22). President Kennedy realized that his “strategy of seeking solutions to America’s racial problems with minimal federal intervention would no longer work” (Levy 21-23). Johnson was using the Gettysburg platform as a way to support “his” President: he was suggesting that America do the same!

Audience

Johnson's speech to a largely white audience (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 36) gave him the place to present his agenda relating to the way the African Americans needed to become full Americans. Johnson used the speaker-audience connection to promote this acceptance by his immediate audience. Although there are no video recordings of the event, the sound recording offers substantiation that Johnson got and maintained the attention of the listeners.

Johnson apparently used a form of "conversationalism" with his audience—as there is an informality in the way he presents his words to his audience (CD LBJML). As Ronnie Dugger notes:

Johnson more than most leaders . . . was not an original breaking unexpectedly toward possibilities in the future, he was a weathercock politician who uses and is used by the winds of circumstance and time and . . . in a crisis, reenacts the past and thus transmits it into the present. (28)

Johnson treated the listeners as the "Kennedy administration" had been doing:

They [the Kennedy Administration] had won judicial orders enjoining local police forces and anti-civil rights groups like the Ku Klux Klan from interfering with interstate travel. They persuaded the Interstate Commerce Commission to end segregation in interstate bus terminals. They filed forty-two lawsuits in behalf of black voting rights, and helped win congressional approval of the Twenty-fourth Amendment to the Constitution--anti-poll tax. They also appointed forty blacks to important administration posts. (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 31)

The words Johnson chooses obviously are calibrated to include each person into what he is saying as he moves from the epideictic format tailored for the immediate audience who has come to hear Johnson speak on a Memorial Day at Gettysburg to the national (universal) audience, who hears Johnson speak about justice through his forensic oratory.

Speech

Connecting Civil Rights to Education

Invention

The search for a more effective way to educate minorities truly begins to become a focal point in Johnson's speech. He uses the ethos surrounding the place of Gettysburg to promote acceptance of minorities in all aspects of American life. Within the confines of a speech, he sets out his various appeals for the audience to realize how empathetic he is to the plight of the "Negro" in America today (Remarks: 9).

Johnson demonstrates that he believes a group of people can be moved to activity from the mere promotion of one idea, presented clearly and well. He does this as he leads the audience to agree with him regarding the benefits of education. He takes the first step by stating that a vigil must be maintained to continue the promotion of justice for all Americans (Remarks: 6). He lists the steps that have been taken so far in the vigil: "One Hundred years ago, the slave was freed" (Remarks: 7). However, he reminds the audience of the results that have occurred in moving past "freeing the slaves": "One hundred years later, the Negro remains in bondage to the color of his skin" (Remarks: 8). Therefore, Johnson uses the inclusive to remind the listeners that they are part of the whole that "do not answer" (Remarks 10). He then tells the audience how to resolve this dilemma: Americans—white and Negro together—must be about the business of resolving the challenge which confronts

us now” (Remarks: 11). The resolution lies in giving the “Negro . . . justice” (Remarks: 9). Johnson appeals to the reason of the audience. By constructing his argument of *logos*, he uses the pivotal point of education as the fulcrum around which the idea of justice revolves.

The speech Johnson gives at Gettysburg only explicitly mentions the word education twice. However, implicitly education permeates the words he uses. He correlates education to the main theme of his speech: justice. The first time he refers to education it is a bit obliquely when he says, “we must remember that justice is a vigil, too—a vigil we must keep in our own streets and schools and among the lives of all our people” (Remarks: 6). By these words, he begins to change from epideictic to forensic oratory as he brings in issues relating to the findings of justice: “The Negro today asks justice” (Remarks: 9). However, America’s voice responds with one that is not forensic: “We do not answer him—we do not answer those who lie beneath this soil—when we reply to the Negro by asking, “Patience” (Remarks: 10). Johnson points out the disparity in what America offers and what the “Negro needs” (Remarks: 9-10).

Johnson reminds both the immediate audience as well as the national audience of the 1957 decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in *Brown versus Board of Education*. After the Court deemed that all Americans be allowed to have a proper public education,³⁴ Johnson points out that education resides in the experiential education that is obtained on the street and in the lives of the citizens, themselves, as well as in the schoolhouse.

The second reference to education is directly coupled with the word justice: “Until justice is blind to color, until education is unaware of race . . . emancipation is not fulfilled in

³⁴ *Brown v. Board of Education* (1957).

fact” (Remarks: 19). The implication underlying Johnson’s remarks regarding the marginalizing effects that a lack of education causes on a citizenry is reminiscent of his 1957 speech to the Senate.³⁵ He believes that the connection between education and civil rights is undeniable.

Johnson’s presentation of the argument—that the United States owed all citizens its civil rights—is in direct response to the minimal way that America (specifically the federal government) had been responding to the ever-increasing disparity between blacks and whites. Johnson’s movement from eulogy to the call for action specifically using “the law” (Remarks: 14) shows his penchant for promoting the cause of the underdog.

Examining Johnson’s speech offers us, as rhetorical scholars, another example of how he “got out front on civil rights in a series of public addresses that sounded a moral call to change” (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 36). This change would come, as we find out later, in his Great Society programs. By promoting civil rights, he was obviously promoting equality for all Americans—by achieving the “fulfillment of our hopes . . . for . . . justice” (Remarks: 2). Once again, Johnson echoed Roosevelt when he spoke of the goal of justice—which would be brought about with the attainment of freedom. Unity is the final answer that comes from justice administered wisely; Roosevelt summed up what the notion to accomplish in his 1938 Gettysburg plea:

For the issue [Lincoln] restated here at Gettysburg seventy-five years ago will be the continuing issue before this Nation so far as we cling to the purposes for which the Nation was founded—to preserve under the changing conditions of each generation a people’s government for the people’s good.

³⁵ See chapter 1.

The Task assumes different shapes at different times . . . But the challenge is always the same. . . “with malice toward none, with charity for all.”

It is another conflict, a conflict as fundamental as Lincoln’s, fought not with glint of steel, but with appeals to reason and justice on a thousand fronts—seeking to save for our common country opportunity and security for citizens in a free society. (qtd. in Benson, “FDR at Gettysburg” 169)

In short, Roosevelt was speaking of all citizens enjoying the benefits and the responsibilities that civil rights offered. Johnson was picking up Roosevelt’s 1938 plea with his 1963 oration as he notes that “In this hour, it is not our respective races, which are at stake—it is our nation. Let those who care for their country come forward, North and South, white and Negro, to lead the way through this moment of challenge and decision” (Remarks: 17).

Johnson draws from his experience of having had an audience of fellow Congressmen listen to him: this experience helped Johnson frame all his speeches around the subject relating to patriotism, and freedom. The ideas he promotes (even after his days in Congress) rely on pleas for justice and his belief in the need to couch what he was saying in words that helped stimulate his audience’s patriotic fervor. Therefore, by beginning his remarks by reminding the audience that “we, the living, have not forgotten” (Remarks: 2) and immediately following this reminder with the words “to honor them now as we join on this Memorial Day of 1963” (Remarks: 2), he has effectively unified the past audience (of fallen soldiers on this battlefield) with the present audience (of listeners in Gettysburg) and has made their fight our fight within the minds of the listeners. We are the patriotic ones! The *we* that Roosevelt had so effectively evinced was becoming Johnson’s.

Arrangement

Johnson verbally walks with his audience and requests them to “keep a vigil of peace around the world” (Remarks: 4). He beseeches all who are listening to remember the responsibility of all Americans! This he has effectively moved his audience from the passive listening stance that a eulogy often elicits to one of an active group of people who have joined a common cause to more effectively bring about a chosen result. Johnson describes who this audience is—the people who maintain the vigil that “must [be] performed to preserve peace and the hope of freedom” (Remarks: 3). In short, Johnson has rhetorically created a “community” or public.³⁶ He, then, charges them with a duty: to seek “justice.”

In the opening words of The Declaration of Independence, the word *law* is placed in direct relationship with *God*: “. . . the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God.” Johnson seems to be building a parallel when he talks of *prayer* and connects this spirituality (Remarks: 2) to “fighting for what is right” (Remarks: 3). He cleverly invokes the axiology (the field of ethics relating to values) that holds religion is entwined with patriotism. He does so in such a way that suggests almost a kind of reliance of one on another: that is, the religious aspects support the patriotic acts, and vice versa. He does so in such a way that the audience does not feel the leap in logic he has performed with the words.

He then goes directly to the word justice and begins to speak about the seeming inequity by which this word was defined when it was first used in the Emancipation

³⁶ This is the *public* that Lloyd Bitzer speaks of when he states: “A public is a community of persons who share conceptions, principles, interests and values, and who are significantly interdependent . . . [and] [p]ublic knowledge is a kind of knowledge needful to public life and actually present somewhat to all who dwell in community” (68).

Proclamation.³⁷ We see the parallelism between Lincoln and Johnson when both plead for fair treatment for all Americans. By interposing Johnson (in lieu of Lincoln) into the critique given by the rhetoricians Michael C. Leff and Gerald P. Mohrmann as they wrote about Lincoln's Gettysburg Address we understand Johnson's stance: "[Lincoln] was not content, however, to assume a merely defensive posture; the entire pattern of his argumentation reveals a movement from reply to attack that gathers momentum as the discourse proceeds" (183). Just as Lincoln had made known to the world the importance of Gettysburg by a certain pattern of speaking, Johnson told the world of the importance Gettysburg stood for, especially in the modern time of 1963. Johnson delivered his own Gettysburg Address when he stated: "The law cannot save those who deny it but neither can the law serve any who do not use it. The history of injustice and inequality is a history of disuse of the law. Law has not failed—and is not failing. We as a nation have failed ourselves by not trusting the law and by not using the law to gain sooner the ends of justice which law alone serves" (Remarks: 14).

The definition of freedom as framed and defined by society in 1863 is no longer viable. The reason for the need of freedom to change in definition is that there is still no freedom within the word justice as it is used for the Negro in 1963. Johnson does this complex structuring when we look at the written layout of the speech. Johnson has clearly divided the paragraphs, which suggests he wanted to stop and wait for each paragraph to be digested by the audience: "One hundred years later, the Negro remains in bondage to the color of his skin" (Remarks: 8). Johnson asks the audience to please listen for what is being

³⁷ Which Lincoln also suggests when he gave the Gettysburg Address when he said "that the nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom" (Lincoln),

sought today in America: “The Negro today asks justice” (Remarks: 9). This plea is what Gettysburg reminds the audience about, and it is one that Johnson wants them to hear.

Johnson then talks about the *soul* of the American people. Once again, the disparity is apparent from the soul of the black to the soul of the white: Johnson suggests that justice depends on the “law” (Remarks: 14). He continues by noting the polarized ways in which the law has been carried out in the name of justice are not acceptable. He follows the word justice with the word patience, implying that the latter means something different for the two segments of society—one way for the whites and another for the blacks (Remarks: 16). There must be convergence—a nation with one soul which is just and patient.

Johnson promotes the same freedom (and justice) for all in one nation. The simplicity that Johnson uses to set up his argument becomes apparent when we look at the transcription of the text (included at the end of this chapter). Johnson has specific words he wants the audience to hear, and he promotes these by breaking the thoughts into simple words that have complex definitions.

Style

In this speech, Johnson’s words reflect a style of speaking that differs from the extremely highbrow rhetoric of Kennedy (Evans and Novak 2). However, it is indicative of the way in which he is beginning to transform his manner of speaking. That is, he is moving from the “hard-nosed Senator speaking on the floor of the Senate” (Russell OH LBJML) to a more refined public official who is taking his case to the people.

In this particular speech, Johnson is no longer demanding his audience to acquiesce to his demands in order to be accepted by a “fellow Senator.” Rather, he has to acquiesce to his audience in order to be heard by them. The resulting alteration in the style of presentation is

obvious. First, he presents a change in the overall length. For example, in the August 7, 1957, speech, he was said to have spoken for over thirty minutes. However, in this Memorial Day speech, he only talks for twelve and one-half minutes (Moyers OH LBJML).

Second, Johnson endeavors to bring about a union with his audience. He manifests an empathy, or connection, with both his immediate and his national audience through various ways in which he relates to his audience. Rather than being judgmental—and setting himself apart from his listeners—he embraces his audience in an atmosphere of inclusion: he does so with his continuous use of *we* and *Americans* who have things to do. In performing this act, he seems to suggest that the audience should follow his example and embrace all Americans.

Also by using certain words, Johnson strives to show unity. By beginning with a uniting pronoun of *we*, he immediately establishes that he, Johnson, is part of the whole: “We, the living” (Remarks: 2). He also suggests the beginning of the Constitution: “We, the People.” After all, Johnson learned from Roosevelt that inclusion (as well as exclusion) was a useful way to address an audience. For as the political speech interpreter, Ryan notes, “Roosevelt's frequent references to . . . the collective pronouns *we*, *our*, and *us* are proof of his desire to constitute his audience as a unified group. . . . [T]he identity of this group was based, in his version, as much on who was excluded as who was included” (113). Johnson continues to create this union with his audience: he creates “*us*.” By performing the act of inclusion, Johnson makes a new division in the *us against others*, which he addresses as he draws his forceful speech to a conclusion.

Third, Johnson uses repetition that he has realized is necessary for comprehension. To that end, for example, in his Gettysburg speech, he talks first about the “heroic deeds

[that] were performed” (Remarks: 1) in the past and moves to the “resolution in the deeds we must perform” (Remarks: 3) in the present. Through repetition of the words *deeds* and *patience* (Remarks: 10, 13, 16), justice (2, 6, 9, 14, 19), and *honor* (2, 3, 12), he offers keen insight into connecting the listening audience to the historical audience. He also suggests the implied future audience, which is not in attendance at the speech event, but who will be listening as we are today to his words.

The formidability of Johnson himself suggests an agreement with words he uses. The universal beliefs Johnson suggests in the words of “justice,” “freedom,” and “prayer” stem from ideas that Plato suggests in his forms. The basis of certain Truths serve as the foundation upon which we in the Western culture rely. Johnson used words to help the audience construct a form that the inner eye knew.³⁸ The form that Johnson promoted suggests the Platonic geometric form³⁹ of a triangle—of strength: the form (as Plato suggests) gives not only emotional understanding, but also logical comprehension of the background construction of a word.⁴⁰

Johnson creates his form by creating a triangle. The foundation line of his triangle begins with the word prayer and continues to the other corner of his triangle using a similar religious imagery inherent in the word vigil.

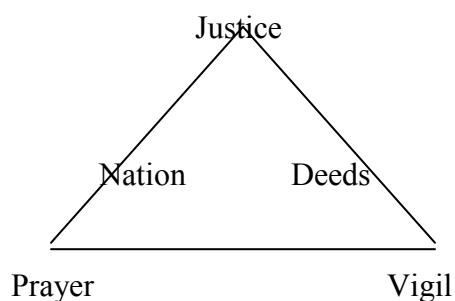
Prayer _____ Vigil

³⁸ Meno’s recollections of true emotions (specifically relating to “virtue”) which Plato writes about in the dialogue of the same name (Plato, *Meno* 883-85.)

³⁹ Tradition has it that this phrase “Let no one ignorant of geometry enter” was engraved at the door of Plato’s Academy, the school he had founded in Athens. This tradition reflects the innateness of the geometric form—specifically, the triangle, in this instance—and the resounding recollections humans could “remember” from former existence (Plato, *Meno*).

⁴⁰ The connection between the ideas of the one word used to form the complete idea (Hooker) resulting in a “truth” (or form) is explicated in reading Plato’s *Meno* and yet permeates most of Plato’s early dialogues.

The supports, or legs, come from the words Nation (suggesting patriotism) and *deeds*, and lead the hearer to the apex of the mental triangular image Johnson has created: e.g., Johnson focuses the listener's attention on hearing the word justice. In focusing the attention on the one word of justice, Johnson allows the listener to hear the ambiguity inherent in those who perceive the usage of justice. Johnson promotes the two-dimensionality of the word, and suggests that additions need to be made in order to complete the form of a three-dimensional—living—thing.

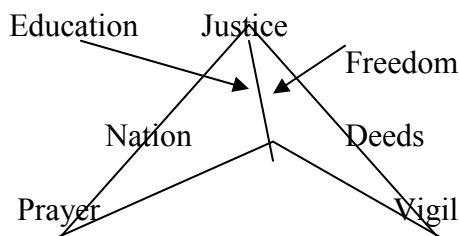


Johnson's speech hinges on the divergence of the definition of justice: the white definition of the word justice and the separate but unequal reality of the word the African American knows. The foundational meaning of justice relies upon not only the word justice but also the ontological meaning (of being) inherent within it. This underlying portion that upholds justice is the implied dimension that the addition of education offers.

By incorporating the strength that the word education suggests to the form, Johnson brings an idea out of the abstract two-dimensional aspect of the triangle and makes the idea into a reality—a three-dimensional, living actuality. Johnson gives the entire form substance. In this way, he promotes the idea that justice can be brought about through strengthening the undergirding idea of education. In short, the leg is education and connects justice to the additional corner of the base. Thus, the triangle is transformed into the strong, virtually

indestructible, pyramid that can withstand much more. Johnson takes the idea of justice and shows it can be a reality with education in the following way:

Johnson constructs his form using his words by which he leads the listener to complete the triangle – and then the implied (more stable) pyramid.



Word	paragraph
Prayer	2, 3
Vigil	4, 5, 6 (3 times)
Nation	12, 13, 14, 17
Deeds	1, 2, 3

The additional “leg” and base “cornerstone” needed to complete the pyramid Johnson constructs:

Freedom	2, 3, 5, 19
Education	19
Justice	2, 6, 9, 14, 19

Kennedy’s relationship to words and the way he uses them to establish a relationship with his audiences has obviously not gone unnoticed by his Vice President, Johnson.

Memory

Johnson makes direct reference to the history contained in public knowledge when he talks about the divergence in “white and Negro” values that are divisive in establishing a whole America (Remarks: 11). The way Johnson suggests “resolving” this challenge is by changing the way in which the law is interpreted. Basically, he questions the laws which were interpreted years ago and which the blacks are beginning to vociferously reject. He

questions the validity of keeping some interpretations of law that are outdated. He suggests they should, instead, be ameliorated to coincide with contemporary needs and applications of the evolving society that America holds dear.

This questioning of the law and corresponding evolution of the meaning behind certain words to which Johnson refers is a commonality that runs throughout the history of Western culture. Sophocles' play *Antigone*—written in 442 B.C.E.—reflects similar questioning of authority that the citizenry had even at that time relating to the term fallen warriors and those in power. Antigone, a citizen of Thebes, questions the law that Creon, as king, made and enforced. Creon has declared Polyneices, Antigone's brother, to be a traitor: Polyneices, although he has died on the battlefield fighting for his country, is thereby deemed unworthy of burial. Antigone is put before a tribunal to determine if her deep sense of values (as evidenced in her moral law) is stronger than Creon's king-made law.

The Gettysburg audience is reminded of the conflicting opinions between two sides: the moral duty to uphold the law and the law as dictated by the government that Lincoln suggests, and that Johnson continues. Antigone's inability to be legally allowed to bury her brother who "fell in battle" directly bears on the audience who has been drawn together at Gettysburg: "To Honor those who have fallen" (Lincoln).

Another more recent public memory for this audience lay in the trials held at Nuremberg, Germany. The judges at the trials for the Nazi criminals were French, British, and Americans; however, the laws from none of these countries were applicable to German citizens because of jurisdictional constraints. That is, the men and women who were on trial in Germany were not being tried for crimes committed in the jurisdictions of France, England, and America. Moreover, the laws of Germany had been altered by the Third Reich

to such an extent that the men and women to be tried at Nuremberg had not broken any German laws. There was a stalemate: the laws of the victors as well as the laws of the vanquished were not useable in a court of law. A solution had to be found. A third way was found using a new category—crimes against humanity. The tribunal could sit in judgment on the men and women who had committed these “crimes against humanity” (“Principles of the Nuremberg Tribunal”). Therefore, a third alternative was found and put in place. This is precisely what Johnson was advocating in his speech.

Johnson poses the question of finding a third position that is acceptable to both the whites and the African Americans in terms of joining the whole. Johnson continues his questioning of the absolute parameters that inhibit interpreting laws. He is suggesting the need for fluidity and malleability that must be part of interpreting laws so that they maintain viability from generation to generation (Remarks: 6). He is nudging the memory of the listeners to recall the Dred Scott case where

in 1846, Dred Scott and his wife Harriet filed suit for their freedom in the St. Louis Circuit Court. This suit began an eleven-year legal fight that ended in the U.S. Supreme Court, which issued a landmark decision declaring that Scott remain a slave. This decision contributed to rising tensions between the free and slave states just before the American Civil War. (“Dred Scott Case”)

In addition, Johnson continues to bring up the realities of the present when he reminds the crowd: “It is empty to plead that the solution to the dilemmas of the present rests on the hands of the clock” (Remarks: 11). Just “by asking, ‘Patience’” (Remarks: 10), Johnson points out that nothing is happening to change the status quo.

Throughout history, there has been the evolutionary process that underlies the legal interpretation of the way human being should live as well as the moral directives by which the fallen are treated. By calling forth the public knowledge that is innate within the American mind, Johnson taps into this sense of being free Americans and changes the tenor of what he begins as an epideictic oration (which celebrates or blames with no further result expected) and concludes as a forensic declaration calling forth actions which will perpetuate democratic resolutions to problems.

Johnson concludes with a very striking literary moment that suggests he remembers childhood phrases he had to memorize. The phrasing suggests a joining in Johnson of his past life with his current one as he delivers the final two paragraphs of the speech. Johnson mirrors the tempo and emotion established by Ralph Waldo Emerson in his poem “Voluntaries”:

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, Thou must,
The youth replies, I can. (Emerson 1)

Johnson’s remarks were:

The Negro says, "Now."
Others say, "Never."
The voice of responsible Americans . . . says, "Together."
There is no other way. (Remarks: 18)

Delivery

The seemingly down-to-earth statements that Johnson used—couched in words that reflect his Texas upbringing—solicited an emotional connection with audiences. However, on a deeper level, he connected with his audience on levels that I would like to suggest relied on basic beliefs he and his audience shared.

As he delivers his speech, given in short bursts of words, he sounds like a repeating rifle—shots straight to the hearts of the listeners.⁴¹ He fires his volleys announcing the need that “[t]he Negro” expresses by asking for “justice” (Remarks: 9)—through receiving education which, in turn, brings about an educated citizenry who is allowed to advance itself in a *just* world, because “Our nation found its soul in honor. . . . We must not lose that soul in dishonor” (here Johnson pauses for a heartbeat, and then follows with the word) “now” (Remarks; 12).

Conclusion

Johnson’s Memorial Day speech at Gettysburg has both “an explicit” (Hillbruner 9-75) as well as “an implicit” (Hillbruner 79-172) dimension. Johnson displays the explicit dimension when he asks for the contemplative acts: “a prayer with a resolution” (Remarks: 3). However, the implicit acts Johnson expects from the audience are to be “active in the deeds we must perform” (Remarks: 3). That is, he implores the audience to make what has been “wrong” now “right for Americans—all Americans.” He explicitly encourages the audience to reflect on their religious foundations and find ways in which to transfer these values into the political system.

We see how Johnson moves from the role of a senator to that of the Vice President of the United States and takes the way he speaks into another, more complex, level. Johnson begins to display his passion for the subject that he feels so aligned with—education—and reminds his audience of their duty to find a way to change the current status quo. He reinforces his stance on education as well as the need to find a middle ground.

⁴¹ The audio recording of the delivery of Johnson’s speech allows us to hear exactly how Johnson presents his words.

APPENDIX B⁴²

Remarks of Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson

Memorial Day, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

May 30, 1963

⁴² “Remarks” will be the reference to this speech throughout the dissertation.

Remarks of Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson

Memorial Day, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

May 30, 1963

1. On this hallowed ground, heroic deeds were performed and eloquent words were spoken a century ago.
2. We, the living, have not forgotten—and the world will never forget—the deeds or the words of Gettysburg. We honor them now as we join on this Memorial Day of 1963 in a prayer for permanent peace of the world and fulfillment of our hopes for universal freedom and justice.
3. We are called to honor our own words of reverent prayer with resolution in the deeds we must perform to preserve peace and the hope of freedom.
4. We keep a vigil of peace around the world.
5. Until the world knows no aggressors, until the arms of tyranny have been laid down, until freedom has risen up in every land, we shall maintain our vigil to make sure our sons who died on foreign fields shall not have died in vain.
6. As we maintain the vigil of peace, we must remember that justice is a vigil, too—a vigil we must keep in our own streets and schools and among the lives of all our people—so that those who died here on their native soil shall not have died in vain.
7. One hundred years ago, the slave was freed.
8. One hundred years later, the Negro remains in bondage to the color of his skin.
9. The Negro today asks justice.
10. We do not answer him—we do not answer those who lie beneath this soil—when we reply to the Negro by asking, "Patience."
11. It is empty to plead that the solution to the dilemmas of the present rests on the hands of the clock. The solution is in our hands. Unless we are willing to yield up our destiny of greatness among the civilizations of history, Americans—white and Negro together—must be about the business of resolving the challenge, which confronts us now.
12. Our nation found its soul in honor on these fields of Gettysburg one hundred years ago. We must not lose that soul in dishonor now on the fields of hate.
13. To ask for patience from the Negro is to ask him to give more of what he has already given enough. However, to fail to ask of him—and of all Americans—perseverance within

the processes of a free and responsible society would be to fail to ask what the national interest requires of all its citizens.

14. The law cannot save those who deny it but neither can the law serve any who do not use it. The history of injustice and inequality is a history of disuse of the law. Law has not failed—and is not failing. We as a nation have failed ourselves by not trusting the law and by not using the law to gain sooner the ends of justice which law alone serves.

15. If the white over-estimates what he has done for the Negro without the law, the Negro may under-estimate what he is doing and can do for himself with the law.

16. If it is empty to ask Negro or white for patience, it is not empty—it is merely honest—to ask perseverance. Men may build barricades—and others may hurl themselves against those barricades—but what would happen at the barricades would yield no answers. The answers will only be wrought by our perseverance together. It is deceit to promise more as it would be cowardice to demand less.

17. In this hour, it is not our respective races, which are at stake—it is our nation. Let those who care for their country come forward, North and South, white and Negro, to lead the way through this moment of challenge and decision.

18. The Negro says, "Now." Others say, "Never." The voice of responsible Americans—the voice of those who died here and the great man who spoke here—their voices say, "Together." There is no other way.

19. Until justice is blind to color, until education is unaware of race, until opportunity is unconcerned with the color of men's skins, emancipation will be a proclamation but not a fact. To the extent that the proclamation of emancipation is not fulfilled in fact, to that extent we shall have fallen short of assuring freedom to the free.

CHAPTER THREE

Lyndon Johnson: The Education President

With a sound that reverberates through space and time, history was rent apart. Within this tear, the United States lost a President, and another one quickly filled the void. John Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963, and Lyndon Johnson moved up to receive the formal sanctioning of power. With historical hindsight, we are aware of the way in which Johnson used his newly gained power to promote many ideas into law. The most pertinent is his implementation of various aspects relating to education—from pre-kindergarten to higher education.

Even in his first speech as President, Johnson suggests the route he will take to make sure America stays strong through implementation of various programs which he presents in his initial and formal address to the nation: “We must be prepared at one and the same time for both the confrontation of power and the limitation of power. We must be ready to defend the national interest and to negotiate the common interest” (Address: 9).

Even if it means fighting more wars to insure democracy, he states a conundrum when he says: “We will carry on the fight against poverty and misery, and disease and ignorance, in other lands and in our own” (Address: 10). Johnson indicates that he is going to begin to “fight the war” against illiteracy—at home and abroad, as well as physically continuing to fight in Vietnam. He does not specifically mention “education” however, we know from the importance he placed on it, he will continue his “war.”

A Quandary

Johnson moved from being the Vice President to the President of the United States; however, he knew he also had to move into the position of President in the mentality of the

populous. As Merle Miller notes, Johnson decided to give a speech because “[t]he people had to get to know him as *President*” (410). Additionally, the make-up of the speech had to show how the transition from Kennedy to Johnson would occur and what changes America could expect. The address also needed to pacify a nation bereft in its sorrow over the loss of Kennedy⁴³ (Thompson 80).

Some of the limitations that Johnson had to deal with are encapsulated by the observation Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Jamieson take note of: “Conventional wisdom and ordinary language treat inaugural addresses as a class . . . [that] critics have intuitively taken to belong to a distinct rhetorical type” (203). However, he had to include several considerations beyond just delivering an “Inaugural Address”: he had to deliver the liturgy for Kennedy, as well as address the Congress for the first time as President of the United States. Robert Dallek captures the tension that Johnson had to face before he delivered the speech:

Lyndon Johnson faced the toughest transition since Harry Truman succeeded the legendary Franklin Roosevelt. "I always felt sorry for Harry Truman and the way he got the Presidency," Johnson told an aide two days after Kennedy's death, "but at least his man wasn't murdered." (qtd. in Dallek, *Lone Star Rising* 54)

Bill Moyers, one of Johnson’s speechwriters, reflects on the importance Johnson knew rested on the first speech he was to deliver as President:

[T]here was a question of what the new President would say. It would, everybody knew, be the most important speech of his career. If it failed, all

⁴³ Kennedy was already being referred to as the “King of Camelot” (Chomsky 187).

the doubts, oh, more than doubts, all the suspicion of him would only be fortified and nothing he said in the future would ever erase that original mistake. (OH LBJML)

History may never relate how many people actually input suggestions into Johnson's speech. Some of these contributors were Herbert Hoover, Dwight Eisenhower, and Harry Truman (Miller, M. 397). In addition, Bill Moyers and Jack Valenti (Miller, M. 398), Theodore (Ted) Sorensen, Adlai Stevenson, John Kenneth Galbraith, and Abe Fortas (Thompson Appendix A) contributed to the documents. Even Lady Bird commented that: "No one knew how many people worked on that speech with Lyndon" (OH LBJML). Everyone within shouting, telephoning, cajoling, persuading, listening distance certainly seems to have contributed an idea or two (Miller, M. 410). The fact that so many contributed to the speech does not suggest that Johnson did not know what went into the speech. He knew exactly what he was saying and what the words implied. He was ready to begin his Presidency—heralding a new era for him, America, and the world.

Johnson's quandary could have been the example Lloyd Bitzer, an eminent rhetorician, used to talk about when he explained his "Rhetorical Situation" (1). Bitzer explained that a "rhetorical situation" (1) requires knowing "the nature of those contexts in which speakers or writers create rhetorical discourse" and yields results that are appropriate, understandable and applicable to the situation in question (Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation" 1-2). The amalgam of topics Johnson wove together to present a coherent, unifying speech is exactly the way Bitzer envisions rhetorical discourse as being an agent of resolution. Johnson was able to bind the topics together in such a way that he created a comprehensive

understanding of one set of events that naturally unfolded into the next set of ideas. The initial portion of Johnson's speech exemplifies this.

First, Johnson pays homage to Kennedy as he says: "The greatest leader of our time has been struck down by the foulest deed of our time" (Address: 3). He continues: "No words are sad enough to express our sense of loss" (Address: 4). However, he now counsels the listeners that even though Kennedy is gone, we must continue. Kennedy had told America "let us begin," and now Johnson wanted the nation to continue "the forward thrust of America that [Kennedy] began" (Address: 4).

Johnson stops eulogizing Kennedy. He begins the construction of his own resolutions; however, instead of blatantly presenting what he wants to do, he weaves in his own plans while listing the various goals—and dreams—Kennedy had for America (Address: 5). Johnson concludes with words which reflect direct action (not dreams) when he states: "And now the ideas and the ideals which he so nobly represented must and will be translated into effective action" (Address: 6). Johnson moves the audience from mourning the passage of a leader directly into the realization of the need to continue.

Johnson's Change in Status Altered the Way He Presented Himself

Ethos (which is neo-Aristotelian⁴⁴) was tremendously important in the transition period between Kennedy's administration and Johnson's—both for America, as well as for Johnson. Liz Carpenter recalls that Johnson had to constantly remember not to "overplay his hand" (Carpenter OH LBJML). Our sense of Johnson's ethos, as a formidable leader of a country, begins to take form with his new role as President. Along with ethos, the way in which he presents ideas is slightly altered: his movement into a seat of major power required

⁴⁴ The three artistic proofs as set forth by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* are ethos, pathos and logos (1356A).

a re-tooling of the way in which he promoted his ideas. The result is Johnson's use of several "types" of rhetoric in order to bring the primary, as well as the universal, audience into accord with what he was addressing: "Our American unity" (Address: 12).

Johnson used the epideictic aspect of praising when he initially began extolling Kennedy: "John Fitzgerald Kennedy lives on in the immortal words and works that he left behind. He lives on in the mind and memories of mankind. He lives on in the hearts of his countrymen" (Address: 3). In this emotional appeal, Johnson quickly moves his audience into the deliberative considerations inherent in a lawful nation as he states, "And now the ideas and the ideals which he so nobly represented must and will be translated into effective action" (Address: 6). Johnson also uses the third, or forensic form of rhetoric, in a more oblique way as he counsels the listeners that he knows America will continue being the just nation" it has come to be known in the world. He ends the thought by saying that "this Nation will keep its commitments" (Address: 8). As was typical in the way in which he spoke, he integrated all the styles of rhetoric in order to bring about the results he wanted. The successful way in which Johnson integrated all of these various aspects into one speech is a reflection of the power, ability, and acumen that Johnson would bring to America (Dallek, *Lone Star Rising* 54).

Promoting an Agenda

I will examine the way in which Johnson used three specific and important ways of speaking in his first official speech as President.⁴⁵ First, he changed how he spoke. That is,

⁴⁵ These strategies are also interwoven into an important change in the way in which he spoke: Epideictic rhetoric is used specifically for addresses, eulogies and similar places. The task of talking to a citizenry through use of the logical, or reasoned, form of argumentation that forensic oratory offers to a speaker is also a well-known area or class of speaking. However, Johnson's task of addressing a bereaved nation while simultaneously speaking to

he became more aware of himself as a speaker. His manner of speaking reflects his sense of changed style, which better “fit the presidency” (Valenti OH LBJML). He moved from speaking in a more aggressive tone that he had affected as a Congressman (and that he had employed even into his Vice Presidential speeches⁴⁶) to speaking as the poised President of the United States.⁴⁷

Second, Johnson changed the format of his delivery. He began to focus on being not only Presidential, but his knowledge of the increased size of his audience caused him to consider more in-depth ways to present ideas. Johnson changed the way he focused his audience on the topics about which he spoke. He began to employ The Johnson Treatment over an entire audience, not merely the one-on-one experiences in which he had employed it before. This change in presentation was sometimes equated with a “velvet glove” (Moyers OH LBJML) Johnson knew how to use.

Third, Johnson altered his style of speaking. That is, he adjusted the way in which he said things to fit the various audiences to which he now spoke. He became aware of the more universal results he wanted to bring about—not merely the statewide results, which would come from certain actions that he had heretofore employed. Johnson restructured words and phrases and made them more audience-sensitive.

the individual citizen for the first time as President of the United States offered some challenges that defy being placed in any kind of *class* of speaking. We know the result: out of this tragedy of the assassination of one man, came the phenomenon, which is well illustrated in the way in which Johnson delivered his first public speech to the Joint Houses of Congress on November 27, 1963.

⁴⁶ As similar to the one analyzed in Chapter 2.

⁴⁷ David Zarefsky, a noted rhetorical and presidential scholar, corroborated this assumption in a personal conversation with me on May 26, 2006. Zarefsky stated he had found a directive received by an aide in a memo sent by President Johnson saying as much in the archives he had searched at the LBJ Museum and Library (email).

Johnson's masterful use of the idea to capitalize on the already martyred President's status as being like a King (Clifford OH LBJML)—to help promote legislation into passage—is a technique as time-honored as that of the Greek leader Peisistratus, who implemented the laws that his mentor Solon had instantiated.⁴⁸ Johnson's delivery of a eulogizing speech that contained a political message⁴⁹ might have been inappropriate if he had not carefully sculpted his words.

Johnson's change in the way of getting things done brought results almost from the outset of his Presidency. Immediately following Kennedy's funeral, Johnson began to meet with various people who represented disparate groups in America. He wanted to start to get things "fixed" (Miller, M. 401). President Johnson's personal advisor, Charles Roberts, specifically notes how Johnson worked to change perceptions of the White House: "During the month of mourning for Kennedy, I think one of the wisest things he [Johnson] did . . . was that he used that period . . . to call in people and to build bridges to the business community that Kennedy had destroyed" (OH LBJML).

Johnson's meetings also included leaders involved in the Civil Rights Movement. A prominent leader of this movement (Carlisle), Roy Wilkins remembers that

After the assassination, a member of his [Johnson's] staff called and said Mr. Johnson would like to hold a series of conferences on the civil rights situation beginning Friday morning, four days after [Kennedy's] funeral. (OH LBJML)

⁴⁸ Solon wrote the laws tailored to both ordinary people and the aristocracy. After having his constitution accepted, Solon exacted the promise of the city that his constitution would not change unless he were to change it himself, and then he left Athens for over ten years. Peisistratus was elected and retained much of the constitution, presiding over what Aristotle describes as a constitutional government (Aristotle, *Athenian Constitution* 216).

⁴⁹ Aristotle defines the political oration as an exhortation speech which deals with future ramifications and the expediency and in expediency that needs to occur (1358b).

Everyone knew that by having a meeting on civil rights, Johnson was going to focus on the main underlying and divisive issue of education (Shriver video). Additionally, instead of speaking pejoratively and possibly further dividing one group from another, Johnson chose to work within the rhetorical situation the Presidency afforded him. He promoted cohesiveness within the various factions, just as he had previously done in the Senate and at Gettysburg.

Johnson gave an indication of the way he would speak as President when he spoke at Andrews Air Force Base after having just been sworn in as President of the United States. When we watch video footage, he stands under the floodlights, trying to make his voice heard over the roar of the engines of the jet while speaking with tensely controlled emotion: “This is a sad time for all people. We have suffered a loss that cannot be weighed . . . I ask for your help and God’s” (OH LBJML). In these few words, he effectively included everyone listening when he said all. He continued by including the all in the *we* who have suffered. He then invoked God—to help him and America—and in this way suggests a kind of civil theocracy that will help guide the Presidency and America. Johnson’s first words as President began a Presidency that he hoped would indicate “inclusion” for all (Moyers OH LBJML).

Speaker

Johnson as Lawmaker⁵⁰

Between the months when Johnson delivered his Gettysburg Remarks on May 19, 1963, until he became President on November 22, 1963, the question of whether Johnson would remain on the Kennedy ticket for the upcoming 1964 Presidential election was becoming an issue of major importance. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak write that

⁵⁰ Liz Carpenter made the observation that Kennedy “inspired; however Lyndon delivered” (OH LBJML).

Johnson had begun to question his status as early as his first year as Vice President. A close friend of Johnson's at the White House recounts Johnson's unease:

Johnson was gloomy and morose about his future. In truth, his friends felt he was concerned more about being dumped from the ticket in 1964 than in dropping off it voluntarily. He walked into the office of a Texas Congressman in early October, plunked himself down in a chair and complained that he had lost the President's confidence. "Why does the White House have it in for me?" he asked. (Evans and Novak 332)

In just two short years, however, Johnson became President and was celebrated in song by the likes of Bob Dylan who gutturally poked fun at the new leader, and named a song after the refrain "Even the President of the United States sometimes must have to stand naked" (qtd. in Russell 3).⁵¹ How could such a *country boy* become so celebrated—as a President? The juxtaposition of the polished presence of John F. Kennedy and the “brash, bullying steamrolling image” (Leibovich 36) of Johnson seemed almost incomprehensible.

As a noted political scholar stated, “[T]he new President was a serious politician with an impressive legislative track record [and] his political and lawmaking skills needed no validation” (Leibovich 36). One of the major problems Johnson had to deal with after Kennedy was assassinated was the pall that tends to hang over the ascension of any Vice President to the seat of President: “Taking office, [Millard Fillmore, Andrew Johnson,

⁵¹Dylan was referencing Lyndon Baines Johnson's utterances in a phone call to Joe Haggard who was a friend and president of a clothing company. Johnson was recorded as having told Haggard that "if you don't want me running around the White House naked, you better get me some clothes." The image may not be one anyone wishes to ponder, but it does give proof of Johnson's plainspoken earthiness and the expansiveness of emotions which defined the essence of the man (Russell).

Chester A. Arthur, Theodore Roosevelt, Calvin Coolidge, Harry S. Truman] each had to bear the latent public suspicion . . . that he had had something to do with the predecessor's demise" (Barber 247). "Lyndon B. Johnson joined this list. Since the tragedy had occurred in Johnson's own state of Texas" (VanDeMark 8), he knew that he needed to resolve this public quandary if he were to gain the confidence of the people and be an effective President. The ghost of Dallas must not be shrugged off (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 51). Johnson addressed this enigma in the minds of the American people as he stood in front of them and spoke. He wanted to assuage any anger or hostility that might exist and used the following set of words in his November 27th speech: "Let us turn away from the fanatics of the far left and the far right, from the apostles of bitterness and bigotry, from those defiant of law, and those who pour venom into our Nation's bloodstream" (Address: 26), and in this form of counseling them, Johnson begins to promote the overall idea of a democratic nation. He needed to make sure that Kennedy's assassination had no link to Johnson; consequently, right after the speech, he began to put together what would become the Warren Commission.

This Commission was given the task of finding out who actually had killed President Kennedy. As with anything to which Johnson was attached, the need for researching and finding a viable answer was paramount. Even at a time when Johnson could have sloughed off finding something out, he still used what he had been taught—research yields answers (Steinberg 14).

Who Did It?

Johnson suggested in his speech how he might act: "An assassin's bullet has thrust upon me the awesome burden of the Presidency" (Address: 14), which suggests the weight Johnson feels pressing down on his presidency. The formation of the Commission

investigating Kennedy's assassination showed exactly how Johnson would act as President. Immediacy coupled with force was Johnson's initial response to any situation. Therefore,

in his earliest hours as President, Johnson, assisted by Abe Fortas and other counselors, conceived the plan for a blue-ribbon commission composed of the nation's most eminent citizens to make a painstaking investigation of the tragic events of November 22 and exorcise the demons of conspiracy.

Moreover, [this group of men] had to be a commission of consensus, skillfully drawn from contrasting segments of the population. (Evans and Novak 337)

Johnson's will to determine what needed to be done, as well as how results needed to be accomplished, is well documented by the way in which he brings together the members who will make up this Commission. It also shows Johnson's employment of The Johnson Treatment. In short, Johnson begins showing how he would use this Treatment as President.

Jim Wright reflects on Johnson's Treatment in his *Balance of Power* as he recalls how Johnson recruited Chief Justice Earl Warren to head the Commission: "Johnson played unabashedly to Warren's sense of duty as he said, 'The President of the United States is asking you to do this for the good of our country'" (qtd. in Wright 110). Warren agreed.

The next member that Johnson chose was Senator Richard Russell. Russell, as Johnson knew from his Senate days (Russell OH LBJML), personified the Southern Democrats—their conservative attitude and their vote in the Senate. Getting the second, and equally important member, to join the Warren Commission (Miller, M. 421) shows Johnson's ability to use of The Johnson Treatment—even over the phone:

In a conversation lasting most of an hour, Johnson unleashed The Treatment, dormant now for three years. Emotionally, he recalled their long, intimate

association. He appealed to Russell as his friend, and he appealed as the President of the United States. "If you say 'no,'" Johnson said, "I'll have you drafted." (Evans and Novak 338)

Russell accepted, and soon, the rest of the commission members joined these two leaders.

By combining the polar opposites Warren and Russell, Johnson privately related he believed he had a “balanced commission” (Humphrey OH LBJML). To the national audience, Johnson evidenced what he thought showed his awareness of the need to have both the Northern Liberals and the Southern Democrats join ranks in order to find out who and why someone had “murdered President Kennedy” (Russell OH LBJML). This strategy of Johnson’s did not go unnoticed: the fact that two seeming enemies could work together to resolve a heinous crime was analogous to the way in which Johnson signaled other Americans that they needed to work together.

No matter what the reasons truly had been, however, for the creation or the results derived from it, the fact remains that The Johnson Treatment helped Johnson bring about the results he wanted: the creation of the Warren Commission.

Johnson as Speech Writer

Along with the question relating to Johnson’s ability to “get things done” (Roberts OH LBJML) was the issue of the President’s ability to formulate speeches. When we relate the logos of a speaker to his ethos, the question as to whether logos drives ethos⁵² or vice versa becomes quite important—especially relating to leaders and their ability to manipulate words (or be manipulated by them). This has question been a deep concern even since Plato gave voice to it by writing:

⁵² This is suggested when Aristotle points out in the *Nichomachean Ethics* that the appetitive aspect of the soul is “submissive and obedient” to logos (qtd. in Roberts and Jones).

There holds the same relation in the power of speech (logos) upon the soul's disposition, as in the disposition of drugs (*pharmakoi*) upon the body's condition. For just as with drugs, different ones draw different juices from the body, and some put an end to sickness and some to life, likewise with speeches some cause distress, and some delight, and some put the listeners into a state of courage, and some with evil persuasions drug and bewitch the soul. (qtd. in Walker 77)

If the words a person speaks are those that he knows, then there is no problem. However, if someone as important as the president has someone else write his words, and then he just says them, the person speaking the words does not have the power. The person who writes the words has the power. For Johnson, however, the reasoning the words reflected was everything. So, as Bill Moyers relates, Johnson's words reflected a rationality that was of great concern to Johnson and being able to control through words was everything (Moyers OH LBJML).

Historical Control

Johnson would choose his words to persuade people to do what he wanted, just as he used actions to get what he wanted. Examples of the “control” that he exerts come from two spheres of influence with which he impacted others: the public and the private.

The first area—the public Johnson—comes from the time that Johnson began his political career on the campus of his college Southwest Texas State: “[O]ne biographer elaborates on the theme [of control] and described him [Johnson] as having won [political] control at San Marcos” simply by his pushy presence (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 85). As Johnson's jobs grew in political importance so, too, did his ability to exert his power. For

example, he exhibited a certain increase in strength and power when his role as Senator also included the title of “floor manager” (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 300). His ability to promote the passage of bills hinged on his effectively using and manipulation of his public persona and the accompanying control he represented. One of Johnson’s fellow senators had this to say about the skill by which Johnson controlled his office:

[Johnson] seemed to have a strange ability to learn the enormously complex details of hundreds of bills [Johnson] told [an old friend] that when he had to know the contents of a bill or a report, he could scan [the bill] and fix it in his mind so well that if you gave him a sentence from it, he could paraphrase the whole page and everything that followed. (qtd. in Steinberg 500)

The second area relates to Johnson’s control over himself: his “self-control” as his mother Rebekah called it (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 26). He extended this others and demanded from every event and person in his life that they acquiesce to his total control. Roberts reflects on Johnson’s need to control in the following remembrances he has of Johnson: “The evidence that President Johnson’s advisers meet his special requirements—as loyal, rugged, industrious, faceless, friendly and dedicated workers—was overwhelming” (Roberts 217). According to Roberts, Johnson would even quote the scripture in order to prove to others that they needed to do what he wanted. Johnson would say: “All have learned the LBJ Way, the way of Isaiah” (Roberts 217-18) where Johnson said: Come let us reason together.” However, as Roberts was quick to point out, Johnson did not quote the rest of the passage, which was, as Roberts notes, “The words after “Come now and let us reason

together” are: “If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land, but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword, for the Lord hath spoken” (217).

On numerous occasions, Johnson told his speechwriters what he wanted. He then reviewed (sometimes scrupulously and possibly over-zealously) the product they gave him (Evans and Novak 466-68, 518; President’s Daily Diary, November 26, 1963; November 27, 1963). Additionally, when we look at the “speaking copy” of speeches Johnson used, he literally had a hand in what was to be said on every one (OH LBJML: Speeches). By this, I mean to say that Johnson’s scribbling is visible on each copy analyzed in the LBJ Archives, which indicates his examining and editorializing each speech before it was delivered). We can see from these brief commentaries that Johnson took great pride in being responsible for the words he said: they were a part of him that he was willing to share with his listeners.

These aspects of Johnson’s personality join to form both the public and the private Johnson: a person who would have never allowed something as important as his words to be out of his control. Therefore, the answer to the question regarding Johnson’s having others write the rough drafts of his speeches (Thompson, *passim*) is “yes.” However, the resounding “No” answers the question relating to Johnson’s having others are responsible for what he actually said in his delivery of the speeches.

Johnson had been a state Congressman, a Senator, and a Vice President for the past thirty-two years of his life. Now, he was President of the United States and, unlike even a lot of elected Presidents who have never held major positions of political power, Johnson knew his political environment. He had amassed a great deal of political power, which he brought to the Presidency.

Occasion

Johnson delivers this speech Thanksgiving Eve, 1963. The suggestion of being able to “work together” as a nation in a time of crisis that can be mollified by setting forth a kind of celebration (Thanksgiving) is not lost on anyone. Johnson used the occasion of his taking over the presidency to set forth what he wanted to implement.

Johnson used the initial premise and reason of the speech to set out the foundation for his agenda. The subtlety he used to mentally move the audience from focusing on the past—where a dead President lay—to the present situation—where he stood—was well crafted. As Robert Oliver, a former professor of speech at Pennsylvania State University, observes: “Many a time history is directed by right words, rightly spoken, at right times . . . [because] discourse which defines issues and circumstances and points a way toward available solutions to problems is one of the significant shaping forces of history” (1).

An occasion is often synonymous with the speech act that comes out of the event—or occasion. Many times the speech that comes about relates to the occasion, itself. An oration that delivers praise (or blame) on a particular occasion is, as noted earlier, called epideictic and usually deals with accomplishments or failures. However, the surrounding context to a speech event affects the speech—whether the speech is praising someone or something or otherwise. The transformation of the epideictic speech into a “political speech” is unavoidable, as Aristotle points out:

[W]e must ascertain what are the kinds of things, good or bad, about which the political orator offers counsel. For he does not deal with all things, but only with such as may or may not take place. Concerning things which exist or will exist inevitably, or which cannot possibly exist or take place, no

counsel can be given. Nor, again, can counsel be given about the whole class of things Clearly, counsel can only be given on matters about which people deliberate; matters, namely, that ultimately depend on ourselves, as well as matters we have in our power to get going. (1359b)

Aristotle suggests that what once began as a speech praising or blaming someone can be—and usually is—transformed into a deliberative speech if the person being praised or blamed is under scrutiny by the Congress.⁵³ When Johnson began, he delivered a speech praising the fallen President; therefore, it was an epideictic oration. However, upon closer examination, it is clear that he set forth many of the programs he was going to implement (with the legislature’s help) over the next few years.

Audience

Charles Roberts, a reporter for *Newsweek* magazine, describes the sense of chaos that surrounded the event of Kennedy’s assassination when he said, “We all just wanted to . . . figure out what to do next . . . because . . . there was no precedent . . . there was simply no precedent over what to do!” (OH LBJML). Roberts’ words suggest the quandary that Johnson found the country in as he figured out what to say, and how to say it. Because of the inability to relate to reality that sometimes leads to a sense of shock for a person (Jobe and Muslin 3), Johnson knew he needed to speak to the Nation—and the world—publicly and immediately. The choice of the forum in which he was to speak, the audience to whom he was initially addressing remarks, and the points he decided to focus on were of supreme importance in Johnson’s first speech as President of the United States.

⁵³ For example the current events (April-May, 2007) involving the Attorney General of the United States’ and his firing of the attorneys involves many partisan-related arguments (personal note).

The Address Johnson delivers to the Joint Session of Congress on November 27, 1963, exemplifies his compassion, his concomitant determination, and his underlying commitment to achieve the goals he deems to be necessary. Johnson knew he needed to take immediate command of the situation in order to be able to in order to form the subsequent events as he wanted them—not to be manipulated by the events. In short, he used the immediate situation to “illustrate a highly effective response to the complex demands of . . . an occasion” (Campbell and Jamieson 37).

Johnson’s choice to address a known forum—the Congressional arena—seemed logical: he returned to his friends in time of need (Valenti OH LBJML). He was familiar with the makeup of his audience. He tapped into this sense of collegiality with the Senators when he states, “For 32 years Capitol Hill has been my home” (Address: 13). He plays up to the members’ vanity as he continues saying, “I have shared many moments of pride with you, pride in the ability of the Congress of the United States to act, to meet any crisis, to distill from our differences strong programs of national action” (Address: 13). Johnson reminds the Congress that he “hasn’t forgotten them, if they haven’t forgotten him” (Russell OH LBJML). He promotes this sense of reciprocity and relies on the current association that the learned men of Congress possess. That is, the recently established “game theory” outcome had been deduced and the results were that reciprocity was the “winner” (Von Neumann and Morgenstern 1-3). Johnson made the subliminal connection for his immediate audience to recognize. By stating this, he also served to remind the members of Congress that his fellow Senators had elected him majority leader. The issues that were of uppermost importance for Johnson were those he had been working on for most of his political life: “Civil Rights, Voting Rights, Medicare, Medicaid, and [last but certainly not least was]

Federal aid to education” (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 4-5). Aristotle offers an additional idea particularly suited to what Johnson delivered in his speech: “[A]ll men are persuaded by considerations of their interest, and their interest lies in the maintenance of the established order” (1366a).

However, there was another reason, Johnson needed to show that the place where he had served as a member for years still held him in high esteem. Johnson wanted the Congress to credentialize him to the nation; that is, that since the Congress trusted him, so, too could the nation. Therefore, a reason for Johnson’s choice of addressing his former colleagues in the Senate and House was to show the national audience that he came from a place that approved of him. Johnson, reciprocally, showed his sense of respect for the audience members.

He did not make an impersonal television appearance that would seem to put the audience at arm’s distance; rather, Johnson chose to go to the people. He went to the Representatives of the People. The people wanted this speech, write several of Johnson’s speechwriters, and the people wanted the eulogy delivered to them in person by their new President—not in a recorded “message” given to Congress (Roberts 37). Accordingly, Johnson heard the people and responded.

Johnson was able to make several subliminal and important connections for his audience. For the immediate audience, the Congress, he showed his respect. He also displayed to the Congress that he would work with them—not separate the executive branch from the legislative, as Kennedy had done.

For the national audience—the universal audience—Johnson showed that he was not alone as president. He worked with the people’s representatives, as a good “civil servant” in

a representative government should do. In short, Johnson showed the people that they were part of the Johnson Administration. The people were not to be left out of the running of the country.

Johnson brought about the sense of closure he knew the American people—and the world—needed. We can see the movement that Johnson fomented and promoted as he propelled Congress to pass the greatest body of legislation America has ever witnessed, to date (Hardeman email).

Speech

Invention

Johnson establishes the lines of appeal for Kennedy's death. He then quickly moves the audience into realizing the topic that he wants the audience to accept—education. Johnson uses every persuasive appeal in order to promote America's acceptance of him as its new President. He begins his initial Presidential speech with the use of pathos: "All I have I would have given gladly not to be standing here today" (Address: 2). He continues using the appeal of reason to America when he notes that "Today John Fitzgerald Kennedy lives on in the immortal words and works . . . in the mind and memories of mankind . . . [and] in the hearts of his countrymen" Address: 3). He uses both the pathos and the logos to elicit establishment of the ethos he needs as President of America.

Johnson links education to the future and the need to prepare for a "strong, forward-looking action," which he reiterates twice in one paragraph. This repetition shows the listener how important the set of words actually is: that is, the words suggest dealing with future events, as predicated on past actions. Johnson wants the listeners to realize how current actions have impact on future events.

In short, this is no time for delay. It is a time for action—strong, forward-looking action on the pending education bills to help bring the light of learning to every home and hamlet in America—strong, forward-looking action on youth employment opportunities; strong, forward-looking action on the pending foreign aid bill . . . and strong, prompt, and forward-looking action on the remaining appropriation bills. (Address: 22)

Michael Leff, a noted rhetorical scholar, builds on Aristotle’s statement relating to rhetoric’s role by adding that when one directs the objective of the topical invention, the topic is expanded, and “the topics emerged not only as more useful but as more directly connected to the distinctive characteristics of rhetoric” (203). In short, Leff shows that with a “slight direction of objective” (e.g., focus), creation occurs. Rhetoric becomes the “action” and “performance” (Leff 203); moreover, neo-Aristotelian rhetorical criticism has a similar expanding role in the overall understanding of an event. Carolyn Miller backs up Leff’s argument when she writes:

[A] brief glimpse at the philosophical context [of the way in which “rhetoric” as treated by Plato and Aristotle] suggests how differently Plato and Aristotle must have thought about rhetoric and how each could have conceived invention. In the Platonic world of Being, invention can only be discovery, but in the Aristotelian world of Becoming, it can also be creation. Novelty and innovation are possible. (Miller, C. 137)

Johnson applies this creative use of inventing the arguments relating to the topic of his Address by beginning with a eulogy and ending with a call to a Nation to continue to fulfill its forward-looking dreams.

Now that Johnson decided where to give his first speech as President, he had to figure out what to say in it. John Kenneth Galbraith, Kennedy's ambassador to India, offers a good summative demonstration of Johnson's concerns about including all the topics he needed to cover in his speech. Galbraith recalls that

the day after the assassination . . . LBJ grabbed me by the arm and we went over to his office . . . he wanted to talk about his speech to the Congress . . . First, he said, "Look, Ken, put your mind on it. What do you think I have to worry about the most?" (OH LBJML)

Abe Fortas, who was a lawyer and close friend of Johnson's, recalls that immediately after the assassination, a group of individuals met with Johnson to decide what needed to be talked about in his initial speech to Congress. Fortas shows how Johnson applied Leff's "directing the objective of the topical invention" (Leff 203) when Fortas recalls this portion of that conversation:

One of the wise, fine practical people around the table said, "Mr. President, you ought not to urge Congress to pass this [Civil Rights Bill]. You oughtn't to make this one of the imperatives of your program because the Presidency has only a certain amount of coinage to expend, and you oughtn't to expend it on this. . . ."

There was a moment of silence as I recall, and Johnson looked at this fellow—"Well, what the hell's the Presidency for?" he said. (OH LBJML)

Johnson's trait of meeting obstacles head-on demonstrates what Michael Waldeman, President Clinton's Chief White House speechwriter, noted as being a critical aspect of being a forceful speaker and President:

When you're President, you know people are going to listen to you. If you can summon up powerful policies, do that in such a way that calls on the best in American History, and link that with challenges of today, you can make an impression.

This serves as an eloquent and powerful force, not so much from words themselves but from the policies that are behind them. (Waldeman)

Johnson had policies he wanted to promote. After meeting and talking to anyone who would "sit still to talk about it" (Moyers OH LBJML), he gave his accumulated ideas to his speechwriters. For example, since he had met with those in the Southern Christian Coalition in the first day of his Presidency, he made it clear that he wanted to work to "bridge the gap that Kennedy had attempted to turn his back on" (Moyers OH LBJML: Miller, M. 404).

In his first speech as President, Johnson uses the word dream nine times in one paragraph. The allusion to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech given only three months earlier—August 28, 1963—also suggests inclusion into his Presidency by those who have heretofore been marginalized (Address: 5).⁵⁴ The fact that Johnson was obviously reaching out to this group involved in the Civil Rights Movement as well as others who were sympathetic to King's cause is obvious by his (over)use of the word dream in his first speech as President. However, as Johnson knows, an integral building block for establishing civil rights comes from an educated citizenry. It is in his best interests to promote King's "Dream" in order to promote his own.

⁵⁴ Over 250,000 people were at the Lincoln Memorial and on the Washington Mall when King gave his "I Have a Dream Speech" (King "Home Page"). The fact that Johnson was obviously reaching out to this group involved in the Civil Rights Movement is obvious by his stressing of the words he uses in his first speech as President.

Arrangement

Some have observed that writing a Presidential speech must include certain aspects to consider, such as deferring to the place in which the speech is presented and dealing with a subject matter the primary audience is interested to hear (Moyers OH LBJML). However, the way in which Johnson laid out the speech displays a strategy, itself. After the initial requisite recognitions of the Congressional audience—e.g., the Speaker of the House and its members and the President of the Senate and the Senators—Johnson immediately shows that he is aware of who is listening. He states “[M]y fellow Americans” (Address: 1).

Johnson has one short burst of words where he introduces himself into the words he is uttering by saying “I.” However, he does not use this pronoun again until paragraph 14, which is halfway through his speech. (Address: 14). By keeping references of himself out of the speech, Johnson keeps the listeners’ focus on what is being said. Moreover, if they are going to judge anything, it will be how they are being reflected in the speech. For example, Johnson says, “The greatest leader of our time has been struck down by the foulest deed of our time. Today John Fitzgerald Kennedy lives on in the immortal words and works that he left behind. He lives on in the mind and memories of mankind. He lives on in the hearts of his countrymen” (Address: 3). In this opening paragraph, Johnson implicitly invokes a contractual arrangement between Kennedy’s immortality and the American citizenry. The immortality Johnson talks about is the immortality of the Presidency that the person, Kennedy, inhabited. As long as the contract is adhered to, Kennedy—who has transcended mortality and is now invested in the body of the Presidency—will not die. This contract means that Kennedy will be remembered when his *words and works* are brought from

abstraction into reality. That is, the implicit duty that Americans have to Kennedy is to bring into being what Kennedy wanted for America.

Johnson then uses this same arrangement throughout his Address in order to remind the listeners of that contract. This contractual arrangement suggests a duty and responsibility the listeners can repay by implementing what Kennedy had wanted. Johnson seems to use a truncated form of his familiar method—The Johnson Treatment—in his first Address. Throughout the Address, Johnson invokes the memory of Kennedy and then follows with what needs to be done in order to pay homage to Kennedy.

Additionally, as noted earlier, as Johnson creates momentum, he gains more and more applause. One way that he assures applause is to mention Kennedy's name and then pause. As Johnson introduces what he believes should be included on the upcoming programs for Congress to pass, he first mentions Kennedy's name, then lists what he believes needs to be passed and then pauses. For example:

First, no memorial oration or eulogy could more eloquently honor President Kennedy's memory than the earliest possible passage of the civil rights bill for which he fought so long. We have talked long enough in this country about equal rights. We have talked for one hundred years or more. It is time now to write the next chapter, and to write it in the books of law.

(Address: 19)

I urge you again, as I did in 1957 and again in 1960, to enact a civil rights law so that we can move forward to eliminate from this Nation every trace of discrimination and oppression that is based upon race or color. There

could be no greater source of strength to this Nation both at home and abroad.(Address: 20).

The way in which Johnson strategically placed various announcements regarding what should be implemented left no doubt in the Congressmen's minds that they needed to start passing these bills right away—for Kennedy, yes. However, Johnson also had to please the voting public; that is, Johnson's newly expanded audience.

Style

The choice, and selection of various words and the way he phrased them that Johnson used to present his arguments that Thanksgiving Eve speech to Congress in 1963, reflects a style that was all his own: even with all the suggestions Johnson had received regarding how to write it.⁵⁵ A political theorist, Benjamin Barber, points out that “The most visible part of the pattern [of character, worldview, and style] is style. Style is the President's habitual way of performing his three political roles: rhetorical, personal, and historical . . . Style is how the President goes about doing what the office requires him to do” (7).

Johnson used the formal or “high” style of language in order to bring the individual into the whole of the nation in two ways, and both allowed for a weaving together of events into a mental tapestry forming the community consciousness or social construct of the American society. He made it possible for the listener to become involved in the public events of government. First, he skillfully used the method of persuasion that Aristotle termed pathos, which is the “power of stirring the emotions of [the audience]” (1356a). Johnson

⁵⁵Everyone was willing to help Johnson. Herbert Hoover came to visit with Johnson the next day. Dwight Eisenhower also drove to Washington from his farm at Gettysburg the morning after Kennedy's death. Lady Bird said that “Eisenhower jotted down on a yellow table notes what he, Ike, would do if he were in Lyndon's place, including calling a joint session of Congress and thoughts on what he might say to them” (OH LBJML).

elicited Kennedy's memory by saying the name Kennedy and then immediately would append certain issues—often contentious and heavily debated in the Congress. Johnson used the pathos in the name “Kennedy” to have various programs get passed into Law. For example, he said: “First, no memorial oration or eulogy could more eloquently honor President Kennedy's memory than the earliest possible passage of the civil rights bill for which he fought so long” (Address: 19).

Johnson was making the connection between Kennedy and the duty of all good Americans to promote what Kennedy had wanted done—to have all Americans receive their civil rights. Underneath this plea of pathos lay Johnson's implicit agenda of the promotion of education. That is, education helped people understand what needed to be done. However, in order to receive this education, their civil rights needed to include getting education. Johnson realized the logical progression that needed to occur: first came the allowance of civil rights. Within these civil rights came the implicit need for providing and receiving quality education. The result was an understanding that came for each America's citizenry. Johnson employed complex symmetry to arrive at this logical realization.

In addition, Johnson made the synecdoche that Kennedy represented the Nation: the Nation, then, was synonymous with courage. In order to have courage, one must have something to be courageous about, and that suggests the need to have *war*. Johnson quickly followed this statement with the idea of the Nation's need to maintain the status quo regarding the military deployed around the world. Or in Johnson's words, “Under John Kennedy's leadership, this Nation has demonstrated that it has the courage to seek peace, and it has the fortitude to risk war” (Address: 7). Johnson continues by stating that, “This Nation will keep its commitments from South Viet-Nam to West Berlin” (Address: 8). The audience

let Johnson know that his words were acceptable by giving him his first burst of sustained applause.⁵⁶ The reaction told Johnson the audience had made the mental connection he had hoped for.

Johnson's setting forth specific goals and using Kennedy's name right before he stated the issue reminded the audience of Kennedy's assassination, and started the mental nods of acceptance for the subsequent issue Johnson brought forth. This strategy was a most effective way for Johnson to garner a positive reaction from the audience in order to achieve subsequent acceptance for the whole remark and help cement the need for legislation from a Congress that was elected by the people!

Johnson signified an association for the audience—acceptance of one idea that followed in the wake of another. This if-then association was constructed in a similar fashion to the first strategy of instantiating an additional idea into overall societal construct. However, in this method, Johnson presented a kind of logical equation. Used in logic, the equation is as follows: If X then Y → therefore Z. Johnson used this in the following words: “An assassin's bullet has thrust upon me the awesome burden of the Presidency. I am here today to say I need your help; I cannot bear this burden alone. I need the help of all Americans, and all America” (Address: 14). This incredibly dense and implicit-laden paragraph listed above becomes the following when one applies the if → then, therefore equation to it:

⁵⁶ This can be heard on the compact disc recording (LBJ Library and Museum) and can be seen in the video representation of Johnson's speech (LBJLM).

IF you believe in doing your duty of following the President (implying the remembrance that first Kennedy was President, and now Johnson is the President),

THEN you will also follow me (Johnson), because I am your President.

What followed was the implicit suggestion: you followed Kennedy, you follow me, and in that way we present coalesced strength (not divisive disunity).

This method of association was a direct appeal from Johnson. He suggested agreement with what he said. Thus, he set forth the initial “yes” in the “if” statement. This initial agreement began the audience’s mental nodding in agreement with subsequent words indicating acceptance of what Johnson said. Johnson followed with another suggestion that promoted further assent from the audience. The summative result—or the “because” portion—came from the implicit role each of the listeners had in helping this one person represent them all.

Johnson strategically couched ideas in such a way as to put forth the fact that Kennedy had initiated an idea and it was up to this audience to help bring it to fruition. A more concrete example comes after Johnson had begun to receive applause for extended portions of his speech. After having received fifteen rounds of applause, Johnson brought forth a specific set of legislation he wanted to promote (Address: 20). Again, Johnson used civil rights and its underlying idea of the need for education to imply that by completing a task that Kennedy set forth, the audience could truly pay homage to Kennedy. The constancy with which Johnson evoked Kennedy’s image and then followed with a need to bring into reality a certain set of laws was significantly numerous. (Johnson did this seven times—in

paragraphs 3,7,16, 19, 21, 26, 27) and numerous times through embedded suggestions. Each individual can become a part of a greater whole.

Johnson makes the synecdoche, which connects him to the Nation, and equates him to the Nation and Government when he states: “This Nation has experienced a profound shock, and in this critical moment, it is our duty, yours and mine, as the Government of the United States, to do away with uncertainty, doubt, and delay, and to show that we are capable of decisive action” (Address: 14). By making himself the I/We that represents the audience, he quickly becomes part of the Nation remitting the implicit the question Would the Nation not help itself? This rhetorical ploy is imbedded within an intensely emotional part of a paragraph that Johnson has structured to evoke patriotism, loyalty, and courage—all the traits he is suggesting the listening audience has. He continues by stating it is our Government, through this Nation that has a duty. By manipulating the words this way, Johnson shows that even though he is part of the Nation, he is by no means an autonomous part: he is a part of the whole, just as each member in the audience is.

Johnson subsequently stays out of the speech (by not referring to himself or using *I*) until paragraph thirteen. Johnson speaks of the time he has already spent on “Capitol Hill” which is his home (Address: 13). In these words, he has gained credibility with the audience: he explains that he belongs here, in front of them. So, even here, he is not talking about himself—as the “I”—so much as the fact that he has been an effective part of a (Congressional) unit for “32 years” (Address: 14). Then, he follows with “From this chamber of representative government, let all the world know and none misunderstand that I rededicate this Government to the unswerving support” (Address: 15). This is where

Johnson begins to list the various responsibilities that America will continue to maintain under his leadership.

The audience is the reason for Johnson's delivering this speech in this way. As Miller says: "The people had to get to know [Johnson] as President . . . Lyndon . . . felt that he ought to speak before a live audience. And what could be better than [following] Eisenhower's suggestion—an address to the assembled members of both houses of Congress" (410).

Johnson uses the words *we* and *our* in this speech as he did in the previous one discussed. He does so in order to bring together and construct American society through his efforts to include—and this inclusion permeates his speeches. Johnson uses the inclusive pronouns a total of twenty times in the first ten paragraphs of a twenty-eight paragraph speech. The audience is implicitly involved in the actions. They no longer are the spectators watching an event. They are actively taking part in creating this addition to history. This simple example suggests why this particular speech received a "standing ovation at the end" (Miller, M. 413). Johnson was one with the audience and showed them this fact in his carefully chosen rhetoric.

This assessment coincides with Aristotle's observations regarding the ways which style is used to present a speech: "It is not enough to know what to say; we must also say it in the right way" (1404a). Johnson was aware of the virtual transformation of Kennedy in the minds of Americans—and the world. As Clark Clifford, close advisor to Presidents Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson, relates, "It was very clear that after the assassination, president Kennedy's popularity grew all the time; he was revered in a manner after his death that perhaps didn't exist before his death. He had become a martyr-President" (OH LBJML).

Johnson's opening words display precisely what Clifford reminds us about when he says: "All I have I would have given gladly not to be standing here today" (Address: 2).

Johnson stayed almost exclusively with the style of repetition. He used variations of what he reiterated (sometimes verb phrases, sometimes nouns, and sometimes entire clause structure); however, the simplicity that Johnson used to transmit to the listeners what he wanted them to hear was extraordinary.

Simple repetition of certain ideas helps him establish the topic about which he will be speaking, and guarantees the listeners will hear him. It almost seems as if Aristotle were whispering in his ear.⁵⁷ He begins this form of speaking, because as early as the third printed paragraph, he reminds the listeners of Kennedy's immortality. Although Johnson redefines "immortality" to mean "live on," his use of tricolon and anaphora means that he repeats the phrase three times in the third paragraph: "Today John Fitzgerald Kennedy **lives on**⁵⁸ in the immortal words and works that he left behind. He **lives on** in the mind and memories of mankind. He **lives on** in the hearts of his countrymen" (Address: 3).

Johnson picks up the pace of the speech by incorporating a litany of things to do. Meanwhile he weaves in the reminder to the Nation of the March on Washington with his repetition of the word dream⁵⁹ (with the implicit suggestion that the African Americans are not going to be forgotten). Once again, Johnson's use of anaphora is in the following:

The **dream** of conquering the vastness of space—the **dream** of partnership across the Atlantic—and across the Pacific as well—the **dream** of a Peace Corps in less developed nations—the **dream** of education for all of our

⁵⁷ "Style to be good must be clear" (Aristotle 1404B).

⁵⁸ My emphasis on the words in "bold."

⁵⁹ Led by Martin Luther King, Jr who delivered his "I Have a Dream Speech" on August 28th—three months earlier.

children—the **dream** of jobs for all who seek them and need them—the **dream** of care for our elderly—the **dream** of an all-out attack on mental illness—and above all, the **dream** of equal rights for all Americans, whatever their race or color—these and other American **dreams** have been vitalized by his drive and by his dedication. (Address: 5)

Johnson seems to gain confidence⁶⁰ as he moves through the speech and receives the applause for his words. He then uses a new strategy of adding a scene, which Aristotle also counsels a speaker to do. As Aristotle states,

Each kind of rhetoric has its own appropriate style. . . . the spoken [style] better admits of dramatic delivery . . . [additionally] the style of oratory addressed to public assemblies resembles scene-painting. In the one and the other, high finish in detail is superfluous and seems better away. . . .

Ceremonial oratory is the most literary, for it is meant to be read. (1414a)

Johnson re-directs the listeners' focus onto his need to act: "An Assassin's bullet has thrust upon me the awesome burden of the Presidency" (Address: 14). Even though he overtly mentions the assassination, Johnson immediately draws attention to himself and follows by asking for help from the audience. In using this format, he engenders the pathos that suggests the listeners need to offer him this aid. He continues with the aforementioned style of repetition and adds to a plea for help in the third from the last paragraph of the speech as he states: "The need is here. The need is now. I ask your help" (Address: 25). His reliance on the emotional appeal of pathos is evident as he almost seems to plead with the audience for their acceptance of his words, and himself.

⁶⁰ This becomes obvious from the CD and Video recording.

Then, Johnson does something that has not been written or planned for. He ends the Address with a prayer for help from God. He reveals his strong upbringing in the Disciples of Christ Church in this last, important addition that he made to his first address to the Nation when he is “asking for the Lord’s blessing while giving Him our thanks.” No writer seems to have been aware of Johnson’s addition of these words until after he had delivered them (Miller, M. 415).

Memory

Johnson relies on public knowledge (using Young’s prescriptive description)⁶¹ to promote his rhetorical stance and shifts the tension (that Lyne expounds upon)⁶² to create a new consciousness within the listeners. Johnson begins promotion of the consciousness-shift that Roosevelt began in the New Deal. Briefly stated, Roosevelt implemented a shift in the way in which people thought about “fixing” the economy. The New Deal involved changing the economic status quo. Roosevelt did this with the help of what is termed the “Keynesian Experiment.”

The experiment—the New Deal—reflected a major rethinking of economic thought by British economist John Maynard Keynes, who published his major work, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*. Keynes argued that there was a middle ground

⁶¹ Marilyn Young suggests—in her in-depth analysis of aspects of Bitzer’s philosophy—her adherence to the idea that public knowledge changes. Public knowledge becomes “the flow of information—some confirmed, some speculative—that surrounds a crisis produces alterations in public knowledge that may become permanent, thus modifying the dynamic relationship among public knowledge, exigence, the rhetorical situation” (289).

⁶² This step of altering the entire aspect relating to public knowledge, exigency and the rhetorical situation is treated further by the scholar, John Lyne, as he adds that the place of rhetoric—as situated within the public knowledge—impacts and alters this knowledge. “Rhetoric trades on the insight that minds are the nexus between the actual and the possible. One holds in mind various possible arrangements of the world, in addition to apprehending the actual one. The tension between the two is what we call consciousness” (166).

between traditional *laissez-faire* liberalism and socialism that would save the capitalist economies; that is, in between the hands-off liberal ideology that the United States had been pursuing up to this point and the planned economy that the Fascists offered, there was a middle ground. Both government and private enterprise could share power. The key to this flexibility between the liberalism and the individuals was creating a great role for government intervention, both to pursue development and economic growth and to soften the impact of crises on individual citizens in what became known as the *safety net*. Keynes' economics meant that, in short, government intervention in the economy was necessary to both stimulate a sluggish economy and protect citizens from the brutality of economic crises:

I direct all my mind and attention to the development of new methods and new ideas for effecting the transition from the economic anarchy of the individualistic capitalism which rules today . . . towards a regime which will deliberately aim at controlling and directing economic forces in the interests of social justice and social stability. I still have enough optimism to believe that to effect this transition may be the true destiny of a New Liberalism.

(Keynes)

The United States, under Franklin Roosevelt's tutelage, adopted this theory as the Depression worsened. The fear of possible social revolution and unrest pressured the government to undertake experimenting with Keynes' ideas. As a result, the government put forth two types of programs: First, a safety net was established which provided programs for the unemployed and the poor. Programs such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and other alphabet agencies came into being. The second area was designed to jumpstart the economy

in what Roosevelt called the “intelligent direction” (qtd. in Hill 543-44). World War II intervened, and no one will ever know the success or failure of the instigation of these ideas.

Johnson, still the acolyte of Roosevelt, believed these programs brought about a positive change in the United States. To that end, he wanted to re-start what he believed to be the road leading to America’s success that Roosevelt had begun years ago. Johnson exemplifies his attachment to these ideas as he works his way through this first Presidential Address.

Johnson uses logos to focus the audience on the promises that Kennedy had alluded to: “And now the ideas and the ideals which he so nobly represented must and will be translated into effective action” (Address: 6). However, Johnson was all the while promoting continuation of building on the foundation that Roosevelt had established in the 1940s.

The progressive mode of economic and social movement that Roosevelt had begun—the safety net—that had been suggested in previous administrations comes from education. Johnson realizes that the various programs Roosevelt had begun were beginning to lie fallow. By comparing Roosevelt’s words to Johnson’s we see the direct correlation between Roosevelt’s speech and Johnson’s follow-up through comparison of the logos each used.

Roosevelt had used the words stated below in an address to Congress in January 1944:

We have come to a clear realization of the fact that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence . . . needy men are not free men.(qtd. in Hill n.)⁶³

⁶³ Quote from an English case of Blackstone’s era (Hill).

Johnson presents a similar thought when he states: “We will carry on the fight against poverty and misery, and disease and ignorance, in other lands and in our own” (Address: 10).

Roosevelt made the observation that

People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made (Roosevelt)

Roosevelt went on to enumerate a list of new freedoms that should supplement those of the now inadequate Bill of Rights. These freedoms include

The right to a useful and remunerative job . . . The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation . . . The right of every business man, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere free from unfair competition and domination . . . The right of every family to a decent home . . . The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health . . . The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident and unemployment. . . The right to a good education. (Roosevelt)

Johnson, too, continued the plea for early passage of a workable Civil Rights Bill, with the ever-present need for promoting education to be a large part of the *rights* that were guaranteed (Address: 12, 19, 20, 21). Johnson was implying that education underlay the rights afforded to all Americans in the first few words he utters: “[T]he dream of education for all of our children” (Address: 5).

In addition, Roosevelt had begun focusing on federal aid to education—through the G.I. Bill. The G.I. Bill allowed service men and women to ease back into the job market by

first receiving diplomas from institutions of higher education⁶⁴ By affixing his signature to this Bill, Roosevelt demonstrated his belief in the strength of the “new form” of economics. Johnson continued the ideas that Roosevelt had begun when he advocates that “[T]his is no time for delay. It is a time for action—strong, forward-looking action on the pending education bills to help bring the light of learning to every home and hamlet in America” (Address: 22).

Johnson calls upon the memory of the American public. However, he creates a new addition to this memory for his listeners on November 27, 1963. He suggests the tension that brings about a consciousness. He was determined that Kennedy’s eulogy would serve as his beginning.

Delivery

Several times throughout his delivery of the *Address to Congress*, Johnson has breaks in his speech pattern suggesting emotional discomfiture. Then, in the final paragraph of the speech—the completion—the break is obvious and the continuation of the delivery is in a quivering tremor (OH LBJML): “. . . God shed His grace on thee, /And crown [audible tremor] thy good/With brotherhood/From sea to shining sea.” (Address: 28). In no other public speech that Johnson uttered was the emotional connection made so clear. This appeal, in itself, I believe, showed the American citizenry as well as the watching world that Johnson truly needed the help he asked for (Address: 14, 25,27).

As Johnson begins his address, he uses a quiet tone that continues throughout most of the speech. The initial words are almost inaudible. Johnson’s voice does not rise until after

⁶⁴ By making the link between government financial aid and education permanent, several areas of contention were resolved. David Labaree talks about the goal that America and education shared: preparation for citizens by educating them to be responsible and knowledgeable. This shared goal made a more democratic citizenry (Labaree 43).

he receives his first round of applause, which comes after these words in the third paragraph: “No words are strong enough to express our determination to continue the forward thrust of America that he began” (Address: 3)

After he receives his second burst of applause, Johnson seems to get into the stride of the speech. The timbre of his voice strengthens and his posture straightens, giving the visible suggestion that he is beginning to realize the audience is working with him. He continues in a voice that reflects a growing assurance and he does not pause as he did so prolifically at the outset of the delivery of the speech. As he gains in confidence, Johnson begins to speak a bit more loudly. His assurance comes after the relatively long paragraph where he relates a litany of dreams that gain more and more hands in the accumulated applause until he reaches the words “and above all, the dream of equal rights for all Americans, whatever their race or color” (Address: 5). Here, he is stopped by the thunderous applause of an audience using their hands to voice their agreement to what he is saying.

With the repetition of the word “united,” Johnson reflects a strong sense of the way he wants to affect his Presidency. “We will serve all the Nation, not one section or one sector, or one group, but all Americans. These are the **United** States—a **united** people with a **united** purpose” (Address: 11). This constant embrace of his audience seems to garner Johnson the reaction he wants from the audience, because he begins to speak with more assurance as well as with more clarity. He then presents what he has been leading up to: He moves from Kennedy’s “let us continue” to his “let us begin” (Address: 16-17). Johnson was already making his own way as President.

Scattered applause interrupts Johnson's delivery. Moreover, throughout the whole speech, Johnson does not hesitate to specify what he envisions for the future of the Nation: he reaches out periodically as if to embrace the audience and share with them in his vision of what is to come.

As many writers and political theorists have taken note, the words relating to the civil rights issue were critical. Johnson's treatment of the contention and division in Congress did not disappoint anyone as he made note of this fact: "I urge you again, as I did in 1957 and again in 1960, to enact a civil rights law so that we can move forward." He followed by stating, "We have talked long enough in this country about equal rights" (Address: 19). This statement was the first indication of what he—as President—would be promoting. Johnson knew this action also would be "The end of a democratic party in the South for more than a generation" (OH LBJML).

Johnson concluded with a strong, direct emotional plea to the audience, which did not come from any text Johnson read (Moyers OH LBJML): "America, America/ God shed His grace on thee,/And crown thy good With brotherhood/From sea to shining sea" (Address: 27-28). From his religious background, Johnson derived the strength to end his Address and return to the work of being President.

Conclusion

Up to this time, as each chapter has indicated, Johnson has had three clear phases of speaking. In each one of these phases, he holds a different public office. However, a whole notion of Johnson's authority and his ability to make changes has evolved from each one of the previous speech events. Throughout these chapters, Johnson's views stay consistent; however, the rhetorical situations are different. The issue of education stays consistent, but

the audience, the constraints and the exigencies vary. Consequently, as the problem of providing a good public education for all Americans remains, Johnson becomes more and more a person who can resolve it. In other words, he can do more as President than he could as a Senator.

When Johnson addresses the Joint Session of Congress for the first time as President of the United States, not only must he tread the razor-edge of a nation mourning the loss of its President through assassination, but also he must present a forceful presence that suggests his ability to effectively continue Kennedy's legacy. In the video we see, and in the recording we hear, that Johnson accomplished both goals as well as beginning his own legacy.

Dunamis (Smith),⁶⁵ the Greek word, describes not only Johnson's persona, but also his great strength. In the first speech Johnson delivers as President he demonstrates the overwhelming *dunamis* he contains within him. He is compassionate—"All I have I would have given gladly not to be standing here today" (Address: 2) and yet pragmatic—"And now the ideas and the ideals which he so nobly represented must and will be translated into effective action" (Address: 6).

We realize Johnson is ready to start accomplishing his goals when he states: "I profoundly hope that the tragedy and the torment of these terrible days will bind us together in new fellowship, making us one people in our hour of sorrow. So let us here highly resolve that John Fitzgerald Kennedy did not live—or die—in vain" (Address: 27).

⁶⁵ In this instance, the word means "power"; similar to the power that is inherent within a stick of dynamite (Smith).

Johnson introduces his Presidential beliefs in education. He expands on them in the next chapter where we examine his Great Society speech. Johnson specifically lays out his plans for educating America and helping it become a Great Society on Earth, which is directly analogous to St. Augustine's City of Man, which one enters before attaining the City of God.

APPENDIX C⁶⁶

**President Lyndon B. Johnson's
Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress
November 27, 1963**

⁶⁶ “Address” will be the reference to this speech throughout the dissertation.

President Lyndon B. Johnson's
Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress

November 27, 1963

1. Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, Members of the House, Members of the Senate, my fellow Americans:
2. All I have I would have given gladly not to be standing here today.
3. The greatest leader of our time has been struck down by the foulest deed of our time. Today John Fitzgerald Kennedy lives on in the immortal words and works that he left behind. He lives on in the mind and memories of mankind. He lives on in the hearts of his countrymen.
4. No words are sad enough to express our sense of loss. No words are strong enough to express our determination to continue the forward thrust of America that he began.
5. The dream of conquering the vastness of space—the dream of partnership across the Atlantic—across the Pacific as well—the dream of a Peace Corps in less developed nations—the dream of education for all of our children—the dream of jobs for all who seek them and need them—the dream of care for our elderly—the dream of an all-out attack on mental illness—and above all, the dream of equal rights for all Americans, whatever their race or color—these and other American dreams have been vitalized by his drive and by his dedication.
6. And now the ideas and the ideals which he so nobly represented must and will be translated into effective action.
7. Under John Kennedy's leadership, this Nation has demonstrated that it has the courage to seek peace, and it has the fortitude to risk war. We have proved that we are a good and reliable friend to those who seek peace and freedom. We have shown that we can also be a formidable foe to those who reject the path of peace and those who seek to impose upon us or our allies the yoke of tyranny.
8. This Nation will keep its commitments from South Viet-Nam to West Berlin. We will be unceasing in the search for peace; resourceful in our pursuit of areas of agreement even with those with whom we differ; and generous and loyal to those who join with us in common cause.
9. In this age when there can be no losers in peace and no victors in war, we must recognize the obligation to match national strength with national restraint. We must be prepared at one and the same time for both the confrontation of power and the limitation of power. We must be ready to defend the national interest and to negotiate the common interest. This is the path that we shall continue to pursue. Those who test our courage will find it strong, and those

who seek our friendship will find it honorable. We will demonstrate anew that the strong can be just in the use of strength; and the just can be strong in the defense of justice.

10. And let all know we will extend no special privilege and impose no persecution. We will carry on the fight against poverty and misery, and disease and ignorance, in other lands and in our own.

11. We will serve all the Nation, not one section or one sector, or one group, but all Americans. These are the United States—a united people with a united purpose.

12. Our American unity does not depend upon unanimity. We have differences; but now, as in the past, we can derive from those differences strength, not weakness, wisdom, not despair. Both as a people and a government, we can unite upon a program, a program which is wise and just, enlightened and constructive.

13. For 32 years Capitol Hill has been my home. I have shared many moments of pride with you, pride in the ability of the Congress of the United States to act, to meet any crisis, to distill from our differences strong programs of national action.

14. An assassin's bullet has thrust upon me the awesome burden of the Presidency. I am here today to say I need your help; I cannot bear this burden alone. I need the help of all Americans, and all America. This Nation has experienced a profound shock, and in this critical moment, it is our duty, yours and mine, as the Government of the United States, to do away with uncertainty and doubt and delay, and to show that we are capable of decisive action; that from the brutal loss of our leader we will derive not weakness, but strength; that we can and will act and act now.

15. From this chamber of representative government, let all the world know and none misunderstand that I rededicate this Government to the unswerving support of the United Nations, to the honorable and determined execution of our commitments to our allies, to the maintenance of military strength second to none, to the defense of the strength and the stability of the dollar, to the expansion of our foreign trade, to the reinforcement of our programs of mutual assistance and cooperation in Asia and Africa, and to our Alliance for Progress in this hemisphere.

16. On the 20th day of January, in 1961, John F. Kennedy told his countrymen that our national work would not be finished "in the first thousand days, nor in the life of this administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But," he said, "let us begin."

17. Today, in this moment of new resolve, I would say to all my fellow Americans, let us continue.

18. This is our challenge—not to hesitate, not to pause, not to turn about and linger over this evil moment, but to continue on our course so that we may fulfill the destiny that history has set for us. Our most immediate tasks are here on this Hill.

19. First, no memorial oration or eulogy could more eloquently honor President Kennedy's memory than the earliest possible passage of the civil rights bill for which he fought so long. We have talked long enough in this country about equal rights. We have talked for one hundred years or more. It is time now to write the next chapter, and to write it in the books of law.

20. I urge you again, as I did in 1957 and again in 1960, to enact a civil rights law so that we can move forward to eliminate from this Nation every trace of discrimination and oppression that is based upon race or color. There could be no greater source of strength to this Nation both at home and abroad.

21. And second, no act of ours could more fittingly continue the work of President Kennedy than the early passage of the tax bill for which he fought all this long year. This is a bill designed to increase our national income and Federal revenues, and to provide insurance against recession. That bill, if passed without delay, means more security for those now working, more jobs for those now without them, and more incentive for our economy.

22. In short, this is no time for delay. It is a time for action—strong, forward-looking action on the pending education bills to help bring the light of learning to every home and hamlet in America—strong, forward-looking action on youth employment opportunities; strong, forward-looking action on the pending foreign aid bill, making clear that we are not forfeiting our responsibilities to this hemisphere or to the world, nor erasing Executive flexibility in the conduct of our foreign affairs—and strong, prompt, and forward-looking action on the remaining appropriation bills.

23. In this new spirit of action, the Congress can expect the full cooperation and support of the executive branch. And in particular, I pledge that the expenditures of your Government will be administered with the utmost thrift and frugality. I will insist that the Government get a dollar's value for a dollar spent. The Government will set an example of prudence and economy. This does not mean that we will not meet our unfilled needs or that we will not honor our commitments. We will do both.

24. As one who has long served in both Houses of the Congress, I firmly believe in the independence and the integrity of the legislative branch. And I promise you that I shall always respect this. It is deep in the marrow of my bones. With equal firmness, I believe in the capacity and I believe in the ability of the Congress, despite the divisions of opinions which characterize our Nation, to act—to act wisely, to act vigorously, to act speedily when the need arises.

25. The need is here. The need is now. I ask your help.

26. We meet in grief, but let us also meet in renewed dedication and renewed vigor. Let us meet in action, in tolerance, and in mutual understanding. John Kennedy's death commands what his life conveyed—that America must move forward. The time has come for Americans of all races and creeds and political beliefs to understand and to respect one another. So let us put an end to the teaching and the preaching of hate and evil and violence. Let us turn away

from the fanatics of the far left and the far right, from the apostles of bitterness and bigotry, from those defiant of law, and those who pour venom into our Nation's bloodstream.

27. I profoundly hope that the tragedy and the torment of these terrible days will bind us together in new fellowship, making us one people in our hour of sorrow. So let us here highly resolve that John Fitzgerald Kennedy did not live—or die—in vain. And on this Thanksgiving eve, as we gather together to ask the Lord's blessing, and give Him our thanks, let us unite in those familiar and cherished words:

28. America, America,
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good With brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-64*. Volume I, entry 11, pp. 8-10. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1965.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Great Society: Lyndon Johnson's Gift

On May 22, 1964, Lyndon Johnson unveiled a term that became an integral part of the American lexicon. Johnson announced the progression of America toward The Great Society. Johnson captured precisely what Bitzer, meant by “public knowledge” (Bitzer, “Public Knowledge” 69) in just these three words: The Great Society. Bitzer explained that “truths and values [that were] previously unknown to a public” are given “voice.” The truths and values are “named.” Johnson performed what Bitzer details when Johnson distilled the “interests and principles” shared by a “public” and named it (Bitzer, “Public Knowledge” 68).

The Great Society became such an integral part of American society that it transcended the mere words used in the phrase. In fact, most Americans used the phrase as a kind of shorthand summarizing basic values and beliefs each “American” felt. In this way, Johnson's ethos insinuated itself into the emotional make up of each individual; and, the words, for a brief time, reflected the patriotic sense inherent within American attitude.

The critical base of Johnson's Great Society was the educating of the citizenry; for, as Dallek points out:

Johnson's highest Great Society priority was to broaden educational opportunities and enrich the quality of school offerings. He had an almost mystical faith in the capacity of education to transform people's lives and improve their standard of living. He shared with earlier generations of Americans an evangelical faith in educational opportunity as a public good.
(Flawed Giant 195-96)

This chapter examines Johnson's rhetorical argument aimed at resolving many of America's societally-based problems. "The Great Society Speech" Johnson delivers at The University of Michigan graduation presents an overview to Americans that Johnson believes will bring America closer to St. Augustine's *City of God*. Johnson tells his immediate and implied audience how he wants to resolve the problems that he has recognized as a challenge for Americans. Although the solutions vary, Johnson believes that educating the citizenry will allow the public to find answers. He tells of the importance of education; the significance of it; and, most importantly, his commitment to it. In short, even though Johnson has become one of the most powerful people in the world, his resolve has not changed towards recognizing the problems inherent within educating a citizenry. The change has come from the fact that now he has a way of proposing a resolution to the problem he sees.

Creation of The Great Society

Johnson's interim Presidency was almost halfway over, and his political strategists maintained he needed to promote an agenda. This agenda would help elect him as the next President of the United States (Jobe and Muslin 189). Roosevelt had had The New Deal: Kennedy had had his Camelot: Johnson needed a "program," too (Valenti OH LBJML). Johnson knew this agenda needed to include education because as he remarked, "Every President from FDR to JFK has worked toward the advancement of education, but 'I plan to get on with the task'" (qtd. in Goodwin 121). Along with *having a program*, Johnson also knew he needed to *announce it* in a visible, public forum. Consequently, after much discussion with advisors (Roberts 98-99), he decided to unveil a program called The Great

Society at the upcoming speech he was to deliver at The University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in May, 1964.

Just as in previous speeches, Johnson had certain parameters he needed to stay within: first, he had to remember to address the primary audience—the graduates at Ann Arbor. Second, he needed to realize that he was speaking to the listening American public.

Speaker

The strength of Johnson’s ethos has been discussed in previous chapters of this dissertation. None have marked such an overt display of the power Johnson’s ethos carried, as the events that this chapter deals with will show. We see in this chapter a major shift from Johnson’s being concerned with problems affecting him individually (and finding results to cure them) to problems which concern an entire nation (requiring his finding results to cure a set of problems).

Johnson realizes that he has to promote an agenda that will bring a resolution to problems that are beginning to erupt around America. As he sees the many areas to address in his University of Michigan Speech—the graduates, the members of the Civil Rights Movement and the SDS—we realize the strength of character it took for him to implicitly offer one answer for many “problems.”

The one answer was education. Because, as statistics that had been shown to him reflect

In the coming decade, 30 million boys and girls are slated to enter the job force: 2.5 million would never see the inside of a high school; 8 million would never earn a high school diploma; and more than a million qualified for college would never go. (qtd. in Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 202)

He had become consumed with the overarching belief in the need to proselytize regarding the curative powers “education” offered America.

Johnson believed that both of these groups came into existence from the common belief that “education was no. 1,” and the lack of it caused the current schism. For the educated who were in the student group, he believed they saw the marginalization of those in poverty. He believed those in the Civil Rights Movement wanted to be a natural part of America—not just adjuncts who lived in America (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 196). Johnson believed that making sure everyone could partake of a good, public education meant they could join in the American Dream (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 196; Labaree 142).

Everyone knew by now that education was Johnson’s first priority; however, Johnson kept saying things like, “Nothing matters more [than education] to the future of our country" (Johnson to Richard Goodwin, OH LBJML). In fact, Johnson had gone so far as to stress that “[t]he nation's military strength, economic productivity, and democratic freedoms depended on an educated citizenry.” (*Flawed Giant* 202)

Johnson maintained that the young people (in the student movement as well as in the Civil Rights Movement) would be lost “unless we act now [to] broaden and improve the quality of our school base, . . . concentrate our teaching resources in the urban slums and poor rural areas, [and] . . . expand and enrich our colleges" (Johnson to Richard Goodwin July 19, 1964).⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Johnson directly relates this in his Great Society speech giving the Michigan numbers as well as the national numbers (Address: 27, 28).

The way in which Johnson presents his plan of the major theme inherent in *The Great Society*—which is a better place for all Americans to inhabit—exemplifies what has contentiously been named “speaker intention” (Bach 179). Kent Bach, a noted linguistic scholar, offers this clarification of “speaker intention” when he writes, “the interpretation [of words] into a pragmatic notion” is one of the major reasons to consider speaker intention (Bach 179 fn 6). The reason for this comes from taking an idea and making the idea become reality—exactly as Bitzer had presented rhetoric’s role in developing public understanding (“Public Knowledge” 70). We see a direct application at this particular juncture of the rhetorical exigence that Johnson uses to promote his idea. In short, the notion of public knowledge initially manifests in the speaker’s intention to present “public truths and values” (Bitzer, “Public Knowledge” 69) in order “to select and justify public means and ends” (Bitzer, “Public Knowledge” 69). The “means and ends” for Johnson meant the programs of *The Great Society*, which suggested fulfillment for each of these seemingly polarized groups—the students and the Civil Rights members. Johnson maneuvered the epideictic format of a Commencement Address to fit his promotion of a solution to the “problems” of society. Johnson used the rhetorical situation for his own purpose.

Dallek makes a keen point about the ineffective way Kennedy was able to get laws passed (*Flawed Giant* 69). However, because of Johnson’s persona—his ethos—he did not have a problem with the Congress. He could “cajole, reprimand, solicit” (Evans and Novak 116) almost everything he wanted.

Consequently, when Johnson took over the Presidency, he was able to deliver on many of the ideas that Kennedy had merely tried to bring about (Carpenter Interview),

simply because he could make the Congress acquiesce to what he wanted.⁶⁸ There was a weakness that Johnson exhibited and that was, he did not have this established strength of character to get and maintain the public acceptance—yet.

Johnson had to learn how to fashion his Treatment to work not on one individual; rather, Johnson had to form his Treatment to work on an audiences. First, he had to convince the public of the need, and then he needed to bring out a program that “sounded good” (Valenti OH LBJML).

The Expansion of The Johnson Treatment: From One to Many

Johnson received many suggestions from many people to help him achieve the result he wanted—an entire program of development for America (Valenti OH LBJML). First, a “catchy name” had to be used (Valenti OH LBJML). The “winning idea” came from a speechwriter—Dick Goodwin (Miller, M. 457-58). Miller writes, “It is generally agreed that the term Great Society, as a Johnson label, was conceived when Goodwin sat down at his typewriter to hammer out the memorial speech” (458) that Johnson was to give March 4 to Anna Kriss, a New York judge (Miller, M. 458). However, as Evans and Novak noted, Goodwin wrote Johnson’s May 22 speech for The University of Michigan graduation exercises. This was the time and the speech that Johnson decided to “roll out” (Valenti OH LBJML) his Great Society. Consequently, “In his draft, Goodwin wrote of the challenge for America to resolve such problems as poverty that were hidden beneath middle-class prosperity and to move forward not just toward a rich and powerful society but to the “great society” (Evans and Novak 425), Johnson knew he had his name (Valenti OH LBJML).

⁶⁸ Johnson was known as a politician who had an ability to use “popular rhetoric” effectively (Tulis 161).

Robert Dallek builds on this idea when he notes that Johnson and Valenti ‘liked the feel and language of Goodwin's draft’ so much that they wanted ‘to build a whole speech around it.’ They believed they could fit a lot of what we were trying to do within the curve of this phrase [in an unknown speech]” (*Flawed Giant* 81).

No matter who is responsible for the actual naming of “The Great Society,” Johnson wrote in the May 22, 1964, entry to his “daily diary” the following words:

To travel to Ann Arbor, Michigan, to speak at The University of Michigan. In this speech to proclaim plans for a "Great Society" which "demands an end to poverty [through education] and racial injustice. (LBJML)

Second, Johnson knew he had to unveil The Great Society at a speech event of major importance (Valenti OH LBJML). Johnson realized that combining introducing The Great Society with giving a commencement address offered untold opportunities for acceptance of the entire idea (Valenti OH LBJML). Johnson’s decision revealed a culmination of political as well as rhetorical acumen.⁶⁹ Through the programs within The Great Society, Johnson believed America could learn how to help itself by shoring up and maintaining its strong democratic foundation.

⁶⁹ Hoyt Hudson noted in 1943 that “rhetoric [i]s most easily conceived when located in an immediate historical situation, usually involving a specific audience [and speaker]” (qtd. in Kuyper 77). Johnson accomplished what Hudson had suggested could occur years earlier with effective utilization of rhetoric and expertise.

Within the Great Society lay several programs promoting education⁷⁰ for various age groups in America. As Johnson said, “a major program relating to educating the young people in America was necessary for continuing democracy for a long time to come” (Moyers OH LBJML). Roosevelt had shown Johnson the importance of making sure that the older Americans were provided education through the G.I. Bill: Johnson proposed continuing and expanding these programs into the university settings (Valenti OH LBJML). All age groups were to receive educational aid in order to become the solidly educated citizens a democracy demanded (Shriver OH LBJML). George Kennedy reinforces Johnson’s idea of the need to promote education as he states, “In modern society, the ability to communicate effectively is at least as important as it was in ancient Greece” (*On Rhetoric*, vii). Johnson decided to introduce a whole group of programs under one name—The Great Society—which would, in turn, be built on his main goal of promoting education within the society. Johnson now had the idea upon which he uses his Treatment to convince a whole audience.

By framing his set of program—The Great Society—and introducing it at a commencement address, Johnson could exert a critical move: he confronted the two social

⁷⁰ One of the major areas that Johnson began to promote was federal aid for education and eliminating poverty.⁷⁰ David Zarefsky recounts that

In the early evening of November 23, 1963—his first full day as president—Lyndon Johnson met with Walter Heller, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, to discuss the council's research on poverty in the United States. Only four days earlier, President Kennedy had decided to make antipoverty policy a major component of his 1964 legislative program, instructing Heller to develop the outline of a program for review shortly after Thanksgiving. (Zarefsky 14-15)

And within moments after Heller had outlined the program, Johnson said, "That's my kind of program. . . It will help people" (Zarefsky 15). In less than six months, Johnson became “progressively concerned with finding his own hallmark” (Miller, M. 458; Roberts 97-99; Dallek 1998, 80) and wanted to offer up something that would remind America of him and his beneficence. He wanted to “roll out a giant idea—full of a lot of programs to help people” (Roberts 99).

movements gaining daily notoriety with a positive solution. In short, Johnson gave a solution, which would answer both of these seemingly disparate factions. Johnson used his ethical appeal to promote acceptance and acquiescence from both groups, simply by his sheer physical presence and the fact that he was willing to reason with them (albeit in a speech).

Occasion

Within the “listening American public” lay a second group that Johnson had to address. There were two social groups—which were becoming extremely forceful in the United States. The two groups were actually forming larger movements and coalesced as such under the banners of specific names.

The first group was called the “Civil Rights Movement” (King, “Nonviolence”). Under the leadership of the Martin Luther King, Jr., this movement demanded equality for all Americans. The second group was initially named “the student-movement.” However, due to the actions of this group, it became known as the more violent “Students for a Democratic Society” (SDS). Members of the SDS were located on university campuses across America.

Both of these groups shared a similar—and quite basic—reason for being. They wanted to share in what each group considered to be the “right of all Americans” which was to be allowed the rights given to “fully entitled members of a free democracy” (King, “Nonviolence”; SDS). Both groups sprang forth from the idea that they lacked participating in the American Dream. The Civil Rights Movement believed they were ostracized and were not allowed to enjoy the American Dream. The Student Movement believed that the American Dream was non-existent. Both these groups perceived that the social contract that the Founding Fathers had set forth—of pursuing life, liberty and happiness—had not included them (King, “Nonviolence”; Hayden, “Port Huron Statement”).

Because the first parameter Johnson needed to address lay within the graduation of students from college, education was a natural theme. However, both the SDS and the Civil Rights Movement lacked direct connection to the idea of “education.” Johnson had to make sure that he fashioned his agenda—or Great Society—in such a way as to make it obvious that becoming part of an educated citizenry was the way to rectify the problems for both social groups.

History: America’s Social Contract and The Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement took shape under the leadership of King with the goal of promoting equality for African Americans as citizens of America (King, “Nonviolence”). Within the parameters of equality lay all measures which would raise up the “Negro” from poverty. On such stricture was to be able to partake in education in order to secure the rights due all people as Americans (Foster xxviii).

King had initially formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957 to mobilize the black churches behind the push for civil rights (King, “Nonviolence”). King’s leadership also helped to determine the shape that the search for civil rights—as a movement—would take. As a Christian and a follower of Gandhi’s ethic of nonviolence (qtd. in Pyatt 72), King brought both the Augustinian idea of the City of God and the Gandhian principles of nonviolent resistance to the Civil Rights Movement (King, “Nonviolence”).

More specifically, King focused on many of the Christian ideas that St. Augustine espoused, including the belief that the reward for having lived a successful life meant one’s physical body died and one’s spiritual body reached the heavenly *City of God* (King, “Nonviolence”). King often referred to St. Augustine’s book, *The City of God*, and believed

that helping create a better city of man on earth would help one reach the City of God in the afterlife.

King believed that helping create a better city of man meant participating actively in a civil rights movement. The movement would ensure a better life on earth, which would pave the way to a better afterlife in heaven (King, “Alabama’s Bus Boycott”). Michele Foster observes in her in-depth inquiry into the history of Black educators and education that “prior to emancipation, blacks held in slavery were forbidden to learn to read. Despite these prohibitions and severe punishments, black valued literacy and many learned to read despite these restrictions” (Foster xxiv). However, education was still not readily available for most African Americans in 1964, and Johnson wanted to change this fact (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 189).

King named his movement using a technique that he learned from the second man he sought to emulate—the Indian Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi espoused the idea that a “revolution” needed to be nonviolent in order to achieve its goals. Also, the revolution needed to use the same name that the “other side” had named it. Therefore, King’s Christian movement changed its name to “The Civil Rights Movement” (King, “Nonviolence”). King initiated using a third aspect that Gandhi had instituted in his Indian Nationalist Movement. The Civil Rights Movement used the suffering (the examples of which were numerous for Americans to see on television) of its own people to try to change the hearts of the enemy—the *whites* (King, “Nonviolence”).

King used other ploys Gandhi had used. For instance, Gandhi had stated the only way to pursue civil disobedience was within a context of accepting the legal punishment for breaking laws (King, “Nonviolence”). The civil rights protestors engaged in mass acts of

civil disobedience against laws they considered unjust; however, they accepted arrest and imprisonment from the government (Kotz 48-49). King tried to show that the laws had to be upheld, but the laws needed to be changed because of the inequity by which they were interpreted. King was fond of counseling his listeners with these words: “the ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral begetting the thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it” (King, “Home”). King brought the Civil Rights Movement into the national consciousness by saying at the outset of his efforts to organize his movement: “We must meet the forces of hate with the power of love; we must meet physical force with soul force” (King, “Nonviolence”).

With this organizational base, the Civil Rights Movement brought hundreds of thousands of protestors into the streets. The strategy of the movement was to target a particular city and a particular type of segregation and then bring people in from all over the South to make that case more obvious: thus, the pressure increased on those whom the Movement considered to be wrong. As the followers of King proclaimed, “they were the armies of God” (Kotz 131-33).

The campaigns began in Alabama in 1955⁷¹ and proceeded to North Carolina in 1960.⁷² In early May 1961, seven black and six white “freedom riders” (Sixties Project) boarded a bus in Washington and headed for the Southern states to force desegregation of bus stations along the way.⁷³

⁷¹ Rosa Parks, a seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama, in December, 1955, refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white person as required by Montgomery law (King “Nonviolence and Racial Justice,” 166).

⁷² In 1960, in Greensboro, NC, a sit-in at a Woolworth’s lunch counter occurred when a Black was refused service because of his skin color (King “Remaining Awake,” 272).

⁷³ At stops along the way to Alabama and Mississippi, the riders were attacked by mobs and eventually arrested by police. Hundred more Freedom Riders followed until the Interstate

In the spring of 1963, the Movement focused on Birmingham. When King violated a local court injunction prohibiting protest marches, he was arrested and spent the week in jail writing what became his famous “Letter from the Birmingham Jail.” Once again, King promoted the idea of “changing a law” by showing how outdated it was (King, “Letter”). By proving how writing could change a point of view, King undertook writing a “Letter” that linked the movement’s ideals to the America Dream: “We will reach the goal of freedom in Birmingham and all over the nation because the goal of America is freedom. Abused and scorned though we may be, our destiny is tied up with America’s destiny” (King 16 April 1963). King exemplified the benefits of being literate when he wrote a letter that became emblematic of the Civil Rights Movement where he saw and expressed the hypocrisy:

You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern. Since we so diligently urge people to obey the Supreme Court's decision of 1954 outlawing segregation in the public schools, at first glance it may seem rather paradoxical for us consciously to break laws. One may ask: "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws (King 16 April 1963)

Along with the “Letter,” Birmingham became a pivotal site in American history that demanded Johnson pay attention. The images from the mistreatment of human beings were

Commerce commission banned segregation in interstate terminals (King “Nonviolence and Racial Justice,” 167).

transmitted nightly on national television. People all over the United States were watching police turn water hoses on children (Cronkite “Remembers”).

Most scholars maintain that the specter of violent resistance and the way it pushed itself into the national consciousness through television finally forced the federal government to get involved—by sending in troops.⁷⁴ The actions seem far-removed from literacy, and yet, the reason these people formed the Civil Rights Movement was to receive their civil rights and to partake of the American Dream. Because many of these minorities were illiterate, they could not find meaningful jobs, and could not join in the economic benefits America offered. Education offered the answer to rising out of their current conditions and therefore was the foundation upon which their civil rights rested.

On August 28, 1963, the Civil Rights Movement exploded into national politics with the March on Washington. Two hundred and fifty thousand people gathered in Washington, D. C., at the Lincoln Memorial to make up the largest civil rights demonstration in American history. King delivered his most famous “I Have a Dream” speech (“March on Washington”). Part of Johnson’s legacy was The Civil Rights Movement headed by King.

History: America’s Social Contract and The Student Movement

The student movement differed from the Civil Rights Movement in that its members had received an education that extended through, and often culminated in, graduation from college. This group initially was founded to re-establish the fundamental beliefs in American values (Sale 15-6) and was made up of intellectuals who had primarily been first-generation college students (Hayden). In short, this group was the first wave of graduates who had

⁷⁴ In 1962, President Kennedy had sent in federal marshals to protect James Meredith who attempted to register at the University of Mississippi. When two of these marshals were killed by a white mob, Kennedy sent in 30,000 federal marshals (“March on Washington”).

taken advantage of the New Deal's inclusion of Federal Aid to Education (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 196).

A group of dissatisfied students at The University of Michigan were concerned with the way they perceived “America was proceeding in its path that was anti-democratic” (Hayden). They wrote what became known as “The Port Huron Statement” (Sixties Project). They promoted a return to the roots of democracy (Hayden) and the foundation of education that helped people understand how to work within a situation in order to change it (“Student Movement”). As the members entered the mainstream of life after their days as students, they also maintained their affiliation with the SDS group because they still perceived themselves to be witnesses to the hypocrisy in America that did not truly allow “freedom” for the citizens (Hayden “Port Huron Statement”). As a group, they never issued a call to overthrow democracy. However, many campuses had organizations named SDS who quickly moved from nonviolence to violent activities⁷⁵ (Kotz 286).

The Michigan branch of the SDS held the first anti-Vietnam war teach-in (Sale 16) and began the evolution of the SDS into the violent group of extremists that America came to know. Protests and branches of the SDS quickly spread to many university campuses around the country. These few words reflect a manifesto to which they adhered

We are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit. . . . These American values [that were learned as children] we found good, principles we could live by. . . . Many of us began maturity in complacency. As we grew,

⁷⁵ The impact from the student group was often due to involvement in activities related to protesting the Vietnam War and America's involvement in the war (Kotz 286).

however, our comfort was penetrated by events too troubling to dismiss.

(Anderson 62-66)

This was not posterity looking at their exclusion from freedom (which was the claim of the Civil Rights participants); rather, these were the children of the privileged in America who looked around to see the hypocrisy they were to inherit. This was not the future they wished to embrace (Sale 178).

Once again, national television helped promote a movement. The nightly news projected real-life images—of the bombs dropped in Vietnam and the people they were killing—and the SDS responded by picketing (SDS). Television helped display the disparate idea of freedom upon which America was founded: the tranquility as seen in America versus the ripping up of a country in Vietnam—all in the name of peace and freedom. It was to this context that a generation of American students responded—at a moment when forty-one percent of Americans were under the age of twenty (Cronkite “Remembers”).

As Tom Hayden—a founder of the Michigan SDS—has stated many times, these students perceived the social contract forged by the Founding Fathers between the citizenry and the government was no longer valid. America was hypocritical in terms of the in which the Constitution was being enforced (Hayden). The democracy—upon which America was founded—was being promoted (as they saw it) in a paradoxical fashion, and the war in Vietnam was the major example of such hypocritical manifestations of the way in which a democracy manifested. The protests of this group symbolized a social revolution based on ideals and questions relating to the basic tenets of democracy. They concluded their Port Huron Statement by observing that

as students for a democratic society, we are committed to stimulating this kind of social movement, this kind of vision and program in campus and community across the country. If we appear to seek the unattainable, as it has been said, then let it be known that we do so to avoid the unimaginable.

(Sixties Project)

The incendiary nature of the student movement was contagious. As SDS members on one campus reacted, so, too, did more members—on other campuses. At the time, as Hayden recalls, he attempted to assuage violent protests from the students because the Port Huron Statement and the SDS were becoming synonymous. Continuing with his remembrances, he recalls “There was no notion at Port Huron that these differences [between the American Dream and the American reality] were irreconcilable. The [Port Huron Statement] doesn't confuse community and fraternity” (qtd. in Sale 63).⁷⁶ However, the Port Huron Statement put words to feelings that many who were educated in the higher echelons of academia felt. Violence erupted from this segment of the American population, just as the Civil Rights Movement was gaining momentum.

Johnson met the student movement in the typical Johnson style of “head on” (Dallek, *Lone Star Rising* 452): Johnson demonstrated by his physical presence that he was willing to work with those in the student movement by the simple act of his being at The University of Michigan—the place of inception for the SDS. The incredibly forceful strategy was visually rhetorical and succeeded—for a short time—in quelling the student unrest.

⁷⁶ As a result of the postwar baby boom, college enrollments in the United States had risen from 3.6 million in 1960 to almost 8 million in 1970 (Hersh and Merrow 171; 174).

Johnson addressed the second portion of the listening audience—the Civil Rights Movement⁷⁷—in a more oblique way. When Johnson spoke of the “City of Man” (Address: 9), he was directly addressing King as he suggested the benefits which would come from The Great Society. Johnson knew of King’s religious proclivities and beliefs and his reliance on Augustine’s words. Johnson evoked this connection by stating that once the *City of Man* meshed with the *City of God*, there would be a sense of fulfillment that was lacking at this time: “[Here will be] a place where the city of man serves not only the needs of the body and the demands of commerce but the desire for beauty and the hunger for community” (Address: 11-12). The interweaving of the visual with the oratorical flourishes reflects Johnson’s deference to the Civil Rights Movement.

He also suggested that all needed to come together in order to succeed as a Nation, because, as Johnson reasoned, “I have come from the turmoil of your Capitol The purpose of protecting the life of our Nation” (Address: 5- 6) is being tested. In other words, Johnson was stating that the “turmoil” would subside once The Great Society was in place and functioning.

Johnson continues by stating it is the “duty” of these educated and emerging citizens to help protect their Nation so others can partake in its many benefits (Address 6-7). Johnson used the occasion of a commencement to suggest a beginning of settling the unrest in the Civil Rights Movement, as well as the SDS. He was suggesting to work together as a whole nation—a united set of states, and people. In this way, he addresses the idea of the Social Contract that both movements challenge. He, too, used the argument that Gandhi had

⁷⁷ Johnson sought to harness the political momentum created by the civil rights movement to enact a far-reaching domestic reform agenda under the rubric of the Great Society. (VanDeMark xv)

told his Indian non-violent nation to pursue—to “use the language of the other in order to bring about accord” (King, “Nonviolence”). It was into this churning water that Johnson waded to pour his calming oil of peace: his Great Society.

Audience

For Lyndon Johnson, audience was everything (Roberts 96). Even though he was President, he still reflected an insecurity that was remarked upon by those who were with him as he left Ann Arbor. As the airplane was waiting for takeoff, after delivering “The Great Society Speech,” Johnson asked, “How’d I do?” (qtd. in Roberts, 96). All the “phrasemakers aboard *Air Force One* knew as they taxied down the runway leaving Detroit that there was only one response that was expected and that was that the speech was ‘GREAT!’” (Roberts 96-97).

Rhetorician Thomas Benson suggests that

speakers and writers, acting rhetorically, create not only themselves, but their audiences. That creation is an act of rhetorical being and an invitation to rhetorical being. Listeners and readers engage in rhetorical action of their own—being, knowing, and doing with the speaker and other listeners, accepting or refusing to accept the images offered by the speaker, enacting or declining to enact the role of the public. (320)

Chaim Perelman and John Petrie add a necessary consideration—that the orator must create an effective argument to bring about this creation of the audience. The reason is obvious:

When Plato in his *Phaedrus* dreams of a rhetoric worthy of a philosopher, what he recommends is a technique that could convince the gods themselves. When the audience changes, the argumentation changes too, and even though

the goal at which it aims is always to act efficaciously on minds, in judging its value one cannot but take account of the quality of these minds it succeeds in convincing. (*Argument* 140)

Perelman and Petrie continue saying that the *values* (to which an audience adheres) offer a critical aspect for an orator to consider if “he wants to present a [rhetorically] effective speech” 143). Johnson determined the values of his audience: through use of humor.

Over 85,000 people were in attendance in The University of Michigan football stadium (video LBJML) when Johnson delivered his Commencement Address. He had to find out a lot of necessary information about the people he addressed and he had to do so rapidly. He knew he needed to establish the fact that he “was an interesting speaker” (Valenti OH LBJML) who had something of value to talk about to the audience. However, in order to do that, he needed to find out what values the greatest portion of the audience held, because as Perelman and Petrie note

the *arguments* employed will be characterized not as correct or incorrect, but as strong or weak. Every argumentation is addressed to an audience, large or small, competent or less competent, which the speaker seeks to persuade. It is never conclusive: by means of it the speaker tries to gain the adherence of a free being, employing reasons which that being should find better than those advanced on behalf of the competing thesis. (1963 101)

Johnson was finding out where the values of the audience lay when he first addressed the audience: “This university has been coeducational since 1870, but I do not believe it was on the basis of your accomplishments that a Detroit high school girl said, ‘In choosing a college,

you first have to decide whether you want a coeducational school or an educational school” (Address: 2).

This first attempt at humor did not rouse the interest of the audience, as the intermittent applause shows (CD OH LBJML). The audience did not respond in large numbers to the first attempt at humor. If the audience had laughed spontaneously and as a group, they would have shown Johnson a propensity as an audience to go with ideas which reflect a “value judgments” (Bitzer, “Public Knowledge” 69) relating to The University of Michigan’s being a “strictly social” University. Johnson established, for himself, how he needed to deal with certain ideas and say certain things. We hear him slightly shifting through papers—suggesting he switches texts.

Johnson then questioned another set of values when he said: “I came out here today very anxious to meet the Michigan student whose father told a friend of mine that his son's education had been a real value. It stopped his mother from bragging about him” (Address: 4). Once again, these remarks were met with minimal laughter. When differences are exposed, laughter usually exposes a contradiction between beliefs and reality which laughter serves to resolve (Attardo 308); consequently, since many responded with laughter to his words, Johnson knew he had completed his task. He had identified the general values he needed to consider for effective delivery to his audience of the rest of his text. Johnson had established two major values the overall audience maintained: the minor place that socializing maintains in The University of Michigan’s make-up and the loyalty of the audience to the university and the learning that goes on inside it. Additionally, when he talked about the disparity in times of the day in which the answer could be determined, he suggests to the listeners that he knew what a student’s life was like: “. . . to decide whether

you want a coeducational school or an educational school (Address: 2) Well, we can find both here at Michigan, although perhaps at different hours” (Address: 3). The establishment of camaraderie suggested that he knew something of value and he was willing to share it with them. As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca make note “The theory of argumentation studies the discursive techniques which make it possible to evoke or further people's assent to the theses presented for their acceptance (*New Rhetoric* 5).

Johnson knew how to read his audiences. Perelman offers the following:

The result . . . is that the development of all argumentation is a function of the audience to which it is addressed and to which the speaker is obliged to adapt himself. By speaker I mean the person putting forward the argumentation
By audience I mean all those whom the argumentation is aimed at, whether hearers or readers. (Perelman, *Argument* 155)

Johnson could now consider giving his speech in the way that he had planned to do—presenting his Great Society. Johnson took the “War on Poverty” that the martyred Kennedy had begun to consider and made it an integral part of his Great Society. In this clever move, Johnson mixed Kennedy, the poor, and Americans who wanted to do their duty as citizens by supporting the War, in order to form his battalions of Americans who wanted to “abolish poverty in America” and “. . . join in the battle to build The Great Society, to prove that our material progress is only the foundation on which we will build a richer life of mind and spirit (Address: 40). As usual, Johnson flattered his audience at the outset and then suggested that they could be part of another student movement—that differed from the other on-campus group at Michigan in his address” (Address: 9).

Johnson had made his exigency and as Arthur Miller, the well-known rhetorician notes, “[R]hetors not only perceive and judge exigencies but *themselves* in relation to those exigencies” (116). Thomas Benson muses in his preface to *American Rhetoric* that “the study of a rhetorical text or communicative event is a multifaceted and open-ended affair, seeking in part for judgment but, even more importantly, for understanding” (ix). He continues by stating that in order “to understand . . . we must see not only its form and its details, but also its relation to its context, especially as that context is perceived by the participants” (ix).

Jack Valenti, who was the special assistant to the President and one of his many speechwriters, was just such a participant. Valenti had tallied twenty-seven interruptions for applause in the President’s Great Society speech (OH LBJML). Johnson corrected him and said that actually it was “twenty-nine, because the introduction and the farewell applause needed to be counted, too” (Roberts 96-97). This small interaction shows how Johnson had kept track of his audience and their positive reactions to what he said. Now that Johnson had his primary audience with him, he could in the rest of his speech guide them as loyal American citizens to do what needed to be done.

Speech

Invention: The Great Society, as an Event

Johnson presents his Great Society first as a logical acceptance of a new set of programs. He next suggests The Great Society is analogous as place for people to work their way on earth into the *City of God* in the next life. The third way Johnson promotes his Great Society is through the promise of time for “leisure.”

He presents his logical argument over three paragraphs (Address 6-9):

- Major Premise: The positive aspect of the topic Nation (Address: 6)
- Minor Premise: The congratulation to the part of that Nation that is wise (Address: 8)
- Conclusion: Therefore, since the nation is made up of wise people, and (of course) all people in the Nation want to continue being wise), so these people will embrace The *Great Society* (Address: 9)

He then states “[The Great Society] is a place where the city of man serves not only the needs of the body and the demands of commerce but the desire for beauty and the hunger for community” (Address: 11). Johnson’s knowledge not only embraces knowledge of current events, but also knowledge of past events. Johnson reveals not only his knowledge of St. Augustine’s words, but also his contestation of the words that Augustine has used to promote an idea. Johnson is not ready to accept Augustine’s assessment of the earthly city and the love that maintains it. Johnson proposes that there is a way to make a better city on earth—Johnson proposes a Great Society, where the “needs of the body and the demands of commerce are satisfied,” and the “desire for beauty and the hunger for community” (Address: 11) are slaked.

The next thing Johnson focuses on is leisure time, which is inherent in the idea of a balanced human being: “It is a place where leisure is a welcome chance to build and reflect, not a feared cause of boredom and restlessness” (Address: 11). Johnson continues to list various aspects of what The Great Society will offer the city of man in his Address (Address: 12) and thereby offers the possibilities of this wonderful life for Americans—all Americans.

Johnson gives a kind of *caveat* when he continues in the next paragraph to caution Americans against becoming too complacent:

[M]ost of all, The Great Society is not a safe harbor, a resting place, a final objective, a finished work. It is a challenge constantly renewed, beckoning us toward a destiny where the meaning of our lives matches the marvelous products of our labor. (Address: 13)

Johnson offers an alternative that lies between the earthly city of man and the heavenly city of God: it is a place on earth that offers a Great Society. As he strives to prove his point, Johnson gives specific statistics that affect this crowd of educated and educators:

Today, 8 million adult Americans, more than the entire population of Michigan, have not finished 5 years of school. Nearly 20 million have not finished 8 years of school. Nearly 54 million—more than one-quarter of all America—have not even finished high school. (Address: 27)

Each year more than 100,000 high school graduates, with proved ability, do not enter college because they cannot afford it. And if we cannot educate today's youth, what will we do in 1970 when elementary school enrollment will be 5 million greater than 1960? And high school enrollment will rise by 5 million. College enrollment will increase by more than 3 million. (Address: 28)

Johnson continues with a list of the problems students face in the classrooms (Address: 29-30) and he suggests forthcoming legislation will deal with these problems.

In this Great Society, Johnson proposes citizens embrace not only what King espouses in the Civil Rights Movement (which is change through nonviolence), but also what the students espouse as they seek the founding principles of America (which is inclusion for all in the American Dream).

Arrangement

The arrangement of a speech is the strategic order of appeals. Johnson spends the first third of his address (Address: 1-8) introducing himself to his public; in the second third (Address: 9-30), Johnson talks about his Great Society and its place in the Nation; and, the third portion of his address (Address: 31-42), he deals with his plea for help from the audience to help make The Great Society happen. These questions are directly reflective of the way in which FDR would phrase his speeches. Johnson knows they were most effective for Roosevelt, and he employs the similar strategy. His pacing reflects the structure affording him the ability to speed up and slow down in each grouping in such a way that the speech did not seem to be forced or, alternatively, sluggish.

First Johnson gives a timeline. First we do that, which is “For a century we labored to settle and to subdue a continent. For half a century we called upon unbounded invention and untiring industry to create an order of plenty for all of our people (Address: 7). Now we must do this in order to continue to grow: ”the challenge of the next half century is whether we have the wisdom to use that wealth to enrich and elevate our national life, and to advance the quality of our American civilization (Address: 8). The chronological order reflects a logical progression that Johnson establishes for his audience.

Next, Johnson points out where the Great Society is to be found. Through the alliterative repetition of the letter “c,” Johnson reinforce the place his Great Society is located: the Great Society is found “in the cities, the countryside, and the classrooms” (Address: 14). Since we have the time and the places established, Johnson now makes the appeal of pathos when he reiterates the words Kennedy used in his Inaugural Address. Kennedy states that “now it is the time to begin” (Kennedy, *Address* 42). Johnson states:

“The Great Society rests on abundance and liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice, to which we are totally committed in our time. But that is just the beginning” (Address: 14).

Johnson continues to argue in this format, until he reaches the end. In four paragraphs, Johnson iterates the word will at the beginning of each set of statements. He makes sure that as he uses his ethos (as an appeal) to promote the idea of building a Great Society, this group will make it happen. He reinforces his belief in the audience by the constant reassertion that they will perform all that is expected of them:

So, will you join in the battle to give every citizen the full equality which God enjoins and the law requires, whatever his belief, or race, or the color of his skin? (Address: 37).

Will you join in the battle to give every citizen an escape from the crushing weight of poverty? (Address: 38).

Will you join in the battle to make it possible for all nations to live in enduring peace—as neighbors and not as mortal enemies? (Address: 39).

Will you join in the battle to build the Great Society, to prove that our material progress is only the foundation on which we will build a richer life of mind and spirit? (Address: 40)

Johnson arranges his arguments in such a way that he wants his audience to immediately begin to create this new society. Johnson keeps the arrangement simple, and yet effective in order to promote the major idea he is suggesting.

Style

The rhetorical strategies Johnson used to promote his agenda in this speech were well-calibrated and extremely effective.⁷⁸ First, he knew this audience would primarily accept his “idea” of a Great Society, since his speech was in front of a liberal audience willing to accept a set of programs that would “help minorities” (Miller, M. 497). In addition to this, Johnson knew he could test the response from this group and see if the name—The Great Society—worked, or not. Next, since he was speaking to a group of graduating seniors, the need for education was implicit in the fact that they were graduating from an educational institution, he knew this group could understand the underpinnings of the importance of the Great Society. They would help him promote his Great Society in order to help others realize the many benefits of receiving an education within a Great Society. After all, Johnson did not have to be overt in what (he perceived) brought about democracy (Labaree 43): education. Finally, Johnson could use a more “inflated rhetorical style” (Grubin LBJML)⁷⁹ in order to get across several of his more arcane ideas.⁸⁰

A news commentator summed up Johnson’s flamboyant style as “inflated rhetoric—the kind American leaders seldom use any more” (Grubin LBJML). An aide attempted clarification of Johnson’s meaning when he said, “What he [Johnson] meant was a full stomach, ‘yes.’ But he also meant a fuller life, too” (Grubin LBJML). With these few

⁷⁸ Upon watching the footage that focuses alternatively on Johnson and the audience in attendance, the viewer cannot help but become aware of some shocked faces (LBJML video of May 22, 1964, Commencement at The University of Michigan).

⁷⁹ Noted in the video by the narrator for LBJ: Biography. PBS video.

⁸⁰ Sargent Shriver noted that when Johnson named him as head of the Office of Economic Opportunity, which was to put into effect the Great Society, there was no plan on how to implement any aspect of any of these programs (LBJ Biography PBS video).

seemingly random remarks, we, as the reviewing audience—over forty years later—realize that Johnson was referring to what had become known as the *organic theory*⁸¹ of jurisprudential thought.

Johnson used one word (Nation) to refer to the individual and the state: Johnson uses the word Nation twice in the opening paragraph of the speech indicating the importance of the word and what the word suggests (i.e. the way the Nation had been—as well as the way in which the Nation could evolve) when he states: “The purpose of protecting the life of our Nation and preserving the liberty of our citizens is to pursue the happiness of our people. Our success in that pursuit is the test of our success as a Nation” (Address: 6).

Johnson did not choose the word Nation lightly in this important speech. As the historian Michael Mezey writes:

the Founders succeeded in designing a political system that optimized both their managerial and their democratic standards for good government decisions that were a product of the beliefs that they carried with them to Philadelphia and of the events that they perceived taking place around them [were drawn] in part from the writings of philosophers such as David Hume, Locke, and Montesquieu, [as well as] their own knowledge of governmental practices in ancient as well as more contemporary societies. (22)

⁸¹ “This explanation of the origin of the state as a natural phenomenon, which bears some resemblance to aspects of divine and patriarchal theory, implies that the state is an entity that emerges quite independently of the autonomous will of man. . . . In this view, the state exists because it is part of the natural order of things and not the arbitrary contrivance of man. Closely allied to this conception of the state is another which sees the state essentially as a self-sustaining "organism" with its own intrinsic purposes and ends, which may be quite different from those of the individuals who constitute its members” (Sicker 52).

As Mezey helps us remember, the choice of the speechwriters stems from a discussion begun earlier in the history of Western Civilization by Marcus Tullius Cicero. Regarding the origins of the state and political authority, Cicero stated that the source of all human goods and virtues was found in nature, including the natural impulse in humans toward association with others. The reason for this, Cicero continued, is that "the human kind is not solitary, nor do its members live lives of isolated roving; but it [the state] is so constituted that, even if it possessed the greatest plenty of material comforts, [it would nevertheless be impelled by its nature to live in social groups]" (qtd. in Sicker 21-22).

The philosopher John Locke adds to Cicero's realization of the human need to band together, saying, "once and for all the value and happiness of individual life is that 'which is good for the community, and [reciprocally] good for every individual in it'" (qtd. in Cobban 89-90). Edmund Burke, the noted Eighteenth Century British statesman and philosopher, expanded on Locke's reference to a community and called it a Nation when he applied his words that: "Corporate bodies are immortal for the good of the members. . . . Nations themselves are such corporations" (Cobban 90). The word Nation, as Johnson used it, reflects an evolution arrived at by "organic theory"⁸² of the word. Johnson arranges his words in such a way that the audience realizes they are the recipients of this nation that the founding fathers established.

Johnson brings the entire Address into a balanced symmetry as he completes it: by again talking about the Nation and specifically embracing the students who graduate by

⁸² According to Meyer Abrams in the biological presentation of the evolution of a plant (1) The plant originates in a seed and as Samuel Coleridge wrote, "The living whole is prior to the parts" (qtd. in Abrams 394); (2) The plant grows, which described the process by which the plant continues; (3) The plant evolves spontaneously from an internal source of energy and organizes itself into its proper form; and, (4) The achieved structure of a plant is an organic unity (Abrams 394).

including words that former Presidents had used: “Woodrow Wilson once wrote ‘Every man sent out from his university should be a man of his Nation as well as a man of his time’”

(Address: 34). By using the words of another notable President, Johnson implies his association with Wilson, his words, and the feeling Wilson posits in his statement.

Johnson immediately contrasts the “goings on” in real life with the serenity of the “hallowed halls of academe” when he states “I have come today from the turmoil of **your Capitol** to the tranquility of **your campus** to speak about the future of **your country**”

(Address: 5). Johnson pauses after each of the three italicized words (above); when he does this, he performs two major tasks. First, he includes the listeners by using the possessive form of the pronoun you – your. Second, he draws on the physical (and linear) movement between “your Capitol” and “your campus” and expands to the more abstract place where “your country” exists. He is, at once, acknowledging the fact that the graduates are moving from the serenity—and protected place—of campus life into the hustle and bustle of “real life.”

In the next paragraph he equates protecting life with maintaining the *happiness* of the individual citizen who makes up the Nation and then goes on to promote how reaching happiness as well as protecting life occurs in the Great Society (Address: 6-9). Then, Johnson delves into the reason for his giving the speech—which is not just a commencement address; rather, the speech is to herald a Great Society that offers everything to all who are part of the Nation (Address: 9).

To posit that the audience recognized the style by which Johnson presented his speech is not as far-fetched as one might think. Johnson used this speech as a kind of literary presentation that reflects the organic theory that Samuel Coleridge devised for understanding

poetry. Johnson did so with full knowledge that scholars made up most of his audience which ranged from freshly-minted college graduates to established college faculty, as well as friends and family of collegiate scholars. Therefore, when Johnson put forth the word Nation (which he used throughout his speech), he knew that the propensity of the listening audience would be to make the immediate connections to the inherently held idea that this word evinced.

First, Johnson speaks of the Nation as being a living organism. The organism is made up of each cell, but each cell is dependant upon the health of the whole in order to maintain health, itself:

For a century we labored to settle and to subdue a continent. For half a century we called upon unbounded invention and untiring industry to create an order of plenty for all of our people. (Address: 7)

The challenge of the next half century is whether we have the wisdom to use that wealth to enrich and elevate our national life, and to advance the quality of our American civilization. (Address: 8)

Johnson incorporates a unique technique at this point. He relies on the scholarliness of this graduating class of higher learning when he makes reference to an idea that Coleridge promoted: imagination. In his *Biographia Literaria*, Coleridge writes that imagination has both the perceptive power to see similarity lurking within dissimilarity—or unity in the midst of difference—and the synthetic power to fuse and reconcile opposites into one (qtd. in Coburn 147-50). Johnson refers to “this fusion” inherent within imagination’s properties of perceptivity when he begins with the words: “Your imagination, your initiative, and your indignation . . .” (Address: 9) which leads to the creation of The Great Society: “For in your

time we have the opportunity to move not only toward the rich society and the powerful society, but upward to the Great Society (Address: 9).

Johnson's use of alliteration suggests that the audience remember what he said in order to act on what was of great importance to him. After all, the use of memory tricks helps us all recall certain ideas even after the entire event is long past. Another example is the use of the three *c*'s that was discussed earlier: "In our cities, in our countryside and in our classrooms" (Address: 14).

Johnson ends his Address with the symmetry that suggests a balanced presentation: in two important concluding paragraphs, he once again mentions the Nation:

For better or for worse, your generation has been appointed by history to deal with those problems and to lead America toward a new age. You have the chance never before afforded to any people in any age. You can help build a society where the demands of morality, and the needs of the spirit, can be realized in the life of the Nation. (Address: 36)

Will you join in the battle to make it possible for all nations to live in enduring peace—as neighbors and not as mortal enemies? (Address: 39)

Memory

Bitzer's fund of truths applies to Johnson's reflecting on America's values. One of the main values is that of becoming educated in order to promote democracy. One of the greatest internalized truths that Americans hold directly relates to "The Golden Rule" or some form of it (and various aspects of this "rule" are held to be true in other parts of the

World⁸³). This assumption comes from the fact that some form of “The Golden Rule” exists in the vernacular that will suit the particular targeted audience stretching as far back into history as time Before the Common Era (B.C.E). The phrase is well-stated in Mathew 7:12, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.” Luke more simply writes, “Do to others as you would have them do to you” (6:31).

Lyndon Johnson was making direct reference to this particular belief of doing unto nature so that it would reciprocate when he said:

It [The Great Society] is a place where man can renew contact with nature. It is a place which honors creation for its own sake and for what it adds to the understanding of the race. It is a place where men are more concerned with the quality of their goals than the quantity of their goods. (Address: 12)

Johnson refers to a contract renewal that is socially-based: implied within this social contract lies the realization that in order to understand a contract, the reader has to have some sort of educational background. Otherwise, no understanding can occur.

Johnson offers the ability of those who join into this Great Society to become implicit participants in following the “Golden Rule” by “adding to the understanding” (Address: 12) of all humans through education. Thus it will follow that the listeners must “treat others as you would like to be treated” (Mat. 7:12). Again, Johnson’s use of the three places where Americans can follow the Golden Rule are “in our cities, in our countryside, and in our classrooms” (Address: 14). And in a subsequent paragraph, Johnson reminds Americans of

⁸³ Harry Gensler, noted philosopher and writer on ethics notes that “The golden rule is endorsed by all the great world religions; [Jesus](#), Hillel, and Confucius used it to summarize their ethical teachings. And for many centuries the idea has been influential among people of very diverse cultures (Gensler),

the roots from which they came when Aristotle talked of the “good life” that comes from banding together as a Nation (*Nic. Ethics*; Address: 19). Johnson speaks of the countryside of America, and he receives the loudest applause (showing the spontaneous memory he has elicited from his audience):

A second place where we begin to build The Great Society is in our countryside. We have always prided ourselves on being not only America the strong and America the free, but America the beautiful. Today that beauty is in danger. . . . (Address: 23)

A few years ago we were greatly concerned about the "Ugly American." Today we must act to prevent an ugly America. (Address: 24)

Johnson spends the longest time on the third place, suggesting that he is lingering on this particular area in order to make an impact on the audience: “A third place to build The Great Society is in the classrooms of America. There your children's lives will be shaped. Our society will not be great until every young mind is set free to scan the farthest reaches of thought and imagination” (Address: 26). Here, he makes direct reference to the “New Deal” and the way in which Roosevelt influenced Americans by describing how poverty deleteriously affects educational opportunities. Johnson believed that “poverty simply existed because the State did not provide ‘opportunity’ to those who could not fully participate in society” (Young 14). The rationale Johnson uses is this:

Major premise: democracy comes from educated citizens.

Minor Premise: lack of education comes from poverty (Labaree 42).

Therefore: poverty means no democracy (because no democratic citizenry).

The supposition that sprang forth from this way of thinking was that education would mean escape from poverty. Johnson reminds the listeners of the importance that education plays in a democracy. As John Adams wrote in his *Thoughts on Government*, “The necessity is to educate the broader people, and by educating the broader people, they elevate the character of the people in the society itself” (qtd. in Hill 142). This notion of education is oftentimes missed in Adams, but it is central to his argument because he believed that government had a role in enhancing the character of its citizens: “Laws for the liberal education of youth especially of the lower class of people . . . should consider no expense too great for this purpose . . . as [educating them] inspires them with dignity” (Adams qtd. in Hill 150).

As Johnson continues speaking about education, he makes clear the specific areas he wishes to focus on (as opposed to the general way in which he spoke of the “city” and the “countryside” problems. Once again, the words he spoke to White House aide, Joseph Califano: “The people I want to help are the ones who've never held real jobs and aren't equipped to handle them. They have no motivation to reach for something better because the sum total of their life is losing” (Califano 75).

Johnson ends on a note suggesting that the graduating class—as well as all who are listening—have a task to do: to live up to simply by being citizens of this Nation (Address: 42). Johnson suggests that the audience can build the new world that “they” the forefathers sought—through a Great Society when he remarks: “They [the forefathers] sought a new world. So I have come here today to your campus to say that you too can build more than just a new country” (Address: 42). The words he uses are similar to previous speeches, and suggest similar emotions. They come from Ralph Waldo Emerson’s citizens who are “Voluntaries.” In Emerson’s poem, the citizens realize their “duty” as not only

acknowledgement, but the realization of the need to actively participate in creating the nation:

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
 So near is God to man,
 When Duty whispers low, Thou must,
 The youth replies, I can
 (Emerson: “Voluntaries”)

Delivery

The beginning of Johnson’s address was “coolly received” (Miller, M. 459)⁸⁴; however, when Johnson began to suggest the major changes that he envisioned, the audience shifted; the applause increased; and the words Johnson spoke took on a kind of momentum. Finally, when he named The Great Society there was open acceptance and abundant applause—as the transcription of this address shows.⁸⁵ Johnson’s voice booms out over the football stadium at The University of Michigan, and at the conclusion of his presentation the applause generated from 85,000 people is almost deafening.

The way in which Johnson delivered his all important Great Society speech suggests a parallel that he was attempting to reach with Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream Speech” on August 28, 1963. Although King delivered his speech at the Lincoln Memorial, Johnson’s speech shared two important aspects with it: he was using a public forum to give voice to an important idea and he was delivering a well-articulated set of words that targeted a specific need within the society. Johnson did not deliver a speech that was “reminiscent of a church sermon” (qtd. in A “Dream” Remembered); however, it was

⁸⁴ CD of speech.

⁸⁵ Recording from Lyndon Baines Johnson Museum and Library of May 22, 1964, LBJ address at Ann Arbor.

forceful in the way that Johnson clearly and concisely presented a great problem and then offered a great solution through his Great Society.

Just as King did not offer specifics, Johnson, too, remained ambiguous in terms of specific promises leading to exact results: "But I do promise this: We are going to assemble the best thought and the broadest knowledge from all over the world to find those answers for America. . . . [T]o set our course toward The Great Society" (Address: 32). And, just as King had used the metaphor of an unpaid check when he delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech,⁸⁶ Johnson alluded to St. Augustine's words in his *City of God*⁸⁷ when he said,

. . . [a learned man once] wrote: "Every man sent out from his university should be a man of his Nation as well as a man of his time."
(Address: 34) . . .

For better or for worse, your generation has been appointed by history to deal with those problems and to lead America toward a new age. You have the chance never before afforded to any people in any age. You can help build a society where the demands of morality, and the needs of the spirit, can be realized in the life of the Nation. (Address: 35)

Lyndon Johnson had a commanding figure and voice, and when he stood in front of the 85,000 in attendance, his stature made him obviously stand out. When he completed his speech, the audience erupted from its seats.

⁸⁶ "It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check that has come back marked 'insufficient funds'" (par. 4).

⁸⁷ "But in the family of the just man who lives by faith and is as yet a pilgrim journeying on to the celestial city, even those who rule serve those whom they seem to command; for they rule not from a love of power, but from a sense of the duty they owe to others" (St. Augustine).

Conclusion

Immediately upon giving his Address, Johnson returned to Washington and organized several groups to set up educational goals and policies that would implement the goals he had promoted (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 196; Miller, M. 401-02). Johnson knew that much work had to occur in order to get things done and he asks his audience to help bring the Great Society into being more rapidly in his speech at Ann Arbor:

[Because] [t]he solution to these problems does not rest on a massive program in Washington, nor can it rely solely on the strained resources of local authority. They require us to create new concepts of cooperation, a creative federalism, between the National Capital and the leaders of local communities. (Address: 33)

Johnson wanted the people to know they had contributed to bringing about The Great Society. Various states, as well as the local citizenry had to become involved in making The Great Society occur in America. Prototypes of the educational programs inherent in The Great Society had been implemented in twenty-six cities across America (Barnett interview), prior to Johnson's introduction of The Great Society. Johnson had learned from these programs that it was imperative for actual local involvement to occur in order for success to come about. One program within The Great Society's educational agenda—which later became known as “Head Start”—was focused on early childhood education (Wright 143). The “Central Cities Project” (Barnett Interview) was one such prototype carried out in Fort Worth, Texas, from 1963-65.

The 1960s mark a shift in several areas of thought: ideas once considered frivolous became expressions of the most fundamental dilemmas of human existence. The ideas of

freedom, justice, and equality were elevated in such a way as to raise questions about their precise meaning (Watson 516). Johnson thought responding to the two main social movements would forestall problems that might arise; hence, Johnson decided to “roll out the Great Society before some of the prototypes for some of the programs had been completely tested” (Humphrey OH LBJML).

We see, in one of Johnson’s major public speeches (Goodwin OH LBJML), the delivery of the positive message to America. He foretells some of the benefits that can come from embracing ideas inherent in a Great Society: “The purpose of protecting the life of our Nation and preserving the liberty of our citizens is to pursue the happiness of our people. Our success in that pursuit is the test of our success as a Nation” (Remarks: 6).

The previous speeches have helped to identify America’s problem: the lack of proper education of the citizenry in a democracy. In his Great Society speech, Johnson actually offers ways to accomplish success of achieving an educated citizenry. Johnson and King shared a similar “Dream”; however, Johnson realized he could make things happen by using the power of the Presidency to bring forth a Great Society.

I shall never forget the faces of the boys and the girls in that little Welhausen Mexican School, and I remember even yet the pain of realizing and knowing then that college was closed to practically every one of those children because they were too poor. And I think it was then that I made up my mind that this Nation could never rest while the door to knowledge remained closed to any American. (Johnson, “Remarks at Southwest Texas State College Upon Signing the Higher Education Act of 1965”)

APPENDIX D⁸⁸

**President Lyndon B. Johnson's
Remarks at The University of Michigan
May 22, 1964**

⁸⁸ “Remarks at U of M” will be the reference to this speech throughout the dissertation.

President Lyndon B. Johnson's
Remarks at The University of Michigan

May 22, 1964

1. President Hatcher, Governor Romney, Senators McNamara and Hart, Congressmen Meader and Staebler, and other members of the fine Michigan delegation, members of the graduating class, my fellow Americans:
2. It is a great pleasure to be here today. This university has been coeducational since 1870, but I do not believe it was on the basis of your accomplishments that a Detroit high school girl said, "In choosing a college, you first have to decide whether you want a coeducational school or an educational school."
3. Well, we can find both here at Michigan, although perhaps at different hours.
4. I came out here today very anxious to meet the Michigan student whose father told a friend of mine that his son's education had been a real value. It stopped his mother from bragging about him.
5. I have come today from the turmoil of your Capitol to the tranquility of your campus to speak about the future of your country.
6. The purpose of protecting the life of our Nation and preserving the liberty of our citizens is to pursue the happiness of our people. Our success in that pursuit is the test of our success as a Nation.
7. For a century we labored to settle and to subdue a continent. For half a century we called upon unbounded invention and untiring industry to create an order of plenty for all of our people.
8. The challenge of the next half century is whether we have the wisdom to use that wealth to enrich and elevate our national life, and to advance the quality of our American civilization.
9. Your imagination, your initiative, and your indignation will determine whether we build a society where progress is the servant of our needs, or a society where old values and new visions are buried under unbridled growth. For in your time we have the opportunity to move not only toward the rich society and the powerful society, but upward to the Great Society.
10. The Great Society rests on abundance and liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice, to which we are totally committed in our time. But that is just the beginning.
11. The Great Society is a place where every child can find knowledge to enrich his mind and to enlarge his talents. It is a place where leisure is a welcome chance to build and reflect, not a feared cause of boredom and restlessness. It is a place where the city of man serves not only the needs of the body and the demands of commerce but the desire for beauty and the hunger for community.
12. It is a place where man can renew contact with nature. It is a place which honors creation for its own sake and for what it adds to the understanding of the race. It is a place where men are more concerned with the quality of their goals than the quantity of their goods.
13. But most of all, the Great Society is not a safe harbor, a resting place, a final objective, a finished work. It is a challenge constantly renewed, beckoning us toward a destiny where the meaning of our lives matches the marvelous products of our labor.

14. So I want to talk to you today about three places where we begin to build the Great Society—in our cities, in our countryside, and in our classrooms.

15. Many of you will live to see the day, perhaps 50 years from now, when there will be 400 million Americans—four fifths of them in urban areas. In the remainder of this century urban population will double, city land will double, and we will have to build homes, highways, and facilities equal to all those built since this country was first settled. So in the next 40 years we must rebuild the entire urban United States.

16. Aristotle said: "Men come together in cities in order to live, but they remain together in order to live the good life." It is harder and harder to live the good life in American cities today.

17. The catalog of ills is long: there is the decay of the centers and the despoiling of the suburbs. There is not enough housing for our people or transportation for our traffic. Open land is vanishing and old landmarks are violated.

18. Worst of all expansion is eroding the precious and time honored values of community with neighbors and communion with nature. The loss of these values breeds loneliness and boredom and indifference.

19. Our society will never be great until our cities are great. Today the frontier of imagination and innovation is inside those cities and not beyond their borders.

20. New experiments are already going on. It will be the task of your generation to make the American city a place where future generations will come, not only to live but to live the good life.

21 I understand that if I stayed here tonight I would see that Michigan students are really doing their best to live the good life.

22. This is the place where the Peace Corps was started. It is inspiring to see how all of you, while you are in this country, are trying so hard to live at the level of the people.

23. A second place where we begin to build the Great Society is in our countryside. We have always prided ourselves on being not only America the strong and America the free, but America the beautiful. Today that beauty is in danger. The water we drink, the food we eat, the very air that we breathe, are threatened with pollution. Our parks are overcrowded, our seashores overburdened. Green fields and dense forests are disappearing.

24. A few years ago we were greatly concerned about the "Ugly American." Today we must act to prevent an ugly America.

25. For once the battle is lost, once our natural splendor is destroyed, it can never be recaptured. And once man can no longer walk with beauty or wonder at nature his spirit will wither and his sustenance be wasted.

26. A third place to build the Great Society is in the classrooms of America. There your children's lives will be shaped. Our society will not be great until every young mind is set free to scan the farthest reaches of thought and imagination. We are still far from that goal.

27. Today, 8 million adult Americans, more than the entire population of Michigan, have not finished 5 years of school. Nearly 20 million have not finished 8 years of school. Nearly 54 million—more than one-quarter of all America—have not even finished high school.

28. Each year more than 100,000 high school graduates, with proved ability, do not enter college because they cannot afford it. And if we cannot educate today's youth, what will we do in 1970 when elementary school

enrollment will be 5 million greater than 1960? And high school enrollment will rise by 5 million. College enrollment will increase by more than 3 million.

29. In many places, classrooms are overcrowded and curricula are outdated. Most of our qualified teachers are underpaid, and many of our paid teachers are unqualified. So we must give every child a place to sit and a teacher to learn from. Poverty must not be a bar to learning, and learning must offer an escape from poverty.

30. But more classrooms and more teachers are not enough. We must seek an educational system which grows in excellence as it grows in size. This means better training for our teachers. It means preparing youth to enjoy their hours of leisure as well as their hours of labor. It means exploring new techniques of teaching, to find new ways to stimulate the love of learning and the capacity for creation.

31. These are three of the central issues of the Great Society. While our Government has many programs directed at those issues, I do not pretend that we have the full answer to those problems.

32. But I do promise this: We are going to assemble the best thought and the broadest knowledge from all over the world to find those answers for America. I intend to establish working groups to prepare a series of White House conferences and meetings—on the cities, on natural beauty, on the quality of education, and on other emerging challenges. And from these meetings and from this inspiration and from these studies we will begin to set our course toward the Great Society.

33. The solution to these problems does not rest on a massive program in Washington, nor can it rely solely on the strained resources of local authority. They require us to create new concepts of cooperation, a creative federalism, between the National Capital and the leaders of local communities.

34. Woodrow Wilson once wrote: "Every man sent out from his university should be a man of his Nation as well as a man of his time."

35. Within your lifetime powerful forces, already loosed, will take us toward a way of life beyond the realm of our experience, almost beyond the bounds of our imagination.

36. For better or for worse, your generation has been appointed by history to deal with those problems and to lead America toward a new age. You have the chance never before afforded to any people in any age. You can help build a society where the demands of morality, and the needs of the spirit, can be realized in the life of the Nation.

37. So, will you join in the battle to give every citizen the full equality which God enjoins and the law requires, whatever his belief, or race, or the color of his skin?

38. Will you join in the battle to give every citizen an escape from the crushing weight of poverty?

39. Will you join in the battle to make it possible for all nations to live in enduring peace—as neighbors and not as mortal enemies ?

40 Will you join in the battle to build the Great Society, to prove that our material progress is only the foundation on which we will build a richer life of mind and spirit?

41. There are those timid souls who say this battle cannot be won; that we are condemned to a soulless wealth. I do not agree. We have the power to shape the civilization that we want. But we need your will, your labor, your hearts, if we are to build that kind of society.

42. Those who came to this land sought to build more than just a new country. They sought a new world. So I have come here today to your campus to say that you can make their vision our reality. So let us from this

moment begin our work so that in the future men will look back and say: It was then, after a long and weary way, that man turned the exploits of his genius to the full enrichment of his life.

Thank you. Goodby.

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-64. Volume I, entry 357, pp. 704-707. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1965.*

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CHAPTER FIVE

Johnson: The Messenger

In this chapter, I show how Johnson really serves as an individual who is willing to take his ideas of a Great Society out to the people. I present two speeches promoting the Great Society, in each speech event, the audiences, the occasion, and the rhetorical situation dramatically differ. We see how Johnson alters the delivery of the same ideas to reach the immediate audience to whom he is speaking. In short, Johnson reveals his rhetorical ability by persuading two seemingly different audiences of the same thing: implementing education for America's citizenry

Many reasons for his active promotion—that is, Johnson's acting as a messenger to the American public bearing information regarding his Great Society—have been given; however, one primary motivation drove Johnson. There was unrest in the country, and Johnson felt that the way the way to stop these antagonistic feelings was to make everyone understand what the Great Society offered them. Therefore, Johnson took the message to the people in public speeches (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 134, 222; Duvale 39).

Writer Robert Dallek observes that a speech gave Johnson the platform to transmit a lot of information to a large group of people (*Lyndon Johnson* 152). Additionally, the speech event gave Johnson the ability to show his “overwhelming personality and [demonstrate his] unique understanding of political power” (qtd. in Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 536).⁸⁹ A more personal reason seems to be inherent in Johnson's motivation to do what he considered to be “the right thing” (Steinberg 51). His father, Sam, had told Johnson years before when he was beginning his political life to always consider: “Son . . . is this . . . in the benefit of the

⁸⁹Clark Clifford was a close personal advisor to Johnson (Miller 695).

people? What does this do for human beings? [You must ask yourself] how have I helped the lame and the ignorant and the diseased?" (Kearns 89).

To this end, Johnson brought the significance of the Great Society directly to the people. In one of these speeches, he bluntly delivered the following edict: "[Education] is the number one business on this Nation's agenda" (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 198). He wanted people to realize not only what The Great Society *offered* but also the correlative responsibility they had *to do* in order to work *within* a Great Society. The main task, he maintained, was that they educate themselves and all of America's citizens, in order to begin the task of building what would become a Great Society.

The following chapter uses two particular speeches in which Johnson actively promotes his message—that education is “the guardian genius of our democracy” (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 198). Education upholds a Great Society and Johnson wants the American public to realize the importance of education. The two speeches are “Remarks in Johnson City, Texas, Upon Signing the Elementary and Secondary Education Bill” and Johnson's Commencement Address at Howard University ("To Fulfill These Rights"). Johnson delivers both of these speeches just months apart (the Johnson City speech is April 11, 1965, and the Howard University Address is June 4, 1965). In both speeches, Johnson promotes the same idea—The Great Society; yet, in virtually antithetical ways.

Historical Overview

What history books term as “a rift” occurred in America between the time that Johnson announced his Great Society (in May 1964) and the time he performed one of the

first acts promoting the Great Society—signing the Civil Rights Act of 1964⁹⁰ into law on July 2, 1964 (“Civil Rights Law”). The Civil Rights Movement had made division clear between the “haves” and the “have-nots” in America. The rift, which had begun as a separation between African Americans and the rest of American society, had become a major schism apparent to most of the country by mid-July 1964.

Even though many believed a new age in racial relations was dawning in America (King, “Drum Major Instinct”) other Americans were angered and did not want to have the government tell them what to do (King, “Alabama’s Bus Boycott”). Many African Americans—under the leadership of Stokely Carmichael and Malcolm X—felt American had wronged them (Sixties Project). They maintained “The American Dream was an illusion” (Sixties Project).

In early spring to late fall of 1964, the schism continued to widen. It became a chasm dividing Americans after the signing of the Civil Rights Act and implementation of the various laws that were supposed to be focused on anti-discrimination (Grofman 10). Many of the states acted quickly to circumvent all the new Federal laws allowing of civil rights for the African Americans. Specifically, groups targeted The Civil Rights Act. African Americans did not target this act because it focused on anti-discrimination *to* them⁹¹; rather, they focused on this act because of the white majority’s having to allow equal opportunities

⁹⁰The Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes note of the following: It is to enforce the constitutional right to vote, to confer jurisdiction upon the district courts of the United States to provide injunctive relief against discrimination in public accommodations, to authorize the Attorney General to institute suits to protect constitutional rights in public facilities and public education, to extend the Commission on Civil Rights, to prevent discrimination in federally assisted programs, to establish a Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity, and for other purposes (“Civil Rights Act of 1964.”).

⁹¹ A negative civil right is basically defined as an unalienable natural right that is non-negotiable and exists prior to civil society. Civil rights, as construed in a defined “negative” aspect, are not denied; however, they are not aided by the government in any way. (Borelli).

(primarily to African Americans) in specific areas such as housing and schooling.⁹² In other words, the white majority still served as the dominant determiner of the law, and most African Americans felt that the white majority would use this new set of laws to control what happened to them further.

States such as California⁹³ enacted laws that engendered a feeling of injustice and despair in the inner city dwellers—who were primarily minorities. The actions that occurred during the time period between the signing of the Civil Rights Act and the actual enforcement of it reflects a gap in the way in which portions of the United States’ population interpreted the word “freedom” which was used in the words of the Civil Rights Amendment.

Nick Kotz, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, helps to refine the way in which Johnson and his administration interpreted “freedom.” For Johnson, freedom had come to the African Americans with the passage of this Bill. Those involved in the Civil Rights Movement, however, felt that the bill gave them “too little” and came “too late” (Kotz Interview). Kotz continues:

Whenever you have been standing on someone’s neck for over 100 years and then you get off, they don’t tend to turn around and “thank you.” This was the attitude that Johnson was finding emanated from those who were involved in the Civil Rights Movement. (Kotz Personal Interview)

Many of the people who were being discriminated against had not received adequate education (Valenti OH LBJML). They had the feeling of being forced to either accept what

⁹² Civil society’s entire reason for being is to guarantee the civil rights of individuals. Civil rights are entirely government granted, positive rights. A good government is one that, in the form of its positive civil rights and structure, effectively secures those natural rights, and, in its official government actions, does not otherwise violate such natural rights (Borelli).

⁹³ California voted in Proposition 14, which attempted to block the fair housing components of the Civil Rights Act (“1965 Watts Riots”).

was given to them or physically revolt (Jeffries 73). In short, since many did not have the educational training necessary to use words to defend themselves, much less understand the words being interpreted for them, they felt unable to fight in the courts of law using words. Instead, they used the physical weapons of violence they knew how to wield (Jeffries 37). Thus, five days after Johnson signed The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Dallek *Flawed Giant*, 222), the Civil Rights Movement transformed from peaceful protests in the South to violent clashes in the nation's major cities. Los Angeles exploded into riots in what has become infamously known as the “Watts Riots” beginning August 11, 1965.⁹⁴ The events leading up to the cataclysmic outbursts made some feel as if the United States were “going through another Civil War that might not end in a ‘united set’ of states” (Baird interview). The two speeches Johnson delivered served as parts of a bridge that Johnson attempted to build between the time of the signing of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act (August 6, 1965).

Johnson’s Historical Knowledge of Negative and Positive Constitutional Rights

Johnson had come into politics as a Texas Representative who was a “great big” anomaly (Dugger 211). According to accounts that Ronnie Dugger records, Johnson vacillated as a Congressman in 1946 between having a strong military (298) and yet, alternatively, espousing being a “brotherhood of man” (296). He had become a strong Southern Democrat in the Senate and yet had refused to join the Southern Caucus when civil rights became a topic in 1954 (Caro, *Master of the Senate* 218). When Johnson became

⁹⁴ Twenty one-year-old Marquette Frye, a black motorist suspected of drunken driving, quickly drew a crowd in South Los Angeles. A scuffle broke out and someone threw a rock, then another. Rock throwing became a fight, which quickly escalated to almost war-like conditions. For the next six days, urban black frustration boiled over. Buildings burned across Watts and neighboring communities. Thirty-four people died, looters emptied stores, and the National Guard patrolled the streets. (Wildes)

President, many perceived him as moving into the liberal “camp.” However, Northern liberals were fearful of results that Johnson might bring about. Oddly enough, Johnson actually implemented all of the programs Kennedy had begun (Miller, M. 495).

Consequently, when Johnson moved from being the Southern Democrat to being the President (Nieman 164; 176), he moved from being generically identified as a negative rights’ adherent to a positive rights’ adherent. He was indicating to Gardner—and the task force that Gardner headed—that he did not want his administration to be “trampling on any civil rights” (Nieman 164): Johnson wanted to be sure that he adhered to the legal constraints as well as opportunities that the Constitution afforded any citizen of the United States.

The law that Johnson signed at Johnson City, Texas, was the result of a meeting of many minds—including the conference attendees, and was actually the application of a positive construction of the Constitution. The reason is obvious; it actually expanded the way in which the Constitution could help citizens achieve their rights because “From our beginnings as a nation, we have felt a fierce commitment to the ideal of education for everyone. It is fixed into our democratic creed” (Remarks at ESEA: 8). Johnson wanted to help all Americans be able to exercise their “right” to become educated. Johnson knew “helping” meant first helping many achieve being allowed to exercise that right. Johnson offered a positive means to achieve the rights that the Constitution guaranteed.

Johnson knew that the struggle for acquisition of power occurs through the use of laws, and “using” laws means being able to understand and work within them. Johnson realized that many of the people who needed the law could not understand it and therefore could not work within it. He fashioned the law so they could partake of it easily. The government made it possible for the impoverished to find a way to achieve their rights.

Johnson knew that when people understand the law—and the dispensation of justice allowed through the law—they can hold onto a major way of maintaining the power they seek.

Education was the way in which to understand.

In his ESEA Bill, Johnson helped the profoundly poor in the elementary and secondary grades of school access their rights to receive education. By signing this law, Johnson showed he could implement change. He took the positive results that the ESEA had begun when he spoke to the graduates at Howard. Johnson was implicitly saying to this group that use of the law can evince “an aspect of class struggles [and] an aspect of the human struggle to grasp the conditions of social justice” (Kennedy 47), and these educated ones, had to help others get their education, too. Education could provide the necessary way to help all achieve the freedom that the founders initially sought.

History of Johnson’s Educational Programs: Background

Johnson had set up a task force immediately after announcing his Great Society in May 1964. This was to help promote an entire educational package for America. When Johnson gave the edict to the task force that it was to look into establishing Federal means to support education, the words “*without coming into conflict with the Constitution*” (Husen 88-89) were of special importance. By having been on the other side of the “aisle” (Caro, *Master of the Senate* 221), Johnson knew two polarized ways the Constitution could be interpreted; that is how interpretation of the Constitution could be used to impugn the validity of ideas (Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 289).

Johnson knew about the “Constitutional order of interpretation” (O’Neill 103). The basic premise behind Johnson’s concerns regarding Constitutional order lay with the construction of the distinction between negative or positive liberties. That is, there are two

basic ways to understand and construct rights: a negative way or a positive way. Those rights that are not denied are termed “negative” rights; whereas those that are allowed are called “positive.” For example, the negative pursuit of liberty (Kommers, Finn, and Jacobsohn 308) means that the government may not interfere with a citizen’s obtaining a right, “save on certain conditions” (Bandes).⁹⁵ Alternatively, the positive pursuit of liberty means that the government makes efforts to help citizens realize and exercise their ability to utilize their rights (Bandes).⁹⁶

The application of the definition of education in a civil society is expressed in the following example. The negative reading of a civil right reflected the current ways by which the right of education was sanctioned. That is, the idea the Supreme Court promoted in *Plessy versus Ferguson* (separate places to educate the whites and the African Americans) was acceptable. A negative civil right, defined as an unalienable natural right, is non-negotiable and exists prior to civil society, and therefore, the society has no duty to make sure that education is attained—education merely has to be offered.

Civil rights, as construed in a defined “negative” aspect, are not denied; however, they are not aided by the government in any way (Borelli). Public actors, such as Governor George Wallace, who had construed the law in a “negative rights” format, attempted to justify actions as being legal by saying they were not violating the Constitution (Wallace). That is, they did not deny individuals from engaging in education: they were just *not helping* individuals go to get an education.

⁹⁵ Negative rights entail freedom *from* government action. To enforce a negative right, a citizen merely insists that the government not act so as to impinge her freedom (Bandes 2271).

⁹⁶ Positive rights are defined as rights *to* government action. When a citizen enforces a positive right, he or she can compel the government to take action to provide certain services. (Bandes 2272).

However, the alternative perception maintains that for a “civil society” to exist, the civil rights of individuals are guaranteed. That is, civil rights are entirely government-granted (as per the Constitution) and reflect “positive rights.” A good government is one that, in the form of promoting positive civil rights, effectively secures those natural rights, and, in its official government actions, does not otherwise violate such natural rights (Borelli). A good example came from the positive pursuit of achieving liberties, demonstrated by Johnson’s Elementary and Secondary Law. Being able to pursue education in a positive construction of the Constitution (and as Johnson envisioned it) came from the signing of the ESEA in April, 1965. This law came about from a conference that Francis Keppel convened “with officials of the big education lobby groups—the National Education Association, the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the National Council of Churches” (Roberts 103).⁹⁷ Keppel’s group helped formulate the education bill that was the “centerpiece of the President’s Great Society program” (Roberts 103) and which helped to facilitate students’ ability to take advantage of their civil rights—i.e., go to school.

The Taskforce

John Gardner,⁹⁸ the president of Carnegie Corporation, was leader of the President’s Task Force (Manna 76). Gardner motivated the group to reach results. He knew Johnson wanted results soon from this Task Force. Johnson was adamant about the place of education in his administration: his overriding mandate for the task force was that they come up with

⁹⁷ These groups came together to find a way to work together (Labaree 45): they found a formula that would provide aid to public school districts impacted by poverty and also give aid to parochial school children, without giving aid to the parochial schools. In other words, this group met and found a way to help schools that would not violate the Constitutional principles each group represented (Roberts 103), and also found ways to embrace the negative and positive rights of other groups.

⁹⁸ Gardner later became Secretary of State for Health, Education and Welfare (Bresler, Cooper and Palmer 89).

proposals about what the Federal government could implement in order to improve American school education, first by focusing on all age brackets of individuals and Second “without coming into conflict with the Constitution” (Husen 88-89). He reminded the task force it was to suggest ways in which to bring about several programs relating to educating the poor (Kaplan 6-7), no matter what their age. He made the necessary link between education and lack of poverty for those members in the task force when he said “this is going to be an education program. We are going to eliminate poverty through education . . . [because] people are going to learn their way out of poverty” (Kaplan 7).

The educational task force (sometimes called “Gardner's committee”) was to devise a program of compensatory education which performed Johnson’s directorate and “became part of the War Against Poverty” (Husen 89). Gardner’s committee arrived at a solution which involved giving a large allocation of resources to school districts “with a high percentage of children who were growing up in poverty or being linguistically hampered by not having English as their mother tongue” (Husen 88).

The intersection of Johnson’s landslide [victory] in 1964, President John Kennedy’s assassination . . . and the burgeoning civil rights movement produced a powerful window for LBJ to push his education agenda. (Manna 90)

Because this task force did its job, in just five months from giving the Great Society speech, Johnson had a bill that was ready to go to Congress.

The task force offered programs that gave Johnson’s Great Society the ability to grant all Americans the freedom to become educated as well as providing ways for them to be able to practice this “right.” Educational programs such as Head Start (which provided education

for children ages 2-5 who were from homes of the “profoundly impoverished”), and the ESEA (which provided federal financial aid to schools who taught children from homes targeted as “poverty laden”) as well as the OEO’s general programs offering financial aid to students who went to college, were only part of what Johnson envisioned as ensuring a Great Society for America (Labaree 72).

The Head Start programs were aimed at helping children from a single parent family, who were from the profoundly impoverished portions of the society (Barnett Interview), and who were usually “pre-K in age” (Barnett Interview). In fact, promoting educational equity for poor and disadvantaged children, an idea that extended the logic of the U. S. Supreme Court’s 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, “became the explicit mantra of the Federal government’s primary education law” (Manna 89). The addition of one component—which became Title VI⁹⁹—made the ESEA “constitutionally correct” (Manna 10).

Rebecca Doggett, head of Newark Head Start, gives an insight into the success various aspects of the program elicited from people: “It was an exciting time. We were having people really begin to learn” (Grubin LBJML). In fact, Sargent Shriver, Johnson’s appointed Head Start director, enthusiastically remembers that

You could see women who had never learned how to read or write suddenly learning! They were feeling the thrill of learning, and this was because their

⁹⁹ [T]hat nothing in the Act should be construed to authorize any Government department, agency, officer, or employer to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration of personnel of any educational institution or school system, or over the selection of library resources, textbooks or other instructional materials by any education institution or school system. (*Congressional Quarterly* 1966, 279).

child was in Head Start, and part of the requirement was that the child had to go home to an educated parent. (qtd. in Grubin LBJML)¹⁰⁰

Johnson took this enthusiasm with him when he specifically targeted Howard University—an African American institution of learning. When he arrived at Howard, he challenged the graduates to promote education in such a way that more African American¹⁰¹ could get an education that began before kindergarten and continued by graduating from institutions of higher learning. This would allow them to become effective democratic citizens. Johnson had recently been shown the statistics that even though “fifty-nine percent of Arkansas had a Negro population, only one percent of the population was registered to vote” (Valenti OH LBJML).

The speech Johnson delivered at the signing of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) took place in Johnson City on April 11, 1965. At the time, Johnson believed that the “ESEA would be the most important measure that I shall ever sign” (*CQ*, 1966 276). However, as the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum, Johnson sought to quell further unrest by giving a commencement address at Howard University—a historically African American university. The following chapter shows how Johnson dealt with education in the atmosphere of the springtime of 1965—which was the precursor to the long hot summer that the Watts Riots brought to a close.

¹⁰⁰ One of the requirements for having a child included in Head Start was that the parent had to come to class and learn at least one three-hour session per week—all the time the child was in the program (Barnett Interview).

¹⁰¹ The graduates at the June 1965, ceremony were 95% African American (Commencement Address).

Speaker

In 1964, Johnson was elected by a landslide unseen since Franklin Roosevelt was re-elected (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 231). Johnson began his term as elected President of the United States as one known to accomplish a mission about which he felt strongly (Cohen OH LBJML).¹⁰² Johnson had taken on the task of becoming known as “The Education President,” and he did not want anything to prevent his achieving that end (McCoy 74). Consequently, with missionary zeal, he began to create what he hoped would become his legacy. He continued along a path that led to his becoming the President “who wants our era remembered as the education era” (McCoy 74). James Kinneavy reminds us of an integral part of the make up of a speech—his *logos* a speaker employs—when he writes that “[C]lassical rhetoric is a general theory of language for serious human communication, and as such it should be taken more seriously than it currently is” (161). Therefore, by considering aspects of the way Johnson attempted to bring education to “all the *peepul*” (Grubin LBJML), we grasp the complexities of his rhetoric.

Johnson began promoting education and funneling federal aid into educational endeavors. He was responsible for implementing “over sixty education bills that were signed into law during his tenure—including the historic first Federal aid to education act” (Berube

¹⁰² One of Johnson’s aides remembers his first days working for a President: “First then, I spent eight years and two days working for the Kennedy-Johnson administrations. It was the most important episode in my whole life. I don’t think any of you can appreciate what it means to work with my colleagues here, and others who had the sparkling dynamism, social idealism, and the practical management to try to make government work for the American people. I felt that I was engaged in an enterprise far beyond my competence, far beyond my ability, far beyond the capacity really of any human being. And yet, when the President of the United States said, “I am nominating you for this office because I have confidence in you,” there is something that envelops you in something that is so much bigger than you are, that you feel everyday should have thirty hours, every week should have eight days, and every year should have 400 days (qtd. in Firestone and Vogt 90).

59). Hubert Humphrey, Johnson's Vice President, connected Johnson to education when he said, "Johnson was—to put it frankly—a nut on education. He felt that education was the greatest thing that he could give the people: he just believed in it, like some people believe in miracle cures" (Humphrey, OH LBJML). As a matter of fact, one of Johnson's education bills got through Congress without Congress's having to change a thing: this was called "[T]he Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA] of 1965 . . . [which] was the product of an electoral mandate" (Firestone and Vogt 9).

However, Johnson knew in order to maintain his popularity, he had to address the ever-widening gap that was separating black America from white America and stop the violence that was making the gap widen. Because of the quickness by which violence escalated (Blum 252-54), Johnson felt an urgency to contact as many people as he could to promote the idea of The Great Society—and the underlying aspect of education. Johnson believed he could stop the cycle of violence through implementation of the Great Society and various programs within it. By helping people understand that things were changing, the cycle of violence would be broken. That is, the Great Society would first break the cycle caused by lack of education. Then, the cycle which was propagated through, and by, a lack of understanding¹⁰³ would not culminate into violence (Horsman 6).

The ethos that Johnson maintained as President was a continuation of that he had been establishing all his political life. Johnson uses his audience as the point for his establishment of his ethos. The personal magnetism that Johnson exudes in his speech to "his Hill People" in Johnson City demonstrates his towering ethos: throughout his speech he uses charged words to talk about a subject about which he obviously feels strongly. "I do not

¹⁰³ As Johnson was able to testify had occurred in his early attempts to change the status of electrical use in Texas in 1937-38 (Dallek *Flawed Giant*, 181).

wish to delay by a single day the program to strengthen this Nation's . . . schools” (Remarks at Johnson City”: 5). He continues his reasoned plea when he tells of bridging the gap between helplessness and hope for more than 5 million educationally-deprived children (Remarks at Johnson City: 14), with the added observations that “[W]e rekindle the revolution—the revolution of the spirit against the tyranny of ignorance” (Remarks at Johnson City: 18).

The speech that he gives upon signing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act into law at the old school house he attended as a boy in Johnson City, Texas (LBJML archives), suggests Johnson’s adaptation of a serious subject to suit the down-home audience. In performing, this, Johnson shows his respect for his “folks” (Moyers OH LBJML). Johnson’s personal recognition of people such as a former teacher, shows the pride he felt in his own personal accomplishment as well as that sincere wish to share his pleasure with those who helped him: “Come over here, Miss Katie, and sit by me, will you? Let them see you. I started school when I was 4 years old, and they tell me, Miss Kate, that I recited my first lessons while sitting on your lap” (Remarks at Johnson City: 7).

He could finally give back to these people who helped make it possible for him to “become more” (Johnson OH LBJML). Also, Johnson “shows off” for “these folks” and feeds their vanity when he points out the dignitaries who have come down to their part of the world: “We are delighted that Senator McCarthy . . . has been working for this educational bill ever since the first day he came to the House of Representatives, and ever since he has been in the Senate” (Remarks at Johnson City: 12). Johnson continues by noting that “I am delighted to have another good friend of mine . . . the distinguished majority leader of the

House, without whose efforts we would never have passed this bill—Carl Albert of Oklahoma” (Remarks at Johnson City: 13).

Johnson was able to sign into law the “contract” providing education for those who were especially “impoverished” (Barnett Interview). The enthusiastic and sporadic bursts of applause were so loud that they interrupted Johnson’s words, but served to point out the emotions he evoked (Kearns 249).

Johnson also attempts to make this connection with his listeners at Howard University; however, he does not herald all the personal accomplishments that have led up to this moment. Rather, Johnson specifically focuses on how the audience needed to be aware of the fact that he championed the cause of Civil Rights:

We have seen in 1957, and 1960, and again in 1964, the first civil rights legislation in this Nation in almost an entire century. (Commencement Address: 6)

As majority leader of the United States Senate, I helped to guide two of these bills through the Senate. And, as your President, I was proud to sign the third. (Commencement Address: 7)

Johnson maintains a seriousness when he delivers his Howard speech. The difference in Johnson’s manner shows how effectively Johnson can manipulate himself to adapt to the requirements of the speech and the audience. He manages to convey a strong ethos in both occasions.

The benefit that comes from adding the historical perception offers clarity as we have followed Johnson’s political career. Now, as we examine two speeches given on the same subject, we can see the dynamism and force with which Johnson promoted a topic. We can

understand more fully Johnson's belief in the Great Society and the way education, as a particular program within this society, would "serve as the cornerstone of his Great Society" (Berube 6). By seeing how Johnson affects these two ways of expressing his passion on education, we can more effectively perceive Johnson's zeal.

Occasion

As Edwin Black noted, persuasive discourse is an instrument designed to affect an immediate audience on a certain occasion, and "the new-Aristotelian critics tend ... to comprehend the rhetorical discourse as tactically designed to achieve certain results with a specific audience on a specific occasion" (39). Thomas Benson expands the time rhetoric can impact to include the future. As evidence, he shows how Nichols addresses and even reconciles "rhetorical humanism with scientific modernism under the umbrella of a recovered Aristotelian rhetoric" by incorporating the "historical moment" along with the speech analysis, itself (qtd. in Benson *American Rhetoric*, 162) in order to arrive at more objective, current realizations. As Benson points out, the "contemporary reader" comes "into the situation" and thereby more fully appreciates the achievements of the speaker (Benson *American Rhetoric*, 162) when a whole set of past events combine with the present rhetoric to display a more entire idea.

Johnson delivers his two speeches at two quite specific and also extremely diverse, occasions: one speech is to commemorate the signing of a bill into law and the other is a commencement address (an ending which marks a beginning). However, as the section relating to speech analysis will explain in greater detail, Johnson says substantially the same things in both instances about education. He is promoting the need to acquire an education as a foundation for a person to succeed in life. In the Remarks given at Johnson City,

Johnson uses the words “I know that education is the only valid passport from poverty” (Remarks at Johnson City: 20). And in the Commencement Address for Howard University, Johnson uses a Biblical passage to metaphorically argue the same idea: “I shall light a candle of understanding in thine heart, which shall not be put out” (Commencement Address: 72). These two specific occasions offer Johnson the place and time to speak about education as well as other aspects of a Great Society.¹⁰⁴

Audience

In her analysis, Nichols cautions the critic to realize that the rhetorical effects a speaker uses are not merely a reflection of personal excellence as a speaker but also incorporate the ability of the speaker to realize and use what will exert influence over an audience (qtd. in Benson 163). The employment of rhetorical strategies as well as fitting them precisely to the each audience he addresses is quite obvious when one examines these two speeches side by side.

The audience make-up for the Johnson City speech was down-home and folksy. The Howard University Commencement Address was in front of an audience of graduating seniors, their parents, friends and faculty. When he spoke to the graduates about the change that needed to come to African Americans in his Howard University Commencement Address, he assumed he was addressing a group who would help instantiate change because they knew “it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates” (Commencement Address: 13).

¹⁰⁴ Once more, Hochmuth Nichols clarifies the benefits of examining the speech: to determine the purpose the speaker has in mind that needs to be relayed to the audience (qtd. in Benson 162).

Each of these speeches, however, serves as reminder of the way in which Johnson talked to the immediate audience while remembering the universal audience that was listening. For this reason, among others, the way in which Johnson focused on words he used, persuasive strategies he invoked, and even phrases that he decided to leave out were indicative of the way that Johnson wanted to get across—to America, as well as to his immediate audience of listeners—that education must become accessible for all people.

“Actually teaching people how to learn” (Shriver OH LBJML) by promoting Federal aid to promote American education was a good point Johnson admonished Gardner’s Task Force headed to pursue. However, there was a possible obstacle to Johnson’s construction of promoting education within America.

Speech

Invention

Johnson issued directives to every program within The Great Society. One such set of directives came from the ESEA bill (Roberts 103) Johnson signed into law and spoke about in this chapter. The means by which Johnson felt he could aid “the people” was to help those who marginalized by society, and unable to speak for themselves, due to the fact “they were hindered by being uneducated” (Humphrey OH LBJML). Johnson said as much when he stated “I’m talkin’ *folks*, here” (Grubin LBJML). These “folks” were the ones whom Johnson wanted to help. “The only way to help them,” he told aides, was by giving them a “great big push at the start” (Grubin LBJML).

Johnson used reasoning to appeal both to the Johnson City “friends” as well as to the Howard University graduates. The form of logos Johnson used was complex and came from the commingling of knowledge from childhood, adolescence, and professional-life. Johnson

rolled all the contemporary complexities of the 1960 culture together and came forward with two speeches. Both speeches had the same subject: education. However, the occasions and audiences were quite different. He choose to treat them accordingly. The “down-home” audience received a “charming, almost extemporaneous” presentation;

Once again, Johnson’s use of the syllogism as a means to persuade is a major way in which Johnson transmits a connection in thought to his audience:

Major premise	These people—who are audience today for the signing of the Elementary and Secondary Education Bill—are people who had an impact on Johnson’s early education.
Minor premise	Johnson, as President of the United States is signing an education bill into Law that will affect all American children by providing them with educational opportunities.
Conclusion	These people had an impact on getting this Bill into Law.

The commencement address was formal with no variations from the written text (Moyers, OH LBJML). Johnson delivers his Commencement Address at Howard University with his Presidential, formal voice to “speak in a Presidential fashion” (Zarefsky Interview), and displays his attempt to communicate seriously about grave matters. Johnson carefully and skillfully entwines statistics with words, using logos to express how some laws were already passed by his administration.

Johnson celebrates the ability the African Americans have in becoming graduates for only one paragraph (Commencement Address: 17). Immediately, he begins to evoke an emotional response from his audience when he states that “But for the great majority of Negro Americans—the poor, the unemployed, the uprooted, and the dispossessed—there is a much grimmer story (Commencement Address: 20). Johnson presents the staggeringly negative statistics with a dogged insistence. By going over and over the negative statistics

the uneducated minority member faced, Johnson suggests the bleak future available for most African Americans. From paragraphs 21- 30, Johnson relates facts (such as unemployment, income level, infant mortality) supporting his dire predictions (Commencement Address: 21-30).

Johnson describes the widening economic gap between whites and blacks and attributes it to the "centuries of oppression and persecution of the Negro man" (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 222) and the resulting collapse of the black family, which must be made whole again to break the cycle of despair and deprivation. In this speech, Johnson announced the convening of a Fall 1965 conference entitled, "To Fulfill These Rights" (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 222) by saying to this class "Therefore, I want to announce tonight that this fall I intend to call a White House conference of scholars . . . with [i]ts object . . . to help the American Negro fulfill the rights which, after the long time of injustice, he is finally about to secure" (Commencement Address: 59).

This humble way to begin is in no way comparable to Johnson's initial beginning at Howard. Johnson talks of "revolution" and "enemies" when he states: "The American Negro, acting with impressive restraint, has peacefully protested and marched, entered the courtrooms and the seats of government, demanding a justice that has long been denied. (Commencement Address: 5). Johnson constantly addresses the adherence that the "American Negro" (Commencement Address: *passim*) has maintained to the law—the consistency of staying within the legal parameters while maintaining a nonviolent stance. He is quick to point out the answering speed by which all in "America . . . once aroused, the courts and the Congress, the President and most of the people, have been the allies of progress" (Commencement Address: 5). In these introductory words, Johnson has

acknowledged the possibly internalized need that some in the audience might be harboring for revolution. He is also simultaneously attempting to diffuse the anger that might incite violence. Johnson is obviously trying to assuage and defuse any anger these graduates (and others in the audience) might feel towards the people in power.

Johnson continues listing Bills that have been on their way to becoming laws:

We have seen in 1957, and 1960, and again in 1964, the first civil rights legislation in this Nation in almost an entire century (Commencement Address: 6) [N]ow very soon we will have the fourth—a new law guaranteeing every American the right to vote. (Commencement Address: 7)

In a continuing attempt to mollify any feelings of rancor the audience might hold, he adds what looks at first glance to be an almost superfluous paragraph: “No act of my entire administration will give me greater satisfaction than the day when my signature makes this bill, too, the law of this land” (Commencement Address: 8). In other words—the law is on the side of the “American Negro.” By this time, Proposition 14 had been passed by California;¹⁰⁵ and yet, Johnson counseled his audience to believe, as he did, in the law.

Johnson relates statistics and various other forms of substantiating evidence promoting his theme "To Fulfill These Rights" (Commencement Address: 58) because as he notes, “[T]he American Negro [needs help in order to] fulfill the rights which, after the long time of injustice, he is finally about to secure” (Commencement Address: 59). The purpose was to assemble various experts aimed at one goal, which Goodwin clarifies by saying, “It

¹⁰⁵ This Proposition negated the Fair Housing component of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This Proposition implicitly stated that African Americans were forced to move into the lower housing “ghettoes” known as the “Watts Area” of Los Angeles. This adaptation by some the states of their construction of a Federal Law was something that Johnson had no idea about when he delivered this address (“1965 Watts Riots”).

was to be the beginnings of a campaign for affirmative action—an effort to find ways to help blacks compete for jobs and admission to the country's best institutions of higher learning” (342). Goodwin (and other writers) did not stop when they mentioned the conference. They noted specifics, and one imperative part of the conference was to hinge upon education (Goodwin 242-4; Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 343).

Education was both a means to an end and an end in itself for Johnson (Berube 61). George Reedy, the press secretary for Johnson in 1964, elucidates this point as he remembers Johnson's “obsession with education” (22). As his memoirs reflect:

Nothing was in [Johnson's] thoughts more often. He sought guarantees that every boy or girl in the United States "could have all the education he or she can take." He was actually superstitious about the subject, and at times one expected him to advocate college as a cure for dandruff or university as a specific for sore throats. (22)

Arrangement

The way in which Johnson sets forth ideas to the two different audiences who hear these speeches suggests a constant deference to each. To the Johnson City audience, he begins with warm words of welcome: “I want to welcome you to this little school of my childhood—many of my former school mates and many who went to school with me at Cotulla and Houston and San Marcos, as well as some of my dear friends from the educational institutions of this area” (Remarks at Johnson City: 2). Whereas at Howard, Johnson immediately addresses the “race” issue: “I am delighted at the chance to speak at this important and this historic institution. Howard has long been an outstanding center for the education of Negro Americans” (Commencement Address: 1).

Since Johnson was signing into law the ESEA, his “Remarks at Johnson City” reflected a *fait accompli*. Johnson takes a more relaxed stance on presenting facts.

For too long, children suffered while jarring interests caused stalemate in the efforts to improve our schools. . . .(10)

Now . . . the House of Representatives, by a vote of 263 to 153, and the Senate, by a vote of 73 to 18, have passed the most sweeping educational bill ever to come before Congress. (Remarks at Johnson City: 11)

In fact, the percentage of this speech that was “ad-libbed” is an impressively high twenty-one percent (Thompson 208). Johnson concludes his speech with the reminder that things will continue to improve in education: “On Tuesday afternoon we will ask the Members of the House and Senate who were instrumental in guiding this legislation through the Congress to meet with us at a reception in the White House” (Remarks at Johnson City: 23).

In severe contrast, the speech Johnson gives at Howard University is recorded as having zero percent of ad-libbing (Thompson 210). The way presents the Commencement Address opposes the almost laid-back presentation in Johnson City.

Style

Johnson uses down-home jargon combined with an informal presentation of words to kindle the fire of support in Johnson City upon signing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) into law. A good example comes when he “remembers” his childhood: “As a son of a tenant farmer, I know that education is the only valid passport from poverty” (Remarks at Johnson City: 18-19).

By being ingratiatingly charming to the people in Johnson City, Johnson promotes a connection with his audience:

In this one-room schoolhouse Miss Katie Deadrich taught eight grades at one and the same time. . . . (Remarks at Johnson City: 7)

From our very beginnings as a nation, we have felt a fierce commitment to the ideal of education for everyone. It is fixed itself into our democratic creed. (Remarks at Johnson City: 8)

Johnson exhibits how he can expand The Johnson Treatment to embrace this audience: that is, Johnson moves from a private arena to the public one and reflects an ability that a truly adept speaker can accomplish by playing to the vanity of the listener.

Johnson continues to use strategies that will ingratiate him with his listeners in Johnson City. First, he shows how important his roots are to him as a successful man who is now President. Second, he draws the audience's attention to the fact that these roots—that he shares with this audience—are the same as what is being offered to the Nation. Johnson aligns himself with the audience and suddenly “he” is “them.” Just as this audience had an impact on his life, so, too, can they impact the Nation.

Johnson reflects the significance of his words in the solemn manner in which he communicates them. He does so in a manner he perceives a President would—and should—do in order to effectively communicate information to an audience that could possibly contain hostile sentiments. The rhetorical strategies Johnson uses are not flamboyant in the Howard University speech. They display a restraint in actions and words that he has heretofore not demonstrated in many of his speeches. He keeps the wording much more formal, and to the point. He speaks of the limitation behind the words “promise of freedom”: Johnson, however, starts this statement with the limiting word “but,” and suggests the need to move forward beyond the limitation the mere words suggest when he says, “But freedom is

not enough. You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: “Now you are free to go where you want, and do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please” (Commencement Address: 11).

When Johnson gives his address at Howard University, he adopts a more professorial manner. He begins by relating statistics and facts. He then proceeds to try to relate to his audience as he acts almost humble: “[I]t is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates” (Commencement Address: 14). Johnson embraces these new “friends”:

[We seek] the next and the more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity. . . . For the task is to give 20 million Negroes the same chance as every other American to learn
(Commencement Address: 14-15)

Robert Dallek offers insight into the reason that Johnson felt so strongly about promoting education to these newly graduated African Americans:

In May, Johnson had received a copy of a report on the black family . . . [d]escribing the breakdown of black families in ghettos The coming challenge would be to assure that blacks had the means to convert opportunities opened by the civil rights revolution into genuine equality.
(*Flawed Giant* 221-22)

Johnson talks about the group of “American Negroes” as “another nation: deprived of freedom, crippled by hatred, [and with the] doors of opportunity closed to hope” (Commencement Address: 4). Judging by the increasing warmth and positive facial

expressions seen on the video recordings taken of Johnson's delivery of this Address, Johnson connected with this audience.¹⁰⁶

Johnson seeks, by carefully reasoned arguments based on facts, to implement education as the cornerstone of a Great Society offered to all Americans. He also demonstrates regard for the feelings and rights of all the people by stating that "Freedom is the *right* to share" (Commencement Address: 10). Johnson then addresses what has become a continuous "chant" for him: "We seek not just freedom but opportunity. . . . not just equality as a *right* and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result" (Address: 14).

Johnson points out how he has continued to support the civil rights cause:

[I have issued] a series of public addresses that sounded a moral call to change. At Wayne State University in Detroit in January 1965, he had said: "To strike the chains of a slave is noble. To leave him the captive of the color of his skin is hypocrisy." Later in the month before a largely black audience in Cleveland, he called for a national agenda that would solve the problems left unresolved by Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 36).

And he wanted to make sure that this group realized that he had worked to bring about freedom by his continuous promotion of their civil rights. The overwhelming applause Johnson receives at the completion of each of these speeches exemplifies the success by which he had employed specific strategies on each specific audience.¹⁰⁷ The fact that Johnson uses a Biblical reference in his Howard University speech suggests that he talks to Christians who hear him and Kennedy's grave upon which the "Eternal Flame" burns:

¹⁰⁶ See video of Johnson's delivery of speech at Howard University.

¹⁰⁷ The video of the Howard speech shows as a standing ovation. (LBJML).

The Scripture promises: "I shall light a candle of understanding in thine heart, which shall not be put out (Commencement Address: 72).

Together, and with millions more, we can light that candle of understanding in the heart of all America (Commencement Address: 73).

And, once lit, it will never again go out. (Commencement Address:74).

The words he used in April to his Johnson City audience—"We strengthen State and local agencies which bear the burden and the challenge of better education" (Remarks at Johnson City: 17)—were words he stated in a different way to his Howard audience as he said: "We are trying to attack these evils [the lack of training and skills and living in slums] through our poverty program, through our education program, through our medical care and our other health programs, and a dozen more of the Great Society programs that are aimed at the root causes of this poverty" (Commencement Address: 32).

First, Johnson briefly alludes to what is going to be done when he talks to the Johnson City audience. Whereas, when he speaks to the Howard University graduates, he expands and clarifies the same idea by saying what will be done: "attack . . . lack of training" by "education." Johnson tells the group in Washington precisely what he means. By his use of the confrontational verb "attack" he is telling the graduates that poverty will not be left untrammelled. The negative connotation of "war" parallels his initiating his "War on Poverty." Johnson takes this one idea one step further when he states exactly what will benefit from this "attack" on poverty: education, medical care and "other health programs" (Commencement Address: 32). Johnson leaves nothing to be inferred by his audience.

In the speech in Johnson City, Johnson uses an almost offhanded joviality to accompany his words. Whereas Johnson reflects a seriousness regarding facts recently

presented to him, while he states precisely the words written for him to deliver in the Howard University Speech. In other words, Johnson moves from a speech in Johnson City that is primarily free-form to the one at Howard University in which he remains “totally scripted” (Thompson 211), with no variance from the written text (Thompson 211).

The style Johnson employed to affect his audience reflects his need to promote education as a solution for all problems. Consequently, when Johnson was “down home” with the “folks” of his childhood, he spoke in a way that reflected the way Johnson perceived his audience would feel at ease with. This empathetic sense of “listening” reflects a kind of pathos that Johnson often blustered through in other speeches. After giving the beginning amenities expected in a speech from a President, Johnson immediately gives his two reasons for choosing this place to sign this important Bill into law: first, not to delay, and second because he “. . . Felt a very strong desire to go back to the beginnings of my own education—to be reminded and to remind others of that magic time when the world of learning began to open before our eyes” (Remarks at Johnson City: 5).

Alternatively, when Johnson brings his brief speech in Johnson City to a close, he uses a much less flamboyant style of speaking: he counsels the Johnson City folks that “We have established the law. Let us not delay in putting it to work” (Remarks at ESEA: 25).

Memory

A speech often marks the reaching of high point and this is precisely the rhetorical moment in which Johnson finds himself as he signs into law the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. When Johnson signs the bill that Gardner’s Task Force delivered on November 1964, he reminisces about those who first helped him begin his educational quest—he goes back to “his people.” After all, as he says “From our very beginnings as a

nation, we have felt a fierce commitment to the ideal of education for everyone. [Education] is fixed into our democratic creed” (Remarks at Johnson City: 8). Then, he reiterates this “[Because] by passing this bill, we bridge the gap between helplessness and hope for more than 5 million educationally deprived children” (Remarks at Johnson City: 14). This speech in Johnson City forms a symmetry Johnson points out to his audience. That is, Johnson shares the end with those who helped him begin his long trek, which would allow others to benefit as he did from receiving a good education.

Alternatively, he delivers the speech to the graduates at Howard in June and reinforces many of the reminders he used in his speech as a Senator in 1957 to help pass the first Civil Rights Bill in Congress. He reminds these seniors of the past: “In far too many ways American Negroes have been another nation: deprived of freedom, crippled by hatred, the doors of opportunity closed to hope”(Commencement Address: 4). However, he immediately goes into the upbeat aspect, reminding the listeners that “In our time change has come to this Nation” (Commencement Address: 5).

Johnson does not want to lose this audience and he tells his audience that he wants them to “stay with him” when he says: “The American Negro, acting with impressive restraint, has peacefully protested and marched, entered the courtrooms and the seats of government, demanding a justice that has long been denied” (Commencement Address: 5). However, Johnson could have easily been speaking of the way in which he counseled himself after the great loss he had received against W. Lee “Pappy” O’Daniel.¹⁰⁸ The empathy transmits to the audience, because as the video shows, he begins to have a few sit forward in their seats as they watch him talk. They are truly listening to him. He keeps listing the

¹⁰⁸ The psychiatrists Jobe and Muslin give a detailed rendering of Johnson’s subliminally motivated tactics that came from the loss he suffered at the outset of his political career (15).

evidence to the listeners of the way in which the American society is attempting to make things right when he says:

Thus we have seen the high court of the country declare that discrimination based on race was repugnant to the Constitution, and therefore void. We have seen in 1957, and 1960, and again in 1964, the first civil rights legislation in this Nation in almost an entire century. (Commencement Address: 6)

Johnson then begins to practically pummel the audience with constant reminders of the plight of most “Negroes” (Commencement Address: *passim*). Since most of the graduating class is African American, Johnson seems to feel the need to remind them of their duty—not to not forget those who share their ethnicity and help them succeed. Johnson’s reiteration of statistics as well as his moral and ethical pleas to remind them of their responsibility. Just as he has a responsibility to all Americans, they, too, have a responsibility to help others who are not as fortunate as they have been. Johnson promotes the memory of the commonality of all African Americans and then the commonality of all Americans.

Johnson skillfully uses facts to evoke sympathy for what he wants this group to help him accomplish. In this way, he manipulates the feelings of his audience as he evokes the memories of the wrongs they can right. Johnson suggests the social contract that these students have to help their fellow human beings. That is, they have a responsibility and they need to fulfill it after graduation.

Delivery

Johnson sets the tone at the outset of both of his speeches. In the speech given at Johnson City, Johnson suggests that a feeling of relaxed informality will continue throughout his speech when he begins by humorously noting:

My Attorney General tells me that it is legal and constitutional to sign this act on Sunday, even on Palm Sunday. My minister assured me that the Lord's day will not be violated by making into law a measure which will bring mental and moral benefits to millions of our young people. (Remarks at Johnson City: 3)

However, when Johnson begins his speech to the Howard graduates, he immediately conjures up the somber reminder that the “revolution” driven by “hope” in order to find “justice”: “Our earth is the home of revolution. In every corner of every continent men charged with hope contend with ancient ways in the pursuit of justice” (Commencement Address: 2). This serious tone enforces the idea to the graduating class that perceptions of reality—and truth—differ.

The emphatic way Johnson delivers certain aspects of the words he says indicates Johnson’s feelings of passion.¹⁰⁹ He obviously remembers other venues where he did not “win,” and he realizes the absolute necessity of “winning” this audience of African Americans over to his way of thinking. He needs to have people support his efforts in

¹⁰⁹ The way in which Johnson had lost his first time at seeking election in the Federal sphere—in 1942—had happened in Texas to W. Lee “Pappy” O’Daniel¹⁰⁹ (Dallek *Lyndon Johnson*, 211). Johnson had vowed he would never lose like he had to O’Daniel: Johnson never did suffer another defeat (Dallek *Lyndon Johnson*, 220). However, the way in which he had lost still obviously had a shock-valued reaction that affected Johnson.

America, not work against him.¹¹⁰ As Johnson continues his two speeches, he promotes the one underlying idea of education as a panacea for all that ails the American society.

Conclusion

Johnson performs a difficult task, in a public forum, to promote understanding of a complex set of programs making up a Great Society. From Johnson's delivery of both speeches, to the style he uses, we see Johnson's skill at speaking to two different audiences about the same topic in order to evince an understanding of one main idea. By examining Johnson's words under both of these circumstances, we not only see how Johnson treats education, but we also are privy to the way in which he can adapt his presentation of ideas to suit his audience and the occasion upon which he delivers his words. By examining both of these events, we can more easily see how rhetoric can transmit information about a certain subject if taken seriously enough to build an idea to a type of crescendo that Johnson reaches in both speeches: he arrives at the peak via different routes.

Johnson's advisors had told him that the "marches and the Civil Rights Movement, in general, had lost many participants" (Valenti OH LBJML). It is interesting to note that "[the White House had come to believe that the era of demonstrations had outlived its usefulness" (Ralph 182), and the African American communities would now be ready to express their American-ness. For this reason, many aides counseled Johnson that the time was right to petition a primarily African American institution to work toward establishing a Great Society. The process involved education and "learning was the key,"¹¹¹ When Johnson said

¹¹⁰ Martin Luther King, Jr. had just made a major "split" with the administration in general, and Johnson, in particular relating to the way that the War in Vietnam was being escalated. (Carson)

¹¹¹ In 1960, before the Johnson administration's War on Poverty, there were 39.9 million poor persons in the nation. During the mid-1960s the president and Congress adopted a series

This is the next and the more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity. We seek not just legal equity but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result. (Commencement Address: 14)

James R. Ralph helps us more fully grasp what Johnson was truly saying when he states “At his famous commencement address at Howard University in June 1965, [Johnson] proclaimed that equality of opportunity for all Americans was not enough. Equality of result was the desired goal” (182). However, as often happens with language, the message becomes garbled. Instead of serving as clarifying facts and showing the audience that he was relating to them, Johnson’s words had an opposite effect. This portion of Johnson’s Commencement Address served as a kind of “call to arms” for the Civil Rights Movement.¹¹² The “light” to which Johnson referred became the “torch” of vengeance that leaders (Huey Newton and Malcolm X) reminded audiences about (Lewis). Additionally, and quite ironically, Johnson’s speech marked a turning point in the Civil Rights Movement: the movement transformed from the nonviolent group of protesters who “marched” with King into the more militant group of demonstrators who actively protested. The new “group” used violent means to bring about their desired ends—under leaders such as Stokely Carmichael (Grubin LBJML), Malcolm X and the Black Panthers (Carson).

of programs directly geared to helping those caught in poverty. Those programs (plus a strong economy) succeeded in reducing the poverty ranks by 15.8 million—a reduction of 40 percent—to 24.1 million. As a result, the poverty rate (the percentage of poor in the total population) dropped dramatically from 22.2 percent to 12.1 percent (Americans for Democratic Action).

¹¹² Stokely Carmichael used it in several of the speeches he delivered to incite black audiences to anger. The words that Johnson said were “This is American justice. We have pursued it faithfully to the edge of our imperfections, and we have failed to find it for the American Negro” (Address: 69).

When Johnson delivered his words, he believed that strengthening education and the positive effects it brought with it would form the underlying foundation upon which a Great Society would naturally evolve (Doar phone conversation). Therefore, the Commencement Speech to the graduating class at Howard was to be a speech ending an era (of violence) and beginning another (of cooperation). Johnson “charged” the graduating class at Howard University the task of helping their fellow humans learn how to be all they could be in a Great Society. Instead of offering a laurel leaf of peace and cooperation, Johnson unknowingly poured fuel on the fire of discontent for many African Americans.

Shortly after Johnson delivered his Howard University Commencement Address, Watts exploded, the My Lai massacre became public knowledge, and Lyndon Johnson became another victim of the Vietnamese War. Because of these incidents, as well as public sentiment generated by these actions, he did not run for President in 1968. The next chapter reviews Johnson’s rhetorical prowess as a lame-duck President and reveals how Johnson dealt with a form of defeat that he took personally.

APPENDIX E¹¹³

Remarks in Johnson City, Texas, Upon Signing
the Elementary and Secondary Education Bill
April 11, 1965

¹¹³ “Remarks at ESEA” will be the reference to this speech throughout the dissertation.

**Remarks in Johnson City, Texas, Upon Signing
the Elementary and Secondary Education Bill**

April 11, 1965

1. Ladies and gentlemen:
2. I want to welcome to this little school of my childhood many of my former school mates and many who went to school to me at Cotulla and Houston and San Marcos, as well as some of my dear friends from the educational institutions of this area.
3. My Attorney General tells me that it is legal and constitutional to sign this act on Sunday, even on Palm Sunday. My minister assured me that the Lord's day will not be violated by making into law a measure which will bring mental and moral benefits to millions of our young people.
4. So I have chosen this time and this place for two reasons.
5. First, I do not wish to delay by a single day the program to strengthen this Nation's elementary and secondary schools. I devoutly hope that my sense of urgency will be communicated to Secretary Celebrezze, Commissioner Keppel, and the other educational officers throughout the country who will be responsible for carrying out this program.
6. Second, I felt a very strong desire to go back to the beginnings of my own education—to be reminded and to remind others of that magic time when the world of learning began to open before our eyes.
7. In this one-room schoolhouse Miss Katie Deadrich taught eight grades at one and the same time. Come over here, Miss Katie, and sit by me, will you? Let them see you. I started school when I was 4 years old, and they tell me, Miss Kate, that I recited my first lessons while sitting on your lap.
8. From our very beginnings as a nation, we have felt a fierce commitment to the ideal of education for everyone. It is fixed itself into our democratic creed.
9. Over a century and a quarter ago, the President of the Republic of Texas, Mirabeau B. Lamar, proclaimed education as "the guardian genius of democracy . . . the only dictator that free men acknowledge and the only security that free men desire."
10. But President Lamar made the mistaken prophecy that education would be an issue "in which no jarring interests are involved and no acrimonious political feelings excited." For too long, political acrimony held up our progress. For too long, children suffered while jarring interests caused stalemate in the efforts to improve our schools. Since 1946 Congress tried repeatedly, and failed repeatedly, to enact measures for elementary and secondary education.

11. Now, within the past 3 weeks, the House of Representatives, by a vote of 263 to 153, and the Senate, by a vote of 73 to 18, have passed the most sweeping educational bill ever to come before Congress. It represents a major new commitment of the Federal Government to quality and equality in the schooling that we offer our young people. I predict that all of those of both parties of Congress who supported the enactment of this legislation will be remembered in history as men and women who began a new day of greatness in American society.

12. We are delighted that Senator McCarthy could be speaking at the University of Texas yesterday, and he came up and had lunch with me today, and is returning to Washington with me at 7:30 in the morning. Senator McCarthy is an old friend of mine from Minnesota. Stand up, Senator, and let them see you. He has been working for this educational bill ever since the first day he came to the House of Representatives, and ever since he has been in the Senate.

13. I am delighted to have another good friend of mine who spent the weekend in his home district—McAlester, Oklahoma—and who came down here to spend the evening with me, and is returning in the morning, the distinguished majority leader of the House, without whose efforts we would never have passed this bill—Carl Albert of Oklahoma.

14. By passing this bill, we bridge the gap between helplessness and hope for more than 5 million educationally deprived children.

15. We put into the hands of our youth more than 30 million new books, and into many of our schools their first libraries.

16. We reduce the terrible time lag in bringing new teaching techniques into the Nation's classrooms.

17. We strengthen State and local agencies which bear the burden and the challenge of better education.

18. And we rekindle the revolution—the revolution of the spirit against the tyranny of ignorance.

19. As a son of a tenant farmer, I know that education is the only valid passport from poverty.

20. As a former teacher—and, I hope, a future one—I have great expectations of what this law will mean for all of our young people.

21. As President of the United States, I believe deeply no law I have signed or will ever sign means more to the future of America.

22. To each and everyone who contributed to this day, the Nation is indebted.

23. On Tuesday afternoon we will ask the Members of the House and Senate who were instrumental in guiding this legislation through the Congress to meet with us at a reception in the White House.

24. So it is not the culmination but only the commencement of this journey. Let me urge, as Thomas Jefferson urged his fellow countrymen one time to, and I quote, "Preach, my dear sir, a crusade against ignorance; establish and improve the law for educating the common people."

25. We have established the law. Let us not delay in putting it to work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:20 p.m. on the front lawn of the former Junction Elementary School, Johnson City, Tex. Early in his remarks he referred to Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Anthony J. Celebrezze, and Commissioner of Education Francis Keppel. Later he referred to Mrs. Kate Deadrich Loney, his first schoolteacher. He also referred to Senator Eugene J. McCarthy of Minnesota and Representative Carl Albert of Oklahoma.

The reception at the White House for the Members of the Congress was held on April 13. As enacted, the bill (H.R. 2362) is entitled "Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965" (Public Law 89-10, 79 Stat. 27).

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965.* Volume I, entry 181, pp. 412-414. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1966.

APPENDIX F¹¹⁴

**President Lyndon B. Johnson's
Commencement Address at Howard University: "To Fulfill These Rights"
June 4, 1965**

¹¹⁴ "Commencement Address" will be the reference to this speech throughout the dissertation.

President Lyndon B. Johnson's

Commencement Address at Howard University: "To Fulfill These Rights"

June 4, 1965

Dr. Nabrit, my fellow Americans:

1. I am delighted at the chance to speak at this important and this historic institution. Howard has long been an outstanding center for the education of Negro Americans. Its students are of every race and color and they come from many countries of the world. It is truly a working example of democratic excellence.
2. Our earth is the home of revolution. In every corner of every continent men charged with hope contend with ancient ways in the pursuit of justice. They reach for the newest of weapons to realize the oldest of dreams, that each may walk in freedom and pride, stretching his talents, enjoying the fruits of the earth.
3. Our enemies may occasionally seize the day of change, but it is the banner of our revolution they take. And our own future is linked to this process of swift and turbulent change in many lands in the world. But nothing in any country touches us more profoundly, and nothing is more freighted with meaning for our own destiny than the revolution of the Negro American.
4. In far too many ways American Negroes have been another nation: deprived of freedom, crippled by hatred, the doors of opportunity closed to hope.
5. In our time change has come to this Nation, too. The American Negro, acting with impressive restraint, has peacefully protested and marched, entered the courtrooms and the seats of government, demanding a justice that has long been denied. The voice of the Negro was the call to action. But it is a tribute to America that, once aroused, the courts and the Congress, the President and most of the people, have been the allies of progress.
6. Thus we have seen the high court of the country declare that discrimination based on race was repugnant to the Constitution, and therefore void. We have seen in 1957, and 1960, and again in 1964, the first civil rights legislation in this Nation in almost an entire century.
7. As majority leader of the United States Senate, I helped to guide two of these bills through the Senate. And, as your President, I was proud to sign the third. And now very soon we will have the fourth—a new law guaranteeing every American the right to vote.
8. No act of my entire administration will give me greater satisfaction than the day when my signature makes this bill, too, the law of this land.

9. The voting rights bill will be the latest, and among the most important, in a long series of victories. But this victory—as Winston Churchill said of another triumph for freedom—"is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

10. That beginning is freedom; and the barriers to that freedom are tumbling down. Freedom is the right to share, share fully and equally, in American society—to vote, to hold a job, to enter a public place, to go to school. It is the right to be treated in every part of our national life as a person equal in dignity and promise to all others.

11. But freedom is not enough. You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: Now you are free to go where you want, and do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please.

12. You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, "you are free to compete with all the others," and still justly believe that you have been completely fair.

13. Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.

14. This is the next and the more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity. We seek not just legal equity but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result.

15. For the task is to give 20 million Negroes the same chance as every other American to learn and grow, to work and share in society, to develop their abilities—physical, mental and spiritual, and to pursue their individual happiness.

16. To this end equal opportunity is essential, but not enough, not enough. Men and women of all races are born with the same range of abilities. But ability is not just the product of birth. Ability is stretched or stunted by the family that you live with, and the neighborhood you live in—by the school you go to and the poverty or the richness of your surroundings. It is the product of a hundred unseen forces playing upon the little infant, the child, and finally the man.

17. This graduating class at Howard University is witness to the indomitable determination of the Negro American to win his way in American life.

18. The number of Negroes in schools of higher learning has almost doubled in 15 years. The number of nonwhite professional workers has more than doubled in 10 years. The median income of Negro college women tonight exceeds that of white college women. And there are also the enormous accomplishments of distinguished individual Negroes—many of them graduates of this institution, and one of them the first lady ambassador in the history of the United States.

19. These are proud and impressive achievements. But they tell only the story of a growing middle class minority, steadily narrowing the gap between them and their white counterparts.
20. But for the great majority of Negro Americans—the poor, the unemployed, the uprooted, and the dispossessed—there is a much grimmer story. They still, as we meet here tonight, are another nation. Despite the court orders and the laws, despite the legislative victories and the speeches, for them the walls are rising and the gulf is widening.
21. Here are some of the facts of this American failure.
22. Thirty-five years ago the rate of unemployment for Negroes and whites was about the same. Tonight the Negro rate is twice as high.
23. In 1948 the 8 percent unemployment rate for Negro teenage boys was actually less than that of whites. By last year that rate had grown to 23 percent, as against 13 percent for whites unemployed.
24. Between 1949 and 1959, the income of Negro men relative to white men declined in every section of this country. From 1952 to 1963 the median income of Negro families compared to white actually dropped from 57 percent to 53 percent.
25. In the years 1955 through 1957, 22 percent of experienced Negro workers were out of work at some time during the year. In 1961 through 1963 that proportion had soared to 29 percent.
26. Since 1947 the number of white families living in poverty has decreased 27 percent while the number of poorer nonwhite families decreased only 3 percent.
27. The infant mortality of nonwhites in 1940 was 70 percent greater than whites. Twenty-two years later it was 90 percent greater.
28. Moreover, the isolation of Negro from white communities is increasing, rather than decreasing as Negroes crowd into the central cities and become a city within a city.
29. Of course Negro Americans as well as white Americans have shared in our rising national abundance. But the harsh fact of the matter is that in the battle for true equality too many—far too many—are losing ground every day.
30. We are not completely sure why this is. We know the causes are complex and subtle. But we do know the two broad basic reasons. And we do know that we have to act.
31. First, Negroes are trapped—as many whites are trapped—in inherited, gateless poverty. They lack training and skills. They are shut in, in slums, without decent medical care. Private and public poverty combine to cripple their capacities.

32. We are trying to attack these evils through our poverty program, through our education program, through our medical care and our other health programs, and a dozen more of the Great Society programs that are aimed at the root causes of this poverty.
33. We will increase, and we will accelerate, and we will broaden this attack in years to come until this most enduring of foes finally yields to our unyielding will.
34. But there is a second cause—much more difficult to explain, more deeply grounded, more desperate in its force. It is the devastating heritage of long years of slavery; and a century of oppression, hatred, and injustice.
35. For Negro poverty is not white poverty. Many of its causes and many of its cures are the same. But there are differences—deep, corrosive, obstinate differences—radiating painful roots into the community, and into the family, and the nature of the individual.
36. These differences are not racial differences. They are solely and simply the consequence of ancient brutality, past injustice, and present prejudice. They are anguishing to observe. For the Negro they are a constant reminder of oppression. For the white they are a constant reminder of guilt. But they must be faced and they must be dealt with and they must be overcome, if we are ever to reach the time when the only difference between Negroes and whites is the color of their skin.
37. Nor can we find a complete answer in the experience of other American minorities. They made a valiant and a largely successful effort to emerge from poverty and prejudice.
38. The Negro, like these others, will have to rely mostly upon his own efforts. But he just can not do it alone. For they did not have the heritage of centuries to overcome, and they did not have a cultural tradition which had been twisted and battered by endless years of hatred and hopelessness, nor were they excluded—these others—because of race or color—a feeling whose dark intensity is matched by no other prejudice in our society.
39. Nor can these differences be understood as isolated infirmities. They are a seamless web. They cause each other. They result from each other. They reinforce each other.
40. Much of the Negro community is buried under a blanket of history and circumstance. It is not a lasting solution to lift just one corner of that blanket. We must stand on all sides and we must raise the entire cover if we are to liberate our fellow citizens.
41. One of the differences is the increased concentration of Negroes in our cities. More than 73 percent of all Negroes live in urban areas compared with less than 70 percent of the whites. Most of these Negroes live in slums. Most of these Negroes live together—a separated people.
42. Men are shaped by their world. When it is a world of decay, ringed by an invisible wall, when escape is arduous and uncertain, and the saving pressures of a more hopeful society are unknown, it can cripple the youth and it can desolate the men.

43. There is also the burden that a dark skin can add to the search for a productive place in our society. Unemployment strikes most swiftly and broadly at the Negro, and this burden erodes hope. Blighted hope breeds despair. Despair brings indifferences to the learning which offers a way out. And despair, coupled with indifferences, is often the source of destructive rebellion against the fabric of society.

44. There is also the lacerating hurt of early collision with white hatred or prejudice, distaste or condescension. Other groups have felt similar intolerance. But success and achievement could wipe it away. They do not change the color of a man's skin. I have seen this uncomprehending pain in the eyes of the little, young Mexican-American schoolchildren that I taught many years ago. But it can be overcome. But, for many, the wounds are always open.

45. Perhaps most important—its influence radiating to every part of life—is the breakdown of the Negro family structure. For this, most of all, white America must accept responsibility. It flows from centuries of oppression and persecution of the Negro man. It flows from the long years of degradation and discrimination, which have attacked his dignity and assaulted his ability to produce for his family.

46. This, too, is not pleasant to look upon. But it must be faced by those whose serious intent is to improve the life of all Americans.

47. Only a minority—less than half—of all Negro children reach the age of 18 having lived all their lives with both of their parents. At this moment, tonight, little less than two-thirds are at home with both of their parents. Probably a majority of all Negro children receive federally-aided public assistance sometime during their childhood.

48. The family is the cornerstone of our society. More than any other force it shapes the attitude, the hopes, the ambitions, and the values of the child. And when the family collapses it is the children that are usually damaged. When it happens on a massive scale the community itself is crippled.

49. So, unless we work to strengthen the family, to create conditions under which most parents will stay together—all the rest: schools, and playgrounds, and public assistance, and private concern, will never be enough to cut completely the circle of despair and deprivation.

50. There is no single easy answer to all of these problems.

51. Jobs are part of the answer. They bring the income which permits a man to provide for his family.

52. Decent homes in decent surroundings and a chance to learn—an equal chance to learn—are part of the answer.

53. Welfare and social programs better designed to hold families together are part of the answer.

54. Care for the sick is part of the answer.
55. An understanding heart by all Americans is another big part of the answer.
56. And to all of these fronts—and a dozen more—I will dedicate the expanding efforts of the Johnson administration.
57. But there are other answers that are still to be found. Nor do we fully understand even all of the problems. Therefore, I want to announce tonight that this fall I intend to call a White House conference of scholars, and experts, and outstanding Negro leaders—men of both races—and officials of Government at every level.
58. This White House conference's theme and title will be "To Fulfill These Rights."
59. Its object will be to help the American Negro fulfill the rights which, after the long time of injustice, he is finally about to secure.
60. To move beyond opportunity to achievement.
61. To shatter forever not only the barriers of law and public practice, but the walls which bound the condition of man by the color of his skin.
62. To dissolve, as best we can, the antique enmities of the heart which diminish the holder, divide the great democracy, and do wrong—great wrong—to the children of God.
63. And I pledge you tonight that this will be a chief goal of my administration, and of my program next year, and in the years to come. And I hope, and I pray, and I believe, it will be a part of the program of all America.
64. For what is justice?
65. It is to fulfill the fair expectations of man.
66. American justice is a very special thing. For, from the first, this has been a land of towering expectations. It was to be a nation where each man could be ruled by the common consent of all—enshrined in law, given life by institutions, guided by men themselves subject to its rule. And all—all of every station and origin—would be touched equally in obligation and in liberty.
67. Beyond the law lay the land. It was a rich land, glowing with more abundant promise than man had ever seen. Here, unlike any place yet known, all were to share the harvest.
68. And beyond this was the dignity of man. Each could become whatever his qualities of mind and spirit would permit—to strive, to seek, and, if he could, to find his happiness.

69. This is American justice. We have pursued it faithfully to the edge of our imperfections, and we have failed to find it for the American Negro.

70. So, it is the glorious opportunity of this generation to end the one huge wrong of the American Nation and, in so doing, to find America for ourselves, with the same immense thrill of discovery which gripped those who first began to realize that here, at last, was a home for freedom.

71. All it will take is for all of us to understand what this country is and what this country must become.

72. The Scripture promises: "I shall light a candle of understanding in thine heart, which shall not be put out."

73. Together, and with millions more, we can light that candle of understanding in the heart of all America.

74. And, once lit, it will never again go out.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:35 p.m. on the Main Quadrangle in front of the library at Howard University in Washington, after being awarded an honorary degree of doctor of laws. His opening words referred to Dr. James M. Nabri, Jr., President of the University. During his remarks he referred to Mrs. Patricia Harris, U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg and former associate professor of law at Howard University.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was approved by the President on August 6, 1965.

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965.* Volume II, entry 301, pp. 635-640. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1966.

CHAPTER SIX

The End as the Beginning

That Lyndon Johnson was going to “not seek” (Johnson qtd. in Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 519) the Presidency in the 1968 Presidential election was becoming obvious to the world. To the public audience that decried his continuing as their President, as well as for the personal audience that he wanted to address, Johnson delivered his last public speech as President on January 14, 1969.

Johnson used the platform as President to deliver a final summation of what had been accomplished during his time in office as well as to acknowledge those who had helped him achieve it. He “had no intention of leaving office with any sign of defeat” (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 597). To this end, not only did Johnson seek to persuade the audience of the assets he had brought to the Presidency, but also his presence—the ethos that surrounded him—served as a persuasive acknowledgement.

The reason for this sense of invincibility came as Johnson led a kind of

celebration of not simply his administration with its landmark domestic reform and eight years of economic growth, but a paean to the compassion and decency of a great nation devoted to eliminating poverty and assuring equal justice and opportunity for all. (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 598).

The historian, Halford Ryan, comments on Johnson’s ability to include an audience—any audience—into his orations when he states, “Johnson is part of the list of other twentieth-century Presidents, such as Herbert Hoover, Harry Truman [and] John Kennedy” who spoke extremely effectively and “essentially without formal instruction in the art [of speaking]” (xv). Part of the ability Johnson and others exhibited came from rhetorical ability that

resonated in the media. In fact, “The media, and particularly television, accentuated [the] desire for and consumption of new images” (St. Clair et al. 11). These men fulfilled the viewers’ desire to see new images that were “bigger than life” (St. Clair et al. 12). Mary Stuckey, noted communicator, adds, “The images transmitted through television . . . take on an immediacy [and effectiveness] that print lacks (136-137; Ryan 224). Johnson knew how to work within the relatively new medium of television extremely well (Moyers OH LBJML).

When Johnson decided to deliver his final speech as President, the inclusion of television cameras into the Congressional Hall was not a problem. He knew he could handle himself and deliver a speech well. Hence, he decided to personally deliver his speech in front of the Congress, instead of having it “just read” into the record (Moyers OH LBJML).

Television and other media aside, Johnson showed his prowess as a speaker by not mentioning what he had specifically accomplished, especially in this, his final public speech. For example, Johnson did not mention education. He did not specifically point to various programs that were inherent within The Great Society. Instead, he started with the words, “I shall speak to you tonight about challenge and opportunity—and about the commitments that all of us have made together that will, if we carry them out, give America our best chance to achieve the kind of great society that we all want” (Annual Message: 3). All who heard his speech knew that not only was education the foundation upon which Johnson’s Great Society was built, but education was also the way in which every ear that heard this speech understood what was being said.

Many people commented on the fact that the event was a “warm, sentimental occasion” (Woods 877) which celebrated Johnson’s accomplishments. Moreover, many

found the oration was what had been expected—a kind of summation of what had been accomplished in Johnson’s time as President (Miller, M. 643); however, the lens by which people examine—and understand—words is reflected in the outcomes they report. The words that Johnson used in this his final public speech held deeper meanings as a more in-depth examination of what he said reveals.

Johnson used a kind of shorthand to present the overview of many ideas that were begun during his time in the Office of the Presidency. He was able to efficiently use fewer words in part because he had brought into being the blanket term that Americans now used with great fluidity—The Great Society. Johnson had promoted expansion of civil rights for all Americans as well as passage of Medicare and other health-related programs. He put in place the program insuring social security benefits for all Americans.

Johnson’s administration underwrote the greatest civil right of all as it began providing quality public education for all ages of Americans. One of the “most comprehensive educational packages that any President had offered to America” (qtd. in Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 196) came from Johnson’s administration. As Johnson had noted In January, 1964, every President from “FDR to JFK had worked toward [developing education for the people of America]” (qtd. in Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 196); however, only Johnson was able to get it done.

History offers us the hindsight of being able to compare what *was hoped for* (in 1963) with what *actually transpired* (by 1969). The fact that many programs inherent within the Great Society had been brought to life showed that Johnson had been able to use various rhetorical strategies in order to bring about positive results. We can also interpret the benefits that Johnson more subliminally offered a nation. One of these lies in the fact that

Johnson enabled more Americans to participate in obtaining a quality education—which is needed to maintain a democracy.

Speaker

Johnson’s ethos as acting President ended with the completion of this speech. He marks a symmetrical conclusion to the beginning he started as President, the night Kennedy was shot. Within the first twenty-four hours of taking office, Johnson had begun to implement his plans for educating all Americans—beginning with eliminating poverty¹¹⁵ (Heller OH LBJML). Johnson followed these ideas up by offering a substantive plan of action. In less than a year after taking office—on November 1, 1964—Johnson issued “four Presidential Policy Papers on Education, Health, Conservation of Natural Resources, and Farm Policy” (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 196), setting forth actual goals that needed to be met. This unprecedented—and immediate—activity reflects Johnson’s commitment to use everything he had stored in his arsenal of personal abilities—including The Johnson Treatment—that would help promote passage of bills into laws that America needed to make education a viable force in America.

On January 11, 1965, Johnson held a cabinet meeting where he stated that enactment of education laws was mandatory:

Tomorrow I am sending to the Congress the Message on Education. . . . I want—and I intend—education to be the cornerstone on which we build this administration's program and record. . . . I consider your first priority of

¹¹⁵ Walter Heller was an economist from The University of Michigan, hired by John Kennedy to head the Council of Economic Advisers. Heller had been told by Kennedy to “help work out a detailed program” on dealing with poverty. Heller relayed this information to Johnson on November 23, 1969 (Miller, M. 440-41).

responsibility to support education—not merely the legislation, but the cause itself. (qtd. in Dallek, *Lyndon Johnson* 198)

Johnson expanded his concerns about promoting education when he delivered the following edict in his January 12 Message to Congress: “[A] national goal of Full Educational Opportunity [is needed because the country has spent] seven times as much on a youth that has gone bad” (Johnson Message to Congress, January 12, 1965).

He asked for a doubling of federal spending on education from \$4 billion to \$8 billion, with \$1 billion going to elementary and secondary students (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 36). By March 26, 1965, the eighty-ninth Congress had passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which Johnson signed into law on April 11, 1965 (Miller, M. 496). The words of Thomas Jefferson echoed and resounded throughout Johnson’s time in office and found their resolution when Johnson signed the ESEA into law: “Preach, my dear sir, a crusade against ignorance; establish and improve the law for educating the common people” (qtd. in Johnson *Remarks upon signing the ESEA Bill into Law*: 24). As Johnson noted,

[The ESEA]went far to spur state governments to become more involved in educational questions, shape new teaching techniques. . . fix attention on the importance of early childhood schooling, benefit students at near average achievement levels, speed desegregation of schools, and assist handicapped and non-English-speaking pupils who previously had received no special attention. . . . [and] led to the creation of a Cabinet level Department of Education in 1980. (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 201-02)

The primary and secondary education bill was the first passed by the Congress (Miller, M. 496) during the five years of Johnson's Presidency. Johnson left Johnson City after signing the ESEA into law to prepare the Office of Education "for the big job that it ha[d] to do" (Johnson OH LBJML).

In November 1965, when Johnson signed the HEA at his Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos (Woods 567), he helped ease the burden that was being felt by both the students and the administrations. One reason for the "increased burden" lay in the fact that "the nation's twenty-three hundred institution of higher education were straining to accommodate the children of the World War II generation" (Woods 567). The law established college and university programs: "[These] community service programs [were] designed to assist in the solution of urban and suburban problems. It provided monies to support library acquisitions at colleges and universities and to train librarians and specialists in information sciences" (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 202).

Problems in Administrating Educational Programs

The actual results of the federal financial aid packages were not all that Johnson had thought could happen. In 1966, in his State of the Union message, the President had said that "This nation is mighty enough, its society is healthy enough, its people are strong enough, to pursue our goals in the rest of the world [meaning [Vietnam] while still building a Great Society here at home" (State of the Union Address 1966).

Johnson believed providing "guns and butter" for Americans could become a reality. However, the results that actually occurred proved him wrong (Miller, M. 551). Additionally, the actual administration of various programs was not in the hands of the federal government. For example, what the ESEA had demanded was not given sanction in

many school districts because “the bill dictated that local school districts rather than the federal government ha[d] the greatest say in spending ESEA funds” (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 201). The historian Allen J. Matusow remembers that the original plans that Johnson had—that “Title I [of ESEA] was an antipoverty program” (Matusow 201)—never happened. As a matter of fact:

Local officials made sure [the ESEA] never was [an antipoverty program]. A 1977 sample survey revealed that nearly two-thirds of the students in programs funded by Title I were not poor; more than half were not even low achievers; and 40 percent were neither poor nor low achieving. (Matusow 201)

As history shows, along with Johnson’s high hopes for a Great Society and better world, his belief that education could “improve the lives of poor youngsters far outran the reality” (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 201). Educators found that poverty had more to do with family background and general social context than the quantity and quality of education a child received. And even where studies suggested initial improvements for poor children helped by ESEA reading and math programs, later assessments indicated that benefits faded quickly and left students little better off than those not in the programs (Matusow 223-26). In short, “all the talking, [and] the junketing, [and] the administering of ‘The Treatment’ in its various forms could not hide the evidence of erosion” of Johnson’s Great Society (Miller, M. 555-56) and the bedrock of education that it was built upon.

Occasion

Johnson once asked a question that bears remembering as we examine the words he has chosen to use in his Final State of the Union/Farewell Address:

How does a public leader find just the right words or the right way to say no more and no less than he means to say—bearing in mind that anything he says may topple governments and may involve the lives of innocent men? (Johnson OH LBJML)

Johnson shows he has found the answer when he delivers his final speech to Congress—where he states much¹¹⁶ and yet does not specifically ask for anything—in true “Farewell Address” form.¹¹⁷

When Johnson was considering delivering his final State of the Union Address, he had initially thought about writing it and sending it to the Congress (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 597); however, he decided to deliver the speech in person: “I rejected and rejected and then finally accepted the congressional leadership's invitation to come here to speak this farewell to you in person tonight” (Annual Message: 89).

Campbell and Jamieson help develop understanding of the importance of Johnson’s decision in this regard. Delivering his final address in person meant that he went beyond what is required of an “Annual Message” which the Constitution defines “in Constitution, Article 2, section 3” that the President “shall from time to time give to the Congress information on the state of the Union and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient” (qtd. in Campbell and Jamieson 51-52). However, as Campbell and Jamieson reiterate, “he does not have to deliver a personal address each year” (Campbell and Jamieson 52). The “informing aspect” of the “Annual Message” has been expanded to “facilitate institutional maintenance in two ways: by recognizing the

¹¹⁶ The entire speech is over 105 paragraphs in length.

¹¹⁷ “[The President’s] practical power [at the moment of delivery of a Farewell Address] is virtually spent; in this [kind of] address more than in any other, a president must rely on moral suasion” (Campbell and Jamieson 191).

President as both the symbolic and the real head of state, and by providing him with his most significant moment of legislative leadership” (Smith and Smith 22).

In their *Deeds Done in Words*, Campbell and Jamieson further make note that the often sentimental (or pathos-laden) “Farewell Address” (Smith and Smith 23) does not necessarily address specific programs that the previous administration has accomplished. The Farewell Address has, however, “become increasingly popular as the Presidency has become increasingly rhetorical” (Campbell and Jamieson 52). “Farewells” combine the President's roles of leader and visionary so as to define his legacy to the country (Smith and Smith 23). The basic “premise behind the Farewell Address of a President” is a “response to a systemic need for a ritual of departure” (Campbell and Jamieson 191). Campbell and Jamieson continue by noting that the President’s farewell address will usually perform two primary functions: “testify[ing] to what they have learned . . . and reaffirming the meaning of the people” (191). Johnson combined both of these genres: he informed (as per the rigors of Annual Message) and testified (as per the rigors of the Farewell Address). Even in his final speech as active president, Johnson exerts his ethos to present his assessment of what had been given to them—in the form of The Great Society—as well as what needed to be continued in order to maintain the programs already in place.

One way Johnson assured his speech would be recorded for posterity came from the realization that by delivering the speech to Congress in person (instead of having the speech merely read into the record by someone) Johnson maintained the last word: he kept control of the words. He also made sure the speech was heard by many because this was his last speech and in it he was entrusting his legacy:

Yet the very existence of these commitments—these promises to the American people, made by this Congress and by the executive branch of the Governments—are achievements in themselves, and failure to carry through on our commitments would be a tragedy for this Nation. (Annual Message: 22)

Luci Bird, Johnson's daughter, remembers how important this speech was to her dad. Upon finding out that his grandson was not going to be awakened to see and hear him deliver his speech Johnson pointedly asked: "Isn't he going to go to the speech?" (qtd. in Luci Baines Johnson OH LBJML). When Lady Bird added that an "eighteen-month-old child had no business at such an event" (qtd. in Luci Baines Johnson OH LBJML), Johnson's quick rejoinder made it clear to all present that the child needed to be awakened to hear what he, as well as all of America's children, were being left by their President:

Bird [Johnson's term of endearment for his wife], I'd just love to have you at the State of the Union speech, and I'd just love for you to take your daughters if you choose to, and that includes all those other relatives that you invited, if you want to, and even some of those dear close friends. But it's my State of the Union speech and it's my last one and the only person I'm inviting is Patrick Lyndon [Johnson's grandson]. If any of the rest of you want to come, that's just fine, but I'm only inviting him! (Luci Baines Johnson OH LBJML)

Johnson wanted to "testify to what [the American people were to] learn and how it applies to the future" (Campbell and Jamieson 191) and to this end he told of his reasons for speaking: "One was philosophical" (Annual Message: 90) and "[t]he other was just pure sentimental" (Annual Message: 91). Even though this is his last official speech, he shows he

wants to “reaffirm the meaning to the people and enrich that conception in light of what [could be] learned [and built upon]” (Campbell and Jamieson 191) from his tenure in office as well as how to maintain growth in his greatest gift of The Great Society.

Audience

Johnson’s audience is one that fits the definition Chaim Perelman and John Petrie offer in their book on “Argumentation”:

What must be retained from traditional rhetoric is the idea of audience, which immediately comes to mind when we think of discourse. Every discourse is directed to an audience A discourse is conceived of in terms of an audience. While . . . [the] text is always conditioned, consciously or unconsciously, by the persons whom he means to address. (139)

Campbell and Jamieson untangle the complex structure of the audience when they offer the clarifying words that: “Presidents address many audiences, but ‘the people’ are always listening. Skillful presidents not only adapt to their audiences; they engage in a process of transforming those who hear them into the audience they desire” (5).

Johnson reflects these words as he talks to three groups, simultaneously, in one presentation. These groups are the universal audience, the immediate audience, and the private audience. The first tier of audience is what Perelman and Petrie help us to define when they talk about the universal audience.

[T]he universal audience never actually exists; it is an ideal audience, a mental construction of him who refers to it. We could easily show that this so-called “universal audience” varies with the epoch and with the person: each creates its own idea of the universal audience. (169)

Johnson seems to go into great detail in order to explain outcomes he feels have been impacted by his serving the last five years in the White House to the audience that Perelman and Petrie have helped us recognize when Johnson elucidates further by saying:

I hope it may be said, a hundred years from now, that by working together we helped to make our country more just, more just for all of its people, as well as to insure and guarantee the blessings of liberty for all of our posterity. (Annual message: 104)

The second audience to whom Johnson presented the speech was the immediate audience. This is the same body to whom he had delivered his first speech as President on November 27, 1963: a Joint Session of Congress. On both occasions, Johnson sought out a group of listeners that would presumably be his greatest supporters. However, Johnson tells us why he chose Congress to be the primary audience to whom he gave his last public speech when he states that it was “purely sentimental. Most all of my life as a public official has been spent here in this building” (Annual Message: 91).

The second level of audience, or Congress, was the “immediate audience” who had previously been fellow Congressmen, and later colleagues. This group of individuals understood many of the complexities to which Johnson refers in his speech. For example, when Johnson made the following statement, they knew what underlay the words:

The Nation's commitment in the field of civil rights began with the Declaration of Independence. They were extended by the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments. They have been powerfully strengthened by the enactment of three far-reaching civil rights laws within the past 5 years, that this Congress, in its wisdom, passed. (Annual Message: 44)

We can see the action → reaction (or cause and effect) that Johnson attempts to exert over his audience—even if he is not going to have control over these individuals. This kind of cause and effect demanded recognition of future needs in order to continue what had been begun. The understanding of such an audience can come from the immediate audience who knows and understands:

I am going to speak in the language which the Congress itself spoke when it passed these measures. [quoting now] In 1966, Congress declared that "improving the quality of urban life is the most critical domestic problem facing the United States." Two years later it affirmed the historic goal of providing a "decent home . . . for every American family." (Annual Message: 27-28).

Johnson continues to lay out ways to continue what they had begun when he says:

Let me speak for a moment about these commitments. I am going to speak in the language which the Congress itself spoke when it passed these measures. (Annual Message: 27)

I am going to quote from your words. (Annual Message: 28)

Finally, as Johnson draws his speech to a close, he takes the time to remember the private audience—his third tier of audience. In this area, he addresses individuals, as well as groups of Congress who have helped him along his political road: Vice President Hubert Humphrey, Speaker McCormack and Majority Leader Albert (Annual Message: 99); Senator Mike Mansfield, and President Pro Tem of the Senate, Senator Richard Brevard Russell (Annual Message: 99); Senator Dirksen and Congressman Gerald Ford (Annual Message: 101). Also, Johnson returns to his universal audience when he sums up his speech by saying:

“But I believe that at least it will be said that we tried” (Annual Message: 105). And the “we” to whom Johnson refers can be the cumulative audiences that he has addressed in this Message.

Speech

Invention

This speech only mentions the word education three times. He mentions education once, in regard to reaching an “accomplishment” or goal of the administration (Annual Message: 6); next, he uses the word education as he talks about the providing of a good public education for all students in America (Annual Message: 17); and finally, he specifically targets the actual amount that this administration had accorded when he states that “[Congress has allocated] from \$30 billion in 1964 to \$68 billion in the coming fiscal year. That is more than double. That is more than it has ever been increased in the 188 years of this Republic, notwithstanding Vietnam” (Annual Message: 60). Then, Johnson lists the accomplishments of the Congress in order to show them that he knows they can continue these actions (Annual Message: 28, 29, 35, 36, 38, 40, 43, 44, 45, and 48).

First, Johnson commends them (with the ploy of stroking their vanity), then he tells them they need to exert their strength by informing the next administration to accomplish certain needed programs: “I believe, and I hope the next administration [knows] that the key to success is [continuing] this effort” (Annual Message: 42). Even in this final speech, Johnson is attempting to use his Johnson Treatment to persuade; however, his ethos as President is over.

Johnson talks specifically about the ways in which accomplishments had occurred in his administration. He talks to three different audiences and uses different ways of

persuading. The one overarching idea, however, was that Johnson was presenting the truth (as he saw it) about the various accomplishments of the administration. Johnson's use of logos, or logical reasoning to promote the truth as he saw it is undeniable: "Some of the laws that we wrote have already, in front of our eyes, taken on the flesh of achievement" (Annual Message: 13).

Arrangement

When Johnson begins his speech to a hushed audience (LBJML archive video). We are reminded of his initial delivery of a speech to this same body right after he had been sworn in as President in 1963. Then, he was beginning his time as President. Now, Johnson is ending his time in office. Although Johnson mentions some of the challenges he took over from Kennedy, he states them in an oblique way that is buried in the middle of his long, final speech. The words nonetheless reflect the considerable difficulty that Johnson had to overcome in order to make the Presidency his:

My term of office has been marked by a series of challenges, both at home and throughout the world. (Annual Message: 94). In meeting some of these challenges, the Nation has found a new confidence. In meeting others, it knew turbulence and doubt, and fear and hate. (Annual Message: 95).

The arrangement that Johnson uses follows what David Zarefsky points out to be an important part of persuasion: the power to define (1). As Campbell and Jamieson again remind us, "All Presidents who complete their terms of office have an opportunity to deliver a farewell address. . . . [and they can use these] to define the meaning of the system of government of which the Presidency is a part" (211). To this end, breaking Johnson's speech

into three segments helps us see the way in which Johnson defines his administration to his various audiences. He does this through careful arrangement.

In the first segment of his speech, Johnson talks about what has been done for America and its citizens during the time of his administration: “Medicare” (Annual Message: 14); “Voting rights and the voting booth” (Annual Message: 15); “Schools and school children all over America tonight are receiving Federal assistance” (Annual Message: 16); “Preschool education—Head Start—is already here to stay [as are federally funded programs promoting keeping] young people in the colleges and the universities of this country” (Annual Message: 17); “Part of the American earth. . . has been permanently set aside for the American public” (Annual Message: 18); “[and] Five million Americans have been trained for jobs in new Federal programs” (Annual Message: 19). He then repeats himself when he states: “We must not ignore our problems. But neither should we ignore our strengths” (Annual Message: 8).

Through use of the words “we must not ignore” which are closely followed by words expressing the same idea “neither should we ignore” Johnson gives impact to the words he delivers to his audience, just as he implicitly suggests he wants the audience to feel that Congress delivered the *fait accompli* to them. Johnson takes the audience with him on a chronological time travel: from past to present with the result being one from which all can benefit: “These achievements completed the full cycle, from idea to enactment and, finally, to a place in the lives of citizens all across this country” (Annual Message: 21). Johnson is promoting the accomplishment achieved in his Presidency. The Great Society was a major offering to the citizenry, and the results are profound—now and in the future for America.

In the next segment, he talks about the aspects of what Congress has done, and needs to do in order to further aid the citizens of America. He lists all the various bills that have been passed starting with personal rights that have been promoted for the citizenry, then continuing to the commitments that have yet to come about:

This much is certain: No one man or group of men made these commitments alone. Congress and the executive branch, with their checks and balances, reasoned together and finally wrote them into the law of the land.
(Annual Message: 24)

They express America's common determination to achieve goals. They imply action. (Annual Message: 25)

In most cases, you have already begun that action—but it is not fully completed, of course. (Annual Message: 26)

And with these words he launches into what he believes should come about. In typical Johnson fashion, he ends this segment by using his *Treatment* to the body of Congress, where he chides Congress in its failure to pass a bill

Frankly, as I leave the Office of the Presidency, one of my greatest disappointments is our failure to secure passage of a licensing and registration act for firearms. I think if we had passed that act, it would have reduced the incidence of crime. I believe that the Congress should adopt such a law, and I hope that it will at a not too distant date.(Annual Message: 52)

By presenting what has not been accomplished immediately after the litany of what has been accomplished, Johnson makes the rhetorical presentation obvious to the Congressional body

that the bill *needs* to be passed in order to maintain the consistency that the Congress has established.

In the third segment, Johnson personally addresses his thanks to all of the Congressmen who have helped him achieve the various goals of his administration: “Now, my friends in Congress, I want to conclude with a few very personal words to you” (Annual Message: 88). Even though Johnson says that he wants to address personal words—he uses a public forum to do so. He makes it plain to the other groups—audiences—that much has been accomplished: “I believe deeply in the ultimate purposes of this Nation—described by the Constitution, tempered by history, embodied in progressive laws, and given life by men and women that have been elected to serve their fellow citizens” (Annual Message: 97). Even in this, his final section of the speech, Johnson has incorporated all of his audiences as he talks about the accomplishments achieved during his administration. Even up to the end of his final speech, Johnson attempts to persuade by use of patriotic fervor to unite all his audiences into one audience.

Johnson seeks to define his Presidency by the issues he focused on in his last speech that he delivers as President. Again, Campbell and Jamison help clarify this seemingly obvious idea when they point out, “The selection of criteria and the warnings developed in these [farewell] addresses are revealing because the failures and successes of Presidencies are mirrored in what is excluded from and included in farewell addresses” (195).

Johnson opts to arrange his topics in such a fashion so that they build to a climactic point, which he then resolves by stating that his administration has provided many answers:

“These achievements completed the full cycle, from idea to enactment and, finally, to a place in the lives of citizens all across this country” (Annual Message: 21). He then hastens¹¹⁸ to remind Congress of the constant vigil they must continue in order to have the continuation of the benefits the Johnson Administration has put in place be continued:

I wish it were possible to say that everything that this Congress and the administration achieved during this period had already completed that cycle. But a great deal of what we have committed needs additional funding to become a tangible realization. (Annual Message: 22)

The clear appeals to the conscience of the listeners he offers, as well as the constant reminders of the positive results that have come already from his term in office run throughout each segment.

Johnson uses this simplistic, and yet effective model of arranging what he says to lead up to the final paragraphs where he directly focuses on what he wants everyone to take away from this speech: “But I believe that at least it will be said that we tried” (Annual Message: 105). Johnson seems to be almost resigned to what will be written about his administration with these words.

Style

Admittedly, the rhetoric Johnson used in his 1969 speech was much more succinct and focused than the remarks he had used in 1963. For example, in the 1963 speech, Johnson focused on what programs *will be* passed into law: space; partnership across the Atlantic—and across the Pacific; a Peace Corps; education; jobs; care for our elderly; all-out attack on mental illness; equal rights for all Americans (Annual Message 1963: 5). Johnson also stated

¹¹⁸ CD of Johnson’s Annual Message (LBJML).

why he was going to promote them: “[Because] now the ideas and the ideals which [Kennedy] so nobly represented must and will be translated into effective action (Address, 1963: 6). However, in 1969, Johnson only had to present what *had been* accomplished. These areas he listed as assets relating to “our economy, the democratic system, our sense of exploration” and the accomplishments in the judicial system, as a whole (Annual Message, 1969: 6). Johnson also added the *why* when he focused on the “commitments” that everyone in America had made in order to “achieve the kind of Great Society that we all want” (Annual Message 1969: 3). At the outset of his Annual Message, Johnson reaffirms his position of doing what all Presidents believe is right, because “[e]very President lives, not only with what is, but with what has been and what could be” (Annual Message: 4).

He continues by reminding the audience that although he is *in* the group of individuals who exercise the power—which the Presidency represents—he is not necessarily *part of* this group when he says “and extending back through several other administrations” (Annual Message: 5). In this, one of his opening sentences, Johnson distances himself from other Presidents by using the possessive—and more speculative and analytical objective—pronoun “his” and not the subjective pronoun “my.” Johnson is immediately telling his audience that he is analyzing the events of the Presidency along with them, not telling them what happened.

Johnson then cements the fact that he is no longer President: he has now joined the American audience when he adds himself into the “we” of the population (Annual Message: 8). By taking this humble stance at the beginning, Johnson was exhibiting one of the most forceful rhetorical strategies he had used throughout his entire political career: he shows he is

one of the people—and this emotional appeal has worked in many of his speeches over his entire political career.

As Johnson moves through his speech he is moving from being the President to becoming a citizen. This all-important transition reflects what Campbell and Jamieson focus on and clarify as they state:

The lines of argument [a President uses that] must deal with criteria for evaluating the Presidency, [along] with the accomplishments of [the] given administration and with a legacy . . . addressed to the future. However, the style and content must be fused if the legacy is to be bequeathed. (211)

John Dodds, editorial executive and analyst, builds on this idea that Moyers suggests when Dodds recalls that “His [manner of] speech was filled with country rhythms, country similes, metaphors that came from people who are born on the land and live on the land” (Dodds OH LBJML). As a matter of fact, Johnson lapsed into this style of speaking—*albeit* only to a slight extent—as he reminded the assembly of the Johnson Treatment: “No President should ask for more, although I did upon occasions” (Annual Message: 102). This humorous addition, to an otherwise serious speech reflects the “country-style” of language where people are put at ease. It is reminiscent of the way Johnson addressed his audience as he signed into law the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in Johnson City, Texas, in April, 1965.

In short, Johnson’s ethos was complicated, and yet, as his ascendancy to the office of the President indicates, it was successfully constructed. It was an ethos that was obviously *of* the people that initially elected him to office. And his “way of talking country” (Dodds OH

LBJML) added to—and did not detract from—the depth and personality that Johnson used to his advantages in many of his speeches—including this farewell speech.

As Johnson sums up his Message, he uses the inclusive “we”: “Now, it is time to leave. I hope it may be said, a hundred years from now, that by working together we helped to make our country more just, more just for all of its people, as well as to insure and guarantee the blessings of liberty for all of our posterity” (Annual Message: 104). The word “we” can be construed to stand for individuals; however, the “we” can refer to the entire audience. Johnson’s style of speaking allows him to encompass in one speech—and, more specifically, one sentence—all three levels of his listeners—the universal, the mixed and the individual audience.

Memory

W. Thomas Johnson, White House fellow from 1965-55, deputy press secretary in 1967 and special assistant to the President in 1968, had extensive, first-hand knowledge of Lyndon Johnson: he offers this cogent observation:

All of the people who came in contact with Lyndon Johnson—his family, his friends, his political associates, the members of the White House staff—each of them has his or her slice of Lyndon Johnson. Now some of the slices are larger than others. . . .[N]obody has ever put all of the slices together. The things that have been written about him, all of them are very limited, taking in a very small slice. What has to be done is to put all the slices of the pie together. (OH LBJML)

Thomas Johnson then adds as a kind of afterthought, “If it can be done” (Johnson OH LBJML). Their slices—or “memories—are similar to Johnson’s, and every human beings’ in

that these memories are selective. When he delivers this speech, he selectively chooses which memory to recall and talk about, and that is what we, as the rhetorical critics, can use as a foundation, or guide. Throughout his speech, Johnson promotes the fact that the administration has sponsored effective methods of achieving “the kind of great society that we all want” (Annual Message: 3) while he attempts to de-emphasize the war in Vietnam—mentioning it only nine times (in a speech of over 105 paragraphs).

Each time Johnson refers to Vietnam, he does so in a minimal way. The closest Johnson comes to admitting any kind of defeat in Vietnam comes as he recounts that “I regret more than any of you know that it has not been possible to restore peace to South Vietnam” (Annual Message: 81). However, history allows various voices to enter an ongoing conversation in order to offer clarification: such is the case in this instance. Johnson had continually escalated the war in Vietnam, hoping to end the conflict. However, on February 27, 1968, Walter Cronkite of CBS television, “the nation's most trusted person” (Dallek, *Flawed Giant* 506) asserted that “the conflict was deadlocked and that additional fighting would change nothing” (Cronkite *Reporter's Life*, 257-58).¹¹⁹ The disparity in “realities” was reflected in the divisiveness that was occurring in America over Vietnam.

The dichotomy points out that once again, by promoting a set of ideas, Johnson is able to use the power of definition to focus an audience. This formidable ability (of being able to refine and hone what is to be focused upon) is one that many Presidents take years to acquire, notes David Zarefsky, rhetorician. Zarefsky states that it is the President’s choice to pick “among available symbols to characterize a situation” (1). Zarefsky continues by noting

¹¹⁹ After hearing Cronkite's assessment, Johnson reportedly said, "If I've lost Cronkite, I've lost Middle America" (Johnson qtd. in Dallek *Flawed Giant*, 506).

the situation that is presented “rests on two premises . . . the symbolic interactionist belief that reality is socially constructed and the emergence in the twentieth century of the ‘rhetorical Presidency’” (1). Both of these results come from the mixed way in which memory can be used by a person in power.

Johnson’s explication of the benefits (Annual Message: 13-32) and the needed commitments to continue benefits (Annual Message 34-50) promotes his belief that continued support of The Great Society and the programs within it offers the key to the continued growth of democracy in America. As Johnson points out, “Working together, we helped to make our country more just, more just for all of its people, as well as to assure and guarantee the blessings of liberty for all of our posterity” (Annual Message: 105). Johnson’s memories become America’s memories—if just for a short time.

Delivery

A rousing standing ovation from the Congressional leaders and the gallery met Johnson’s appearance at the podium. The loud clapping, whistles, and cheers of “Bravo” lasted for a full ten minutes. The loud gavel strokes of the Speaker brought order (LBJML video archive). Johnson accepts his peers’ accolades of his peers with a smile of pleasure and nods to various individuals throughout this time.

Since the delivery of the speech deals with his actual performance, we can see the impact and forcefulness Johnson uses. He is loud and then he is almost inaudible. The quiet tones he uses to deliver the more personal remarks he has for the Congressional members in the audience make it almost as if we, as the rhetorical critics, are eavesdropping on a personal set of remarks—not meant for any but the personal audience to hear. Johnson weaves the

actual way he speaks his words in with other words, to form an edifice that creates the visual representation of a President who is almost bigger than life.

Conclusion

Campbell and Jamieson offer an observation of a speech event relates to Johnson's January 14, 1969 Annual Message: "For a brief period at the end of their tenures, Presidents have the opportunity to speak from an exalted position as leader and prophet to bequeath a new understanding of the government and its principles as a legacy" (212). We as rhetorical critics can better grasp what Johnson was attempting to promote in his speech to the Congress on January 14, 1969, as we view how Johnson delivered his final speech.

He relates what he believed was the truth about what had been accomplished during his administration. Although Johnson delivered this "truth" in such a way that some in his audience maintained they were being manipulated (Caro, *Path to Power* 5), most in the audience believed they were, indeed, receiving "[Johnson's] assessment of the State of the Union" (Annual Message: 2). Although Johnson has attempted to make The Great Society—and the foundational aspect of education—be the mainstay of his Presidency, the war in Vietnam was the ubiquitous elephant in the congressional chambers (Miller, M. 300). The words Johnson delivers to Congress and to the World capture his unshakable persona. Johnson's final speech displays not only the Presidential "final speech" that Campbell and Jamieson write about, but also the strength of a leader who stands before a body and delivers an "Annual Message." Johnson's strength as an orator is obvious in the way he weaves subject matters together with presentation in such a way, that we, as rhetorical analysts, can truly realize the legacy that Johnson left us.

APPENDIX G¹²⁰

President Lyndon B. Johnson's
Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union
January 14, 1969

¹²⁰ “Annual Message” will be the reference to this speech throughout the dissertation.

President Lyndon B. Johnson's
Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union

January 14, 1969

[Delivered in person before a joint session at 9:05 p.m.]

1. Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, Members of the Congress and my fellow, Americans:

2. For the sixth and the last time, I present to the Congress my assessment of the State of the Union.
3. I shall speak to you tonight about challenge and opportunity—and about the commitments that all of us have made together that will, if we carry them out, give America our best chance to achieve the kind of great society that we all want.
4. Every President lives, not only with what is, but with what has been and what could be.
5. Most of the great events in his Presidency are part of a larger sequence extending back through several years and extending back through several other administrations.
6. Urban unrest, poverty, pressures on welfare, education of our people, law enforcement and law and order, the continuing crisis in the Middle East, the conflict in Vietnam, the dangers of nuclear war, the great difficulties of dealing with the Communist powers, all have this much in common: They and their causes—the causes that gave rise to them—all of these have existed with us for many years. Several Presidents have already sought to try to deal with them. One or more Presidents will try to resolve them or try to contain them in the years that are ahead of us.
7. But if the Nation's problems are continuing, so are this great Nation's assets:
 - our economy,
 - the democratic system,
 - our sense of exploration, symbolized most recently by the wonderful flight of the Apollo 8, in which all Americans took great pride,
 - the good commonsense and sound judgment of the American people,
 - and
 - their essential love of justice.
8. We must not ignore our problems. But neither should we ignore our strengths. Those strengths are available to sustain a President of either party—to support his progressive efforts both at home and overseas.
9. Unfortunately, the departure of an administration does not mean the end of the problems that this administration has faced. The effort to meet the problems must go on, year after year, if the momentum that we have all mounted together in these past years is not to be lost.
10. Although the struggle for progressive change is continuous, there are times when a watershed is reached—when there is—if not really a break with the past—at least the fulfillment of many of its oldest hopes, and a stepping forth into a new environment, to seek new goals.
11. I think the past 5 years have been such a time.
12. We have finished a major part of the old agenda.

13. Some of the laws that we wrote have already, in front of our eyes, taken on the flesh of achievement.
14. Medicare that we were unable to pass for so many years is now a part of American life.
15. Voting rights and the voting booth that we debated so long back in the fifties, and the doors to public service, are open at last to all Americans regardless of their color.
16. Schools and school children all over America tonight are receiving Federal assistance to go to good schools.
17. Preschool education—Head Start—is already here to stay and, I think, so are the Federal programs that tonight are keeping more than a million and a half of the cream of our young people in the colleges and the universities of this country.
18. Part of the American earth—not only in description on a map, but in the reality of our shores, our hills, our parks, our forests, and our mountains—has been permanently set aside for the American public and for their benefit. And there is more that will be set aside before this administration ends.
19. Five million Americans have been trained for jobs in new Federal programs.
20. I think it is most important that we all realize tonight that this Nation is close to full employment—with less unemployment than we have had at any time in almost 20 years. That is not in theory; that is in fact. Tonight, the unemployment rate is down to 3.3 percent. The number of jobs has grown more than 8 1/2 million in the last 5 years. That is more than in all the preceding 12 years.
21. These achievements completed the full cycle, from idea to enactment and, finally, to a place in the lives of citizens all across this country.
22. I wish it were possible to say that everything that this Congress and the administration achieved during this period had already completed that cycle. But a great deal of what we have committed needs additional funding to become a tangible realization.
23. Yet the very existence of these commitments—these promises to the American people, made by this Congress and by the executive branch of the Government—are achievements in themselves, and failure to carry through on our commitments would be a tragedy for this Nation.
24. This much is certain: No one man or group of men made these commitments alone. Congress and the executive branch, with their checks and balances, reasoned together and finally wrote them into the law of the land. They now have all the moral force that the American political system can summon when it acts as one.
25. They express America's common determination to achieve goals. They imply action.
26. In most cases, you have already begun that action—but it is not fully completed, of course.
27. Let me speak for a moment about these commitments. I am going to speak in the language which the Congress itself spoke when it passed these measures.
28. I am going to quote from your words.
29. In 1966, Congress declared that "improving the quality of urban life is the most critical domestic problem facing the United States." Two years later it affirmed the historic goal of "a decent home . . . for every American family." That is your language.

30. Now to meet these commitments, we must increase our support for the model cities program, where blueprints of change are already being prepared in more than 150 American cities

31. To achieve the goals of the Housing Act of 1968 that you have already passed, we should begin this year more than 500,000 homes for needy families in the coming fiscal year. Funds are provided in the new budget to do just this. This is almost 10 times—10 times—the average rate of the past 10 years.

32. Our cities and our towns are being pressed for funds to meet the needs of their growing populations. So I believe an urban development bank should be created by the Congress. This bank could obtain resources through the issuance of taxable bonds and it could then lend these resources at reduced rates to the communities throughout the land for schools, hospitals, parks, and other public facilities.

33. Since we enacted the Social Security Act back in 1935, Congress has recognized the necessity to "make more adequate provision for aged persons . . . through maternal and child welfare . . . and public health." Those are the words of the Congress—"more adequate."

34. The time has come, I think, to make it more adequate. I believe we should increase social security benefits, and I am so recommending tonight.

35. I am suggesting that there should be an overall increase in benefits of at least 13 percent. Those who receive only the minimum of \$55 should get \$80 a month.

36. Our Nation, too, is rightfully proud of our medical advances. But we should remember that our country ranks 15th among the nations of the world in its infant mortality rate.

37. I think we should assure decent medical care for every expectant mother and for their children during the first year of their life in the United States of America.

38. I think we should protect our children and their families from the costs of catastrophic illness.

39. As we pass on from medicine, I think nothing is clearer to the Congress than the commitment that the Congress made to end poverty. Congress expressed it well, I think, in 1964, when they said: "It is the policy of the United States to eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation."

40. This is the richest nation in the world. The antipoverty program has had many achievements. It also has some failures. But we must not cripple it after only 3 years of trying to solve the human problems that have been with us and have been building up among us for generations.

41. I believe the Congress this year will want to improve the administration of the poverty program by reorganizing portions of it and transferring them to other agencies. I believe, though, it will want to continue, until we have broken the back of poverty, the efforts we are now making throughout this land.

42. I believe, and I hope the next administration—I believe they believe—that the key to success in this effort is jobs. It is work for people who want to work.

43. In the budget for fiscal 1970, I shall recommend a total of \$3.5 billion for our job training program, and that is five times as much as we spent in 1964 trying to prepare Americans where they can work to earn their own living.

44. The Nation's commitment in the field of civil rights began with the Declaration of Independence. They were extended by the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments. They have been powerfully strengthened by the enactment of three far-reaching civil rights laws within the past 5 years, that this Congress, in its wisdom, passed.

45. On January 1 of this year, the Fair Housing Act of 1968 covered over 20 million American homes and apartments. The prohibition against racial discrimination in that act should be remembered and it should be vigorously enforced throughout this land.

46. I believe we should also extend the vital provisions of the Voting Rights Act for another 5 years.

47. In the Safe Streets Act of 1968, Congress determined "To assist state and local governments in reducing the incidence of crime."

48. This year I am proposing that the Congress provide the full \$300 million that the Congress last year authorized to do just that.

49. I hope the Congress will put the money where the authorization is.

50. I believe this is an essential contribution to justice and to public order in the United States. I hope these grants can be made to the States and they can be used effectively to reduce the crime rate in this country.

51. But all of this is only a small part of the total effort that must be made—I think chiefly by the local governments throughout the Nation—if we expect to reduce the toll of crime that we all detest.

52. Frankly, as I leave the Office of the Presidency, one of my greatest disappointments is our failure to secure passage of a licensing and registration act for firearms. I think if we had passed that act, it would have reduced the incidence of crime. I believe that the Congress should adopt such a law, and I hope that it will at a not too distant date.

53. In order to meet our long-standing commitment to make government as efficient as possible, I believe that we should reorganize our postal system along the lines of the Kappel¹ report.

54. I hope we can all agree that public service should never impose an unreasonable financial sacrifice on able men and women who want to serve their country.

55. I believe that the recommendations of the Commission on Executive, Legislative and Judicial Salaries are generally sound. Later this week, I shall submit a special message which I reviewed with the leadership this evening containing a proposal that has been reduced and has modified the Commission's recommendation to some extent on the congressional salaries.

56. For Members of Congress, I will recommend the basic compensation not of the \$50,000 unanimously recommended by the Kappel Commission and the other distinguished Members, but I shall reduce that \$50,000 to \$42,500. I will suggest that Congress appropriate a very small additional allowance for official expenses, so that Members will not be required to use their salary increase for essential official business.

57. I would have submitted the Commission's recommendations, except the advice that I received from the leadership—and you usually are consulted about matters that affect the Congress—was that the Congress would not accept the \$50,000 recommendation, and if I expected my recommendation to be seriously considered, I should make substantial reductions. That is the only reason I didn't go along with the Kappel report.

58. In 1967 I recommended to the Congress a fair and impartial random selection system for the draft. I submit it again tonight for your most respectful consideration.

59. I know that all of us recognize that most of the things we do to meet all of these commitments I talk about will cost money. If we maintain the strong rate of growth that we have had in this country for the past 8 years, I think we shall generate the resources that we need to meet these commitments.

60. We have already been able to increase our support for major social programs—although we have heard a lot about not being able to do anything on the home front because of Vietnam; but we have been able in the last 5 years to increase our commitments for such things as health and education from \$30 billion in 1964 to \$68 billion in the coming fiscal year. That is more than double. That is more than it has ever been increased in the 188 years of this Republic, notwithstanding Vietnam.

61. We must continue to budget our resources and budget them responsibly in a way that will preserve our prosperity and will strengthen our dollar.

62. Greater revenues and the reduced Federal spending required by Congress last year have changed the budgetary picture dramatically since last January when we made our estimates. At that time, you will remember that we estimated we would have a deficit of \$8 billion. Well, I am glad to report to you tonight that the fiscal year ending June 30, 1969, this June, we are going to have not a deficit, but we are going to have a \$2.4 billion surplus.

63. You will receive the budget tomorrow. The budget for the next fiscal year, that begins July 1—which you will want to examine very carefully in the days ahead—will provide a \$3.4 billion surplus.

64. This budget anticipates the extension of the surtax that Congress enacted last year. I have communicated with the President-elect, Mr. Nixon, in connection with this policy of continuing the surtax for the time being.

65. I want to tell you that both of us want to see it removed just as soon as circumstances will permit, but the President-elect has told me that he has concluded that until his administration, and this Congress, can examine the appropriation bills, and each item in the budget, and can ascertain that the facts justify permitting the surtax to expire or to be reduced, he, Mr. Nixon, will support my recommendation that the surtax be continued.

66. Americans, I believe, are united in the hope that the Paris talks will bring an early peace to Vietnam. And if our hopes for an early settlement of the war are realized, then our military expenditures can be reduced and very substantial savings can be made to be used for other desirable purposes, as the Congress may determine.

67. In any event, I think it is imperative that we do all that we responsibly can to resist inflation while maintaining our prosperity. I think all Americans know that our prosperity is broad and it is deep, and it has brought record profits, the highest in our history, and record wages.

68. Our gross national product has grown more in the last 5 years than any other period in our Nation's history. Our wages have been the highest. Our profits have been the best. This prosperity has enabled millions to escape the poverty that they would have otherwise had the last few years.

69. I think also you will be very glad to hear that the Secretary of the Treasury informs me tonight that in 1968 in our balance of payments we have achieved a surplus. It appears that we have, in fact, done better this year than we have done in any year in this regard since the year 1957.

70. The quest for a durable peace, I think, has absorbed every administration since the end of World War II. It has required us to seek a limitation of arms races not only among the superpowers, but among the smaller nations as well. We have joined in the test ban treaty of 1963, the outer space treaty of 1967, and the treaty against the spread of nuclear weapons in 1968.

71. This latter agreement—the nonproliferation treaty—is now pending in the Senate and it has been pending there since last July. In my opinion, delay in ratifying it is not going to be helpful to the cause of peace. America took the lead in negotiating this treaty and America should now take steps to have it approved at the earliest possible date.

72. Until a way can be found to scale down the level of arms among the superpowers, mankind cannot view the future without fear and great apprehension. So, I believe that we should resume the talks with the Soviet Union about limiting offensive and defensive missile systems. I think they would already have been resumed except for Czechoslovakia and our election this year.

73. It was more than 20 years ago that we embarked on a program of trying to aid the developing nations. We knew then that we could not live in good conscience as a rich enclave on an earth that was seething in misery.

74. During these years there have been great advances made under our program, particularly against want and hunger, although we are disappointed at the appropriations last year. We thought they were woefully inadequate. This year I am asking for adequate funds for economic assistance in the hope that we can further peace throughout the world.

75. I think we must continue to support efforts in regional cooperation. Among those efforts, that of Western Europe has a very special place in America's concern.

76. The only course that is going to permit Europe to play the great world role that its resources permit is to go forward to unity. I think America remains ready to work with a united Europe, to work as a partner on the basis of equality.

77. For the future, the quest for peace, I believe, requires:

- that we maintain the liberal trade policies that have helped us become the leading nation in world trade,
- that we strengthen the international monetary system as an instrument of world prosperity, and
- that we seek areas of agreement with the Soviet Union where the interests of both nations and the interests of world peace are properly served.

78. The strained relationship between us and the world's leading Communist power has not ended—especially in the light of the brutal invasion of Czechoslovakia. But totalitarianism is no less odious to us because we are able to reach some accommodation that reduces the danger of world catastrophe.

79. What we do, we do in the interest of peace in the world. We earnestly hope that time will bring a Russia that is less afraid of diversity and individual freedom.

80. The quest for peace tonight continues in Vietnam, and in the Paris talks.

81. I regret more than any of you know that it has not been possible to restore peace to South Vietnam.

82. The prospects, I think, for peace are better today than at any time since North Vietnam began its invasion with its regular forces more than 4 years ago.

83. The free nations of Asia know what they were not sure of at that time: that America cares about their freedom, and it also cares about America's own vital interests in Asia and throughout the Pacific.

84. The North Vietnamese know that they cannot achieve their aggressive purposes by force. There may be hard fighting before a settlement is reached; but, I can assure you, it will yield no victory to the Communist cause.

85. I cannot speak to you tonight about Vietnam without paying a very personal tribute to the men who have carried the battle out there for all of us. I have been honored to be their Commander in Chief. The Nation owes them its unstinting support while the battle continues—and its enduring gratitude when their service is done.

86. Finally, the quest for stable peace in the Middle East goes on in many capitals tonight. America fully supports the unanimous resolution of the U.N. Security Council which points the way.
87. There must be a settlement of the armed hostility that exists in that region of the world today. It is a threat not only to Israel and to all the Arab States, but it is a threat to every one of us and to the entire world as well.
88. Now, my friends in Congress, I want to conclude with a few very personal words to you.
89. I rejected and rejected and then finally accepted the congressional leadership's invitation to come here to speak this farewell to you in person tonight.
90. I did that for two reasons. One was philosophical. I wanted to give you my judgment, as I saw it, on some of the issues before our Nation, as I view them, before I leave.
91. The other was just pure sentimental. Most all of my life as a public official has been spent here in this building. For 38 years—since I worked on that gallery as a doorkeeper in the House of Representatives—I have known these halls, and I have known most of the men pretty well who walked them.
92. I know the questions that you face. I know the conflicts that you endure. I know the ideals that you seek to serve.
93. I left here first to become Vice President, and then to become, in a moment of tragedy, the President of the United States.
94. My term of office has been marked by a series of challenges, both at home and throughout the world.
95. In meeting some of these challenges, the Nation has found a new confidence. In meeting others, it knew turbulence and doubt, and fear and hate.
96. Throughout this time, I have been sustained by my faith in representative democracy—a faith that I had learned here in this Capitol Building as an employee and as a Congressman and as a Senator.
97. I believe deeply in the ultimate purposes of this Nation—described by the Constitution, tempered by history, embodied in progressive laws, and given life by men and women that have been elected to serve their fellow citizens.
98. Now for 5 most demanding years in the White House, I have been strengthened by the counsel and the cooperation of two great former Presidents, Harry S. Truman and Dwight David Eisenhower. I have been guided by the memory of my pleasant and close association with the beloved John F. Kennedy, and with our greatest modern legislator, Speaker Sam Rayburn.
99. I have been assisted by my friend every step of the way, Vice President Hubert Humphrey. I am so grateful that I have been supported daily by the loyalty of Speaker McCormack and Majority Leader Albert.
100. I have benefited from the wisdom of Senator Mike Mansfield, and I am sure that I have avoided many dangerous pitfalls by the good commonsense counsel of the President Pro Tem of the Senate, Senator Richard Brevard Russell.
101. I have received the most generous cooperation from the leaders of the Republican Party in the Congress of the United States, Senator Dirksen and Congressman Gerald Ford, the Minority Leader.

102. No President should ask for more, although I did upon occasions. But few Presidents have ever been blessed with so much.

103. President-elect Nixon, in the days ahead, is going to need your understanding, just as I did. And he is entitled to have it. I hope every Member will remember that the burdens he will bear as our President, will be borne for all of us. Each of us should try not to increase these burdens for the sake of narrow personal or partisan advantage.

104. Now, it is time to leave. I hope it may be said, a hundred years from now, that by working together we helped to make our country more just, more just for all of its people, as well as to insure and guarantee the blessings of liberty for all of our posterity.

105 That is what I hope. But I believe that at least it will be said that we tried.

¹Frederick R. Kappel, Chairman of the Commission on Executive, Legislative and Judicial Salaries.

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1968-69. Volume II, entry 676, pp. 1263-1270. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1970.*

CHAPTER SEVEN

“The Johnson Treatment”: Employment and Expansion of Ethos

Rhetorical studies have allowed us to accomplish much in terms of understanding Johnson’s ability to persuade audiences. These seven, publicly-delivered speeches, given over Johnson’s political lifetime, show precisely how Johnson used words to reflect the opinions and expectations of his audience(s). First, we study the way in which Johnson developed his use of words to convey to his audience what he deemed to be important regarding the subject of education. Second, we see the specific way in which Johnson introduced the words *The Great Society* to be a kind of shorthand reflecting important ideas that America could integrate to become greater. The third, and perhaps the most incisive detail this study has shown is the treatment of ethos that Johnson exemplified. Born with a strong sense of character—or ethos—Johnson also developed his ethos. In fact, he became such a force he was able to manifest his rhetorical power for a whole world to witness.

Ethos is the driving force behind many lives that make a difference in our world. In fact, as recently as 2005, Senator John McCain wrote a book entitled *Character Is Destiny*, where he argues the fact that “character” or “ethos” includes being aware of, and applying, inspiration that “every young person should know and every adult should remember” (frontispiece). Johnson began displaying certain character traits in childhood that he later refined as he pursued his political career. Johnson’s ethos drove the rhetorical strategies he employed and expanded upon throughout his life. The strategies came together to help Johnson realize the *eudaimonia* of his life.

Aristotle defines “*eudaimonia*” to mean a completion or a happiness that comes from a satisfaction within the self (*Nicomachean Ethics 1:8-10*). That is, there is a fulfillment,

which reflects bringing about a “good life. A good life, in turn, manifests in living a virtuous life” (*Nicomachean Ethics 1:6*).¹²¹ In this manner, Aristotle helps us realize that *eudaimonia* is the foundation upon which the ethos, or character, of an individual is built. Johnson’s ethos, both the one with which he was born and the one he developed within himself, helped him fashion his own personal *eudaimonia*. Johnson’s sense of rightness worked within him in order to manifest in his politically constructed world. That is, Johnson took the ethos with which he began his political career as a Congressman in Texas and built upon it to form the powerful national political dynamo known as “LBJ” that expanded into the vision of the world.

As we see how Johnson maneuvers from the local arena to the national stage, we realize how relatively easily Johnson transforms what he says and how he says it to embrace new audiences. In each of these speeches, we trace the expansion of Johnson’s ethos, which grows along with the size of his audiences. Johnson’s knowledge (as an inherent part of his ethos) expands in order to include and accommodate his ever-increasingly diverse audience(s). This sense permeated his being to solidify the *eudaimonia* from which Johnson pulled in order to persuade not only his immediate, listening audience, but also his universal audience.

Johnson adapts his innate ability to know many aspects of a problem or event into an overarching force and power that presents workable solutions. Johnson’s empathy enabled him to include everyone into an audience that ranged from one person to a world. As Johnson’s ethos expands, he realizes what he needs to accomplish in order to bring about a better world so others can have a better life. When Johnson became President, he realized he

¹²¹ Greek εὐδαιμονία literally means having a good, virtuous spirit (*Nicomachean Ethics 1:9*).

needed to introduce, implement, and maintain a Great Society. The foundation upon which his Great Society was built rested on education.

Johnson sharpens, distills, and develops many rhetorical strategies. However, the pivotal one he uses throughout his political career is The Johnson Treatment. As time passes, Johnson develops his skill in applying The Johnson Treatment; he shifts from using it merely as a one-on-one technique into a tool he employs to motivate and inspire an entire nation. The Greek word *dunamis* captures this force or power of persona. Martin Luther King, Jr., a contemporary of Johnson's, envisioned more for the African Americans; however, it was not until he gained enough power and prestige was he able to affect change. Johnson, too, was unable to affect the changes he foresaw in America until he became President.

After giving his final public speech as an active president, Johnson returned to the Texas Hill Country he loved. He had another heart attack on January 22, 1973 and died. Just as King was unable to climb his mountain to achieve the freedom he saw, Johnson was unable to establish all aspects of his Great Society. However, because of the richness of his character and the full-throttled way in which he lived every day of his life, we, as rhetorical historians, are still researching the heights Johnson reached during his lifetime.

As this work reveals, Johnson had a remarkable ability to empathize with disenfranchised groups. Johnson's perspective encompassed not only what needed to change in the moment, but also what needed to change for the future. Just as Lincoln, in the 1860s, became synonymous with freeing the physical bodies of the former slaves, Johnson, the 1960s became synonymous with freeing their souls.

In the summer of 1969, the author of this dissertation went to Girls' State held that year in Austin. Johnson paid a surprise visit (a "drop in," as he was known to do on Capitol

Hill). He delivered a thrilling speech that inspired everyone in the audience. In fact, his words helped determine the course this author's life should take—to promote democracy and help the "underdog."

People look at dissertations to see how they contribute to society's knowledge. This dissertation shows how one man was able to transcend his Texas twang to use words in so forceful a way that he impacted a nation. As Aristotle contends, there are two ways to have a persuasive style—or ethos: to be born with a strong ethos or to develop it. Johnson did the remarkable; he did both. We are the benefactors of Johnson's complex personality that used rhetoric to change a world.

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