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Policy Statement and Call for Papers
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The editor of the 2017 Journal of the Speech and Theatre Association of Missouri is presently accepting manuscripts. Scholarly articles, book and resource reviews, and teaching resources are all encouraged. Scholarship from a diversity of areas from the discipline encompassing communication, speech, and theatre will be considered. These areas include, but area not limited to: Speech, Debate, Theatre Instruction and Performance, Communication Theory, Interpersonal Communication, Intercultural Communication, Health Communication, Rhetoric, Persuasion, Organizational Communication, Political Communication, Family Communications, Listening, Communication Ethics, Mediation, Public Relations, Film, Mass Media Theory, Mediated Communication, and New Communication Technologies.

All submissions should be in Microsoft Word, and emailed to the editor. References should follow the latest edition of the American Psychological Association style manual. A separate page with abstract, author affiliation and bio(s) should be included. All submissions should be received by February 17, 2017 to ensure full consideration for publication.

Updated submission information for volume 47 will be available in October of 2016 at the website for the Speech and Theatre Association of Missouri – **www.speechandtheatremo.org**

Submissions can be sent to:
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The Efficacy of Teaching Debate as a Cross Curricular Strategy to Engender Critical Thinking and Attitude Mitigation in Student Populations

Arthur R. Rennels, Jack E. Rogers, & Nicole A. P. Freeman

Abstract

This article argues that teaching debate across the curriculum in secondary classrooms has the potential to effectively teach critical thinking, source credibility, and to moderate previously held attitudes and beliefs. Students need to be taught to ask the right questions and to seek the answers to those questions in an intelligent, thoughtful manner. This leads to better academic outcomes for the students, but also tends to moderate opinions as they learn to investigate both sides of an issue. These skill sets are critical not only to the future success of the students, but to the overall well-being of society. Statistical data is provided to support these findings.

On February 9th, 2011, National Public Radio News aired a segment on its *Morning Edition* interviewing Richard Arum, sociology professor at New York University. In the segment, Professor Arum introduced his new book, *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses* (Arum & Roska, 2011). In the book, Arum and Roska reported dismal academic performance by a significant number of college students charging the U.S. education system with failing to adequately prepare students for college-level work; in effect, casting them academically adrift and leaving both their college careers and society at grave risk. Arum and Roska left their readership to conclude that even after pouring billions of dollars into the public education system, it too often fails in achieving its most fundamental mission: educating students in the skill sets necessary to prepare them for a lifetime of success. How can we still be failing?

Bartels (2013) laments that over a decade ago cognitive scientists John Bransford and Daniel Schwartz found that what best distinguishes children from young adults was not the ability to retain facts or even to apply knowledge to a new situation, but a quality they referred to as “preparation for future learning.” Foundational to that preparation is critical thinking and the ability to ask and to seek answers to the right questions. Both the students' and society's survival depends upon them asking the right questions; Yet formal education, which is driven by test taking, is increasingly failing to require students to ask the kind of questions that lead to informed decision making. Educational curriculum that specifically teaches critical thinking skills continues to struggle for significant inclusion amongst coursework focused on knowledge and retention of basic skills.

Further complicating this educational deficit is an implication highlighted by Miriam, et.al. (2003). An inability to ask the right questions is directly linked to the students' inability to assess the credibility of informational sources. As a result, both the students' inability to properly assess issues of credibility and the fact that they often verify information significantly less than adults, prompted the researchers to express grave concerns that we are creating an information deficit upon which to make informed decisions. Given the often dubious nature of on-line information, and the growing tendency for young people to seek out only information that tends to agree with their previously established viewpoints, are we forced to ask the question of whether our failure to teach critical thinking leads to further polarization of previously held attitudes and beliefs, which threatens to lead to an increasingly fragmented and intolerant population? Em Griffin (2012) observed, "The mass age of electronic media is becoming increasingly personalized. Instead of one unified electronic tribe, we have a growing number of digital tribes forming around the most specialized ideas, beliefs, values, interests, and fetishes. Instead of mass consciousness, which McLuhan viewed rather favorably, we have the emergence of a tribal warfare mentality" (327-328).

The dilemma for educators, then, becomes one of finding a way to include curriculum that reinforces critical thinking and assessing source credibility in an already overcrowded schedule. The solution may be found not in finding room for a new subject, but through teaching debate across the curriculum. However, this approach would only achieve efficacy if the process lead to an outcome wherein students' attitudes were changed, or at the very least, mitigated to some degree.

Review of Literature

Our research focus, therefore, becomes two-fold. First, can debate teach and reinforce the critical thinking and “preparation for future learning” skills mentioned by Bartles (2013) and Miriam, et. al. (2003)? Second, does the teaching of debate lead to the mitigation of strongly held attitudes and beliefs?

In answer to the first research questions, the case made within the literature seems clear. Advocates for the inclusion and support of competitive academic debate teams within secondary schools have long extolled its benefits to student participants. A cursory search of the research literature credits debate with teaching and reinforcing skill sets necessary, even critical, to academic excellence in the classroom. For example, debate participation teaches critical thinking and presentational skills (Hill, 1993; Kyper, 2011; Lux, 2014; Rogers, 2002, 2005; Williams, et.al. 2001). Debate is noted for increasing knowledge, self-confidence, poise, and a wide range of skills necessary for academic success (Bartenan, 1998; Colbert & Biggers, 1985; Derryberry, 1998; Hill, 1983; Jones, 1994; Kyper, 2011; Lux 2014; Rogers, 2002, 2005; Williams et al, 2001).

In addition to those skills sets of immediate use in the classroom, recent research argues that benefits for the student participants and society extend well outside of the classroom’s walls. Increasingly, researchers have begun to investigate and report on the value of forensics in teaching more long range skills. Jensen and Jensen (2006) argue convincingly that participation in forensics enhances communication competency in the areas of mentoring, cultural communication, and conflict management; which, in turn, creates what Freeman and Rogers (2013) regard as the 'whole person.’ Freeman and Rogers (2013) argue forensics engenders “hope for more positive long term benefits to the self and society as we educate our forensic students to be citizens” . . . and observe “[M]any argue that forensics teaches social responsibility and advocacy on behalf of the less fortunate” (p. 4). They conclude with the suggestion that “the pedagogic value of inclusive communities intentionally mentored to effectively pursue public service and social advocacy is a critical strategy for achieving our goal of teaching and reinforcing skill sets that extend beyond the competitive weekend and into the post forensic world” (p. 13-14). Thus, an argument that the deficits reported by Arum & Roska (2011) in their book could be addressed through adding debate and forensics to the curriculum is supported by the literature.

The question, therefore, becomes, if participation in debate and forensics leads to such positive outcomes, is there a roll for teaching debate to our students across the curriculum; and if so, what might it look like and how can we convince administrators to embrace cross curricular education?

The answer to those questions might lie in the observations of Susan Millsap (1998) and Daniel Rohrer (1987). Millsap, when arguing for forensics education across the curriculum went so far as to say that forensics education alone has the unique ability to be pedagogically effective across the liberal arts tradition. She believes that teachers in other areas are not giving their students training in the skills necessary to make their pedagogical approach effective. Perhaps, Daniel Rohrer (1987) summarizes the pedagogic virtues of a debate education best when he quotes Ralph Waldo Emerson as saying “The highest purpose of debate is to develop ‘man thinking (sic),’ in the total milieu of society and the world around him. Ultimately, debate attempts to improve a man by laying a foundation for better understanding of himself and those around him, to inculcate habits of the mind, breadth of interest, and enlargement of spirit, the same goals of the liberal education” (p. 9).

In summary of our first research question, the literature supports the argument that including debate in the curriculum has the potential to effectively teach and reinforce the critical thinking and “preparation for future learning” skills mentioned by Bartles (2013) and Miriam, et. al. (2003). Additionally, if debate was included as a skill taught across the curriculum, rather than as a discrete, stand-alone class, its inclusion would not compete against other subjects within the curriculum and the benefits of a debate education would be extended to all students rather than a select few who happen to participate on extra-curricular speech and debate teams.

The second question remains: Does the teaching of debate lead to the mitigation of strongly held attitudes and beliefs? “Moderation in all things” is a common summary of Aristotle’s, *Doctrine of the Mean* (as presented in his Nicomachean Ethics); yet individual positions on controversial social topics such as gay rights or continuance of the death penalty are anything but moderate. Antidotal evidence from several instructors who teach argumentation and debate courses continues to suggest that students who debate these topics tend to start out with strong positions on the topic but those positions, at least for some, tend to moderate at the conclusion of the course. This begs the question, why do some student's, who have stanchly held attitudes on these topics change, while others do not?

Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance is without doubt the seminal work in social psychology when investigating attitude change. Central to Festinger's theory is the human desire to attain and maintained cognitive consistency "in any knowledge, opinion, or belief about the environment, about oneself, or about one's behavior" (p. 3). The issue of cognitive inconsistency is important as it may be the proverbial canary in the mine when potential errors in one's belief systems are considered (Gawronski, 2012, Quine & Ullian, 1978). While cognitive consistency can never be relied upon as a measure of correct or accurate belief, inconsistency can be the impetus to seek additional information resulting in a reassessment of or even a revision of a prior held beliefs.

Festinger (1957) frequently employed the illustration of a smoker who knew smoking was bad for his or her health in discussing his hypothesis. Festinger (195) hypothesized that knowing that continuing to engage in a behavior that the smoker knew was a risk to his or her health created what he termed 'cognitive dissonance,' which is inherently uncomfortable. As a result, individuals will take steps to reduce this feeling of dissonance. One of these steps described by Festinger was that the person may avoid information that would increase the dissonance. Thus, not unlike our students who seek out and fail to challenge sources of information that reinforce their previously held attitudes and beliefs, our smoker discounts information that reinforces an increased risk to smoking. Facts matter less than relief from the dissonance. In many cases, our smoker, and our students, may come to confuse opinions which support what they already believe with objective facts offered by credible sources; thereby, further polarizing divergent attitudes which become highly resistant to change.

In an attempt to examine the pernicious relationship between dissonance and attitude change, Festinger and Carlsmith (1959) studied attitude change attributed to cognitive dissonance. Research participants were asked to engage in behavior in direct opposition to their previously stated attitudes in both high and low incentive reward situations. They reasoned that high incentive reward in and of itself serves to resolve dissonance in counter attitudinal situations. Conversely, when there is a low incentive reward accompanied by counter attitudinal behavior, dissonance cannot be reasonably attributed to the reward so dissonance must be mitigated by some other means – typically a change in the attitude associated with the behavior. Leippe and Eisenstadt (1994) asked white participants to write an essay supporting an increase in scholarships for persons of color. No penalty or reward was associated with the writing of the essay or its contents either for or against increased scholarship. In other words, the students had nothing to gain (low reward), thus very low pressure. When the situational pressure was low, white students reported less negative attitudes toward persons of color. The participants did not report feeling any challenge to their belief systems or attitudes.

Propositional beliefs are central to attitude and cognitive dissonance. Until there is a clash in propositional beliefs, cognitive consistency is unchallenged and individual value systems remain unchanged. When propositional beliefs come into conflict a change in evaluation of the "truthfulness" of a given proposition is often accompanied by a change in the value system under consideration. Within the context of persuasion theory, persuasive messages that challenge the "truth" of a held proposition would likely produce dissonance and the integration of those messages resulting in a subsequent alteration and formulation of the new 'truth' would alleviate the dissonance. Thus, if students are exposed to information that challenges the 'truth' of their previously held beliefs, one way they may seek to relieve the cognitive dissonance created through the conflicting evidence, is to alter, or mitigate their believes to reflect a 'new truth.'

For example, when researching prejudice Sritharan and Gawronski (2012) argued that increasing factual information and appealing to personal values are two central components in the mitigation of prejudice-related belief systems. Gawronski and Strack (2004) asked non-Black students to write an essay in favor of a policy change that would double scholarships for Black students and substantially replicated the previous research findings of Leippe and Eisenstadt (1994). Finally, Eisenstadt & Leippe (2005) investigated attitude change by asking individuals to advocate a position contrary to their personal belief. They reported results that confirmed the proposition that attitude change had occurred within the participants in order to reduce their dissonance. These findings suggest that the propositional components of prejudice-related belief systems could possibly be changed by employing dissonance manipulation using factual information which challenges a presently held value. In this case, asking students to both seek out information that supports and then advocate for positions that run counter to their previously held attitudes or belief systems.

In summary, within the context of teaching argumentation and debate, students enrolled in these courses are routinely required to advocate for positions that they may not personally hold to be true. Antidotal information suggests that when students have to research and argue positions based upon credible evidence, their attitude on a given social issue is frequently altered from a prior held belief. However, as this support is antidotal, in support of investigating our second question, does the teaching of debate lead to the mitigation of strongly held attitudes and beliefs, the researchers advance the following:

> *RQ: Does engaging in the behaviors typically taught in debate, such as researching, constructing reasoned arguments and arguing positions, result in measurable attitude change when students are asked to argue positions that run counter to their previously held attitudes and belief systems?*

Methodology

Participants

A sample of convenience involving students enrolled in an Argumentation and Debate class at a medium-sized, Midwestern, state institution were asked to participate in the study. Sixteen out of an enrollment of 18 executed informed consent statements. The age of participants ranged from 18 to 35 (mean 23) with nine females and eight males. Seven identified as democrat, six as independent, two as libertarian, and one as republican. Three identified as African-American and thirteen as Caucasian. No other demographics were remarkable or reported.

Procedures

Prior to any instruction or content related classroom discussion, students were administered a survey to measure their attitude toward issues of homosexuality (*Homophobia Scale* by Wright, Adams & Bernat (1999)[1] and the death penalty (the *Attitudes Towards the Death Penalty* by Hingula & Wrightsman)[2]. Two controversial topics were selected for the study to minimize the confounding effect of attitudes or beliefs towards a single issue. After receiving content specific instruction including the methods and procedures for evidence based debate, approximately mid-way through the semester students were then assigned a debate topic (either gay rights or the death penalty) and instructed that they would have to prepare for both the affirmative and negative positions. Further, the position they would debate from would be assigned the class period prior to the day they had to debate in front of the class. Students were permitted to gather their own evidence, but were required to produce a minimum of six pieces of credible evidence for both positions (for and against). Throughout the class, students were reminded that in debate, participants were frequently required to argue a position that they may not personally hold. This was just a part of the activity and that no one should assume that a person arguing for (or against) a position would actually be *personally* for (or against) that position.

Up to this point, this reflected regular class-room procedures for the course. During the class period prior to their scheduled debates, the students who had executed informed consent statements were assigned counter-attitudinal positions to debate based upon the results of their pre-test surveys. Those who had expressed attitudes and beliefs supportive of gay rights and/or the death penalty were assigned to debate positions against these beliefs. Conversely, those who were previously against these topics were assigned the affirmative position. On the day of their

[1] The *Homophobia Scale* by Wright, Adams & Bernat (1999). This previously validated instrument consists of 20 questions on a five point Likert scale where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree.
[2] The *Attitudes Towards the Death Penalty* by Hingula & Wrightsman (2005). (in Measure of Legal Attitudes, Wrightsman, Batson & Edkins). This instrument consisted of 23 items five-point scale of "1= Strongly Agree to 5 = Strongly Disagree."

debates, students then debated in front of class. Several debates took place on the assigned topics over the remainder of the semester. At the conclusion of the course, students were again surveyed with the same instrument used in the pretest.

Each attitude scale was independently examined for evidence of attitude change between the pre and post-test administration. Both sets of survey results were validated using Mauchly's Test of Sphericity and were found to be valid. Data were analyzed using SPSS (v23) within the scope of the General Linear Model focusing on Within Group testing. For ease of discussion each attitude scale will be reported.

Results and Discussion

Results for Homosexuality

Sixteen students participated in study one which investigated attitude moderation and homophobia. For reporting purposes, Aff Pre represent students who initially scored somewhat negatively on homophobia scale and were assigned a Pro-gay rights position while those in Neg Pre scored somewhat positively on the homophobia scale on the pre-test were assigned the negative position. Aff Post and Neg Post represent post-test conditions for each group.

Table 1
Pre and Post-Test Scores for Homosexuality

Group	Mean	Std Deviation	N
Aff Pre	38.86	10.107	7
Aff Post	47.43	15.683	7
Total			
Neg Pre	45.44	13.510	9
Neg Post	35.89	6.772	9
Total			16

Based upon the observed difference in mean scores, multivariate analysis using Wilk's Lambda demonstrated a statistical significance of .002 and is reported in table 1.2

Table 1.2
Statistical Significance for Homosexuality

Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
.482	15.020	1.000	14.000	.002

Results for Death Penalty

Sixteen students participated in study two which investigated attitude moderation and the death penalty. For reporting purposes, AFF Pre represent students who initially scored somewhat low on the capital punishment scale (opposition to the death penalty) and were assigned a Pro-capital punishment position. Students who scored somewhat higher on the capital punishment scale (pro capital punishment) on the pre-test were assigned the anti-capital punishment position and are reported as Pre Neg. Aff Post and Neg Post represent post-test conditions for each group. Those results are reported in

Table 2
Pre and Post-Test Scores for Capital Punishment

Group	Mean	Std Deviation	N
Aff Pre	62.25	9.588	8
Aff Post	68	12.55	8
Total			16
Neg Pre	75.67	7.263	9
Neg Post	70.78	7.014	9
Total			17

Using Wilks' Lambda Multivariate Test data reported significance at the .001 level.

Table 2.1
Statistical Significance for Capital Punishment

Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
.477	16.478	1	15	.001

Discussion

Obviously, with an N of 16, no statistical analysis in terms of power would be useful to report. However, of note is that both F tests reported a moderate statistical significance when comparing attitude change within group means for both the pro and con positions. In effect, the data reported that regardless of prior held attitudes and beliefs, students who participated in the research gathering and argument construction required in debate, and further, were required to argue against their prior beliefs, demonstrated a moderation in those prior held beliefs. The data clearly supported that each side became better informed on the issues; and as a result, became more tolerant of the other side's position moderating the potentially dangerous divisiveness described by Griffin (2012) and Miriam, et. al. (2003). Often the goal of education, as described by Arum and Roska (2011) and Bartles (2013) is not to break attitudes, but to foster understanding which may well lead to moderation of belief and compassion for others' viewpoints and positions.

If we return to our research question *Does engaging in the behaviors typically taught in debate, such as researching, constructing reasoned arguments and arguing positions, result in measurable attitude change when students are asked to argue positions that run counter to their previously held attitudes and belief systems (?),* it seems fairly clear from the study that the answer is yes. While this should be of no surprise to the readers, it does present statistical evidence to support what has been previously supported through only anecdotal evidence; and thus, may be more persuasive in advancing the argument for inclusion of debate across the curriculum.

Conclusion

Over a decade ago, cognitive scientists John Bransford and Daniel Schwartz (see Bartles, 2013) observed that what best distinguishes children from young adults was not the ability to retain facts or even to apply knowledge to a new situation, but a quality they referred to as “preparation for future learning.” Foundational to that preparation is critical thinking and the ability to ask and to seek answers to the right questions. Both the students’ and society’s survival depends upon their ability to ask the right questions and intelligently sift through information for the right answers. One impediment to this process in an educational system that focuses on the retention of facts and information, according to Bartles (2013) and fails to teach the skill sets critical to the process of life-long learning as described by Arum and Roska (2011) and Miriam et. al. (2003). This research supports the argument that teaching debate across the curriculum both teaches critical thinking and the assessment of source credibility, which are critical to asking the right questions and seeking answers, and that engaging in the debate process leads to the moderation of previously held attitudes and beliefs. If we can foster a generation of students who think critically, asking the right questions and seeking the answers in a reasonable and intelligent way, who, as a result, become more open and tolerant of others’ viewpoints, the benefits to the students and the larger society would be a tremendous win for the education system.

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Developing a Dual Credit Program: A Collaboration in Sports Broadcast Journalism Education

Joseph H. Moore

Abstract

This project was a collaboration between students at seven area high schools who were studying journalism, multimedia production, and broadcasting and students in sports broadcasting at the University of Central Missouri. The goal was to provide training in the development of highlight packages from high school football and basketball games to high school students in the UCM-TV coverage area. It also provided UCM students experience in developing a studio highlight show. With a focus on the high school side of the production, this case study looks through the lens of systems theory to examine the development of the dual credit program, its implementation, and its future plans.

In 2002, Columbia University president Lee Bollinger called for journalism education reform at his university, going so far as to suspend his university's search for a new head of its graduate program in journalism while a task force considered the need for a specific journalism curriculum. In response, Dates (2006), defended journalism education, writing:

> Unlike doctors and lawyers, who must follow a specific course of study to enter their fields, journalists often enter the industry through varied routes. So, too, do journalism educators. But, regardless of how we get here, one thing unites us: a desire to help our students learn best how to inform and engage our readers and viewers as honestly and as fairly as we can (p. 144).

In particular, Rein, Kotler and Shields (2007) made the argument that training in the sports media field seems to be a good area to consider, given the changing climate of the media in the new century:

> There is probably no better place to examine the media landscape in the next decades than the sports arena, especially the first big players in this highly lucrative, multibillion-dollar worldwide industry (p. 40).

They noted the manner in which sport is transmitted has changed. As Internet webcasts and social media have become more popular, gone are the days of strictly television content. “In this transformation, new alliances will be formed, media giants will be sorely pressed to operate, and viewers—i.e., fans or customers— will have unprecedented access to information on numerous and yet-to-be-determined distribution channels” (p. 40).

This call for more specific training in sports journalism caught my attention. Then in 2009, Bryan Burns was named distinguished alum at the University of Central Missouri. As he was then-executive vice president of ESPN and we were in the process of developing a sports broadcasting course and a sport communication minor, it was determined we should schedule time to visit with him. One piece of advice Mr. Burns offered: have your students cover area high school games as a means of expanding their experience and gaining support in neighboring communities (B. Burns, personal communication, October 8, 2009).

Three years later, Mark Grant was on campus to direct the CBS Sports College Game of the Week. He had similar advice. Mr. Grant encouraged our students to gain experience by working with the local cable channel to broadcast high school games (M. Grant, personal communication, September 20, 2012). As our campus houses Warrensburg’s public access channel for Charter Communications, it seemed fitting that we find a means to showcase our students’ work while providing them great experience.

It could be argued that the journalism training Dates (2006) and Rein et. al (2007) recommend should begin in high school. LaMonte (2011), for one, said high school journalism education has value beyond training reporters. He noted that journalism training teaches analytical thinking, clear writing and sensitivity to deadlines. He added that in an ever-increasing social media world, students learn online civility and ethics, and they feel more empowered and important.

Given the advice we received from professionals and the call for more specialized training, we decided to develop a dual credit course in sports broadcasting. This case study details how the project was developed and how the students were prepared and trained along the way. It also looks through the lens of systems theory to address some of the triumphs and pitfalls we experienced as all the pieces of the project were pulled together to produce a weekly highlight show and a game of the week.

Literature Review

The following literature review address systems theory and its use in curriculum development. Next it looks at the needs for high school journalism education and for sport communication programs at colleges and universities, and finally it examines the value of dual credit programs.

System Theory

Bertalanffy (1968) introduced the concept of systems theory as a way to unify disciplines in the sciences so they would become less fragmented and to demonstrate how they might relate. He noted that as manufacturing became more complex, with different groups producing separate components, it became necessary to consider how each part of the system related to the others to form a functioning piece of machinery. This idea taken from manufacturing, Bertalanffy proposed, should be studied and applied in other disciplines. Put another way, “At its heart, systems theory is useful for identifying the causes and consequences of social-environmental problems as it avoids compartmentalized explanations” (Simon, Wee, Chin, Tindle, Guth & Mason, 2013, p. 43).

Smith and Ragan (2005), when discussing instructional design, defined a system as a “set of interrelated and interacting parts that work together toward some common goal” (p. 24). Patton and McMahon (20006) pointed out that physicists, biologists, anthropologists, and psychologists all have studied and utilized systems theory in their practices. They, in turn, utilized systems theory to study career counseling because previous research in the field undervalued or ignored other important concepts. For example, Patton and McMahon said, by focusing on self-concept, other aspects of career decision making might not be considered. Thus, examining all aspects of career decision making, such as historical trends, family, beliefs, personality, and socioeconomic status--the entire system--was appropriate. McMahon (2011) furthered the idea by arguing that “narrating career stories goes to the heart of practical applications of STF” (p. 171). She claimed that if career counselors would be more effective if they focused on the constructs of the individual, at the level of career counseling interaction, and at the career counseling process.

Systems theory, then, is an appropriate theory to consider when addressing instructional design because of the care and attention to all details and all concepts necessary to produce an effective class model. Smith and Ragan (2005) further proposed that a systems perspective is appropriate when the instructional design is centered on distance education. Moore and Kearsley (1996) stressed, “As institutions, and even states and nations, try to fit distance education into their older, established systems or to set up new systems, they find that their traditional policies about education have to be adapted; they may even find it necessary to develop new policies” (p. 1). On the first page of their text, Moore and Kearsley noted that distance education requires learner and teacher to be in different places, new technologies to be learned, and new methods of instruction and learning to be experienced. They then launched into an in-depth examination of distance education, including its history, technology, teaching, management and administration. They also addressed theory and scholarship as it pertained to distance education.

Glazatov (2012) and Conradie (2013) considered how systems theory could be utilized in instructional design using 21st century technology. Glazatov pointed out that technology is allowing individuals to communicate and learn in new ways. The influx of new resources and technologies, Glazatov stressed, make it critical to consider how these new variables can and/or will change instructional strategies. She noted that “components such as how people are learning in the present day, the functional resources of mobile devices, and instruction design theory guiding the process” would have to be considered when instructional strategies are put in place.

Conradie (2013) utilized semi-structured interviews and took the systems approach to examine how mobile devices could improve learner motivation, engagement and enjoyment. He evaluated 54 students and their perceptions of learning through mobile technology. Conradie found that, while small screen size, mobile network bandwidth and cognitive overload were found to de-motivate users, the opportunity to utilize resources such as YouTube and Google Docs through mobile devices correlated positively with learner perceptions, encouraging them to not only be consumers of education content, but prosumers as well.

No research has been conducted that combined systems theory and dual credit education. However, these studies that centered on mobile technology in education and systems theory give us a starting point. Having examined the value of the systems approach to curriculum development, particularly in a distance education environment, it now seems appropriate to look at the specific subject matter utilized in the present study: journalism and sports broadcasting.

High School Journalism Education

Concerns about high school journalism education prompted Lattimore (2000) to write of the need for professional journalists to support high school journalism. She said if high school journalism education is to survive, programs should involve a trained adviser “with a curriculum plan aimed at teaching student reporters to consider themselves members of the professional press” (p. 36). Lattimore also stressed the need for professional journalists and/or journalism educators to support local advisers by offering workshops and seminars, talking to student journalism staffs, and providing a teen page in the local paper.

More than a decade later those concerns linger. White (2013) wrote that, even though most high school media production classes are a study in project-based learning, problem solving, media literacy, and critical thinking, K-12 reformers and politicians lack an “understanding of journalism and it’s integrated learning opportunities” (p. 28).

This is a problem in light of what Newton (2013) of McClatchy/Newspapers wrote: “Society needs journalists who can tell hard truths, just as it needs doctors who can cure, lawyers who can win justice, and politicians who can compromise to solve problems” (para. 7). Newton stressed that because of this need and because of the changing media landscape, teaching student journalists to report across platforms is essential in U.S. colleges and universities. White (2013) and Lattimore (2000) would argue that this training should begin in American high schools. But Newton pointed to a recent Poynter Institute study that reported 26 percent of media professionals believe students are graduating without the necessary skills to succeed. Another report Newton quoted found that only a third of American high school media is functioning in the digital realm.

College Sports Communication Programs

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), because of the large number of job seekers, sportscaster jobs are highly competitive, especially in larger metropolitan areas. They recommend students gain as much experience as possible by volunteering or interning at college television and radio stations and with local stations. They also advise aspiring sportscasters to begin developing a demo reel and to consider careers as video editors or production assistants instead of putting all their eggs in the proverbial sportscaster basket. But where are students to gain the training to enter the specialized field of sports broadcasting?

Programs in sports communication—either majors or minors—have historically been few and far between. Almost 20 years ago, Neupauer (1997) recognized with disappointment that, "Token SID classes do pop up from time to time at institutions, appearing as 'special topics' courses" (p. 36). However, he noted that, despite a growing number of students aspiring to enter public relations in college athletics, "SID majors, minors, tracks or concentrations are rare in undergraduate education" (p. 36). Four years later, Neupauer (2001) pointed to a 15-credit program at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. that provided a general certificate in sports communication with instruction in reporting, broadcasting and public relations. John Humenik, executive director of the College Sports Information Directors of America, made an even greater call for sports communication training on the managerial level. He offered that "courses and presentations that would help interested parties in all aspects of sports management better understand the need for strategic thinking and planning as it relates to communication, PR, and media relations would be a big plus" (Stoldt, 2008, p. 463).

In the fall of 2014, the University of Central Missouri first offered a minor in sport communication. This was in part a response to an increasing interest among the student body, but also in part because of the cited lack of such offerings around the country. Similarly, Baus, Ksobiech and Brady (2015) examined the development of a sports communication major at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. The proposed program attempted to meet the demands of students for more sports broadcasting and journalism training. Ultimately, though, the administration rejected the idea.

Sports Business Journal (2016) lists 309 sports management programs across the United States. Presumably some have some sports journalism component. In 2015 one of the nation's top journalism schools, Arizona State University, added a sports journalism major to the prestigious Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass

Communication (Ewens, 2015). In fact, The College Board (2016) recognized 19 schools with degrees specifically in sport communication.

Clearly interest exists at colleges and universities for specialized sports broadcasting training and education. And if that interest exists in colleges and universities, it is a safe bet interest in sports broadcasting exists in high school as well. In order to simultaneously provide training to college and high school students, dual credit programs may be the answer.

Dual Credit Education

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2007), dual enrollment, also called concurrent enrollment and dual credit, refers to arrangements where high school students, usually juniors and seniors, can enroll in courses that count for both college and high school credit. These courses are attractive for several reasons: they challenge students academically throughout their high school careers, they offer curricular options that would not otherwise be accessible at their high schools, they provide high school students a more realistic picture of the social and academic skills necessary to succeed in college, and they lower the cost of postsecondary education because tuition is either reduced or free and because they shorten the time to degree completion.

Andrews (2000) took an early look at dual-credit programs, as he focused on trends in enrollment, the academic rigor offered in such programs, how courses were delivered, and the implications for college administrators. Andrews noted enrollment was on the rise, from 96,913 in 1993 to 123,039 in 1995. According to a Comprehensive Education and Data Research Systems report, 328,743 students were enrolled in dual credit courses in 2013 (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2014). With regard to rigor, Andrews pointed out that Missouri was a trend-setter in terms of developing “principles of good practice”, including student eligibility, program structure and administration, faculty qualifications and support, assessment of student performance, and transferability of credit. Andrews stressed that “responsibility for course quality was assigned to college academic departments” (p. 34). He also found that delivery methods varied widely – from requiring students to come to the main campus or a satellite to delivery on the high school campus to delivery through instructional television.

Similar to the current study, White, Hopkins and Shockley (2014) conducted a case study to examine how high school students performed in dual-credit college chemistry courses. They examined how the course was delivered, how student performance was assessed, and how the high school students compared with their college counterparts. Through their research, White et al. also offered insights into how to improve student success and course completion.

While studies have been conducted that addressed systems theory, high school journalism education, college sport communication training, and dual-credit programs, no study has looked at the development of a dual credit course in the dynamic field of sports broadcasting. Utilizing the case study approach, this study attempts to fill that gap so others may develop similar journalism education programs. This case study looks through the lens of systems theory to examine each step in the process of developing a dual credit program in sports reporting. As Simon et al. (2013) pointed out, systems theory helps us identify why programs succeed or fail because “it avoids compartmentalized explanations” (p. 43). Thus, this case study will consider everything from the conceptualization of program to the purchasing of equipment, from the training of students to the production of the show. Finally, it will examine the post-project reviews with the high school students and make suggestions for future growth.

Methodology

According to various qualitative research texts (Creswell, 2007; McMillan, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Willis, 2007), case study research is intended to focus on one or a few particular incidents within a bounded system. In the case study, as with all forms of qualitative research, “there is no manipulation or control of behavior or settings, nor are there any externally imposed constraints” (McMillan, 2008, p. 272). Willis added that case studies are particularistic, meaning they focus on one specific context, and that they are naturalistic, detailing the experiences of real people and situations in their natural environment. Since this study will be considering the development of one particular dual credit program that resulted in the production of a high school highlight show and a regularly scheduled game of the week, the case study approach is appropriate.

In this case study, I examine the process of acquiring the necessary equipment, the training process, and the production of the show. I also address the student impact and the timeline for the project. Finally, I discuss what was successful, what needs improvement, and what suggestions were presented, based upon interviews with the high school students and faculty.

The Process

The goals of the project were: (1) to help UCM students develop leadership and media management skills, (2) to offer a community service by providing coverage of area high schools, (3) to support area high schools in teaching journalism, and (4) to develop content for the digitalBURG and UCM-TV.

First, again based on the recommendations of Bryan Burns and Mark Grant, we made the decision to take the production of a high school game of the week a step further and produce a weekly high school football highlight show. Having taught a dual credit course in public speaking, I was familiar with some of the area high schools, so I contacted our dual credit coordinator and got approval to begin my project, utilizing area high school students as “foreign correspondents”. We also had the advantage of operating the local public access channel, so we had the outlet for showcasing our student’s work.

The final piece of the puzzle was how to acquire the necessary equipment. Because our project would support student learning at the university as well as at area high schools, funding was sought to purchase identical camera outfits for each participating school in order to ensure as much consistency as possible between the schools. A UCM Foundation Opportunity Grant provided funding for five high-def video cameras, SD cards, carrying cases and tripods (see Table 1). UCM Foundation Opportunity Grants are provided to faculty who demonstrate a program that responds to the university's mission to provide engaged learning, a culture of service, and future focused academics.

Table 1. Budget for the Project

Item	**Unit Cost**	**Total Cost**
JVC Everio Wi-Fi 40X Optical Zoom 3” Touchscreen HD Camcorder (5)	$229.95	$1,149.75
LowePro REZO Camera/Camcorder Carrying Bag (5)	$34.95	$174.75
Transcend 32GB SDHC Memory Card (5)	$69.95	$349.80
Ketai Collapsible Camcorder and Camera Tripod (5)	$24.95	$124.75
Total	**$359.80**	**$1,799.00**

These were sent to the five schools directly in the UCM-TV coverage area. Because we were sending several out-of-use standard definition video cameras and tripods to surplus, I was able to secure cameras for two other area schools. Those two schools do not receive UCM-TV as part of their Charter Cable package, but the highlight show and High School Game of the Week were to be uploaded to our YouTube Channel and aired on our daily online news service, the digitalBURG.com.

Following the interrelated and interacting parts philosophy of systems theory, phase two of the project took place in July 2014 when we hosted a broadcast journalism workshop at UCM. At this time, about 20 high school students came to campus with their supervising teachers and/or parents as I laid out the expectations of the project, shared a few demonstration videos and training videos, and answered questions. Next I presented the Game of the Week schedule and invited students to assist the UCM student who had been hired to produce the games. I also collected names and contact information, and our dual credit coordinator visited with students interested in enrolling in a dual credit course in sports broadcasting.

Finally, in phase three, the area students formed teams and made assignments for coverage of each game. They then shot the highlights, edited the two-minute packages, recorded voiceovers, and submitted the packages to me via Google Drive. Each Wednesday, then, my UCM students edited the script (which I wrote), and assumed their positions in the studio to direct, film and host the show. It was then my responsibility to enter the packages and graphics during post-production. The shows were loaded onto our cable channel and YouTube.

The actual course descriptions and objectives were as follows:

Course Description:

Welcome to this dual credit session of Intro to Sports Broadcasting. While the content of the course instruction will center on live remote production, your practical work will focus on shooting highlights with SOME live production (as much or as little as you'd like frankly; we'll do a high school game of the week at many of your schools and you are invited to attend UCM games to work with the college crew as often as you like).

This course provides learners a foundation in sports television broadcasting. Students will gain experience in pre-production as well as producing, directing, announcing, graphics development and camera operation.

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of the equipment used in live television sports. The student will also have knowledge of the terminology used in the sports broadcasting industry and the process of producing quality sports broadcasts. The student will also develop sports announcing skills as a lead announcer, color commentator, and sideline reporter.

Learning Objectives:

1. Learners will be able to utilize broadcast terminology and to explain the procedures and positions necessary in a live sports telecast.
2. Learners will have a working knowledge of how to operate a camera, a switcher, a graphics controller, and instant replay for filming of a live sporting event.
3. Learners will have a working knowledge of how to serve as a producer and director of a live sporting event.
4. Learners will have a working knowledge of how to provide play-by-play, color commentary, and sideline reporting for a live broadcast.

5. Learners will be able to analyze and critique a live television broadcast of a sporting event, identifying both strengths and weaknesses of the production.
6. Learners will be able to shoot and edit highlights of live football and basketball games and to produce highlight packages for airing on a television show.

Objectives 1 through 4 were assessed through exams administered via Blackboard over each content area. High School students who helped produce the High School Game of the Week and who took me up on the offer to attend UCM games also received hands-on experience. Objective 5 was assessed through a mid-term paper requiring the high school students to watch the live broadcast of any sporting event of their choosing and then evaluate the broadcast utilizing what they learned in the content areas of the course. Objective 6 was the primary focus of the class, as this is what the high school students were required to do each Friday during the football season and for home games during the basketball season.

Student Impact

Eighteen UCM students were in my intro to sports broadcasting class. Eleven high school students enrolled in the dual credit section with another 10 high school students volunteering for the project, for a total of 39 students (18 university, 21 high school). All 21 high school students participated in filming, editing and voicing the highlight packages, but only the 11 students enrolled in the dual credit section received college credit. Each week I provided feedback to the high school students, highlighting things they were doing well and pointing out areas where they could improve. Several times I showed the packages to colleagues who asked if the projects were produced by my college students and were highly impressed to hear that, no, the high school students had made them. On four occasions I also went to high schools to troubleshoot issues as they learned more about writing scripts and editing videos.

In December, as we began preparation for the basketball season, I traveled to each high school for a debriefing and to train students how to shoot basketball. Finally, the high school students had one more chance to provide feedback at the end of the school year as I again visited each school to get their thoughts on the project as a whole and to recruit for the next year. A timeline for the project shows how system theory and its focus on the interconnected parts was applied throughout the school year (see Table 2).

Table 2: Project Timeline

June 1	Purchased necessary equipment
June 15	Packaged camera equipment (cameras, bags, SD cards, extra batteries, tripods, cases) for presentation to schools.
July 20	Hosted workshop for high school and distributed equipment
August 28	Hosted and aired first episode of the Midwest Missouri Gridiron Report
October 30	Hosted and aired final episode of the Midwest Missouri Gridiron Report
December 15-18	Visited high schools involved in project to debrief football season and train for basketball season
January 23	Hosted and aired the first episode of the Midwest Missouri Hardwood Report
February 6	Hosted and aired the final episode of the Midwest Missouri Hardwood Report
May 6-18	Visited high schools involved for one final debriefing and to recruit for 2015-2016 school year

The Findings and Discussion

Through this project, we achieved the university’s mission to provide engaged learning as both our UCM and high school students practiced what they learned online and in the classroom. We provided a culture of service by developing media coverage through the university’s outlets to the surrounding area. And we demonstrated future focused academics as the UCM students collaborated with high schools to create converged media packages.

We did not miss a single week of the football season, despite a couple potentially “fatal” obstacles. Students at one school in particular showed great resilience when one of their classmates dropped the dual credit class. The remaining students all played football. I traveled to their high school and we made a plan that they would work with the coaches to get the game film. The students would then take *this* film, edit, write the script, record voiceovers, and produce packages in this fashion. They did not get the filming experience, but that was all they missed. Another school, similarly, had an issue seven weeks into the semester when one of the two students involved decided she didn't want to volunteer anymore. The other student involved got injured playing volleyball and no longer felt comfortable holding the camera on the sideline. I, therefore, made contact with the team's video coordinator, and he provided me with the footage and I made the packages for this school so they didn't get left out of the coverage.

From an empirical perspective, the program was a success. In its first year, the Midwest Missouri Gridiron Report averaged 148 views on YouTube with a high of 376 and a low of 74. The High School Game of the Week averaged 162, ranging from 442 views to 26. The Midwest Missouri Hardwood Report was not as successful, averaging 31 views ranging from 45 to 21.

This was with very little promotion. We primarily promoted the shows via our Facebook and Twitter accounts. One thing we can do to make fans of the respective teams more aware of the shows is to make announcements at the schools and through public address announcements at games. We also need to notify coaches of the teams involved in the High School Game of the Week prior to Friday nights and ask them to share with their teams. In addition, we learned that embedding the videos on the university's online daily news site, the digitalBURG.com, aided in awareness.

Despite these promising initial results, we want to grow. The systems approach posits that evaluating processes is critical, particularly, as Smith and Ragan (2005) said, in distance education situations. Therefore, in my interviews with the students, I asked four questions:

- What worked well?
- What was the greatest challenge?
- What were your biggest takeaways or lessons learned?
- What suggestions would you have for the future of this project and for future students?

No student names were collected during the focus group-type interviews. Therefore, for the purposes of reporting, no names are mentioned.

Two themes emerged from these interviews in response to the first question regarding what worked well. One was that Google Drive was an efficient means of sharing data. This supported Conradie's (2013) findings that tools like YouTube and Google Docs correlated positively with learner perceptions. Even when technology failed, many students felt good about the method of transferring files. “I thought Google Drive worked really well,” one student said. “Sometimes the school Wi-Fi would go down here, and that would cause a problem. But we were able to work through it.” Another added that he and his classmates thought “Google Drive was really useful; it made it easy to transfer the games.” A student at another school echoed that sentiment, saying “It's all worked pretty well. The uploading process to Google Drive was really easy.”

One school enjoyed the process so much, they began using the equipment to live stream and announce some of their sporting events via their YouTube channel, again supporting Conradie's (2013) findings. “I liked learning about color commentating and play-by-play,” a male student said. “After watching the videos about those, I began watching the game in a different light, and that added to my enjoyment of the game.”

Another positive was that the deadlines really helped the students stay on task. Three students pointed out that deadlines made the project more real-world and challenging. One said, “The pressure of having it on TV helped; lateness is not an option.” Another added, “There was usually plenty of time. When we didn't have school on Monday and Tuesday, that made it tight, but overall it worked well.” The third student agreed, saying, “Time limits really worked well. They were reasonable, but you still had deadlines.”

In response to question two, the greatest challenge the students said they faced was in assigning tasks for shooting and in post-production. Several pointed out that it took some time to get this figured out, particularly for the road games. “Coordinating who was doing what,” one student said. “I liked traveling, but not knowing who was bringing the equipment was stressful.” A student at another school shared this frustration. “For the away games, getting people to travel and record. Sometimes people couldn't make it,” she said. “That made it stressful.”

To combat this dilemma, three students noted planning was key. “Learning how to divide the work,” one student said. “We argued a lot to start out, but then we finally said, 'I'll do this, I'll do that.'“

"Our organization needed a little work," added another student. "We got in a groove after a while." One of his classmates chimed it, "We set up a schedule. Knowing that beforehand would have been helpful."

Taking notes during the games, organizing clips and writing scripts also proved a challenge. The students learned this first-hand. "It wasn't hard," one said, "but it was sort of a pain to go through all the clips and then match up the script." A student at another school had a similar problem. "Not having notes or keeping track of the notes was hard," she said. "We needed to learn to take notes and play-by-play." Yet another student pointed out that she learned "how time consuming it is to write the script and how to make sure it lines up (with the video)."

I was quite pleased to see that, in response to question three, one of the major takeaways was the importance of preparation. A student at one school said, "Charge your batteries! Ours ran out during one game and we had to scramble. And plan out the schedule of who is doing what before the game; don't wait until the last minute. You have to make sure everyone has a job or you are going to be in trouble." This sentiment was echoed by students at another school (despite my warnings in the pre-semester training). "The first game we weren't completely prepared," one student said. "We weren't set on battery, we had an SD card go rogue." Another added, "I found out there is more to sports broadcasting than just shooting it and talking about it."

Other students recognized that knowledge of the sport was essential. "I learned a lot more about football," one female student said, adding, "I learned you really want to know what you're doing because you can't follow what's happening if you don't know the game." A male student at another school added, "It helped to know the game you were recording so you knew what was happening."

Incidental learning I did not anticipate also occurred. While coordinating labor was a challenge, it did force the students to learn a valuable lesson about teamwork and that a quality sports production requires faith in other members of the class or operation. When asked for their greatest takeaways, they made comments like:

- "Working as a group. I had to rely on them to film and the script."
- "Trust. How to rely on other people."
- "How to cooperate with other people."

In the practical sense, the students seemed to be really excited about learning to edit, especially the students at one school who had to get new computers and software. “Knowing the software more before we got started would have been helpful,” they said. “We got MacBooks and iMovie late.” I actually had the opportunity to go to this school to meet with the three students the day they got their new computers and to give them a lesson on iMovie. Their videos improved exponentially after that date. Some comments from students at other schools included:

- “How to operate iMovie. In playing with it, I learned a lot about editing.”
- “I learned how to use the editing software, what angles are best during filming.”
- “I got a lot better with audio recording software.”

One high school teacher who oversaw her students' production couldn't help bragging on her students, saying “My kids were fabulous. I had no idea what technique they used in football. They did it and it was great. However, I lost one student second semester and it became a struggle. Then I had to do it one day and realized it was a nightmare – without good notes.”

Her students were not the only ones who struggled through in the spring semester. Every school ran into issues during basketball season, and we lost one school all together. Because high school football is played on Friday nights, we had consistency in coverage. We knew when games would be played and it was easy to schedule deadlines. High school basketball in Missouri, however, does not have one set night of play. And when trying to film both boys and girls basketball, that issue is multiplied. As a result, we were only able to film three episodes of the Midwest Missouri Hardwood Report.

Where Do We Go From Here

Because of the success of last year’s project, we plan to expand to four other schools that share conference affiliation with some of our existing schools and with whom I have dual credit experience. I have already visited all the schools and have 14 commitments from students. Two schools are also going to make the project a part of class. This fall, I will be advising four UCM students who are interested in becoming sports broadcast talent. They will serve as the hosts and producers of the show. They will also travel to the participating high schools to produce the High School Game of the Week with the high school students at the respective schools assigned to operate cameras.

In the spring, based on the conversations I had with the high school students and their faculty supervisors, we are going to do a few things differently. One change we are going to make is to produce the Midwest Missouri Sports Report during the spring semester, rather than a show focused strictly on high school basketball. The students will have the opportunity to choose which sports and games they cover at their schools each week, and we will provide scores and schedules for the other sports via graphics and voiceovers. The faculty supervisor at one school made this recommendation, stating, “I thought having at least one track highlight and one or two baseball games as a broadcast (would be good).” When asked, several students at other schools agreed it would be a good idea. “The schedule for basketball was nuts,” one student exclaimed. Another offered, “Adding the other sports would give us more to do.”

Based on what I learned through the interviews with the high school students, we are also going to add some things to the pre-semester training. The high school students thought overall the training, both pre-semester and during the semester, went well. One student said, “The workshop was really good. It really helped because we didn't know what to expect. The videos helped too.” Another added, “Having the feedback and advice every week really helped; it gave us something different to tweak each week.”

One student simply said, “I thought it worked out as planned.”

But based on the interview results, more could be done. For one thing, the high school students seemed eager to work with the college students. One said, “Having UCM students work with us and teach us would be really helpful.” Others were looking for more video tutorials and examples (“Some examples of highlight videos would help”, “More videos of simple things that would have been good for us to know--how to set up cameras, what steps to take in post-production, and things like that”).

One just wanted tips on angles, stating, “I'd like to have more training before we start so we know what kinds of shots to get.”

We also will add a segment on covering football, taking notes during the game, writing to video, and producing a script. This was a major frustration for many students in the first year of the program. Thus, more training will be provided in year two.

Another change we are going to make is to improve the mode of communication. During the pre-semester training, the high school students shared their e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers with me and I with them. Those students enrolled in the dual credit course also were issued UCM e-mail addresses. During the fall semester, this mode of communication seemed to work well. But during the second semester, when I noticed students were not getting assessments taken and were not watching the PowerPoint presentations, I became concerned. My concerns grew even more when some schools missed their first assigned basketball game because they did not get the schedule. Some colleagues suggested the students were making excuses ("I didn't get the emails, so I didn't do the assessments"). This argument didn't make sense, though; many of the students involved in the project were not enrolled in the dual credit course. This made me think perhaps some students could not receive group texts. I tried sending texts individually and, sure enough, I got responses that they had not received any texts or emails since the first semester. One student, in the May interviews said, ""Text/e-mail was really sporadic. It didn't all come through. Wi-Fi went down because we live in the country."

I also learned at this time that several were having Blackboard problems or didn't understand how to navigate the system and, as a result, couldn't complete the coursework. One said, "We had quite a while when I could not get on (Blackboard) and couldn't get to the assignments." Another gave some advice to future students. "Play around with Blackboard," he said. "I didn't know how tabs worked. I finally understood when I took a composition class and they took us through it."

The decision, therefore, has been made to extend the Blackboard training during the pre-semester training session and to visit the schools early in the semester to make sure all students are getting onto the system and can maneuver through the tabs. We also will set up a Facebook page for the class, an idea that was met with enthusiasm and some advice. "A Twitter or Facebook page might help," one student said. "If people have their notifications on … have students turn their notifications on."

Another added, "Definitely informing every school there is some form of group messaging where students can communicate would help a lot."

Final Thoughts, Limitations, and Future Research

As systems theory posits a system is a "set of interrelated and interacting parts that work together toward some common goal" (Smith & Ragan, 2005, p. 24), it is important to evaluate whether each part functioned properly. The evidence from the current case study is that the goals of the project and the course objectives were met. Again, the focus of this case study was on the high school students, so it did not evaluate the UCM students and their leadership development. We did offer a community service by covering highlights for seven area high schools and by airing a game of the week for 11 consecutive weeks in the fall, and we did support area high schools in teaching journalism. Finally, because we aired the shows and the game of the week on our cable channel, loaded them to our YouTube channel and subsequently embedded them on our online news service, we were successful in developing content for the digitalBURG and UCM-TV.

With regard to the dual credit class and its objectives, the students who completed the course performed at least at the "B" level on the content exams and on the mid-term paper. Students also were able to successfully complete the highlight packages for the weekly show during the fall semester and for three of the five planned shows during the spring semester.

Students responded that Google Drive was an efficient means for submitting content and that the deadlines imposed helped them stay on task. Challenges included dividing the workload for shooting, editing and recording voiceovers; taking notes during shooting; and writing scripts. The students noted that they really learned the value of ensuring all equipment is ready for use and of knowing the game being recorded, the need for teamwork and trust, and how to edit.

As the program moves forward, it is clear from this case study that more training is required on how to take notes and write a subsequent script. We also need to expand what we film in the spring, including sports besides basketball, so students get a more balanced experience. Finally, a Facebook page or a Twitter account for the class needs to be developed so communication is more efficient.

Based upon the findings of this case study future researchers could examine how high school faculty members supervise their students enrolled in dual credit courses. Based on the findings that students learned about teamwork and trust, an ethnographic study in which the researcher observed student interactions and interpersonal relationships might be informative. Finally, the findings of this case study may be used as a basis for future studies regarding the development and implementation of dual credit courses.

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The Rhetoric of Obscenity: A Brief Historical Evolution Down the Winding Road to the Information Super Highway

David A. Wendt

Abstract

Obscenity is an ideology that is characterized by personal taste. The foundation of this idea is based on current community standards as decided in the Miller vs. California case. The current definition of obscenity has been established by several landmark Supreme Court cases including the Miller case. This historical journey of obscenity has been complicated by the booming information super highway. Have community standards changed in the last 50 years since the Miller case? Does the Internet provide new challenges to the current definition of obscenity? Can we as a culture ever fully determine what is obscene and what is not obscene?

"De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum' was the way the ancient Romans put it: there is no point arguing about matters of taste."
(Sachs, 32)

Obscenity is a topic which taste or personal point of view is a primary factor which makes for a peculiar legal perspective. The lyrics of Ice-T, Chief Keef, Public Enemy, Two Live Crew, The Weekend, Marilyn Manson, Brother Lynch Hung, Slayer, Miley Cyrus, Nine Inch Nails, Porno for Pyros; the art of Robert Mapplethorpe, Serrano, Madonna, Playboy, Playgirl, Hustler; the impact of movies Natural Born Killers. 50 Shades of Grey. Debbie Does Dallas. Deep Throat. The Devil in Miss Jones. Salo: 120 Days of Sodom, The Last Temptation of Christ: the words of libido: The Journal of Sex and Sensibility, Candide. Leaves of Grass, Married Love, Ulysses, Lady Chatterley's Lover, Catcher in the Rye: the performances of *Hair*, *Oh Calcutta*, *Angels in America*, George Carlin, most Shakespearian plays, etc.

This variety of art symbolizes the dilemma in the American Society: is self-expression bad? Though this question appears to be clear and concise, the implications have far-reaching effects in daily life. The clarity of this concept has historical significance as diverse as the culture that it represents.

The exact definition of obscenity relies on an idea that has changed throughout an historical evolution, "The obscene, thus, is a conceptual residuum of very ancient ways of thinking about human conduct. Human beings are thought of as clusters of strengths or virtues and corresponding weaknesses or vices, where virtues and vices are not conceived in narrow moral terms. Obscenity within this view is a kind of vice, a wasting and abuse of the natural employment of bodily functions. Hence, a culture's definition of the obscene will indicate those areas of bodily function in which the culture centrally invests its self-esteem and in which deviance provokes the deepest anxieties" (Richards, 52). From the early Greek civilization to the impact of the English government to the freedoms of the newly formed nation of America to the formation of the Federal Communications Commission to the Communications Decency Act concerning the early stages of the Information Super Highway, the Internet; the jagged pathway of definition has been carved into the legal cornerstone of American Society.

Black's Law Dictionary attempts to define these terms with more specificity. Indecency is being the state or condition of being outrageously offensive, especially in a vulgar or sexual way. Obscenity is the characteristic or state of being morally abhorrent or socially taboo especially as a result of referring to or depicting sexual or excretory functions. However, pornographic images, by themselves are not automatically obscene if they merely represent the nude human form (PVLA).

The foundation for conceptual obscenity is found in the ideology of our Puritan founders as it specified this demeanor with its six religo-moral heresies: 1. false doctrine, 2. irreverence or impious speech, 3. profane and disgusting speech, 4. sexual, sensual and erotic communication; 5. opinions and facts of science and 6. dissenting views concerning private morality. These operational terms encompassed the ideas and concepts that were considered inappropriate for the average citizen or society as a whole.

Eighteenth century England gave the terms obscenity and pornography as well as the legal implications. Judges applied the Latin term *obscenus* to a variety of literature. The term means filthy, offensive or repulsive. The Greek term *pornographos* was applied to certain written literature that is specific about the actions of harlots. Basically, these terms appear interchangeable: obscenity, indecency and pornography. Though the dictionary definitions are different, they are similar enough to conceptualize in the same philosophy.

Much of our society has an intense desire to blatantly eliminate our plethora of options to form an aura of conformity. In short, many people fear change or something that is odd or different. With a basic religious background as a society, it is believed that a set of right and wrong personal choices and values are required for stability. "Our concern is to apply this definition of moral principles to a theory of justice, so we must introduce into the original position the existence of conflicting claims over a limited supply of general goods and consider a specific set of principles to regulate claims on such goods" (Richards, 60).

This historical evolution of obscenity has been heavily influenced by the prudish, somewhat brazen English culture into a supposedly liberal, free thinking American society and the general, sometimes vague, ideas of the Constitution into a narrowing concept to protect susceptible individuals. The perceptions of pornography and obscenity will change, but the quandary of concern with the evolving, easily accessible information systems will forever be part of American society that attempts to protect all citizens from others and sometimes themselves.

Historical Perspective

As the early conception of freedom of expression was being defined during the archaic period (800-600 B. C.), the Greek decision-making class never mentioned any moralistic commentary dealing with individual life style choices. Their concerns centered on slander or speaking evil of others, impious speech or negative speech of the sacred or sedition, criticism of the government. This time period proves to be historically significant as these laws were designed for all classes; aristocrats and workers. The Roman Empire had similar laws in early democracy to help control a dictatorial Caesar dynasty. The basic freedom of speech was found in both empires and accepted as a human right for everyone.

True freedom for all persons was not a possible reality until the Magna Carta was signed in 1215. This document was basically both the beginning and the end to the extremes of a class-oriented society. It brought the beginning of equality for the rich and poor. The final paragraph of the Magna Carta states "that all the men in our kingdom have and hold all the aforesaid liberties, rights, and concessions... forever... (Tedford, 5).

The English government was the first to attempt to dictate individual choices by establishing rules to govern moral heresies. In 1638, a letter was written to a government assembly stating communication that was disgusting, immoral, lewd or sexually stimulating to be unnecessary and illegal. This correspondence, with the help of a Latin dictionary, was eventually titled obscene libel.

Several early legal decisions dispatched a variety of obscenity definitions and rekindled the basic theory of law. Pope Innocent VI banned a fourteenth century collection of stories, <u>Boccaccio's Decameron</u>, not for a violation of possible obscenity, but for blasphemy. An index of banned books, published by the Catholic Church in 1564; was not primarily concerned with sexuality, but more with blasphemy or error.

Researcher Lynn Hunt establishes some early groundwork on the political and religious implications of early pornography. One of the first noted works of “prose pornography” was Pietro Aretino’s *Ragionamenti* in 1536 (Browne, pg. 628). By 1660, the themes of prose pornography were "the self-conscious aim of arousing sexual desire in the reader, the juxtaposition of the material truth of sex against the hypocritical conventions of society and the rulings of the church, and, new in the seventeenth century, the cataloging of perversions as so many variations on a self-justified, amoral gratification of the senses” (Steiner, pg. 31). After the French Revolution, the political aspects of pornography were removed. At this point in history, it became a genre of its own with a specific audience.

In 1708, an English judge dismissed an obscenity prosecution citing no law for punishment. However, in 1727 author Richard Curl was convicted for his novel, <u>Venus in the Cloister or the Nun in Her Smock</u>. The opinion of the judge decided that the material explicitly disturbs the civil order and distorts the importance of religion, virtue or morality. It appears that obscenity, during that time period, was more of an individual perception as opposed to the written word of law.

Parliament Lord Chief Justice John Campbell authored a bill in 1857 to clearly recognize the crime of obscenity. This passed and enacted the procedure to seize and destroy obscene literature. This law was put into place 50 years after a variety of prosecutions throughout various British territories under the guise of indecency.

Less than ten years later, the 'Hicklin Rule' was stipulated in the 1868 landmark case of Regina vs. Hicklin. With that decision, obscenity is determined "Whether the tendency of the matter charged as obscenity is to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences and into whose hands a publication of this sort may fall" (Tedford, 13). This rule contemplated any literature that had several potentially malicious passages that could be interpreted by children, to be subject to legal action.

The legal foundation that was laid by the English government, a European system, gives the current American system historical reference and validity. One example, the Hicklin Rule, was also adopted into American justice. The general ideas of English culture transcended into early American culture. This European historical perspective premeditated American decorum as the basic premise of individual freedom is outweighed by the greater good. The choices of the government are based upon the perceived need to protect the interests of citizens.

Historical Perspective – United States

The founding fathers of America saw a definite need to strengthen all aspects of the country as it began to grow and prosper. They believed that ingenuity was the cornerstone of the foundation of democracy. Second President John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail, "I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study... navigation, commerce and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture... and their son President John Quincy Adams wrote that if the government refrained from "promoting the improvement of agriculture, commerce, manufacture, the cultivation and encouragement of the mechanical and of the elegant arts, the advancement of literature... would be treachery to the most sacred of trusts" (Hughes, 65). Appreciation of the arts was a fundamental promise of the newly-formed democratic process. The framers believed in that promise and fought for those individual rights in the Revolutionary War.

Prior to specific federal laws concerning obscenity, spontaneous convictions were occurring. In 1815, Jesse Sharpless was convicted of gaining profit from exhibiting a painting of a man and a woman in a sexually suggestive pose. Again in 1821, Peter Holmes was convicted for publishing Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure. These arrests were uncommon prior to the Tariff Act of 1842.

Section 28 of the Tariff Act states that 'importation of all indecent and obscene prints, paintings, lithographs, engravings and transparencies' will not occur. This section, though amended numerous times, is still in place within the current legal system. Print media was the original intent, but photographs, films and music have been included. The United States Post Office attempted to curb obscene material by the Postal Act of March 3, 1865. Section 16 censors mail as it states 'no obscene book, pamphlet, picture, print or other publication of a vulgar and indecent character, shall be admitted into the mails of the United States' (Tedford, 39). This legislation, in addition to the 1873 Comstock Act, provided detailed mailing laws concerning obscene material, have formed the basis of our current laws.

The Comstock Act is considered important because it was started by a citizen, Anthony Comstock. Uncharacteristically alone, he led a legal fight against indecency in the middle 1800's with a litany of allegations. His personal crusade eventually led to the passage of the law specific to mailing abortion or birth control material as being taunted illegal and classifying it as 'obscene'.

The 1896 Supreme Court case of Swearingen versus United States redefined the concept of obscenity. The decision of the court stated provided a clear distinction that vulgar language cannot be convicted under the obscenity definition. Obscenity must have a sense of immorality in a sexual nature.

John Woolsey, a United States District Judge, declared major changes for the counterarguments of obscenity in 1933. His three changes to the foundation of the Hicklin rule were established due to the ever-changing writing style of current authors of the time and the possibilities that the literature would fall prey to periodical legislative shifts. The three changes included: 1. the work must be judged as a whole (not by isolated passages), 2. the work must stir the sex impulses or lead to sexually impure and lustful thoughts and 3. the alleged sexual stirrings must be judged according to a person with average sex instincts (not the most susceptible person, such as a child) (Tedford, 135).

As the field of mass communications began to grow and became a staple in the average American household, the Federal government took several steps to control the early chaos. A major step included the 1934 Communications Act signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt. The fundamental parameters saw broadcasting as public interest, convenience or necessity. One of the powers that technically was not granted was censorship as stated in Section 326.

An important component of this law was the creation of the Federal Communications Commission. This governing body for all forms of mass communication helps to formulate and make decisions concerning a variety of rules and regulations. "The American system of broadcast regulation has been built on two phenomena: a fear of the power of television and radio to control the content of public discussion and a concomitant belief in the inability of the market to adequate control that power" (Bollinger, 63). The FCC and the Communications Act were a derivative of the Radio Act of 1927.

Thirty years later, the landmark case of Roth versus United States truly defined the more modern concept of obscenity. A New York businessman, Samuel Roth was convicted of violating the Comstock Act of 1873 for utilizing an advertising campaign by mailing obscene material. The U.S. Court of Appeals upheld the conviction on a vote of six to three.

In 1957, the case was argued in the United States Supreme Court. Justice Brennan, writing the majority opinion, established the 'Roth test' further defines obscenity as 1) worthless (utterly without redeeming social importance) and 2) sexually lewd meaning whether to the average person, applying contemporary community standards, the dominant theme of the material taken as a whole that appeals to prurient interest.

A redefinition in the term occurred in 1973 with the Miller versus California case. This decision still stands as the defining factor in the courts of today. Marvin Miller was convicted in a California court for distributing advertising brochures with sexual illustrations. His appeal was sustained by the Court of Appeals, then on to the United States Supreme Court. Chief Justice Burger used this case to simplify the Roth test for state courts to prosecute cases, currently known as the Three Prong Test, originally known as the SLAPS test.

In the decision, Chief Justice Warren C. Burger defined contemporary community standards to mean local or state standards, not national standards. This strengthened Three Prong Test reasserts that an average citizen applying contemporary local standards, would find that the work taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest; whether the work depicts or describes in a patently offensive way sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law and whether the work lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value (Tedford, 146).

By acknowledging the prevalence of local community standards over national standards, Burger accepted a realistic view of the situation. The opinions and views of certain regions of the country would not be shared. It should be the discretion of local government agencies to establish the guidelines. The tenacity of the obscenity problem is a reflection of the status quo, tolerance for questionable issues is greater in specific regions and should be allowed.

In the early 1970’s, two comedians who attempted to expedite public acceptance of questionable issues were Lenny Bruce and George Carlin. Their performances reflected the importance of the 1978 case FCC versus Pacifica. The decision of this case resulted in the “Seven Dirty Words” that could not be used in a repetitive or frequent manner in a time or place where a minor could hear them. In other words, the interpretation of the law decided that these were the seven words that could not be used on public airwaves during “family time”: shit, piss, fuck, cunt, cocksucker, motherfucker and tits.

The next premier case that brought obscenity into the spotlight was the 1990 case of the art of Robert Mapplethorpe. During a showing of his photography, the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center was prosecuted on obscenity charges. "His work was an extreme form of self-expression meant to shock people into seeing his dark world in a new light” (Stengel, 72).

Mapplethorpe died of AIDS in 1989 and the intensity of his work showed Americans the reality of an under-represented group is often criticized. His pictures of homosexual erotica, sadomasochist poses and other alternative life choices shocked America. Many believed his attempt to bring pornography into the art world was a direct threat to mainstream America.

The 1989 fury concerning Serrano's *Piss Christ* had infuriated Americans. This piece in combination with the Mapplethorpe collection ignited the American public. The artist, Anders Serrano had placed a plastic Christ-on-the-Cross in a jar of his urine and called this a work of art. His work was funded by the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) as was Mapplethorpe’s collection. Legal, moral and financial arguments followed; whether the NEA should support the arts or censor the recipients of their funds. The Helms Amendment, sponsored by long-time Senator Jesse Helms and adopted in 1989, forced the NEA to possibly smash artistic integrity by having recipients sign an obscenity pledge. "The NEA is held captive by a staff that regards with contempt Conservatives, Republicans, taxpayers, the middle class, and pretty much everybody else outside its own circle of the avant garde” (Neusner, 41). The obscenity pledge was replaced in November 1990 with a decency clause that the work must meet community standards established in the Roth Decision. They must pledge that their work will not be "considered obscene, including, but not limited to, depictions of sadomasochism, homoeroticism, the sexual exploitation of children or individuals engaged in sex acts" (Baker, 33). Individuals who qualify for funding must promise to abide by this oath in order to receive their grants.

Since the inception of the NEA, over 150,000 grants have been funded. Over the many decades of funding, very few have caused problems with the exceptions of Serranto and Mapplethorpe. "New language authorizing the NEA to prohibit funding or works that deliberately denigrate the cultural heritage of the United States, it's religious traditions or racial or ethnic groups... areas where Congress clearly has no right to legislate, but this only illustrates where this whole far-right campaign is dragging us--straight into political censorship” (Miller, 10).

To further protect children, Michael Diana, a fanzine cartoonist was convicted of obscenity in March 1994. A Florida court decided that his cartoon magazine *Boiled Angel* was unfit. It attacked the Catholic Church with cartoons of rape, serial killers, child abuse, etc. His court-issued punishment was unusual as he had to undergo psychological evaluation during his probation. He could also have no contact with underage children, was forbidden to draw and was subject to unannounced visits by court officials.

The United States has definitely carved a niche in the definition of obscenity. The early Puritanical view of severely limiting personal self-expression to a more liberating view that a person must challenge an individual moral code in a relatively short amount of time shows a topical evolution that is still growing and changing.

Implications of the Information Super Highway

> Barbarian pornographers are at the gate and they are using
> the Internet to gain access to the youth of America!
> Senator James Exon

The Internet, the Information Super Highway, has added a new dimension to the realm of communication law. Cyberspace is not as easily controlled as print, video or audio media. Yet this new vehicle of communication is under current legal jurisdiction. The problem of control is obvious, "We estimate it would take six people 24 hours a day to monitor obscenity on the Internet... WE can't censor material. If it came to that, we would have to shut it off" (Butler, A27). The urgency of this statement presents the quandary of today's technology: mass education of the world at the push of a button of every computer patron verses the possible viewing of indecent material by underage children.

1991 complicated the rules of obscenity as the World Wide Web opened up numerous opportunities for the sharing of material to both adults and children. By the second half of the 1990's, digital Internet became widely used and an information explosion occurred. Ninety-seven percent of information is telecommunicated by 2007 (Howe). This information boom necessitates legal action to curb easy access to questionable material to multi-age Internet users.

Nebraska Senator James Exon proposed legislation in 1995 to set limits on the information the Internet can pass along to subscribers. "The bill would allow judges to impose fines and jail terms on individuals or companies using cyberspace to distribute material that is obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy or indecent. It is an attempt to prevent minors from gaining access to the pornographic material widely available through computer networks. Conceivably, it could affect everything from on-line services offered by Playboy and Penthouse magazines to the contents of electronic mail messages" (Wilson, A21). Currently known as the Communications Decency Act of 1996, this legislation attempted to "define obscenity along the lines of a 1973 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. That decision defines obscenity as something that appeals to 'prurient interest' and lacks 'serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value' as determined by 'community standards" (Butler, A27).

The Telecommunications Act was signed into law on February 8, 1996 and was the first major change in over 60 years. "The U.S. Justice

Department presented evidence that the law is needed to protect children from 'indecent' material on the Internet" (Young, A21). The ramifications in the context of obscenity control are few in number: first an increase in fines for broadcasting obscene language on radio or cable from $10,000 to $100,000 and second, a severe regulation on indecency as a whole. Immediately upon passage, "A federal judge in Philadelphia issued an order suspending the government's authority to enforce the 'indecency' aspects of the bill, but left in place the prohibition against 'patently offensive' materials, throwing the whole matter into further confusion" (Friedman). The core of this bill stemmed from web pages containing nude pictures on four separate university campuses: Duke University, Michigan State University, University of Texas at Austin and Whitman College.

In 1997, the first case to specifically address regulation of sexually explicit material on the Internet was Reno vs. American Civil Liberties Union. The Court struck down several provisions of the Communications Decency Act. “Through the use of chat rooms, any person with a phone-line can become a town crier with a voice that resonates farther than it could from any soapbox. Through the use of Web pages, mail exploders, and newsgroups, the same individual can become a pamphleteer” (PBS).

Four of the most recent Supreme Court cases, in 2002-2003, have further defined the parameters of Internet pornography to the viewing audience. Ashcroft vs. American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) ruled that community standards, established in Roth and Miller, measures what material is prohibited on-line. Ashcroft vs. Free Speech Coalition decided that “virtual kiddie pornography” is not considered obscene as no real children are involved in the virtual sexual acts. City of Los Angeles vs. Alameda Books found that zoning restrictions may limit “one-stop-shopping sex emporiums in an effort to curb “red light areas”. In U.S. vs. American Library Association, the justices found that libraries using filtering software blocking Internet access to pornographic websites were legal.

The Supreme Court Justices were clear in their decision concerning the Internet. “The Internet may fairly be regarded as a never-ending worldwide conversation. The Government may not, through the 1996 Communications Decency Act, interrupt that conversation. As the most participatory form of mass communication yet developed, the

Internet deserves the highest protection from government intrusion" (PBS).

The always-changing technological world of the Internet is constantly advancing. Simultaneously, the concerns are mounting with new device and application. The judicial world must stay abreast of this evolution. It is clear that rules and laws must quickly evolve to meet the new breakthroughs of computer geniuses and help sculpture this genre of communication to thrive within the guidelines of the Constitution.

Concern of Obscenity

"In America, the arts have always had to prove how moral they are. Ever since the Puritans got to Massachusetts in the 17th century, American culture has had an iconophobic streak: prelates and politicians felt that though God (like them) spoke through the Word, the visual and performing arts were in some sense the devil's work, best left alone by a virtuous polity" (Hughes, 64). This belief has motivated conservative Americans to form an allegiance to dismantle pornography and specific freedoms of expression. The seeming decline of American morals or lack thereof, allows the viewpoint that questionable material should be banned to save society. The never-ending debate continues concerning the ramifications of what is deemed decent. Director Paul Schrader calls the recent surge of censorship "a fight about who controls the culture. *Last Temptation* of *Christ*, like other cultural totems--flag-burning, Robert Mapplethorpe, gun control, NEA, abortion--had become a symbol of cultural hegemony" (Sachs, 33). This philosophy ignites the ACLU, American Civil Liberties Union. This organization protects the rights of Americans and questions all regulations issued by the government and society. Their research indicates "no evidence for a causal link between exposure to pornography and sexual violence" (Herbert, 53). The National Academy of Science agreed in 1993.

"The connection between the obscenity of acts and depictions of acts distinguishes the obscene from the indecent. The distinctive mark of the indecent is the public exhibition of that which, while unobjectionable in private, is offensive and embarrassing when done in public. The obscene, by contrast, may be and often is condemned whether or not it involves a public display" (Richards, 55). When discussing the basic terminology, citizens do not view the discrete difference between the three interchangeable terms.

The historical significance of this self-expression may also send fear into conservative American thinking. "Pornography as a magnet for modernist issues--It was linked to free-thinking and heresy to science and natural philosophy, and to attacks on political authority" (Steiner, 33). A first step in personal expression may lead to other forms of crossing unwritten rules of society. These expressions of freedom could lead to individual expressions in the political or religious sectors causing perceived chaos for elected leaders.

Social critic Katha Polit sees the implications in another way, "People like Pop Culture-That's what makes it popular. Movies drenched in sex and gore, gangsta rap, even outright pornography are not some sort of alien interstellar dust malevolently drifting down on us, but products actively sought out and beloved my millions" (Sachs, 34). The popularity of pornography resonates fear within a significant portion of American society. The goal of censorship could be to eradicate specific popular icons and return to traditional family values.

These new laws and attempts to regulate freedom directly affect higher education. The purpose of education is exploration, both broad and deep, using the world's knowledge and information as tools for further advancement. Censorship inherently prevents full encompassing of exploration. "For a center of higher education, the reaction is going to be to insulate itself from liability. For a college or university, the best way to do that is to heavily restrict or shut down access to anything that could conceivably ferry materials that are indecent or lewd under the act. Basically, you're going to find that people will be afraid to say things or look at things" (Wilson, 27). Trotter Hardy, a law professor at the College of William and Mary agrees that "if that act stands and you're a prudent university, you're going to have to screen everything students post" (Young, A21).

Realistically, the distinction between self-expression and possible indecency is unclear, particularly at the university level. The university drama production, art collections and museums, and campus publications could be constantly questioned as to the viewing appropriateness. Conceivably there might be "too much danger that a museum director would restrict access to a nude statue" (Young, A26). These legal attempts seem to curb academic freedom along with artistic freedom and self-expression. These laws have sent fear into the academic community. University officials have called it "a library issue, an academic-freedom issue and a censorship issue" (Butler, A27).

Conclusion

After over 2000 years of knowledge, experience and evolution of humanity; the concept of obscenity is still unclear. The question remains: should society or the government set the dimensions of obscenity or should we allow our personal morals to express ourselves? "What we need to do, each of us as individuals, is let those who are polluting the culture know that we are going to embarrass them and shame them until they stop, until they use their vast talents and resources to put us in touch with our best selves-instead of the worst parts of our nature" (Sachs, 32).

Sociologist Philip Rieff explains the long-term historical transformation in the West from a religious culture to a therapeutic anti-culture. In earlier religious cultures, the renunciation of instinct was achieved in the name of a greater communal purpose, and sacrifice was made worthwhile by the cultural attainments and participation; this allowed for the sublimation of selfish impulses. In the contemporary era, a cult of impulse release undermined inherited notions of permission and restraint that are the foundation of culture. Whereas older religious traditions had a profoundly consoling aspect – helping to save the individual from excess and isolation – the new sensibility not only mandated self-expression and the unfettered pursuit of desire as the ultimate purpose of life, but fostered the creation of endless new desires (Arnett, 633). This statement summarizes the paradox of obscenity in our current society.

Though many might agree with Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart in his opinion, “I know it when I see it!” (Howe). The validity of this simple opinion needs substantial argumentation to support legislation that suppresses the idea of free speech. The Roth decision gave a five-part structure that could support Justice Stewart’s opinion. 1. The perspective of evaluation was that of an ordinary, reasonable person, 2. community standards of acceptability were to be used to measure obscenity, 3. works whose predominant theme was questionable were the only target of obscenity law, 4. a work, in order to be evaluated for obscenity, had to be taken in its entirety, and 5. an obscene work was one that aimed to excited individuals prurient interest (Legal Information Institute).

In the early 1990’s, then Washington Governor Booth Gardner attempted a realistic solution by signing legislation to combat obscenity. This bill attempted to ban the sale of 'erotic' lyrics to minors. He stated

"This a subtle warning shot across the bow of record producers and music stores that pump out CD's and tapes with sexually explicit lyrics" (Goldberg, 24). Obviously one major way to fight obscenity is in the financial arena. If production companies are held responsible for obscenity with significant fines and penalties, then there should be a significant decrease in the problem. This philosophy did not work. Several corporations have seen an increasing availability of questionable literature, music and movies. Increasing on-line purchase of products has made the ability to easily obtain potentially obscene material a realistic problem for the legislative body to tackle. One area that the FCC supported one area of Gardner's legislation is that questionable lyrics cannot have on-air time between the hours of 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. as children can easily hear these words.

Over the years, numerous solutions have been attempted to control obscenity. The legal system appears to be the only real chance to bring all viewpoints to a common ground for a realistic chance of controlling the Internet and not losing liberties that are guaranteed in the Constitution. To find that no major case since the Miller vs. California case of 1973 has redefined obscenity speaks to the totality of the problem.

Another major aspect of the individual problem is the financial impact. "In 2001, Americans spent between $10 billion and $14 billion dollars annually for pornography, pay-per-view movies on cable and satellite, phone sex, in-room hotel movies, sex toys, pornographic magazines and pornographic websites" (Browne). With the increased availability of on-line access, that dollar amount has risen dramatically with the seemingly change in our culture. The "Seven Dirty Words" no longer have the dramatic impact that they once held and are appearing more readily in the daily vernacular of society. With the increased ease of dissemination of questionable material, society must continually investigate community standards. Have the community standards changed since the Miller decision?

The proposed Federal Communications Commission Consolidated Reporting Act of 2013 would require the FCC to publish a biennial report on the state of the communications marketplace. This bill passed the house and was sent to the senate with no decision. Perhaps, this attempt to gather information on the status of all communication would give an overall picture of the dark world of obscenity. It is surprising to find that no major Supreme Court cases during the past 30 years have changed the definition of obscenity. Theorists have argued that the fabric of our culture has changed greatly, but the definitions of legal terms have steadied the course of time and generational change.

In short, "An obscenity law, then, must be understood as a political expression of broader popular moral attitudes toward the putative proper use, and improper abuse, of the body” (Richard, 72). As was the decision in the Miller vs. California case, local community standards need to be the basis for the legal decisions of obscenity, indecency and pornography. As communities decide what is acceptable for the area, then society will truly have a better comprehension of what the Constitution really guarantees in those standards that artists, musicians, performers, writers should take into consideration as a matter of taste.

Brief Time Line Summary

800-600 B.C. Greek Civilization – Early concept of freedom of expression
1215 Magna Carta signed to begin a series of equality
1560's Catholic Church bans questionable books for blasphemy, not obscenity
1660 Prose pornography establishes a genre of its own
1708 English Judge cites no specific law for obscenity
1727 Author Richard Curl convicted for disturbing the civil order
1842 Tariff Act passes to control obtaining questionable material
1857 Lord Chief Justice John Campbell Bill becomes law that clearly recognizes obscenity
1865 Postal Act passes to control mailing of obscene material
1868 Hicklin Rule is written to control questionable literature from children
1873 Comstock Act passes to further limit mailing laws
1896 Swearingen vs. United States cites vulgar language cannot be considered obscene
1927 Radio Act passes in a first attempt to control mass communication
1933 Judge Woolsey adds three specific changes to the Hicklin Rule
1934 Communication Act passes to establish Federal Communication Commission as governing body for mass communication
1957 Roth vs. United States cites obscene advertisements are illegal
1969 Internet started
1973 Miller vs. California establishes the Three Prong Test
1978 FCC vs. Pacifica establishes the Seven Dirty Words
1989 Serrano's *Piss Christ* was shown and debated
1990 Robert Mapplethorpe's photography shown at Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center
1991 World Wide Web began
1994 Michael Diana, a fanzine cartoonist cited for obscenity
1995 Exon Bill proposed to legislate Cyberspace and the Internet
1996 Telecom Bill signed to help protect children from the Internet
1998 Child Online Protection Act (COPA) protect minors from Internet
2003 U.S. vs. American Library Association establishes that libraries can filter websites
2013 proposed FCC Consolidated Reporting Act

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The Point is Perspective: Merging Oral Interpretation of Literature with Current Events

Kasey Cox

Abstract

In a society suffering from information overload and compassion fatigue, it has become more important than ever to practice the art of walking in one another's shoes. Using Anna Deveare Smith's style of enacting oral history, this paper deals with using oral interpretation of literature to process a polarizing current event within a high school or collegiate classroom or a community context. The paper will explore choosing an event, creating a 10 minute or one act play, and discuss the value in viewing an event from multiple perspectives. The resulting unit overlaps a variety of disciplines: journalism, theatre, education, public relations, etc. As a result, participants will be able to effectively collaborate across departments in order to create a piece that challenges not only the participants, but the audience. It deals with the foundational concerns of bias, the usage of technology, basic playwriting, and the development of empathy.

"What is the practicality of theatre?" To be asked this question or some variant of this question has become a rite of passage in the theatre community. It has become a second job for many young graduates to defend their career choices and offer a suitable answer to this question. Making any sort of living or difference in this arena seems like a far-fetched dream at best and, at worst, can be made to seem superfluous in a floundering economy.

Because of the hostile environment many of our students face, it has become more vital than ever to prove that art for art's sake is not a necessary explanation for the importance of our vocation. Instead, we should say that art is always for humanity's sake. Science creates medicine to heal the body, but art creates in us the empathy for the sick. History instills in us an appreciation for the past, but theatre applies the lessons from the past in a tangible and relatable way. Theatre is where theory meets reality.

This lesson plan, titled "The Empathy Project," will help students understand opposing opinions in a polarizing current event by asking them to research the event from every angle, pair the story with literature, create a one act play centered around this narrative and objective, and perform the piece in such a way as to challenge the student to step into a worldview unlike their own.

Empathy Under Attack

As a result of technology, our students communicate in a different way than ever before. What used to necessitate face-to-face communication now is acceptable in the form of a text message. Social media makes students feel connected to one another, when in fact they cannot purposefully participate in conversation for hours while in a crowded room. Their social media image and that of everyone around them is polished and precise- reality is altered for them.

This new technology affects our empathy levels for three reasons:

1. Students have a form of compassion fatigue. Every day on Facebook there is a new social injustice about which to be outraged. If they are not concerning themselves with a social justice issue, then they may be preoccupied with a natural disaster or terrorist attack half a world away. They are bombarded with images of suffering or inequity at such break-neck speeds that their brains cannot process it all. Proponents of Social Media Activism admit that in order for a social media movement to go viral, it must be of a light package, tap into headline appetites, and adhere to trailer vision (Lim, 644). Long, intricate stories which take some time to digest are no longer marketable. Instead, the most shareable articles are clickbait which contain little meat. To truly feel empathy for another person, one must take some time with them and their story. However, attention spans have become too short. So students share the article in order to feel as though they have done something about it and so they can leave it behind and stop thinking about it.

2. Information to support their views is readily available. This creates a vacuum where there used to be a need to see from others' perspectives. Paul Saffo (2005), a technology forecaster at Stanford University said this: "Individuals can select from a vast cyber-sea of media and utterly saturate their information space exclusively with information sources that reinforce existing world views. Each of us can create our own personal media walled garden that surrounds us with comforting, confirming information, and utterly shuts out anything that conflicts with our world view. This is social dynamite, for shared knowledge and information is the glue that holds civil society together. It is the stuff that caused people to change their opinions and to empathize with others" (p. 6) Saffo also cites a study done in 2004 by Lada Adamic and Natalie Glance that found that there is almost no overlap between the blogs read by liberals and conservatives.
   In our hyper-connected world, students do not have to have their views challenged anymore. All it takes is a quick Google search and they can find a blogger who gives the impression of being intelligent who will tell them that the way they feel is correct. If they happen upon someone that does not agree with them then they can scroll down to the comments section to find validation.
3. We actively engage in the numbing of our feelings through entertainment. In his article, "Does the Internet Make Us Stupid?," Hermann Maurer says that, while he believes technology can compensate for our shortcomings that are a result of technology usage (i.e. we can't walk as far as our ancestors could because we invented the technology of cars, but cars make up for that our lack of ability), he also acknowledges that attention spans have become much shorter since the widespread use of the internet (p. 49). Students don't have to deal with uncomfortable situations anymore because when they start to feel uncomfortable they can pull out their smart phones and play a game, look through Instagram, or watch a video. No one has to endure sitting alone with their thoughts or even casually observing the people around them. Because they are not practicing

healthy engagement with their feelings, they are having more and more difficulty in processing their emotions and, therefore, developing empathy for others in similar situations.

How Do We Revive Empathy?

In a study published in 2005, the University of Parma, Italy, described mirror neurons as neurons that are activated not only when performing an action oneself, but also while observing someone else perform that action. Mirror neurons increase our ability to understand the behaviors of others-empathy. How do we activate these mirror neurons?

In theatre and, specifically, in the theatre classroom lies the answer to this issue. Theatre classrooms force students to put away technology and engage in human interaction while they are partaking in scene work, participating in the relationship between actor and audience, and reading scenes aloud.

Theatre touches students with reality in a way that the news, television, and movies cannot. They cannot think in the abstract anymore because there is now a living and breathing person in front of them and what they are doing or saying demands some kind of response. This is even more true when they are performing theatre- they must read the words on a page, effectively watching someone else perform the action, then perform the action themselves.

Anna Deveare Smith, a prolific actress, playwright, and scholar, merges journalism and theatre to create performance pieces based on her own interviews. She then performs these interviews in one-woman shows. Because she is an African American woman portraying people of all races, religions, and genders, she gives the audience the unique opportunity to view each perspective without the normal biases that we might feel.

Anna Deveare Smith said, “My work is about giving voice to the unheard, and reiterating the voice of the heard in such a way that you question, or re-examine, what is the truth” (1995). In her speech to The Council of the National Endowment for the Arts in 1995, Smith touched on the power of the arts to heal our nation and its pivotal role in addressing civil rights. She said “In a moment such as this, where the national pantry seems to be low on such staple foods as grace, benefit of the doubt, and kindness, it is especially important that artists stay their course and remind the public that in fact, there is more to life than the material evidence of humanness. Now, more than ever, we must continue to practice the human touch. As the great chronicler of American life, Studs Terkel, said to me – 'We are more and more into communications and less and less into communication.'"

The Empathy Project

As an instructor in a mid-sized Baptist University in St. Louis' affluent West County, one of my greatest challenges is to keep my students actively engaged in the world around them. I tell them often that actors, of all people, ought to have the highest empathy for others- since jumping into someone else's skin and walking around in it is the career which they have chosen. This is made all the more difficult by the fact that they are constantly being inundated with "communications"- especially those students that don't know how to filter opinion articles from factual articles. I wanted to ask the question: Would having students portray a variety of viewpoints change the amount of empathy that they feel towards both sides of a polarizing event?

It was my goal to develop a unit in which students engage in critical thinking about a current event, research differing opinions as well as facts surrounding an event, analyze their news sources and other literary sources as performance pieces, and develop the empathy necessary to convincingly portray characters that differ from them whether that be in opinion, race, gender, or socioeconomic status.

We began by choosing our narrative. For us, the Michael Brown shooting occurred just two weeks before we returned to school and was only about twenty minutes from campus. It was current, it was relevant, and it was also controversial. When choosing a narrative, it is important to be sure that the story has multiple opinions, all of which seem to be valid, otherwise the final product will fall flat.

It is equally important to actively bring the students into the conversation. Using a round table discussion with talkative and open groups or a free writing exercise for introspective students can open the doors to events that may have previously been overlooked. Students may also have an assignment to bring in a news story that they believe is interesting, important, or otherwise relevant. Eventually, a chord will be struck with the students and they will choose an event together.

Once a narrative is established, the argument or objective must be decided upon. What story do the students want to tell? What do they want their audience to know or do? The argument or objective can be phrased in a question or a statement. It is important that the group solidifies this together. Our objective for our unit was, "We want to explore the possibility that the events surrounding Michael Brown's death were not actually about Michael Brown at all." This objective left much to interpretation from every imaginable perspective. It was also the final objective and had evolved over the course of the semester as we discovered new facts and opinions and the students began to allow themselves to empathize with both sides of the debate.

In a typical oral interpretation class, students will choose books, plays, and poems to analyze and perform. While this is still a major portion of the unit, students should also be encouraged to explore social media posts, news stories, and blogs. The students then intertwine these sources with literary works in order to tell the story and present their argument. This gives students the opportunity to apply literature to their lives and to current events.

An ideal lesson plan would devote two class periods to each of the following: news, blogs, social media posts, books/plays, and poetry. For example, on a Monday each student would bring two contrasting news articles. Monday and part of Tuesday would be spent reading through the articles aloud and having the students keep track of which articles they would like to consider for the final scene. At the end of the day on Tuesday the goal would be to have 5-10 possible news stories for your scene. Wednesday would have them bringing in two opposing blog opinions, Thursday the class would choose another 5-10. Fridays could be saved for social media posts since these posts are typically short and easy to read and comprehend. The students can then be divided into groups and narrow down the pieces even further. In order to choose the best pieces for the scene, the students should ask themselves: Does this piece support and add to the narrative? Does it include vivid language? Is it dynamic and thought-provoking?

The scene can then be pieced together in whatever order the students decide. In current events, it is typically wise to put the items in chronological order unless the objective should point them in another direction. Having several hard copies of the final pieces chosen can help with this process, as it allows them to rearrange easily and see the entire piece as a whole. Most importantly, do several read thrus throughout until a final product is reached.

When beginning to cast the scene, special attention should be given to the objective. What does the performance hope to accomplish? Using Anna Deveare Smith as our muse, we wanted to disembody the voices so that the words were clearly heard. If the events surrounding Brown were not about him, specifically, then what were they about? In order for the audience to make an informed decision without bias, we believed that it was necessary to rid them of the opportunity to assign certain feelings with certain types of people.

MBU Theatre produced the one act play for the students' final project in December. After the performance the students wrote about their experience with the prompt "What have you learned during this project, both as a student of theatre and as human beings?" We took time together to process the event and the increase in empathy they felt towards other human beings. Instead of seeing the world through their narrow lens, they had learned to purposefully seek out others' stories in order to understand them better.

An Argument for Theatre as the Means

Our current students desperately want to make a positive difference in the world. It is the job of the theatre classroom in our new technology-driven society to equip them with the tools that they need to be successful in this endeavor. Without the empathy that is nurtured through great art and exercising the skill of seeing through someone else's frame of reference, actions to better humanity often become empty and hollow. The theatre promotes human interaction as a means to world change. We cannot possibly save the world virtually. We need to put people in place of words on a screen.

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Thanks, Don’t Mention It: Confirmation, Reciprocation and Punctuation in Cyber Communication

Randy K. Dillon

Abstract

We are increasingly interacting with others through mediated communication in cyberspace. There are tremendous benefits resulting from this very immediate, almost instantaneous new way of communicating. Yet, many of us find that we are experiencing what author Sherry Turkle refers to as "connected, but alone," in that we expect more from technology but less from each other. The results are a 24-7 cyber game of tag, where one always is "it." As educators and administrators, we are constantly fielding requests for information requiring our attention, our time, and our efforts. It is understandable to get frustrated when we do not hear anything back especially if the other initiated the request. Are social norms changing the ways we acknowledge one another as we interact more and more online? Is generational difference playing a part? This program focuses on the communication cues of confirmation, reciprocation, and punctuation. The paper ends with how each of us can become more competent in our mediated communication exchanges. More importantly, these recommendations can be used to help teach and model this communication for our students, our colleagues, and our community.

Rule 1: Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those that are present.
Rule 25: Superfluous compliments and all affectation of ceremony are to be avoided, yet where due, they are not to be neglected.
--*George Washington’s Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour in Company & Conversation*

Like many of you I communicate more in cyberspace for both professional and personal reasons. As part of this shift I receive increasingly more email messages a day as well as through the wee hours of the night. It seems I am constantly playing a game of tag—and I am always "it." As part of this cyber game of tag I wonder about the acknowledgement of the communication I have sent. I question if I am responding in kind, and if so, how my responses were received. There have been times that I have electronically provided information directly to someone who did not originally ask for such. I have had to do this in my roles as a professor, a committee chair, a department head, a program planner for a convention, a graduate director, or as an internship coordinator. For example, I may provide information on upcoming comprehensive exams to graduate students, or announce an upcoming guest speaking at an upcoming scholarly seminar, and to please see attachment for additional details. I may contact faculty to let them know that a particular meeting has been moved to a different classroom. I most often don't hear back from the recipients of such messages; nor am I surprised I don't. I don't expect to hear any messages of gratitude returned to me such as "received the information about this fabulous opportunity" or an electronic "thank you." However nice it is to hear some acknowledgement or appreciation that the communication was received, I expect that the recipient did get the message, and if there is a need for further clarification I will receive a response asking for such.

What concerns me is that too often I find myself in situations where I may be electronically asked (mainly via email) to provide information, clarification to a message, a favor to provide certain materials, or even a request that requires to do a bit of research before I send back what I hope is a coherent response. The "goods" that I am asked for is primarily information and this information is often gladly provided even though it may require attention, effort, and time resources. These electronic requests may come from people I know (such as current and former students as well as faculty and other colleagues). In several cases, I may get requests from people I don't know personally. These requests come from prospective graduate students or undergraduate students looking for internships, external people who ask for information about my scholarship, course openings, and other information pertaining to my department and work institution. I don't mind supplying and meeting these requests. What is astounding is to experience the number of times I have relayed back the request and not heard anything in return. For some reason, I thought maybe I would hear something back.

This drives me to offer different scenarios and explanations:

- Did the individual get the message at all? Did it get lost somewhere in cyberspace? (But then I was just returning their email so how could this be?) Or, are they refusing to be "it" in our game of email tag?
- Was the information or materials supplied "correct" for the receiver? In other words, did I totally get it wrong in supplying the answers to their requests? Partially wrong? If partially wrong, which part is wrong and which part is correct?
- Did the individual get the message I sent and then just forget to acknowledge it? If so, why?
- Are there factors of the receiver that may support whether or not he or she will likely respond? Age or generational differences? The social role of the receiver in relation to the role of the sender?
- Does not knowing the person make a difference in making a response?
- Does an anticipation of future interaction, or additional information requests make a difference in providing a response?
- Does the type of electronic request and how much it is considered a favor, or a gift, etc. influence the type of response, or if any response is returned?
- Could it possibly be that the social norms of reciprocation, gratitude, and acknowledgement have changed, not developed, or are applied differently as a result of this electronic transaction of requesting information or asking to do something, then supplying that information and/or performing the function so that there is no need for an electronic message of acknowledgement?

After sharing these concerns about the lack of responses in my online communication, my "obsession" is one that I believe I share with others who have provided me with their own scenarios too many to list here. The common theme in all of this is: you can agree or disagree with me, but if you don't give a clear indication of my existence than that is even worse that disagreeing with me. To be fair, I too have been the perpetrator of such irresponsible behavior, and it is inexcusable. Good communication is good etiquette. Etiquette concerns itself with conventional requirements for social behavior. These requirements or "rules" shine light on what is commonly referred to as decorum, or what is becoming or appropriate. Nevertheless, what is considered appropriate decorum is constantly debatable and often at odds with one another. When does one go too far and offer what the first U.S. President George Washington says is "superfluous compliments and affectation of ceremony" to be avoided, but sorely needed and not neglected when they are due. Likewise, I wonder what President Washington would say about this lack of decorum in our technological frenzy of communicating in the early 21st century?

Albert Einstein believed that technology has the potential of humans becoming like idiots. That's one way of looking at this phenomenon, but to me that seems a little harsh—and scary. Author Sherry Turkle (2011) writes and speaks about how our technology is making us more connected, but that we may be more alone relationally. What particularly strikes me about Turkle's work is the notion that in our increasing use of technology (e.g. social media) to interact with others, humans are replacing humans with machines. We do not see that behind technology that there are real humans interacting. Whether it is narcissism, forgetfulness, the ease of quicker technology, our fast-paced world, unawareness, or an increasing lack of civility and politeness we are becoming less human-minded and relational in our interactions with one another. However, as we are ever more required to use technology to communicate with one another, and are reliant in doing so, we still must keep in mind that over time this lack of attention and care for our communication to others has important repercussions in our personal, academic, and professional relationships.

This article derives from a workshop I conducted at the annual conference of the Speech and Theatre Association in September 2015, Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri. Not surprisingly, I discovered that others experience a lack of communication cues when engaging in online mediated interactions. Instead of continuing with how we feel ignored, the focus of the workshop (and this article) counsels how to be more aware of how our communication or lack of communication in a mediated world has on others. Saying "please" and "thank you" are places to start, but what are also unique ways that the medium of mediated communication can be wisely used not only to suffice our own goals, but also keeping in mind "the other" in the communication transaction? I hope to continue the conversation on suggestions that we can teach and model appropriate and effective online communication exchanges for our students, children, and colleagues.

Confirmation, Reciprocation, and Punctuation

Buber (1965) wrote that "a society may be termed human in the measure to which its members confirm one another" and "actual humanity exists only where this capacity unfolds" (pp. 67-68). An essential part of human communication is we are aware of others and in turn others are aware of us. It is through our communication interactions that we make ourselves visible. "Confirmation involves the process through which people are 'endorsed' by others, implying a recognition and acknowledgment of them in their personness" (Cissna and Anderson, 1994, pp. 23-24). One's confirmation "as a person" is key to a healthy dialogue including recognition, acknowledgment and endorsement from the other (Cissna & Anderson, 1994, p. 25). On the other hand, when one is not recognized, acknowledged, or their communication is subject to disqualification or imperviousness, otherwise known as "disconfirmation. (Cissna & Anderson, 1994, pp. 24-25). (See also Cissna & Sieburg, 1981; Porter & Cissna, 1990).

So what are the challenges regarding confirmation in our mediated communication? With 24-7 connectivity it could be that there are just too many messages we have to contend with. This constant "din" of communication (Turkle, 2011, p. 166) makes it difficult to pay attention to everything or to miss out on important messages. In other words, I may not mean to ignore you, it's just that the message got lost in the shuffle. However, this leads to the question, how would one know this, if the issue was not raised? The person perpetrating the disconfirmation may not even be aware they are causing disconfirmation. Besides, as Turkle (2011) argues, "An e-mail or text seems to have been always on its way to the trash. These days, as a continuous stream of texts becomes a way of life, we may say less to each other because we imagine that what we say is almost already a throwaway" (p. 168). Are we then experiencing a new norm of confirmation in our online mediated communication?

Reciprocity in communication is the tendency to respond in kind and is closely associated with confirmation. You say something to me and I respond back in a way that has a connection to what you have said, and the process continues. Doing so “confirms” the communication interaction and more importantly the other(s) in the communication. The rule of reciprocity is accorded the status of a social norm. It obligates individuals to return the form of behavior they have received (Gouldner, 1960; Berkowitz, 1972; Axelrod, 1984).

Most of the work in reciprocity examines self-disclosure (e.g. Grice, 1975) with the premise that conversational norms include responses to be relevant to the comment that preceded it. This type of quid pro quo response can include both verbal and nonverbal communication. However, in asynchronous communication such as those that occur online (barring Skype or other synchronous types of communication) the addition of the nonverbal reciprocity can be muted, or nonexistent altogether. “[O]nline communication also offers an opportunity to ignore other people’s feelings. You can avoid eye contact…Online, people miss your body language, tone of voice. You are not really you.” (Turkle, 2011, p. 184).

Together confirmation and reciprocity properly employed, or perceptions of the lack of either carry real world implications. Namely, are we being respectful, civil, and polite to one another? Thus, an important part of our confirmation and reciprocal needs may be summed up by saying two words, “Thank you.” Research indicates that when benefactors have been thanked and their benefits to the beneficiary are noted there is more willingness to supply more or work harder, than those who have not been thanked (Moss & Page, 1972; Goldman, Seever, & Seever, 1982). Furthermore, politeness strategies used in the initial request can be possibly undone by a lack of response (confirmation) after information has been supplied or a favor done. In other words, you can be very grateful, but if there is no demonstration of this gratefulness (confirming the other, offering a reciprocal response) then this could lead to an interaction break. In the future, you as the grateful receiver could see yourself disconfirmed.

Biesenbach-Lucas (2007) looked at email request messages made from students to faculty and compared politeness messages employed by native and non-native speakers of English. Despite the fact that native speakers had at their disposal greater resources to create “e-polite” messages, polite conventions in e-mail using a text-only medium, still appears to be a work in progress. If we are still in the process of working out the appropriate ways to express polite requests through electronically means messaging, than we likely have even further to go to know about the appropriate norms of expressing gratitude once a response to a request has been provided.

Becker and Smenner (1986) wanted to know whether preschoolers would say thank you without their parent's presence. In their study preschoolers (age 3 ½ to 4 1/2) played a game and received a reward from an unfamiliar peer or adult. The results showed that 37% of children said thank you. Girls said thank you more than boys. Students said thank you spontaneously more to an adult than to a peer. In addition, students from lower income families compared with those from middle income families expressed thanks more spontaneously (Becker & Smenner, 1986).

Reciprocating a confirming response such as saying thank you requires more than just saying the words. In some cases the words don't match up with the previous statement, or a response is given that is so late in coming that the original message may be forgotten, or even worse the response is perceived as insincere. One way to grapple with the different meanings that inform our human communication interaction is through punctuation. Punctuation is defined as "The manner in which an ongoing communication process and/or interaction sequence is punctuated determines the meaning attributed to it and how each person's behavior will be evaluated, that is, who is responsible or "guilty," and how one decides to (re)act." behavenet.com/punctuation.

Punctuation as it is utilized in communication is best represented by a group of theorists known as the "Palo Alto Group" most notably its main spokesperson Paul Watzlawick. Watzlawick and his research associates shifted the focus of communication in relationships from the intentions of the individual participants to their mutual interaction within a communication system. Watzlawick's model of interactive communication separates the content of the communication (or what is said) from the form of the communication (or how it is said) (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967).

As employed in the mediated communication interactions that are the foci of this article, punctuation can be extended, or better yet be explained, by the "5ws and the h" of communication interaction. Thus, punctuation involves the who, what, when, where, why of communication, as well as how the message is expressed. Here is a brief overview:

Who says it? What is the role of the sender and the receiver?
What is it? What is the content of the message?

When is it said; when is it received? Is the message sent in enough time for other to respond? Is the message said at a bad time emotionally or even at a time designated by the hands of a clock? Is the message going to be received at a less than favorable time (the start of a weekend, or busy Monday morning); should you have waited?

Where is it said? On Email, Facebook, text, Twitter, Snapchat, or other social media platform.

Why is this being said? What are the motives of the sender? This raises additional questions such as does it even need to be said? Does it even need to be acknowledged?

How is it expressed? Is there a clear direct message or an indirect one? Were appropriate greetings used? Consequently, how was the closing? Was the message said in haste, or thought out?

As with our face to face communication, the misuse of punctuation cues exists in our cyber communication. Considering the who, what, when, where, why, and how one must also not forget the metacommunication going on as well in any communication interaction. Metacommunication is the communication about the communication going on. One way to think of metacommunication is this: It is not just what I think, but also what I think you think or must be thinking, what I think you think I think, and what I think of you, what you think of me, what I think you think I think of you.

Thus, punctuation is a rich area and is just as important (arguably more so as we communicate more electronically) in our mediated world. Failure to attend to confirmation, reciprocation, and punctuation cues in our mediated communication interactions can result in incompetence, a lack of civility and respect for the other, and miscommunication.

Mentioning It: Becoming More Attentive to the Confirmation, Reciprocation, and Punctuation Cues in our Cyber Communication

This final section consists of recommendations regarding confirmation, reciprocation, and punctuation cues that infiltrate our mediated messages. These recommendations should be seen as only the beginning of a conversation and others after reading this article or participating in workshops on the subject are invited to “mention it” and offer additional suggestions. The guiding basis for all these recommendations is helping to answer the question: “Ask yourself—How would it feel to be on the receiving end of my communication?”

Know what medium to use for your message. You may prefer to communicate only on Instagram or Facebook, but keep in mind what type of message and audience you are composing your message for. For example, in the first year foundation course at Missouri State University there has been a push among instructors to get students to use the electronic email system (Bear Mail) that all students have access to as Missouri State University students. The reason for doing is to utilize the communication system of the organization you are part of. If this doesn’t make sense, later on when you are working in an organization and do not use the appropriate email/message system you may not only find yourself lost, but also out of a job.

Watch the tone. Again, how would it feel to be on the receiving end of my communication? Ask yourself did you begin with a greeting or jump immediately to the subject matter? Depending on the nature of your message should you be even using this technology? Is it better to call, or meet in person? Use formal or informal writing? If in doubt, always go for the formal in your writing especially when it comes to communicating with someone you don’t know, or a superior such as a teacher. Students should be told to do their research and know who they are communicating with. For example, I was emailed twice by a student who continually referred to me as Mr. Dylan even though it clearly states my name “Dillon” in the subject line. After the second time my response contained the lyrics of “Tombstone Blues.” On the third try the intern spelled my name correctly, but contributed no response to my lyrical sharing. Fortunately, the intern proved a success at their internship site.

Punctuation is important. Be on the lookout for unintended meanings. Using all caps may be perceived as yelling. A different color of font can be annoying to the reader, or prompt calls inquiring that you may be deranged. Watch for who is copied in the cc line, or hidden in the bcc line, to see who is in the loop of the conversation. Remember that your communication can be shared, preserved, and resurrected when you least expect it. Lazarus has nothing on saucy text messages being raised from the dead. Furthermore, remember the 5 w’s (who, what, when, where, why) and the h (how) in your communication. If any of these are not clear then you reexamine what you have written before you hit the send button.

In the wee wee hours of the morning. Desperation is not pretty. Asking a question at 3:00am about an assignment due that day casts you in a negative light. Especially so, when that literature review should have been worked on weeks before. Popping out a controversial remark ccing coworkers at 5:05pm on a Friday does not make you a popular work colleague. In such cases, ask yourself, “can this wait?” or “should it be said at all?” Further note, if you are inquiring about a job or an internship, don’t email the supervisor several times over the weekend and expect a return to your multiple inquiries—especially during a holiday weekend.

I’m not Mr. Google. Don’t think of me as Ms. Search Engine. Extending the notion that people are not technobots, one should not expect immediate answers. Remember that these are “real” people you are talking with. In some cases where you need an immediate response, the answer to your questions may be at your fingertips if you spent some time looking for the information yourself.

.;: Think, draft, wait. Although efficiency experts advise to handle electronic messages a minimum number of times, i.e. once, sometimes, you are not able to, or must get your thoughts planned before you respond. Forgetting to respond is a likely culprit for our lack of confirmation and reciprocation to other. Keep a file for drafts (but have your own name in the send line in case you accidentally push the send button). Go back each day and manage your responses when you have more time and care to put into your message.

…Mind the ellipsis…. An ellipsis where we omit words that may seem understood or even superfluous. The catch is that what may seem clear to oneself, may be a big giant huh for someone else. Mind the ellipsis and fill in especially in cases where a sufficient amount of time has passed since the previous interchange. For example, that message interchange between you and another (especially someone who don’t know, or in situations where the other is a superior) last year may be vividly remembered by you. However, you may be met with a “who are you and what did we talk about several months ago?” if not enough context is resupplied.

Shhhhhhhh………………………………….. and sometimes it is better to keep quiet and not respond.

Close the loop. A question often raised is who should be responsible for concluding the conversation. If unsure, then if you are the individual who started it, then you are responsible to “close the loop.” If there is any question about who concludes the electronic message, if you started it, you conclude it. Wisely use the magic words “Thank you” if you have nothing else to contribute. Courtesy counts.

In summary, these lessons regarding confirmation, reciprocation, and punctuation cues are not only essential for our students, they are also important to the success of our own interactions. We may face accusations of not being polite. Although we may text one another more than we talk face to face. And we embrace the ease of rapidly sending a message along with the immediate expectation of a response. Still, the rules of civility and behavior in our communication with one another that our first President wrote down over 250 years ago resonant today. Our cyber communication actions should carry some sign of respect for the other. Furthermore, acknowledgements, the “affectations of ceremony” (i.e. thank you), or compliments should not be neglected where they are due. Thank you! Don’t mention it.

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Note: Some of the references below are not cited in the complete published article. However, these references were consulted and shared in workshops at the September 2015 Speech and Theatre Association Conference, Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri, and later at the April 2016 Central States Communication Association Conference, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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Beyond Tests, Tournaments, and Trophies: Theoretical and Practical Justifications for Advocacy in Communication and Forensic Education

Scott Jensen

Abstract

Argument and advocacy is an intrinsic element within communication education. Core instruction includes persuasion, argument, and understanding of messages we both process and communicate. Not only does pedagogy in these areas impact the growth of students, but it also contributes to public dialogue and social change. This program advances ethical and historical/critical justifications for making advocacy an intentional consideration in choices made by communication and forensic educators. Case-studies and best practices for incorporating advocacy in curriculum and forensic program management at high school and collegiate levels are provided.

Classrooms are not neutral zones. While it is ideal for any teacher to separate his or her ideologies from lessons taught, it is impossible to separate the bias of what is taught in communication and performance classrooms. Intrinsic within these disciplines is a belief in the importance of respecting difference in life experience, a conviction of peace being a better end than violence, and an embracing of open-mindedness over dogmatism. Think about it. When we teach interpersonal communication we talk about how relationships evolve and dissolve, focusing on the strategies for fostering relational growth. That focus includes listening openly and without bias, directing content of our communication toward ideas and not people, and expanding our own fields of experience in ways that include worlds different from our own. To teach conflict resolution is to emphasize that while conflict is healthy, its potential for fostering strong relationships and personal growth rests in how it is managed. One cannot teach conflict resolution without the assumption that peace is both a desired end and a process toward that end. Critical thinking is a thread through many of our classrooms and co-curricular contexts, yet we are not able to create critical thinkers until those thinkers are able to listen to, assess, and form ideas based on reasoning and context, and that represent conclusions and expression that extends beyond preconceived notions.

Performers experience worlds beyond their own through the literature they read and the characters they portray. Debaters learn to advocate multiple perspectives on issues with arguments that extend well beyond the comfort of what they already know and think. Presentations in our classroom introduce students to the worlds of their peers through informative, persuasive, and inspirational speeches. In short—communication and performance classrooms and teaching spaces are rich in their potential to create great thinkers and sensitive, responsible citizens and individuals. In that vein, these teaching spaces have opportunities to incorporate advocacy in curriculum and instruction that extends beyond understanding it. The advocacy we teach our students can—and perhaps should—extend well beyond the classroom.

Making the Case for Advocacy in the Communication Classroom

There are a number of arguments that can be made for intentional inclusion of advocacy activities within communication curriculum. Consider, for example, the following realities.

All language is persuasive. Any curriculum that includes language in its instruction has advocacy at its core.

Communication involves language. Consequently, helping students understand language includes teaching its responsible use. Students learn to use language in ways that influence others, whether that be in interpersonal or business contexts. They also learn to use language in ways that bring people together, as opposed to pulling them apart.

Communication is the discipline in which people are taught ways to promote healthy relational development and personal growth.

Communication includes a variety of interpersonal constructs that are central to the promotion and maintenance of healthy and enduring relationships. Similarly, students' personal growth is dramatically influenced through the learning that takes place in courses like interpersonal communication, listening, conflict resolution, or cultural diversity. These classes introduce students to essential relational concepts, and implicitly helps promote understanding by applying them.

Forensics is a co-curricular activity that centers on teaching and applying advocacy skills.

The list of leaders throughout the world who spent some of their years as students on forensic teams is endless. These individuals personify the impact forensic education has on its students. The First Developmental Conference on Forensics endorsed the notion that forensics is argument—debate, public address, and oral interpretation. This conference and volumes of literature that follow it identify the intention of forensics to persuade. Given this, any teaching of forensic skills teaches advocacy. Along with the notion that forensics is argument is the idea that forensics is also a laboratory. Laboratories, as extensions of the classroom, work when they reflect a non-classroom reality in which our students will function when they are not students. To teach students the mastering of forensic skills is to teach them the mastering of advocacy in the world outside of their classrooms.

Higher level learning outcomes for communication pedagogy should include experiential activities. These activities, to be representative of the core of communication, should include advocacy.

The case has already been made for advocacy being at the heart of communication pedagogy, whether it be in the command of language that is taught or in the application of relational skills that foster connections between people. For evidence of how much our students understand the concepts we are teaching them, they must apply them. These applications, ideally, are in the form of experiential activities. Students can promote activities on campus or throughout their community. Students can promote activism on issues of importance; this activism can range from solution steps in persuasive speeches to campaigns in advertising, marketing, persuasion, or other courses. Ultimately, students should be given opportunities to persuade individuals other than their peers or instructors, using the skills they learn in communication classrooms.

Visibility through impactful advocacy activities promotes communication as equal to, or more important than, traditional core courses.

The case for communication as central to a students' educational experience is an easy one to make. At the same time, communication courses are not assessed and often not valued in the same way language arts, science, or math are measured. Highly visible, high-impact experiential learning is compelling. It is also noteworthy for the students participating and the schools and teachers responsible for the unique and meaningful experiences. As an educational institution, ethos is associated with learning that has measurably positive impact. Working with community service organizations, earning accolades at forensic tournaments, and bringing together classrooms and students who share a common learning experience are ways of proving the importance of what we teach.

Potential Advocacy Activities

There is no limit to the ways our advocacy pedagogy can be extended beyond the classroom. Consider the following options as starting points.

Persuasive speaking solutions can extend beyond the speech.

Students who are assigned persuasive speeches can be required to advocate at least one solution step that includes personal advocacy that reaches beyond the speech itself. This can include surveys that are sent, volunteering that is explained through the personal experience of the speaker, or actions that are or have been taken by the speaker. My own students have demonstrated these actions with surveys, petitions that have been sent to university administrators and elected leaders, and on-campus campaigns promoting sexual assault awareness.

Students can work with off-campus agencies regarding their advocacy and activity.

Higher level understanding comes from applying concepts to actual contexts. One way of doing this is to connect students with groups whose activities reflect the advocacy and skills being taught in the classroom. This connection can be through assigned participation in activities, or analysis of and interaction about a group's events and programming (See one example of this in appendix A).

Forensic programs can encourage "real" advocacy outside the context of a speech or a tournament.

The University of Central Missouri awards a cash prize to the winner of persuasive speaking at their tournaments; the prize is directed to the solvency advocate in their speech. The Missouri Association of Forensic Activities has an annual advocacy project proposed by its president. This project becomes the focus on invitational tournaments hosted in the state of Missouri, as well as the association's championship tournament in February. The cause or agency selected is the benefactor of awareness campaign and outreach by Missouri's collegiate forensic community. The 2015 benefactors were the Kansas City and St. Louis Urban Debate Leagues. This past year's adopted cause was bullying and related community advocacy connected to the problem of bullying. The Pi Kappa Delta national tournaments are also providing support for students' persuasive projects as part of their competitive offerings.

These are examples of ways teams and individuals can impact causes and groups for which they advocate in debate, public address, and even oral interpretation rounds. The same solution steps that can be required of classroom persuasive speakers can be part of competitive speeches. A number of students from across the country have asked tournament hosts to help facilitate clothing drives, toiletry collections, and petition signature gathering connected with their speeches.

Sponsoring on-campus and community events associated with important causes and issues is a logical extension of forensic programs. Hosting and moderating candidate debates or debate watching parties reminds campuses that (1) a forensic program exists, and (2) that forensic program participates in activities that are consistent with what is going on in the world outside campus.

Activities that promote self-awareness and communication competence can influence enduring learning that stems directly from course content.

Self-awareness activities are popular in communication classrooms. These activities are consistent with the same advocacy that is outlined and discussed elsewhere in this paper. Students should be encouraged to reflect on what is being taught by applying it to their lives. This advocacy can often include other individuals with whom students in the class have relationships. Whether the applications extend to multiple individuals or are more focused on the student him/herself, they are impactful as vehicles for shaping students into more competent communicators—competent communicators whose competence inherently translates into competent advocates (See appendix A for one example of a conflict activity that reflects this kind of application).

Cautions and Implications

There are a number of cautions related with teaching advocacy in the classroom. While I am convinced that teaching is not neutral, I am also dedicated to the idea that teachers should resist making their classroom bully pulpits. Consider these cautions as a beginning point in integrating advocacy within communication classroom and teaching spaces.

- Teachers should teach advocacy that emphasizes respect for all students, all experiences, and all convictions/ideologies.
- Teachers should exercise judgment in discussing advocacy that has tautology associated with it, either in terms of being inherently positive or negative.
- Teachers should institute instruction that helps students ill-equipped to advocate because of limited exposure and skill. Advocacy requires awareness and ability.
- Advocacy that has integrity must be sincere. In that vein, teachers should use caution in requiring specific causes or groups as recipients of students' advocacy. It is best to foster congruent connections between student convictions and the nature of the advocacy.

As a teacher of 32 years, it has been my consistent experience that communication courses attract students, retain them, and recruit them to our programs as majors and minors. While I have taught with several gifted communication colleagues, I am convinced that the content of what we teach is what persuades students to study more communication. Our pedagogy is real-world and effectively combines theory and practice in ways that make course content real and immediate. This characteristic of classrooms necessitates care when integrating personal connections with course content. As students learn the advocacy that is so central to our instruction, instructors must bear in mind that their understanding and application of advocacy will serve as their models for how to do it as citizens and individuals post-classroom.

Summary

Few things are more exciting about the communication classroom than the immediacy of what we teach to our students. That connection affords infinite "ah ha" moments that reinforce the power of teaching and learning. An understanding of advocacy, along with the skills to advocacy, are among the most compelling things taught in the communication discipline. The logical connection between these areas and our course content is easy to understand, and the potential for teaching them in dynamic and meaningful ways is great. What is offered herein is only a small collection of suggestions and cautions that accompany the intentional incorporation of advocacy in our instruction. The case for doing so is compelling, and the benefits from such an integration are immeasurable. The ultimate, and nearly unavoidable result is a collection of students who become more passionate, competent, and responsible communicators. That means better parents, employees, neighbors, friends, community leaders, volunteers, and citizens. It means we help to create individuals who give us promise for a better world because they are the ones contributes to it.

Appendix A

SPCM 2400—Persuasion
Group Advocacy Project

Like so many areas of study, persuasion makes the most sense when we use it and assess it. Persuasion is seen on a daily basis all around us. Similarly, we use persuasion more times than we can imagine on a daily basis, and for reasons than we can fathom. This project asks students within the class to consider persuasion within the context of community. They will unite with fellow students to craft intentional messages that would be appropriate for use for/by a cause/organization of their choosing. Grading for this project will be based on both group and individual work. Specific are as follows…

- Students will be randomly assigned to groups. Group construction will be final upon assignment.

- Each group will select a cause or organization that engages in framing and communicating persuasive messages. This means the selected subject must have clear purpose, intended audience, and some measure of its effectiveness and appropriateness as a source of advocacy.

- Once a subject is selected, the group will be responsible for contacting people/a person within the organization with some meaningful connection with the persuasive messaging of the group. Students should introduce themselves as students in a persuasion course who have been given an assignment asking them to learn about and apply theory and skills on behalf of an organization or cause. An emphasis should be placed on the fact you are "shadowing" this group, meaning you are not expected to create messages to be used by the group, but rather create messages that would be deemed potentially appropriate and effective for use by the group.

- Students should learn as much as they can about their subject that would help explain the persuasive strategies employed by the subject. At minimum, students should learn about
  - Goals
  - Intended audience(s)
  - Means of evaluating impact of persuasive strategies
  - Particularly effective strategies and messages

- Once background and information is gathered, students should craft a persuasive strategy that would be both appropriate and effective for the subject. This includes the following:
  - Audience analysis
  - Analysis of past and current messages
  - Sample new messages
  - Strategy for message delivery
  - Assessment strategy

- Final messages and strategy should be shared with the same people, in addition to others if you desire, with whom you spoke initially about the subject. This visit should include a critique of student-generated messages and strategies in terms of their potential utility by the subject. Copious notes, and video tape if possible, from this visit should be taken and made part of the final presentation. Importantly, a representative from the subject must email the instructor with a brief synopsis of the meeting. Additionally, the students should provide the instructor with a copy of the materials shared with the subject as part of their final presentations.

- Evaluation for this project will include the following projects and content, within the assigned deadlines:
  - Statement of Commitment—Due September 9th
    - This will be a paper that includes (1) confirmation of the selected subject, (2) name(s) of contact(s) you will use within the subject area, and (3) a page description of the subject that includes its contact information, purpose, and general review of its persuasive strategies.
    - Worth 20 points

- Persuasive Speech Manuscript and Taped Presentation—Due September 30th
  - This is a speech manuscript and presentation for a presentation between 5-7 minutes in length. The presentation should be taped and provided to the instructor via memory card, email attachment, or link from an accessible site. The speech should be one that promotes the subject and its mission. It should include advocacy for both the subject, as well as the cause(s) embraced by the subject. The speech should adhere to the conventions of effective and appropriate persuasive speeches. The manuscript should also be provided, although the presentation does not have to precisely match the manuscript. In other words, the speech can be delivered more extemporaneously.
  - Worth 50 points
- Advocacy Group Presentation—Due October 14th
  - Each group will present a 30-45 minute program that incorporates all they presented to the selected subject. The presentation should include, at minimum…
    - A description of the subject and its purpose
    - A statement of the intended audience for the subject
    - A review of past and present persuasive messages, along with a critique of that messaging
    - New messaging designed by the group
    - Results of the meeting with the subject's representatives
    - How you would proceed if you had another 8 weeks to take this project to the next logical steps
  - Each group member should speak for a roughly equal amount of time.
  - Presentations should include multi-media content.
  - Worth 100 points, divided as follows…
    - 25—peer critique grade
    - 25—individual presentation and contribution
    - 50—group presentation (shared by all members of the group)

Peer Evaluation

For each group member rate them 1 through 5 (5 being the best rating) regarding each of the five considerations listed below. The totals for each will be computed and averaged with other evaluations from remaining group members. The mean point total from all responding group members will be the final peer grade. **All forms will be shredded upon determining peer grades for each student—responses are absolutely confidential.**

	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4
1. This group member made reasonable efforts to attend all meetings and be available for group work.	1-5_____	1-5_____	1-5_____	1-5______
2. This group member completed his/her work delegated as part of the overall group effort.	1-5_____	1-5_____	1-5_____	1-5______
3. This group member demonstrated a positive attitude with regards to group activities and goals.	1-5_____	1-5_____	1-5_____	1-5______
4. This group member made an effort to contribute uniquely to the group's success by sharing talents or showing meaningful self-motivation regarding group activities.	1-5_____	1-5_____	1-5_____	1-5______
5. This group member's participation in our group contributed positively to our group's overall success.	1-5_____	1-5_____	1-5_____	1-5______
TOTAL POINTS	5-25____	5-25____	5-25____	5-25_____

SPCM 4500- Conflict Resolution
Conflict Competence Assessment

The purpose of this assignment is to have you analyze and appraise a conflict communication in one of your relationships. Choose a relationship that you would be willing to discuss in a paper. You may choose any relationship: one from work, an intimate relationship, a relationship within family… it really does not matter. You should choose a relationship that is close to you that you might describe as less than perfect. Do not select a relationship that is so close or so imperfect that you will have a difficult time discussing it "objectively." Use your discretion and talk to the instructor if you are unsure of the appropriateness of the relationship or conflict you select.

Your paper should be divided into five sections:

<u>Part One: Description of the Relationship</u>
The purpose of this section is to describe the relationship to the reader. Familiarize the reader with the type of relationship, how long you have known the person, and any information that will create necessary context.

<u>Part Two: Analysis of Proximal and Distal Factors</u>
Using concepts from the text, discuss approximately two or three of the most important proximal and distal factors influencing your relationship. Please illustrate your point with concrete examples.

<u>Part Three: Analysis of Communication</u>
Examine the communication that is exchanged between you the person with whom you share this relationship. Employ concepts from the test that characterize and explain the communication exchanged between you. Again, please illustrate your point with concrete examples. Fortify your analysis with actual quotations from exchanges that have occurred, or provide examples that typify the kinds of conversations the two of you share.

Part Four: Analysis of Proximal and Distal Outcomes
Discuss the impact that said communication has on a relationship. Use the competence model and any of the relevant proximal or distal outcome variables discussed in the text.

Part Five: Recommendations
Based on your analysis, please offer at least two concrete suggestions as to how you can change your behavior to improve this conflict situation. In other words, do not conclude your paper by discussing how the other person needs to change. If you feel that the other person in your relationship does need to change, you may suggest ways for those changes to occur. You are encouraged, however, to discuss the topic in a competent manner. Again, it would be best if you provide actual quotations. In other words, what exactly might you say in the exact situation if you could relive it?

The paper should be typed, double-spaced, and no less than four pages, not including the cover page. Students should be certain to credit the authors of the text and any other works when discussing theory and concepts upon which their analysis is based. Along these lines, students are encouraged to look beyond the class text for resources that can guide their analysis.

This paper is worth 50 points and is due ***April 14th***.

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Student-Generated Podcasting: Using Audio and Video to Enhance Student Learning in a Study-Away Course in Vietnam

Phillip Voight

Abstract

Audio and video podcasting tools have become increasingly popular, affordable and technologically accessible. This article suggests that assigning student-produced podcasts can effectively enhance student learning in the communication classroom. After providing a rationale for the use of podcasting as a pedagogical tool, the author overviews a course-embedded podcasting assignment that has been developed for a study-away course. The article concludes with a bibliography of useful reference articles.

The use of podcasting as a pedagogical tool has expanded rapidly over the past decade. This growth has been fueled by educator's desire to "flip the classroom" – podcasting lectures that students are expected to view outside of class while preserving class time for group tasks and engaged learning activities. The relatively low cost of digital audio and video recorders, the ubiquitous presence of iPods and MP3 players, the availability of affordable and intuitive editing software like *Garage Band* and the increasingly sophisticated technical competence of faculty members have all contributed to the popularity of educational podcasting. Although they have received far less attention than faculty-produced podcasts, this article suggests that the assignment of course-embedded, student-produced podcasts have an even greater potential to transform the learning environment.

Described by one scholar as the "ultimate" learning experience (Thompson, 2007), podcasting assignments are prized because they promote active learning, encourage collaboration, develop higher-level synthetic and analytic skills and require students to present course material to audiences in engaging ways. Podcasting assignments also promote research, writing and editing skills, while at the same time encouraging students to adapt course content in new and creative ways. Finally, because they produce a durable product at the conclusion of the course, podcasting assignments can provide valuable data for assessment, and can be effective recruiting or promotional tools.

Podcasting assignments are also well-suited for use on study-away courses. Because they are far away from their home campuses, students are already prepared to capture audio and video images, to observe things they see carefully, and to reflect upon their experiences. Unlike research-paper assignments, podcasts do not require extensive access to home-libraries or databases – something that can be unavailable in remote areas of Cambodia or Vietnam. Moreover, the unconventional nature of the assignment is attractive to students, and they approach it with a genuine sense of enthusiasm.

General Considerations: Most students already have mobile phones that can record sound and video, and many are familiar with basic audio and video editing software such as *Garage Band*. Some students also have more sophisticated recording equipment, and many have already created audio and video content on their own. Nonetheless, it would be prudent to place several recording devices on reserve for students who do not have access to such equipment, and schedule at least two class sessions for a mass tutorial on how to plan, record, edit, arrange and produce content. I encourage students to use *Garage Band* and to record audio and video clips directly on their smart phones.

After students are familiar with the basic technology, play several podcasts in class and ask them to critique the composition, structure and production elements that they observe. Include both well-produced programs like Ira Glass' *This American Life*, as well as some examples that are not particularly well done. Encourage them to pay close attention to details like how the podcasts employ narratives, how they use evidence, how well or poorly they articulate a purpose or thesis, and the degree to which they are engaging to audiences. Without going into great detail, provide a few basic tips for recording in the field. When adding commentary to video, for example, suggest that either the student who is filming does the commentary or that it is added later as a voice-over because iPods cannot capture sound at a distance. Conclude by referring students to "how-to" articles with useful field production advice such as France and Wakefield's 2008 article, "How to Produce a Digital Story." Finally, remind them of the importance of saving and backing-up their work, and of the wisdom of having multiple members of the team record the same event from slightly different vantage points as a precaution against data loss or poor audio or video quality.

Next, assign the students to groups. Ask them to think about the assignment and over the next several class meetings and create a "storyboard" for the 30-minute podcast that they plan to produce. At this point, discuss legal and ethical considerations (we use a standard release form for subjects that appear on audio or video, for example, and we discuss copyright law, libel and slander, and the general ethics of spectatorship); and remind students that whether or not they perceive themselves as reporters, they will likely be perceived as such by those who observe them.

Assignment: Prepare a 30-Minute Podcast as part of a Study Away Course in Vietnam Entitled, "Identity, Resistance and Liberation."

Course Goals: The course is, essentially, a field-intensive history and social movement theory course. Students consider questions of identity, resistance and liberation from multiple cultural and historical vantage points. Ideally, students will recognize intercultural and interdisciplinary inflection points in assigned readings, in the presentation of public rhetoric justifying the war(s), in the rhetorical representation of the war in memorials and museums, and in the personal narratives of local guides and experts. During the course of the semester, the course travels to four main cities (Siem Reap, Phnom Penh, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City) and two rural areas (Tay Ninh Province and the Mekong River Delta).

Assignment: Students are divided into six teams (one for each location) and asked to produce a 30-minute podcast that integrates a discussion of identity and resistance in relation to any of the following themes: Pre and post-trip attitudes toward Vietnam and Cambodia; Inter-cultural differences and communicative coping strategies; French, Chinese and American influences on Vietnam and Cambodia; the articulation of national identity and/or the curation of national identity in a museum or at a public monument; the cultural implications of food practices; the political or economic system – either historical or contemporary; the construction of Pol Pot and Ho Chi Minh as nationalist figures; and finally, the reflection of national identity in spiritual or cultural practices, art, poetry or drama. The assignment is intentionally vague and open-ended. Each group is required to devise its own plan to present the site-specific information that they feel is most important for their classmates to understand. They are asked to create a storyboard that outlines the "documentary" they intend to produce and to identify their key learning objectives.

When they meet to discuss the storyboards, offer much more detailed guidance. Suggest specific locations they may wish to consider, class readings that may be appropriate – perhaps even specific subjects they may wish to interview. Like any argument, tell them that their podcasts must be well-structured – containing a central thesis, internal summaries, transitional statements and well-qualified "evidence." Remind them that they may use any combination of resources, including interviews, recitations from class readings, pictures, photographs, poems, advertisements -- even graffiti. Encourage them to be creative and to think carefully about production values and about presenting material in the most effective way possible. Provide them with an evaluation matrix that identifies the relative importance of such factors as the podcast's structure, the quality of evidence it employs, its mastery of editing techniques and production values, and the degree to which the team accomplished the objectives identified during the storyboard meeting.

Outcomes: What do students produce? I have not yet had the chance to offer the course with the full podcasting assignment. The last time it was taught, I merely required the students to gather audio-visual material and for use during elaborate final group representations. Although it did not require them to produce a polished final product, they were encouraged to think of their final presentations as "documentaries." Despite some production deficiencies, I was very pleasantly surprised by the overall quality of the student presentations and it is clear that a full podcasting assignment would not have been difficult for the students to accomplish. Thematically, allowing the students to approach the assignment as documentarians created very engaging presentations, three of which were particularly interesting: (1) "Art and Egalitarianism in a Communist Society." Provoked when they noticed a large display of pictures painted by children in the national art museum in Ho Chi Minh City, one group focused on the difficulty of curating "high art" in a supposedly egalitarian, communist, anti-colonial country. They focused on questions such as: What does it mean to celebrate 'folk art' or 'people's art' rather than 'high art'? What is the relationship between the state and Vietnamese cultural industries? And the degree to which Vietnamese artists felt they enjoyed "artistic freedom." (2) "The Residue of War." Another group contained the granddaughter of a soldier that fought for the Army of the Republic of South Vietnam (and whose family resettled in Minnesota following the war) as well as the grandson of an American Air Force pilot that was shot down and spent time in the infamous Hanoi Hilton prison. They focused on the uneasy way in which historical displays were being altered in an attempt to make them less offensive to American and Vietnamese-American tourists (renaming the American War Crimes Museum, for example, the War Remnants Museum), and on the contradictions embedded in the way the Hanoi Hilton was curated. They also traveled to a poorly maintained and little-visited museum devoted to "Heroic Women of the Revolution" to explore the ways in which gender was articulated in a war-related context. (3) "Globalization and the Ethics of Development." The third group attempted to understand globalization and the gap between western and Cambodian living standards by conducting an extensive "scavenger hunt" for coveted western items. Their list included a wide variety of items such as Wheaties, Skippy Peanut Butter, disposable diapers, a plane ticket to Australia, a new iPod, and a box of band aids; as well as local items like a bag of rice and an elementary school uniform. After locating each item on the list, they translated the price in the local currency into the equivalent number of minutes a worker would have to work to afford the item. They then translated that figure into the US minimum-wage equivalent, and calculated the relative cost in US dollars. Everyday items like diapers (the equivalent of $27.00 US dollars for a package of 12) became expensive and items like a plane ticket to Australia became almost unfathomable. Their podcast included interviews with other shoppers and visits to a variety of malls and local markets, including the so-called "thieves market" in Phnom Penh.

Based on this pilot, the next time I teach the course, I will fully embrace the podcasting model. On the course evaluations, I asked each of the students to reflect on their experiences and they expressed a clear preference for the podcasting model. Several noted that their own blogposts and Facebook videos were simply shorter versions of what I was requiring and that they felt they could easily have completed the assignment. They also felt that requiring a full-blown podcast rather than a multi-media presentation would have enhanced the quality of their final group reports and would have resulted in the creation of a memorable final product.

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