SPEAKING TO CRISIS: INTELLECTUALS, LITERACY, AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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This dissertation analyzes public-intellectual work that deploys crisis tropes in its treatment of literacy, arguing that such work provides insight into the influence that intellectual engagement might exert on discourse in the public sphere. From A.S. Hill's lament that freshman entering Harvard in 1874 could barely construct a legible sentence to Stanley Fish's charge that millions of college graduates earning degrees in 2005 did so without learning what a sentence was, the relationship between literacy and the communicative skills required of productive citizens has been a constant source of concern. Between these two historical moments, this relationship has been an undertheorized feature of debates surrounding racial uplift, feminist protest, and America's role as a world power. When interlocutors in such debates minimize the significance of literacy practices, they encourage rhetorical action driven by a coercive conception of social crisis that limits critical engagement on the part of the public. I argue that the public intellectual's capacity to facilitate rhetorically literate discursive exchange at the level of the mass public can transform the paralysis of crisis into possibility. I reframe well-known debates between W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington, Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem, and Mortimer Adler and Glenn T. Seaborg in terms of the rhetorical models they offer for responsible public-intellectual work.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As it was employed by historian and social critic Russell Jacoby in 1987, the term "public intellectual" emphasized a significant distinction between the academically minded intellectuals of Jacoby's own time and the intellectuals of past decades: the latter actively contributed to and maintained public culture while the former left it to fend for itself, often just as actively. Although Jacoby's *The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe* reads much like an extended epitaph mourning a figure already lost, most current treatments of the public-intellectual subject adopt a less despondent, more resuscitative approach. Rather than write the public intellectual off as an academic relic, they explore strategies by which public-intellectual models for cultural engagement can be revived and put to good use. In addition to confronting the past models and enduring biases associated with public intellectuals and their social roles, these more recent efforts contend with shifts in the nature of academic institutions, the development of more participatory media forums, and the influence of both on the structure and function of public discourse.

While the expressive skills required for navigating academic and public contexts are a central concern in most recuperative projects, rarely is this concern put in conversation with an analysis of the discursive modes governing the response to public-intellectual work within the public realm. This dissertation endeavors to characterize more fully this often overlooked relationship by examining public-intellectual work that responds to moments of "literacy crisis," situations in which the public's communicative abilities are described as ineffective or substandard. While relatively unconcerned with whether these characterizations of public literacy are accurate, I see them as significant

because they nonetheless structure public discourse and access to public debate. When intellectuals address the public, they engage in rhetorical action designed to conform to the public's standards and expectations. In the process of adapting to a mass audience, intellectuals make assumptions about the norms governing public discourse. These assumptions are evident in the rhetorical work itself, and their accuracy can be judged on the basis of the work's reception and influence. Public-intellectual work that responds to literacy crises is especially informative because it treats the possibility of public discourse directly while also enacting a particular style of public address and engagement. When responding to these "crises," public intellectuals confront public discourse both explicitly and implicitly, describing the problems that they see while also modeling what they perceive to be more effective alternatives.

This dissertation analyzes public-intellectual work that responds to four literacy crises, three historical and one contemporary, in order to more fully understand the influence that public intellectuals have, or can have, on public discourse. It is concerned with the actual rhetorical functioning of public intellectuals and the ways in which this functioning might facilitate meaningful discursive exchange within the public sphere. Against treatments of the public intellectual that privilege direct social or political effectiveness and largely discount the impact of rhetorical engagement, I argue that effective public-intellectual rhetoric can itself be transformative due to its ability to shape public discourse by opening specific subjects to debate and by making particular rhetorical and discursive strategies available for public use.

Ultimately, this dissertation recontextualizes public-intellectual work that actively engages crisis tropes in its treatment of literacy and public discourse. I trace the influence

that academic institutions and media forums have had on such work over time in order to account for the challenges facing would-be public intellectuals today. Of these challenges, I argue that the most inescapable is the influence of past models for intellectual engagement and their attendant biases. For this reason, I begin by considering the history of scholarship on the intellectual figure as a means of contextualizing the recent recuperative impulse. The dissertation engages with the variety of forms that this recuperative impulse takes within the field of rhetorical studies, and I argue that a number of the extant "rhetorical" models for public-intellectual engagement are, in fact, surprisingly un-rhetorical. By extending and supplementing the arguments that do advance rhetorically invested models of public-intellectual engagement, I develop a theoretical framework for assessing public-intellectual work on the basis of its rhetorical modeling, and it is this framework that informs my readings of the public-intellectual work treated in each chapter.

The Public Intellectual Lives

To situate my approach to the public-intellectual figure in relation to current work in rhetorical studies, I begin here by analyzing conversations and debates characteristic of the field's larger treatment of the intellectual's public role. The most evocative of these conversations is *Philosophy and Rhetoric's* 2006 forum titled "The Nature and Function of Public Intellectuals." Consisting of three articles representing three distinct perspectives, the forum created space for what editor Gerard A. Hauser describes as a "conversation on the definitional question of what is a public intellectual and what role this person plays in society." In his introduction, Hauser outlines two crucial components

of these definitional concerns, the first of which is the physical location of the intellectual and his or her work. "Are these intellectual practices whose meaning lies in the academy," Hauser asks, "or are they practices that come to fruition in the streets?" The second component concerns the abilities or skills required of the public intellectual and the methods by which these abilities or skills are developed. Are intellectuals "prepared by training and, perhaps, temperament to address the contingencies of public issues"? (125-126). While the questions Hauser poses give the forum a goal-oriented unity, they are, perhaps, more interesting for how they build upon and redirect decades of scholarship on the intellectual. Given the journal's own academic "location" and its disciplinary identity, the forum as a whole can be read as a reprisal of interest in the intellectual figure that has its own rhetorical function, namely the dual recuperation of the successful public intellectual as the master rhetorician and of rhetoric as a publically motivated academic discipline.

In terms of the forum's relationship to the history of work on the intellectual figure, its interest in the location of intellectual effort most notably confronts Jacoby's critique of the academic cloistered in the Ivory Tower. Arguing that the modern university system has effectively monopolized intellectual life, a consolidation with detrimental consequences for public culture, Jacoby contends that such intellectuals "no longer need or want a larger public," as "they are almost exclusively professors. Campuses are their homes; colleagues their audience; monographs and specialized journals their media" (6). Academic intellectuals are not, then, public intellectuals. They are creatures defined by and confined to their natural habitats: the academic institutions responsible for their intellectual development. At the heart of this isolated, and isolating,

intellectual existence are the interconnected forces of specialization, disciplinary identity, and job security. Operating within this system, the academic intellectual has little to gain, and more to lose, from public-intellectual work.

The distinction that Jacoby makes between the new breed of academic intellectuals and the to-be-mourned public intellectuals of the past replicates earlier taxonomies of the intellectual figure attributed to Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault. Gramsci makes the distinction between "traditional intellectuals," those bound to existing power structures and whose interests remain in the cerebral realm of truth and reason, and "organic intellectuals," those who are relatively autonomous and whose interests concern specific class or labor conditions (12). Making a slightly different distinction, Foucault offers the "universal intellectual" and the "specific intellectual," but characterizes the universal intellectual, the intellectual acting as the "bearer of universal values," as outmoded and largely ineffectual (*Power/Knowledge* 132). Both offer models that differentiate between an intellectualism aspiring to transcendent truth and an intellectualism derived from and attentive to specific conditions and contexts. Both also favor the organic or specific model, portraying the traditional or universal as irresponsibly detached and incapable of exerting real influence. The enduring effect of this shared preference forcefully structures contemporary treatments of public-intellectual work, particularly those concerned with what makes public-intellectual work "public" and those asking whether academic intellectuals seen as operating within traditional or universal modes can, in fact, have public influence.

Unsurprisingly, each of the contributors to the *Philosophy and Rhetoric* forum positions rhetoric as the key to assessing the public function of intellectual work born of

an academic context. All three rhetoricians argue that accounting for the role of public communication might neutralize the charge that modern academic life is necessarily a limiting force for intellectuals who wish to engage wider publics. When rhetorical modeling and ethical argumentation are seen as effective methods for intervening in and encouraging public deliberation, the academic intellectual can have meaningful influence in public matters. Despite their shared interest in rendering the work of public intellectuals in terms rhetorical activity, however, contributors Nathan Crick and Steve Fuller give somewhat un-rhetorical accounts of public-intellectual work. Within the context of this forum, neither confronts the challenges of addressing a public audience or characterizes direct public address as necessary.[1] Despite moving in a productive direction, rhetoric-based approaches to public-intellectual work do not immediately free academic intellectuals from the philosophical weight of the Gramsci-Foucault bias, as closer examinations of the forum's content will reveal.

Crick's contribution to the forum offers the most direct assessment of the distinctions drawn between the philosophical and the rhetorical as they align with conceptions of academic work and public influence. He begins with sociologist Stanley Aronowitz's Gramsci-centric intellectual model and argues that Aronowitz's notion of the public intellectual suffers from "an acceptance of an eviscerated conception of rhetoric that ends up separating the theoretical work from the larger sociohistorical situation to which it responds." Such a conception assumes that "rhetoric, by its nature, is particular, practical, stylistic, whereby theory is universal, contemplative, and substantial," and "consequently, rhetoric gets drained of content while theory becomes

[1] In subsequent work, both Crick and Fuller correct for this particular limitation in their initial treatments. I am less concerned with the limitation itself, however, than I am with the ease with which rhetorical approaches to the subject can overlook the significant issues of audience, public address, and reception.

pure meaning awaiting relevance" (129-130). On the basis of such an interpretation, neither rhetoric nor theory readily contributes to public-intellectual work, as the first is rendered superficial and the second characterized as detached, which again privileges an activist, rather than an academic, conception of "public" work. Crick attributes the pervasive nature of this bias to an Ivory Tower model of academia that preserves the Aristotelian tension between "epistēme (contemplative knowledge such as science and philosophy) and technē (productive knowledge such as art and rhetoric)" (130). For Crick, one strategy for resolving this tension is to conceive of public-intellectual work as work that responds to an extended, rather than an immediate, rhetorical situation. Drawing on Lloyd Bitzer's model of the rhetorical situation, Crick challenges reductive notions of "kairos" that serve, again, to privilege particularity and immediate action, suggesting that kairotic exigency can, in fact, extend over time and space.[2] While Crick refers to such situations as "philosophical situations," they maintain their rhetorical function in the sense that they are structured by versions of Bitzer's three rhetorical preconditions: exigence, constraint, and audience. In this sense, public-intellectual work is a rhetorical act that responds to and is structured by a set of conditional forces, but it need not be restricted to a single event or individual moment.

In addition to providing a recuperative framework for understanding public-intellectual work capable of transcending the theory/praxis binary, Crick's assessment gives specific insight into public-intellectual work surrounding literacy crises. Based on his understanding of "philosophical situations," Crick contends that public intellectuals

[2] Bitzer's conception of the rhetorical situation is canonical within both rhetorical theory and composition pedagogy based on the framework it offers for assessing the forces structuring rhetorical action. Equally as well-known, however, is Richard Vatz's response to Bitzer's work, which argues that rhetoric itself has the power to shape situations and to influence its context. Vatz's critique seems to be more in line with my assessment of public-intellectual work in terms of the power that he ascribes to the rhetorical act.

are those who "produce work that conceptualizes and provides direction for longstanding and pervasive problems and are then successful in helping change the habits and practices of a public" (138). Although individual literacy crises are rendered as products of particular historical moments, the idea of a literacy crisis, and much of the rhetorical force derived from it, is grounded in a more general and pervasive sociocultural context. Conceptually, the "literacy crisis" is a prime example of a lingering kairotic context never far from public consciousness. Mistrust of public education, for example, is as American as public education itself. Additionally, public-intellectual work responding to literacy crises is certainly interested in influencing "the habits and practices of a public," as it necessarily defines and classifies modes of literate action while typically advocating for certain forms of literacy instruction. For these reasons, Crick's approach to the rhetorical nature of public-intellectual work is important to my own, despite the fact that he does not contend directly with the how the rhetorical nature of the work manifests in specific forms of public address.

Like Crick, Steven Fuller is concerned with the influence of public-intellectual work on public "habits" when he defines the public intellectual as "an agent of distributive justice;" the public intellectual's function is to advocate for ideas or concepts that the public overlooks on the basis of other ideas' or concepts' being too dominant or otherwise overwhelming within the context of public discourse. "The task for the public intellectual," Fuller writes, "is clear: To construct situations that enable the balance to be redressed, to reopen cases that for too long have been closed" (148). Fuller's model is similar to Crick's in that it, too, conceives of public-intellectual work as work that directs, or redirects, public discourse relating to a longstanding social issue or concern.

Fuller, however, seems even more concerned with the public-intellectual's role in constructing the rhetorical situation than he is with the public intellectual's role in responding to it. What defines successful public-intellectual work for Fuller is the way in which it challenges norms and opens accepted practices to criticism, not the particular agenda or alternative model it proposes.

While both Crick and Fuller make productive contributions to a rhetorical model for public-intellectual work capable of transcending academic contexts, neither privileges the communicative function of such work. Crick contends that ideas themselves can serve as public-intellectual work and do so regardless of the forms their expression and circulation take (135), and Fuller ultimately shifts focus away from mass-audience communication, arguing that classroom-based pedagogical practice can have comparable influence on the habits and practices of the public sphere (153). Given the emphasis that both Crick and Fuller place on rhetoric, their disavowal of public rhetorical acts as the public intellectual's primary mode of influence would be unexpected if not for the very real challenges facing academics in search of a public voice. The two models suggest that academic intellectuals can function "publicly" in relatively passive ways that are more directly in line with their positions in the academy than is cultivating a public presence.

In his response to the forum's contributors, Scott Welsh clears a similarly comfortable space for the academic intellectual based on Jürgen Habermas's conception of the relationship between scholarly work and political consequences. This work conceives of such "consequences" not as "the effective political agency of scholars" but as "the effective democratic agency of citizens" (14). In my assessment, Crick and Fuller do shift some of the focus away from the public intellectual's individual agency to the

conditions he creates for public agency. By offering models of rhetorical intervention that do not require direct discursive contact, both distance the public intellectual from the public realm in a way that puts more pressure on the social actors who receive his messages than it does on the public intellectual himself. I, however, wonder whether this is a sustainable and productive shift in moments of literacy crisis. When the status of public communication is itself at risk, it is irresponsible for a public intellectual to assume that her ideas and contributions will have the effect that she intends without her engaging directly with her audience and with the discursive challenges that they face. Public intellectuals should instead be attentive to these challenges and consider how their own rhetorical acts might intervene in and transform public deliberation for the better, on both the level of content and the level of form.

Given that democratic and social participation requires certain levels of basic literacy and rhetorical ability, direct engagement in the public realm gives public intellectuals an opportunity to model such participation and the skills it requires. The challenges that they face in doing so from an academic context might even be seen as an advantage. As "outsiders" working in discursive modes that are not their own, they are afforded a unique opportunity to shed significant light on the rhetorical and literacy-based requirements for effective public participation more generally. Additionally, direct involvement in public forums gives public intellectuals more power to shape these forums and to further ensure that they are, in fact, facilitating productive deliberative discourse. When discussions of literacy expectations take place in specialized forums rather than in the public realm, this discursive distance effectively limits the influence

that such opportunities for reevaluation can have in reconceptualizing literacy instruction at a more expansive level.

Ultimately, I suggest that intellectuals participating in and directing public discourse can function as "sponsors of literacy," even when they do not address the subject of literacy directly. Deborah Brandt defines sponsors as "any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, and model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold literacy—and gain some advantage by it" (19). Responsible for rhetorical action capable of influencing the structure of public discourse, public intellectuals functioning in this capacity both model and enable public participation. From this position, they support and advocate for the literacy-related skills that this participation requires. Within such a model, the most successful rhetorical modes of public-intellectual work shape conceptions of functional large-scale public participation. While these modes might include the structuring of rhetorical situations that both Crick and Fuller suggest is central to public-intellectual practice, they must also attend to strategies for engaging the conflict and disagreement at the heart of a truly deliberative public sphere. Public-intellectual work capable of accounting for these elements as a means of addressing an audience can productively contribute to public discourse in ways that are themselves a form of political action. Brandt contends that sponsors of literacy gain advantage by their sponsorship, but for the academic intellectual pursuing public-intellectual work, that advantage will not be tenure or disciplinary prestige. The advantage is something greater: a more productive, rhetorically functional public sphere.

In his contribution to the *Philosophy and Rhetoric* forum, Steven Mailloux offers a model more invested in the type of direct rhetorical intervention and modeling that I consider here. Unlike approaches that repackage the everyday work of the academic in terms of the public contributions it makes, Mailloux reserves the title of "public intellectual" for "thinkers who directly engage with and are engaged by nonacademic publics" (144). Importantly, the relationship described here is multidirectional, requiring a communicative give-and-take that the intellectual can initiate but cannot sustain on his or her own. Mailloux also suggests that rhetorical studies provide academics working in other disciplines with a metacritcal resource for engaging public audiences because the field has a longstanding interest in audience analysis and in cultural rhetorics that circulate within the public sphere, a point which further underscores his discipline's investment in the public-intellectual figure.

Adopting Mailloux's more selective characterization of public intellectuals, I extend his argument by examining what, specifically, rhetorical studies has to offer models of public-intellectual engagement. In what follows, my approach supplements Mailloux's perspective with Barbara Misztal's sociological account of the intellectual's relationship to the public good[3] and with Dick Pels's study of intellectual spokespersonship.[4] My analysis of the public-intellectual work at the center of my

[3] Misztal's account of the public intellectual's role is the closest to my own in the way that it emphasizes the discursive contributions that intellectuals can make to public discussion and debate. Seeing the public intellectual as a force in establishing social well-being, Misztal argues that healthy democracies depend upon public intellectuals with specialized background knowledge in relevant content areas, rhetorical savvy, and personal values and moral leanings that guide their judgment. While she recognizes the challenges that academic specialists face in speaking to non-specialized audiences, Misztal also sees the public-intellectual position as one that requires professional upkeep in the sense that the individual must consistently reaffirm his or her authority, and this point in particular informs my assessment of contemporary intellectual work.

[4] At the center of Pels's assessment of public-intellectual work is the intellectual's status as an outsider, a position which he suggests is necessary for one to act as a social critic. This particular orientation

chapters combines all three treatments of public-intellectual work to develop a model of intellectual engagement that is grounded in direct public address but attendant to the multiplicity of ways in which this address intervenes in and influences the subsequent course of public discussion. I argue that the academic intellectual's most significant public role might not be to influence political or social change directly, but rather to facilitate rhetorically literate discursive exchange at the level of the mass public. Based on this model, I consider how public intellectuals respond to literacy crises that are structured by race, gender, and national identity. In order to respond to public concern surrounding these issues, public intellectuals employ different rhetorical strategies in each of these contexts, and these strategies create different conditions for the public discussions that follow.

The Public Intellectual and the Literacy Crisis: A Selective History

Before moving to consider the literacy crises at the center of each chapter, I offer here three separate but surprisingly similar literacy-crisis narratives as exemplars of the genre and as models of this type of discursive intervention. The first of these exemplars is Stanley Fish's May 2005 *New York Times* Op-Ed "Devoid of Content." In this column, Fish described the impending graduation season as "that time of year when millions of American college and high school students will stride across the stage, take diploma in hand and set out to the wider world, most of them utterly unable to write a clear and coherent English sentence." Speaking to a large public audience, Fish characterized

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influences my assessment of the means by which an academic intellectual might position himself relative to a non-academic audience. Additionally, Pels considers the ways in which intellectual figures speaking for or about particular groups face challenges associated with representation and identity, a conversation that is especially relevant to my treatments of intellectual contributions to racial uplift and the feminist movement.

students' transitions from educational institutions to the public realm in terms of failure and frustration, effectively warning the wider world to prepare itself for an influx of illiterate degree holders.

In addition to a strategic emphasis on the present moment and the rhetorical exigence thus attached to the critique it offered, the op-ed tapped into a significant historical trend. It derived much of its persuasive power from a mode of crisis rhetoric that surfaces again and again in discussions of public literacy. In 1874, Harvard's Boylston Professor of Rhetoric A.S. Hill and others issued similar public statements concerning the difficulty that would-be freshman had completing the writing portion of the University's newly instituted entrance exams. More than half of the prospective students taking the exam in 1879 failed, and Hill's reports explained most of these failures in ways that prefigure Fish's concern with grammatical correctness. He noted that many of the exams exhibited "grossly ungrammatical or profoundly obscure sentences; absolute illiteracy" (Hill 10 qtd. in Crowley). Both Hill and Fish ultimately assess students' capacity to function as citizens based on their structural knowledge of the English language. Their critiques set particular standards for literate action based on the authors' understandings of the skills that public life requires.

As I mentioned above, the narrative structure of such critiques is repeated again and again in discussions of public literacy. This repetition has only strengthened the narrative's persuasive appeal, which is why it originally moved beyond strictly academic contexts and continues to circulate more freely in mass media forums. Almost exactly a century after the first round of Hill's entrance exams, for example, *Newsweek* ran the infamous cover story "Why Johnny Can't Write." This article caused panic among public

and academic audiences alike. “If your children are attending college,” read the opening line, “the chances are that when they graduate, they will be unable to write ordinary, expository English with any real degree of structure and lucidity” (58). And the situation grows grimmer when the article turns to earlier education. “Willy-nilly, the U.S. educational system is spawning a generation of semiliterates” (58). As in the other two instances, the distance between the public’s literate ability and the communicative capacities expected of productive citizens signifies a social crisis. In each narrative, however, the particular form of the crisis and its fallout reflect historically and culturally relevant values. The slightly different narratives attached to these crises emphasize how these values influenced conceptions of public participation across time.

For Hill, what was at stake was the academic rigor associated with the Harvard experience and the identity that this experience conferred upon the University’s graduates. How could the University adequately prepare America’s future leaders for all of the responsibilities that the position entailed if it needed first to make sure that the young men in question could write legibly in their native tongue? In sparking the consolidation of freshman composition as a required course, the exam system put pressure on the preparatory schools feeding the University students and worked to isolate this more remedial model of instruction, but it was also a reaction to the more diverse student population that many colleges faced following the Civil War. With the exams and freshman composition functioning as gate-keepers, though, Harvard as an institution could self-inoculate against illiteracy and preserve its prestige despite external social shifts.

While the signs of illiteracy take similar form in "Why Johnny Can't Write," the decline in literate skill is the result of the increasing influence of the audio-visual and its relatively lawless approach to language. The decrease in time spent reading and the intellectual passivity encouraged by television-viewing both threaten the strength of the written word by favoring more fluid and ephemeral modes of communication. "If the written language is placed at the mercy of every new colloquialism and if every fresh dialect demands and gets equal sway," the article concludes, "then we will soon find ourselves back in Babel" (64). Here, the prevalence of new technologies and communicative modes undercuts the stability of the past in the process of subverting a more traditionally literary approach to language. And, as we might expect, the result will be nothing short of a linguistic chaos bound to thwart collective human endeavor. Placing the *Newsweek* article within its historical context, one can begin to understand why a nation divided by linguistic infelicities might be troubling. Facing the external threats associated with the Cold War, including the fall of Saigon months earlier, could the American public risk anything less than direct and productive communication?

Fish was similarly invested in linguistic correctness, but he focused more on the instructional failure of the institutions tasked with imparting this knowledge to students. Both Hill's account and the *Newsweek* article contend directly with major social shifts, but Fish's op-ed considers specific pedagogical trends that he sees as counterproductive. The inability of college composition courses to prepare students for the real world diminishes the value of the college degree and should make the larger public wary of the degree holder's abilities. In Fish's version, the public execution of grammatical knowledge should be the goal of college composition instruction, and the fact that current

approaches to the subject are not achieving this goal underwrites the alternative pedagogical model that he offers.

These three examples show how crisis narratives become one of the dominant communicative modes governing public discussions of literacy. Given the central role that public-intellectual figures like Fish or Hill often play in the construction of these crises, it is from within this crisis context that particular rhetorical modes of public-intellectual engagement could more productively facilitate effective discursive exchange within the public sphere. When such crisis narratives gain momentum and when responses to them proliferate in the public realm, praise and blame become the dominant rhetorical registers, leaving us in the realm of epideictic persuasion and often foreclosing opportunities for deliberative engagement with the issue at hand. Fish blamed compositionists who privileged content over form, A.S. Hill blamed the preparatory schools, and N*ewsweek* blamed audiovisual forms of communication. In each case, the finger-pointing not only identifies the responsible parties but also characterizes the author's investment in a particular form of literacy. In demonizing content-driven composition instruction, Fish suggests that public participation requires linguistic correctness and grammatical knowledge. Hill offers a similar assessment, but he ties his model of correctness to a very specific educational trajectory and the related public identity. Finally, *Newsweek* privileges a more conservative, literary mode of public literacy. Again, what is at stake in all three accounts is the health of a public realm dependent upon functional communication, and all three offer diagnoses that give this health a very particular form based on the authors' social investments. Public literacy is a matter of concern shared among a range of public and professional communities, but the

fact that literacy itself is a fluid concept and can take a variety of forms based on these communities' varying interests and potentially divergent ends can have the effect of thwarting meaningful public deliberation within such crisis-driven contexts.

Even in the face of crisis, however, all need not be lost. In fact, it is possible to view the crisis moment as an opportunity for functional and meaningful change. In her 1954 essay "The Crisis in Education," Hannah Arendt considers America's "recurring crisis in education that, during the last decade at least, has become a political problem of the first magnitude, reported on almost daily in the newspapers." Despite its relatively benign exterior, particularly when placed alongside contemporary crises plaguing other parts of the world following the global warfare and genocide of the previous decade, the educational crisis in America, Arendt contends, is more complex than it appears and worth attention. In part, such crises warrant intellectual investment, even from those not directly involved, solely because they require new modes of thinking and judging. Arendt writes of the "opportunity, provided by the very fact of crisis—which tears away facades and obliterates prejudices—to explore and inquire into whatever has been laid bare of the essence of the matter" (174). Here, Arendt emphasizes that crisis moments offer access to those who take them seriously and suggests that this access can lead to productive rethinking that extends beyond the individual crisis's concerns. Arendt describes the influence of crisis on intellectual engagement as follows:

> The disappearance of prejudices simply means that we have lost the answers on which we ordinarily rely without even realizing they were originally answers to questions. A crisis forces us back to the questions themselves and requires from us either new or old answers, but in any case direct judgments. A crisis becomes a

> disaster only when we respond to it with preformed judgments, that is, with prejudices. Such an attitude not only sharpens the crisis but makes us forfeit the experience of reality and the opportunity for reflection it provides (174-175).

Based on Arendt's perspective, crisis itself can be decoupled from its seemingly inevitable negative fallout and might be approached instead in terms of its potential. By forcing us back to original answers and assumptions, crisis allows us a chance to redress past wrongs and to free ourselves from oppressive or outdated systems of thought and limited discursive modes.

While Arendt wrote from a moment very different from our own, her observations about the centrality of educational crises within American political thought and discourse are just as cogent today. The educational crisis is a widely deployed trope, spanning a range of journalistic and academic registers while serving the purpose of scapegoat, of justificatory context, and of weapon. A decline in academic achievement, alongside the shadowy methods used to quantify it, is to blame for everything from teenage pregnancy to inflation, and there is no shortage of groups and institutions to hold responsible. Today, literacy crises appear to have the most rhetorical force, as well as the widest breadth. Technological literacy, scientific literacy, medical literacy: America's children and young adults can be found lacking in any or all. In contrast to a more traditional or general educational crisis, a literacy crisis usually highlights a skill set responsible for the individual's or group's participation in society. Literacy is active and connective, and literacy crises typically reflect upon some sort of relationship to be cultivated or role to be played.

As Arendt noted, however, these crises are revelatory in terms of what they show us about our society's discourses and value systems. When literacy crises are deployed within discussions of schooling or culture or international relations, they speak to issues of citizenship and public participation, revealing assumptions about both that are most frequently left unexamined. Given the contested nature of literacy itself, literacy crises also function as points of discursive intersection at which a number of interested parties collide. Often, these interested parties can be approached in terms of public and private interests, or in terms of mass and specialized audiences. For these reasons, public-intellectual work frequently emerges out of these contexts, and it is because of this that public-intellectual work can be one of the most fruitful objects of analysis. At the same time, I argue that public-intellectual work itself can do much to facilitate, or hinder, the type of rethinking that moments of crisis make possible and that the rhetorical structuring of this work can itself be reflective of strategies for shifting definitions, challenging assumptions, and exploring new lines of inquiry.

In what follows, I consider specific intellectual debates surrounding the issue of literacy and the influence that these debates had on public discourse. The first chapter sets the debate between W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington against institutionalized, primarily "white," models of public participation. I consider the rhetorical strategies that each thinker employed in characterizing his preferred mode of public engagement as the solution to the race crisis. Both men recognized education as integral to equality, but their pedagogical premises selected for drastically different modes of public participation, modes which informed each man's own public-intellectual work. While Washington functioned as a spokesperson, advocating for a model that

discouraged rhetorical action but required his univocal defense, Du Bois functioned as a facilitator, opening outlets for public discourse and topics to debate.

Expanding on the previous chapter's interest in specialized forums, the second chapter considers how public-intellectual work contributing to the feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s framed access to such outlets as crucial to the development of counterpublics. Less invested in academic literacies, the work examined here made productive use of the rhetorical tropes associated with literacy crises to support what Adrienne Rich called the "women's university-without-walls," an extra-academic realm built from women's literate acts. With Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem as my primary models, I consider how public-intellectuals might challenge normative discursive structures and conventions in order to create space for productive dissent. In particular, I consider the role that these women played relative to the development of a counter-sphere produced from feminist publishing and periodicals.

Returning to more conventionally academic concerns, the third chapter examines the National Committee on Excellence in Education's 1983 *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. I place this document and its reception in conversation with earlier wartime pedagogical debates in order to consider how educational investments in American identity and American culture during the Cold War influenced the form of public discourse. I then read the chemist Glenn T. Seaborg's investment in the project alongside the alternatives that the humanist Mortimer Adler set forth in *The Paideia Proposal* to suggest that what was at issue was the very nature of American citizenship and the literacy-based claims it made on the individual.

The final chapter maintains the pedagogical focus of the previous but accounts for the role of mainstream media, returning to Stanley Fish's 2005 op-ed "Devoid of Content" and its reception. Fish's critique of college composition prompted debate among academics, but this debate was confined to specialized forums to which Fish's large public audience had no access. While I acknowledge the rhetorical mastery underlying Fish's column, I characterize it as an irresponsible piece of public-intellectual work based on its failure to cultivate productive discourse at the level of the mass public. Fish opened a topic for debate, but he foreclosed opportunities for equally public responses in the process. He emphasized linguistic correctness over critical engagement, thereby privileging a model of participation by which one earns the right to a public voice based solely on adherence to convention and excluding the very voices his criticisms targeted.

Ultimately, my characterization of Fish's piece allows me to transition from analytical engagement with such work and leads to a series of recommendations for more responsible public-intellectual work within new media contexts. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of the opportunities offered and challenges posed by these contexts in terms of their public-intellectual use-value and alongside the perpetual concern over the influence of technology on traditional literacy. As the public realm merges with the digital and character is measured in fewer and fewer characters, sustained intellectual intervention in public discourse becomes one means of ensuring that this transition preserves rhetorical models capable of facilitating conscientious and productive public debate.

CHAPTER II

MARKETING THE TALENTED TENTH: W.E.B. DU BOIS AND PUBLIC-INTELLECTUAL ECONOMIES

On November 1st, 1902, William Monroe Trotter's Boston-based newspaper *The Guardian* attributed the following statement to Booker T. Washington: "One thousand bushels of potatoes produced by the hands of an educated Negro are worth more in solving our problems than dozens of orations or tons of newspaper articles." Characteristically Tuskegeean, the claim exemplifies Washington's approach to the "problems" associated with the color line at the turn of the century. Preferring trade-based training over more liberal models of education, Washington saw economic industry as key to racial equality and largely discounted the intellectual labor favored by Trotter and his college-educated Boston Radicals. Forgoing the potatoes, Trotter looked to the printed page, criticizing Washington's accommodationist policies in editorial after editorial and cultivating instead a black readership and a market for public debate concerning the ideological differences between the two factions. Wary of his own rhetorical force, however, Trotter sought the support of W.E.B. Du Bois. In response to Trotter's call, Du Bois's rhetorical intervention interrupted the dominant Washingtonian discourse, directly advocating for educational programs that would enable black men and women to take advantage of newly emerging discursive spaces while also modeling rhetorical activities geared toward promoting similar capabilities in one's audience. Du Bois's democratically oriented rhetorical engagement, I argue, speaks to the influence that public intellectuals can have on the modes and forums governing public discourse. That this engagement necessarily responded to Washington's very different rhetorical

model suggests that such public-intellectual work cannot discount the influence of audience supply and demand; this work must attend to its own economics, even as it aspires to more transcendent ends.

Describing Trotter's pursuit of Du Bois, their contemporary Kelly Miller wrote that Trotter himself lacked the "felicity of utterance requisite of ostensible popular leadership" and "began to cast about for a man of showy faculties who could stand before the people as leader of his cause," ultimately weaving "a subtle net about W.E.B. Du Bois, the brilliant writer and scholar" (16). Given Trotter's opposition to industrial education, Du Bois's academic experience was a functional component of his participation in Trotter's movement. In addition to this scholarly ethos, Du Bois offered a set of rhetorical skills that the similarly educated Trotter did not possess, and it was the combined force of academic achievement and public rhetorical performance that shaped the space that Du Bois and Trotter created for a new black public intellectual. Miller's assessment of the movement's leadership needs speaks to a common challenge facing public-intellectual work in its reference to Du Bois as a man of "showy faculties." As we are too well aware, intellectual achievement itself is unlikely to move a public, but in Du Bois's case, intellectual achievement was a significant part of what situated him to convey the movement's message. In the process of packaging an intellectual perspective and specialized set of concerns for an audience with multiple voices clamoring for its attention, Du Bois negotiated many of the same tensions plaguing would-be public intellectuals today.

Ultimately, assessing Du Bois's interventionist rhetoric through the lens of contemporary work on the public intellectual gives us new ways of approaching the

tension between the universal and the particular, the transcendent and the situated, that permeated his writing. Such an assessment also encourages re-examination of contemporary public-intellectual work. I frame Du Bois's rhetoric as a particular example of public-intellectual work that was committed to opening discursive arenas for debate and in challenging the ideological assumptions and structures that threatened opportunities for productive public deliberation. As the intellectual's contribution to the public realm remains a contested topic, models that emphasize her ability to reinvest in the authority of the people and to facilitate meaningful deliberative exchange on the part of the mass public stand as curatives to models informed by more cynical or elitist notions of intellectual work. By presenting Du Bois as an example of the responsible and engaged public intellectual reacting to significant social crisis, we might begin to see ourselves and our roles as scholars of rhetoric differently.

The Intellectual Problem: An Economic Solution

To approach Du Bois's project for racial uplift as a particular iteration of public-intellectual work, I begin with an overview of the standard theoretical models applied to intellectual work more generally. Scholarly treatments of the intellectual span a healthy range of academic disciplines. As I have already mentioned, most start with one of two dialectical models concerned with the figure's social function, both of which are worth recounting here briefly. Antonio Gramsci distinguishes between "traditional intellectuals," those bound to existing institutions and power structures and whose interests remain in the cerebral realm of Truth and Reason, and "organic intellectuals," those who are relatively autonomous and whose interests concern specific class or labor

conditions (*Modern Prince* 119). Michel Foucault makes a slightly different distinction and offers the "universal intellectual" and the "specific intellectual." He characterizes the universal intellectual as outmoded and largely ineffectual from the perspective of his postmodern moment, and he argues that all intellectuals should be understood as specific intellectuals in the sense that they and their work are conditioned by their "three-fold specificity;" they are the products of their class positions, their work and life circumstances, and the "politics of truth" structuring the epistemes dominant within their social environments (132). As discussed above, both Gramsci and Foucault favor the organic or specific models, and this preference continues to inform assessments of intellectual production today, manifesting in a widespread preference for "on-the-ground," local, and direct intervention in public social issues.

Although not interested in the *public* intellectual specifically, Ross Posnock confronts this Gramsci-Foucault bias in his work on the "impossible life" of the black intellectual, illustrating the degree to which the thinkers' foundational class-based concerns extend to race. He argues that renewed attention to the cosmopolitan universalism previously "stigmatized by the bias of the postmodern toward the particular and the local" might be especially "salutary for the study of African American intellectual history" (324). Because black intellectuals such as Du Bois and Franz Fanon operated between the particular and the universal, Posnock suggests that the conventional privileging of organic and specific intellectual models obscures a significant portion of black intellectual development. Given that the "black intellectual at the turn of the century emerged as a social type by resisting the lure of the prevailing ideology of the authentic," Du Bois, Posnock maintains, "helped construct this new social type by

insisting on the implicitly Dreyfusardian notion of the intellectual as bearer of the universal or, in Du Bois's terms, as 'co-worker in the kingdom of culture'" (324-325). To create opportunities for such intellectual activity, Du Bois's own engagement with the public realm defied a specific model of intellectual work defined by the politics of racial identity and aspired toward a more universal model unmarked by race, but it nonetheless directly confronted and even worked within this more common specific model.

The question of race was unavoidable in public matters during Reconstruction, and engagement with almost any intellectual orientation or philosophical project confronted its influence. In his study of black pedagogical philosophies, educational historian Derrick P. Alridge considers how both Du Bois and Anna Julia Cooper[5] worked within the constraints of Victorianism, Civilizationism, and Progressivism, modes of thought that dominated American public discourse during much of their lives. These intellectual movements often produced arguments for black inferiority and conflicted with programs that Du Bois and Cooper championed, which insisted on the potential for achievement among black men and women as a means toward social equality. Alridge argues that Du Bois and Cooper selectively reconfigured the major tenets of these dominant intellectual movements to suit their own aims, thereby working both within and against potentially constricting modes of thought. These two figures expose "the complexity and dialectical nature of black thought" and reveal "that black educational thought in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century America was often adapted from

[5] Although this chapter confronts the role of the public intellectual through the debate between Washington and Du Bois, I acknowledge the significant contributions made by black female intellectuals working within similar contexts. Black women like Cooper, Ida B. Wells, Mary Church Terrell, and others addressed audiences on a range of issues, and they shaped the discursive space available to other black men and women in the process. Here and at subsequent points in my discussion, I include these women and their work in order to emphasize how their strategies for negotiating the conditions of publicity and challenging existing rhetorical norms helpfully illuminate the structure of the debate at the center of my project.

the larger constellation of ideas to fit the realities and circumstances of black life" (417). Alridge's conception of how dominant philosophical programs could function as resources for black intellectuals invested in racial uplift despite furthering racist social distinctions emphasizes the tension inherent in the public performances of black intellectuals. When they were addressing audiences already familiar with these background discourses, thinkers like Du Bois and Cooper could not afford to ignore the persuasive potential of their significant topoi. Instead, they repurposed the already-circulating premises in service of their projects by stripping useful portions from their racist contexts. For example, while Victorianism furthered racist views of black men and women as savage or barbaric, it also supported a conception of social uplift similar to that for which Du Bois and Cooper advocated. Du Bois and Cooper were able to exploit this internal tension and appeal to Victorians on the basis of the discourses and value systems that they already found persuasive.

That black Americans addressing multiracial audiences during and after Reconstruction confronted rhetorical norms disposed toward upholding white supremacy has been well documented. Nahum Dimitri Chandler contends that this same pressure informs African American studies today in terms of how the field negotiates the role of racial identity. Chandler characterizes the effect of what he refers to as an "economy of desedimentation." Since the dialectical denial of difference, racial or otherwise, reinscribes the hierarchies it attempts to deconstruct, truly oppositional discourses must "produce a displacement of the distinction in question," and this displacement "can be made general or decisive only *through* the movement of the production of difference" (80). Significantly, this production of difference occurs within a philosophical

infrastructure that itself essentializes the difference, and it is by introducing the creative force of difference that one might shift the existing epistemological frame in a meaningful way. When interventions "desediment" constrictive background frameworks determining race-based discourse, they function both critically, challenging "an existing project of [white] purity by the elucidation of a differential presence," and affirmatively, recognizing "the production or setting loose of something new or original in the carrying out of this critical operation" (88). Efficient intellectual intervention, then, is both double and recursive; it invokes but suspends certain notions of difference until making its way back around to overwrite them with more expansive alternatives.

This form of discursive negotiation operates "economically" in the sense that multiple discourses circulate through the same channels and compete for the same audiences. Particular modes of intellectual engagement should be approached similarly. Such an approach allows for a fuller understanding of how black intellectual figures staged their interventions within highly contested and often hostile public realms. Reading Du Bois's intellectual stance as a response to economic forces certainly emphasizes a central ideological tension underlying his body of work, but it also stresses how his intellectual position was rhetorically constructed and textually mediated. Given that Du Bois's participation in the debate surrounding racial uplift required that he respond not only to the arguments advanced by Washington and his supporters but also to the public-intellectual models that earned these arguments credibility, his performance of a public persona becomes a significant component of his strategy. The point at which these two public-intellectual models intersected with each other in the discursive sphere emphasizes the role of direct competition in public-intellectual economies, both in terms

of how this competition influences the viability of ideas and in terms of how it structures the forms of intellectual participation itself.

Steven Fuller advances a similarly market-focused model of public-intellectual activity when he characterizes the public intellectual as "an agent of distributive justice" and defines her primary function as offering marginalized ideas the time and resources necessary for them to compete with more dominant ideas. Such an understanding of intellectual responsibility assumes that the public realm operates on a scarcity principle and that ideas only circulate at the expense of other ideas. In Fuller's words, "no idea is innocent of the fate of others," which means that "ideas are never judged exclusively on their own merits but primarily in relation to other ideas" (147). Intellectual intervention, then, redirects attention. The public intellectual invests, or reinvests, in ideas that have not yet generated their own following or that have fallen out of favor but which might have something to offer nonetheless. In this sense, she consistently confronts the force of what Chaïm Perelman and Lucia Olbrechts-Tyteca refer to as "inertia." Inertia "makes it possible to rely on the normal, the habitual, the real, and the actual and to attach a value to them, whether it is a matter of an existing situation, an accepted opinion, or a state of regular and continuous development" (106). Remarking on the strength of existing opinions about race, Du Bois notes that a "Nation naturally skeptical as to Negro ability" tends to "assume an unfavorable answer without careful inquiry and patient openness to conviction." He warns his audience that they "must not forget that most Americans answer all queries regarding the Negro *a priori*" (*Souls* 68).[6] Always moving against the

[6] While I focus on Du Bois's rhetorical interventions, his work as a researcher also contributed to his project, providing direct evidence countering prevailing racial prejudices. This work included sociological studies of black populations, including those which had benefitted from educational programs like those for which Du Bois argued. Du Bois's own *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), commissioned by the University of

current, the public intellectual works to call attention to opportunities for change that would otherwise go unnoticed or undeveloped under such circumstances. As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's note, however, change must be addressed and justified, whereas inertia is at its strongest when left unexamined and undiscussed. This places an additional burden on public-intellectual intervention, particularly given that change "always has a somewhat devaluating effect because it shakes social confidence" and can, thus, be seen as a threat to the very systems of socially constituted public participation and discourse upon which the circulation of public-intellectual work depends (106). It is at this point in the discussion of public-intellectual work that rhetorical persuasion becomes central and that the economic force of direct competition can be seen as structuring the models of public-intellectual engagement.

Just as ideas become dominant and force other ideas from public consideration so, too, might specific public-intellectual models accrue enough social capital to foreclose opportunities for alternative models to function as persuasively. The aforementioned Gramsci-Foucault bias favoring organic or specific intellectual models over traditional or universal is itself an example of how certain assumptions about the public function of intellectuals select for certain modes of participation. Legal theorist Richard Posner offers an economic model for intellectual work that mediates this bias by explaining how all public-intellectual work is subject to the traditional market forces of supply and demand. While Gramsci's own model is economic in that organic-intellectual work includes labor or industrial organization, Posner is concerned with intellectual work in the form of "symbolic goods," discrete and self-contained pieces of oral or written expression (40).

Pennsylvania, is one example of such work. It combined first-hand interviews and census data to speak to the economic and social conditions of the city's black households.

Within Posner's framework, the organic intellectual who organizes laborers is not a public intellectual until she writes an article or delivers a speech on her methods and their underlying principles. Washington's public-intellectual work would, thus, be contained in the expressive acts by which he represents his Tuskegee program and not in his day-to-day operation of the school itself. The capacity for intellectual work to function as public-intellectual work depends upon the reception and circulation of these symbolic goods in the public sphere, and it is the market demand, not the inherent quality or type of the work, that determines reception and circulation.

In order to emphasize the multiple ways symbolic goods produced by public-intellectuals might function, Posner differentiates among "entertainment goods," "solidarity goods," and "credence goods." While entertainment goods are valued for the pleasure that audiences take in them and solidarity goods are valued for their ability to serve as a "rallying point for the like-minded," credence goods, the type most often associated with public-intellectual work, are valued for their informational nature and capacity to generate belief (42). In more traditionally economic terms, credence goods are distinguished from inspection goods, the latter of which can be "inspected" and judged for quality in advance of purchase while the former can only be judged on the basis of external factors, such as advertisements or testimonials. The same principle holds true for public-intellectual work; public intellectuals are typically called upon to address issues on which there is no inherently right answer. The fact that change as a product in itself cannot be judged prior to its "consumption" suggests the significance of this characterization in relation to both Fuller's model and the role of Perelman and

Olbrechts-Tyteca's inertia. It is nearly impossible to judge the value of a symbolic good in isolation from surrounding contexts and removed from the conditions of its production.

On the basis of this credence-governed symbolic production, public-intellectual work seems to rely on an almost exclusively ethos-driven rhetorical model. "Unable to monitor the quality of public-intellectual work reliably," Posner argues, "the public—and its agents, the media—pay close attention to the quality of the inputs, that is, of the public intellectuals themselves." Here, public-intellectual work takes another significantly rhetorical turn. Given that "consumers do not make a direct assessment of whether what the public-intellectual says is true but instead decide whether the public intellectual is persuasive," Posner characterizes rhetoric's relationship to symbolic goods as akin to advertising's relationship to more traditional consumer products, pointing out that 'the classical devices of rhetoric are well understood by Madison Avenue" (49). Significantly, the persuasiveness of public-intellectual work depends upon the persuasiveness of the public-intellectual persona as it corresponds to the public's expectations and needs. This is especially true given the socially destabilizing potential of change; the public must trust the public intellectual enough to risk the unknown consequences of her recommendations. As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca note, though, advocating for change can, on the basis of change's relatively weak innate rhetorical force, "be appreciated as proof of sincerity" (106). In the process of producing symbolic goods designed to intervene in and circulate within the public sphere, the public-intellectual constructs a public persona that corresponds to his or her particular project, and successful public-intellectual work relies on a seamless and functional conflation of these two components. For Du Bois, this conflation proved challenging, requiring that he

negotiate his role as a representative of his race's potential and his own distinctive intellectual capacities in terms of the ethotic potential each had for the arguments he advanced.

When approached in terms of rhetorical self-positioning, the public intellectual's task might be understood as finding ways to speak *to*, speak *for*, and speak *about* simultaneously. This is particularly true for intellectuals like Du Bois whose projects both depended upon and challenged race-based conceptions of community. Just as Posnock characterizes the pressure of authenticity as it structures the work of black intellectuals, John Michael notes that the supposition of an authentic subject position presents a problem for African American intellectuals, "a problem involving their identities as organic intellectuals linked to a specific 'community' and their relation to their varied audiences within and beyond the pale" (33). While the influence of identity and its potential to subsidize one's authority to speak on behalf of her community is central to work on black intellectuals and their publics, the influence of identity on rhetorical performance has been especially prominent in work on black women writers and orators. In their study of African-American women activists, for instance, Jacqueline Jones Royster and Mary Cochran consider the pressure that Mary Church Terrell felt representing colored women in a global context at the 1919 International Congress on Peace and Freedom held in Switzerland. While addressing issues of human rights that extended beyond racial discrimination and inequality, Terrell included direct statements about the injustices perpetrated against non-whites both at home and abroad. As a light-skinned black woman, she worked to make her racial identity clear within her speeches so that she might "bear witness" for the global community of non-white women (222).

Based on Royster and Cochran's reading of the event, the persuasive power of Terrell's rhetorical performance on this international stage required that she speak about how her experiences related to the experiences of all non-white women while at the same time enacting the differences that qualified her to speak to her mostly white audience.

In part, the attention paid to the identity-based negotiations undertaken by black women rhetors responds to their being doubly disqualified from certain modes of public performance due to the forceful combination of race and gender.[7] Vivian A. May argues that Anna Julia Cooper's work frequently contended with gendered distinctions carried over from white patriarchal constructions and applied to black women. These included "a small-minded interpretation of womanhood, restrictive philosophy of the purpose of home life, and narrow definition of the domestic realm as a distinct and separate sphere" ("Race" 134), all of which served to isolate women from the public and the political. Finding space for oneself in the public realm required that black women contend with both the aforementioned discourses of white supremacy and the equally pervasive force of still-circulating patriarchal scripts.

In "Our Raison d'Être," which opens Cooper's 1892 *A Voice from the South*, Cooper characterizes this compounded challenge as it determines access to the public realm for black American women. The introduction begins by describing the Negro's contribution to the "clash and clatter of the American Conflict" as "a muffled strain…a jarring chord and a vague and uncomprehended cadenza." An even further marginalized part of this "muffled strain," black women remain the "one mute and voiceless note," a claim that Cooper underscores with lines from Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Oh Yet We

[7] For an account of the educational and literacy-based challenges faced by black women entering public realms, see Jacqueline Jones Royster's *Traces of a Stream: Literacy and Social Change among African American Women* (155-161).

Trust:" "An infant crying in the night,/ an infant crying for the light;/ And with no language—but a cry" (i). Among the chaos of the black response to the race problem, the black woman has been unable to speak to her experience, and Cooper describes this inability first in terms of volume, "one mute and voiceless note," and then in terms of expressive capacity, "no language—but a cry." Black women face not only the challenges of access and audience attention, but also issues surrounding their ability to articulate the reality of their experiences within public contexts.

In the process of shifting from this initial auditory conceit, Cooper further characterizes the absence of the black female voice in national discourse by representing the nation's race crisis as a courtroom trial. Cooper contends that "one important witness has not yet been heard from" and that this witness is the "Black Woman." Including this witness's testimony is in the interest of the trial's judiciary success. "It is because I believe the American people to be conscientiously committed to a fair trial and ungarbled evidence," Cooper writes, "and because I feel it essential to a perfect understanding and an equitable verdict that truth from each standpoint be presented at the bar,—that this little Voice has been added to the already full chorus" (ii). Here, Cooper creates a situation in which the voices of black women are integral to the nation's aims and cannot be excluded lest American ideals be perverted. Black women in general and Cooper in particular are painted as significant contributors to a national public capable of upholding an American identity founded on the ideals of justice and equality. Importantly, black women only serve this function to the degree that their own identities and perspectives are not wholly subsumed by this predominately white and male American character. They contribute through their difference, which is why other populations cannot speak

for them. Just as the "Caucasian barristers are not to blame if they cannot quite put themselves in the dark man's place, neither should the dark man be wholly expected fully and adequately to reproduce the exact Voice of the Black Woman" (iii). It is the public performance itself, the rhetorical intervention, and not just the experiential data or narrative that the nation requires, and Cooper presents her essays, the textual manifestation of her voice, as a first step.

Ultimately, the model that Cooper offers speaks to the production of difference from within existing philosophical infrastructures in ways that elucidate Du Bois's project. While Cooper situates her work in terms of its contribution to the preservation of American ideals in the face of social challenge, she does so in a way that makes the public dependent upon her alternative perspective. The "open-eyed but hitherto voiceless Black Woman of America" offers insight that it would be un-American to ignore (ii). Describing this woman as "delicately sensitive at every pore to social atmospheric conditions," Cooper links this insight to the black woman's marginal position, suggesting that her exclusion makes her especially qualified. Vivian M. May describes this stance as an early approach to intersectionality which posits that the experience of marginality enhances one's rhetorical authority. In terms of her own critical perspective, Cooper acknowledged a triptych of marginal identities: "woman," "black," and "Southern," each of the three contributing to a valuable situatedness in ways that made it impossible to approach any one in isolation. Actively occupying the role of outsider or embracing the critical capacities supposedly strengthened by the experience of life on the social margins has long been a hallmark of the intellectual[8]. Black women like Cooper who engaged

[8] For more on the "outsider" status of the intellectual figure, see the first chapter of Dick Pels's *The Intellectual as Stranger: Studies in Spokespersonship.*

similar strategies for negotiating their positions relative to their racial and gendered identities, therefore, provide models for negotiating such challenging rhetorical contexts. For Cooper, like for Du Bois, the key was to maintain the critical perspectives and orientations that their social experience afforded while also reframing these perspectives and orientations for mass audiences in ways that earned both speaker and message rhetorical authority.

Consuming Crisis, Selling History: Washington versus Du Bois

While the public intellectual is a social constant, especially today given that our contemporary moment defines influence in terms of sustained, simultaneous engagement with multiple media, she is most in demand during times of social crisis. When there is widespread disagreement or discontent, the public intellectual has a ready audience, and the rhetorical exigency attending the crisis creates additional demand for the credence-type goods she offers. In some instances, the construction of crisis is part of the public intellectual's role. Intervening in inertia-driven public discourse means uncovering a problem requiring a solution, and this leads to the articulation of crisis narratives that identify and contextualize the problem relative both to its origins and to the future-oriented action the public intellectual hopes to inspire. Crisis narratives, then, are an integral part of the public-intellectual product, particularly in the way that they contribute to a sense of intellectual authority in the process of positioning the public intellectual as the figure with the necessary historical knowledge and insight. Asserting that "crisis texts are a veritable industry," Janet Roitman defines crisis as a "non-locus from which to claim access to both history and knowledge of history." She contends that "crisis is

mobilized in narrative constructions to mark out or designate 'moments of truth'" (3), and the control over the moments of truth that these narratives give their public-intellectual authors contributes to the public intellectual's ethos-driven rhetorical project.

In the process of characterizing the public intellectual as an agent of distributive justice, Fuller emphasizes the public intellectual's function as a "professional crisis-monger," thus inviting consideration of the role that the rhetorical construction of crisis plays in the distributive process, too (148). Crisis provides opportunity for rethinking, but this is only true if the crisis itself sells and creates additional demand for alternative perspectives and intellectual approaches. If the crisis narrative is persuasive, it will suggest its own solutions in the form of the values, emphases, and topoi structuring its arc. Historian Reinhart Koselleck has detailed the role of crisis in the ordering of historical periods and events. Drawing on the etymological progression of the term, he offers two conceptions of crisis that are oriented toward the modern period. First, is "crisis" as a "permanent or conditional category pointing to a critical situation which may constantly recur or else to situations in which decisions have momentous consequences," and second is "crisis" as a "historically immanent transitional phrase," the timing and effect of which "depends on the specific diagnosis offered" (372). Given the emphasis on historiography, crisis is relatively malleable in terms of whether it is rendered as an enduring unity linking historical periods or as an epochal rupture ushering in revolution and change. Each rendering, though, depends on associational structures of thought, and any functional response to the crisis must appeal to the logic of these associations.[9] While both Du Bois and Washington responded to the crisis facing the nation as a result of

[9] This understanding of crisis is also informed by Hannah Arendt's assessments of crisis narratives and their influence on intellectual activity in "The Crisis in Education" and "The Crisis in Culture."

unmediated racial tension, each cast the crisis differently in terms of how it corresponded to and fit within larger histories.[10] The debate between the two thinkers took the form of dueling crisis narratives, and each of their programs and respective modes of public participation reflected strategies for the preservation of the narratives' rhetorical force and strengthened the relevant public-intellectual model.

If, as I have argued, the already available models of black intellectual engagement structured Du Bois's own public participation, then understanding the rhetorical efficacy of his intervention requires accounting for these models as they were embodied by Washington. As was the case with Du Bois's, Washington's public-intellectual model was inextricably linked to the educational policies that he supported, policies which earned him and Tuskegee wealthy white benefactors and powerful political affiliations. By the time Trotter founded *The Guardian* in 1901, Washington's model of industrial education had become standard for young black men and women, rendering other models the exception. In "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others," which appeared as "The Evolution of Negro Leadership" in the July 1901 issue of *The Dial*, Du Bois exercised his historiographic faculties with a reconstruction of the conditions surrounding "the ascendency of Mr. Booker T. Washington," referring to Washington's rise to unprecedented power as "easily the most striking thing in the history of the American Negro since 1876" (*Souls* 34). Du Bois attributed the success of Washington's "programme of industrial education, conciliation of the South, and submission and

[10] In her reading of Anna Julia Cooper's doctoral thesis, Vivian M. May makes similar claims about the revolutionary potential of historiography. By reframing the French and Haitian revolutions, Cooper "develops narrative strategies that allow her to push for a more three-dimensional and inclusive understanding of history and humanity," and these strategies create space for non-white people as historically significant political actors and more fully explicate the relationships between slavery, resistance, and citizenship (904).

silence as to civil and political rights" to the strategies it deployed in responding to and mediating the doubt of a divided people facing a debilitating impasse. Arriving at the "psychological moment when the nation was a little ashamed of having bestowed so much sentiment on Negroes, and was concentrating its energies on Dollars," Washington's industrial model, founded on compromise and faith in the natural progression toward full civic participation, addressed immediate needs and their attendant anxieties, thus having the forceful rhetorical advantage of meaningful exigency for both black and white audiences. "It startled the nation to hear a Negro advocating such a programme after so many decades of bitter complaint," wrote Du Bois of Washington's plan; "it startled and won the applause of the South, it interested and won the admiration of the North; and after a confused murmur of protest, it silenced if it did not convert Negroes themselves" (34-35). Appearing as a radical shift in thinking about the race problem from the perspective of the black population, Washington's solution, in fact, reinvested in the "practical" economic concerns that had informed a large portion of proslavery rhetoric.[11] It grounded itself in a set of values already recognized as important among relevant audiences. Offering some measure of assurance to those on all sides of the race question, the Tuskegee program appeared to many as the only viable answer, and its principles effectively dominated discourse on the subject of civil rights for a number of years.

On the basis of the accommodationist policies to which his educational model adhered, Washington argued that the rights associated with full civic participation would

[11] Patricia Roberts-Miller has accounted for proslavery rhetoric as it reflected such values. While a fuller treatment of the similarities is just outside the scope of the current project, that Washington's rhetoric perpetuates lines of reasoning foundational to proslavery rhetoric is nonetheless significant in terms of his rendering of history and crisis.

be earned not as the result of direct debate but through productive involvement in biracial economic systems. According to Washington, this was especially true in the South: "The Negro in the South has it within his power, if he properly utilizes the force at hand, to make himself such a valuable factor in the life of the South that he will not have to seek the privileges, they will be freely conferred upon him" (485). By accepting the service and industrial positions already available to him, the black man could make himself as indispensable to the white economy as many argued he was during slavery. After proving his value by contributing to economic growth from these positions, the black man would be granted social and civil rights by the grateful white men and women already in possession of them. At the center of this economic program was a performative and exploitative acceptance of racial difference. Washington's list of viable occupations reflected skill sets or characteristics that had been fostered among the "Negro race" historically. He claimed, for instance, that "since the bulk of our people already have a foundation in agriculture, they are at their best when living in the country, engaged in agricultural pursuit" (486). The implication was that black men and women should be confined to certain spheres and types of work based on race. Given Washington's specific preference for potatoes over newspaper articles and orations, for commercial production over the "abstract eloquence that can be summoned to plead our cause" (32), the realms closed to black participation within his model were those which included forums for public discussion.

In contrast to Du Bois and his particularly ambivalent relationship to the authenticity associated with the specific intellectual, Washington, whom Posnock characterizes as the "foremost proponent of authenticity" (324), embraced a rhetoric and

a mode of self-representation rooted in a black identity and community.[12] Additionally, Washington's concern with industrial training largely aligned with Gramsci's treatment of the division of labor as a central component of organic-intellectual work, and Washington himself effectively embodied Gramsci's conception of the organic intellectual as "constructor and organizer" of economic production (*Prison* 10). Returning to Posnock's characterization of the specific or organic intellectual as the preferred model, we might also read Washington's unparalleled influence as evidence of this preference as it informed black intellectual development.

The contexts surrounding Du Bois's public participation in the movement for racial uplift makes a market-based model a productive means of assessing this participation through the lens of public-intellectual work. Du Bois's public-intellectual participation was in direct competition with Washington's, and addressing this competition in terms of public supply and demand frames the two very different models on the basis of the comparable symbolic goods each produced. Such an approach puts Du Bois's more universal model on equal footing with Washington's more specific model and speaks to the potential for Du Bois's model to function just as publicly on the basis of its persuasive symbolic power. In addition to negotiating the influence of the Gramsci-Foucault preference for organic or specific intellectual labor, economic models offer a means of interpreting the relationship between the distinct public-intellectual models that Du Bois and Washington deployed and the educational policies each supported. Posner's

[12] John Michael offers an account of authenticity's influence on the role of contemporary black public intellectuals and its relationship to the organic model of intellectual work, explaining that "black intellectuals as diverse as Adolph Reed, Toni Morrison, and Michael Eric Dyson have recently felt it necessary to address the issue of their relationship to other black Americans because the desire for organic intellectuals still persists and tends to attach itself to these 'authentic' voices from the African American 'community'" (24).

contention that "public-intellectual work could be seen as constituting a market and a career and could be analyzed in economic and sociological terms and compared with other markets and other careers" frames the production of public-intellectual work so that it can be considered alongside the more traditional economic production associated with Washington's Tuskegee plan (2). This comparison attends to the relevant training and skill sets associated with each mode of production, inviting consideration of how the two competing educational programs prepared young black men and women for certain types of public participation and of how each type of public participation reflected back on the public-intellectual model associated with it.

While Washington built his educational policy on the belief that social equality could only be achieved on the basis of industry-related proficiency, Trotter and Du Bois saw more value in rhetorically conscious self-representation in public realms and supported education that trained men and women to participate in these realms, believing that it was from such participation—and not from the fields or factories—that competent and persuasive leaders would emerge. Just as Trotter saw potential in the well-educated and rhetorically competent Du Bois, Du Bois saw potential in similarly trained black youth. Offering his "Talented Tenth" model as an alternative to Washington's Tuskegee program, Du Bois argued that providing one in ten young black men and women with a college education and training them to function as capable teachers and leaders would be more effective than preparing them for trades. Du Bois conceded that industrial training had its benefits, but he was quick to differentiate between "the temporary and contingent in the Negro problem" and "the broader question of the permanent uplifting and civilization of black men in America," contending that in pursuing the latter, "we have a

right to inquire, as this enthusiasm for material advancement mounts to its height, if after all the industrial school is the final and sufficient answer in the training of the Negro race" (*Souls* 65). While Washington's educational model might have addressed the immediate needs of the country, and particularly of the South, Du Bois's model aspired to more sustainable progress, placing the burden of such advancement on the ability of the race's most gifted to assume positions of public leadership.

In so responding to Washington's model, Du Bois challenged the foundational premise that black men and women were to be confined to certain social roles and allowed to influence matters of social equality only indirectly. Characterizing the dominant modes of thinking about race that resulted from Washington's program, Du Bois wrote that "race-prejudices, which keep brown and black men in their 'places,' we are coming to regard as useful allies…no matter how much they may dull the ambition and sicken the hearts of struggling human beings." Viewing race-prejudices as useful in the ways Washington's model encouraged, Du Bois added, had made common the belief that "an education that encourages aspiration, that sets the loftiest of ideals and seeks as an end culture and character rather than bread-winning , is the privilege of white men and the danger and delusion of black" (*Souls* 65). Du Bois, however, saw just such an education as the only possible means of securing political rights and achieving an enduring racial equality.

At the center of Du Bois's educational model was his conception of "culture," which he argued was the crucial component of racial uplift. In "Of Our Spiritual Strivings," a revised version of an article published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1897, he concluded his oft-cited discussion of "double-consciousness" with the contention that

"this, then, is the end of our striving: to be a co-worker in the kingdom of culture, to escape both death and isolation, to husband and use his best powers and his latent genius" (*Souls* 71). In this context, cultural production was figured as a means of mediating and moving beyond the limitations of racial difference, as a way of contributing to human, rather than race-based, achievement. While Du Bois never explicitly defined the forms that this cultural production and progress should take beyond equating it with a college education and "the sovereign human soul that seeks to know itself and the world about it; that seeks a freedom for expansion and self-development" (73), he did describe the privilege that his own education and cultural growth had afforded him. "I sit with Shakespeare and he winces not," wrote Du Bois. "Across the color line I move arm in arm with Balzac and Dumas…I summon Aristotle and Aurelius and what soul I will, and they come all graciously with no scorn nor condescension. So, wed with Truth, I dwell above the Veil" (74). In so rendering the results of his educational experience, Du Bois characterizes it as communion with an intellectual lineage typically denied to black men and women. Having pursued the greater Truth, a truth like that associated with universal intellectual work, Du Bois lives above "the Veil" that separates the white world from the black and, despite the color of his skin, is welcomed by the patriarchs of a European cultural tradition.

In addition to characterizing the pursuit of culture in terms commensurate with a more universal mode of intellectual work, this description of Du Bois's own experience traces a cultural ancestry specifically through writers and rhetoricians. Given his emphasis on being a "co-worker in the kingdom of culture," in actively laboring above the Veil, the fact that *Souls* itself, one of Du Bois's major intellectual contributions, took

the form of written rhetoric can be read as part of a conscious effort to further cement his connection to the prominent historical figures whose legacies he invokes. In this sense, Du Bois's rhetorical skill, his being able to express the Truth with which he was wed, is a primary condition for his active participation in this cultural tradition. The particular mode of public-intellectual work in which he was engaged, then, can be read as one of the desired ends of the educational model he supported.

While this understanding of culture requires further analysis of the particular rhetorical skills Du Bois himself employed, it also emphasizes the differences between Du Bois's educational model and Washington's based on the skill sets necessary for productive "work" in each. For Washington, work took a more traditional form, and trade-based education provided black men and women with the skills they needed to contribute economically. For Du Bois, work was figured as cultural, rather than economic, production and required intellectual exercise and the related expressive talents. The persuasiveness of each conception depended upon a particular teleological approach that rendered the needs of the current moment in terms of a history that suggested its own future. Importantly, the educational model espoused by Washington within the context of this historiographically determined public-intellectual participation effectively limited possibilities for additional public-intellectual participation. Whereas Washington himself might have been capable of producing functional symbolic goods, the same could not be said for all of the men and women trained at Tuskegee, who would have been more adept at tending the fields or keeping homes and were encouraged by Washington to avoid forums dedicated to public deliberation.[13] In this way, Washington's model created a

[13] Washington's model of public-intellectual participation adheres more closely to what Dick Pels refers to as "spokespersonship" and, thus, confronts the "metonymic fallacy of the intellectuals." On the basis of this

closed market in which his voice dominated, while the educational model that Trotter and Du Bois preferred had the potential to cultivate in black youth the expressive skills active participation required.

In establishing Du Bois's model of public-intellectual work and educational programs as viable alternatives to Washington's, Du Bois and Trotter contended with this closed market model that Washington had constructed. Founded as "an organ which is to voice intelligently the needs and aspirations of the colored American" (qtd. in Fox 30), Trotter's *Guardian* sought to create a forum capable of sustaining public discussion of social and civil rights. In Trotter's estimation, the absence of such active forums was one of the conditions underlying Washington's unprecedented influence. In a December 1902 editorial entitled "Why be silent?," Trotter admonished the black institutions and individuals he held responsible for this debilitating lack of discursive activity. Implicating writers and editors associated with other black periodicals, Trotter claimed that the "Negro race" had effectively "endorsed" Washington's statements "by its silence," and he expressed disappointment that it "occurs to none that silence is tantamount to being virtually an accomplice in the treasonable act of this Benedict Arnold of the Negro race" (501). As his economically-minded policies continued to earn Washington and Tuskegee wealth and influence, public expressions of disagreement certainly carried risk, but Trotter maintained that such risk was necessary if true social equality were to become reality; his own arrest at a public meeting of the Boston branch of the National Negro Business League at which Washington spoke in 1903 attested to this commitment.

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fallacy, intellectuals succumb to "the universal danger that resides in speaking for others: which is to disregard the inevitable hiatus between representers and represented, or the specific sociological 'strangeness' which separates spokespersons from the subjects or objects they claim to speak for" (x).

Despite being less extreme in his objections initially, Du Bois agreed with Trotter that the lack of public debate surrounding strategies for uplift as a result of Washington's celebrity was a serious limitation. In "The Evolution of Negro Leadership," Du Bois made similar claims about the danger of silence in the face of Washington's work, and he identified specific groups and individuals whom he knew to disagree with Washington but who had remained publically reticent. The first of these groups was a "small but not unimportant" group "who represent the old ideas of revolt and revenge," but Du Bois was more concerned with the second group, a "large and important group represented by Dunbar, Tanner, Chesnutt, Miller, and the Grimkes." Although this second group was "without any single definite programme, and with complex aims," they "seek nevertheless that self-development and self-realization in all lines of human endeavor which they believe will eventually place the Negro beside the other races" (94). In the revised essay that appears in *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois lists the Grimkes, Kelly Miller, and J.W.E. Bowen as the representatives of this second group, but in both versions Du Bois's second group is a group of black intellectuals similar to Du Bois himself, well-educated men associated with academic institutions and involved in pedagogical practice.

According to this characterization, it is no surprise that Du Bois's intellectuals challenged Washington's program based on their belief "in the higher education of Fisk and Atlanta Universities," "in self-assertion and ambition" and "in the right of suffrage for blacks on the same terms with whites" and that they saw the Tuskegee model as largely foreclosing opportunities for such achievements (94). Albeit relatively understated in this context, Du Bois represents the values and aims associated with this

group of intellectuals not in the racialized terms associated with Washington's educational model, but in terms of universal human achievement similar to those employed in his discussion of culture. Arguing that all "lines of human endeavor," not just those available during slavery, be open to black men and women and seeking full political participation not as a result of programs rooted in racial difference but on the basis of "true" equality, Du Bois's rendering of the intellectuals associated with his second group exhibits his universal-intellectual leanings. This mode of intellectual engagement with the problems of the color line, however, remained, as Du Bois reminds readers, largely unvoiced in the public realm, opposing Washington's program only from behind closed doors.

Given the particular structure of Washington's accomodationist model, the silence to which Trotter and Du Bois objected did, indeed, signify complicity. Washington argued that social equality was not to be obtained directly, through debate or public protest. Thus, an unwillingness to engage in discussions of social equality, even to the relatively minor extent of offering an alternative model, aligned with Washington's objectives.[14] On the basis of the Tuskegee model, the ideal representative of the black race was the industrious man who worked hard and produced goods or capital that circulated within and contributed to a biracial economic system. It was unlikely that such a man would have access to or be prepared to participate in the vigorous public forums Trotter imagined, and he was certainly not the type of man Du Bois would count among

[14] Washington's closed-market rhetorical model might also be linked to his reliance on what Bradford J. Vivian refers to as "epideictic forgetting." Unlike traditional acts of witnessing that encourage remembrance in the process of building social community, Washington's "witnessing" modeled a mode of forgetting that might move a divided nation beyond the debilitating past its populations shared. Within this rhetorical context, the absence of additional discursive activity on the part of black publics aligns with Washington's project. Vivian acknowledges this effect, too, noting that "grave material consequences attend symbolic forgetting in this context," including the almost complete disappearance of black voices from public discourse (205).

the black intellectuals of his second group. With Washington as his spokesperson, however, this man needed not to speak for himself; he required neither access to public forums nor the rhetorical skill required to make use of such access. In contrast, the ideal black leader for whom Trotter and Du Bois advocated depended upon both. While Trotter argued for the importance of public forums like newspapers and other periodicals, Du Bois advocated for the active participation of the intellectual community, but neither would be influential on its own. If public silence on matters of social equality was to be a marker of Washington's model, then public expression was a central mode of anti-Washingtonian action, and if this action was to come from the intellectual community, academic achievement alone would not be enough. What became important was that Du Bois's model of black intellectualism find a public face and that this public face be in public demand and able to circulate freely within the public sphere.

Demand for public-intellectual work comes most directly from editors and publishers, as was the case with Trotter's soliciting statements from Du Bois, but the underlying requirement is that there be a matter of public concern on which there is no academic consensus, or "right answer," but to which academic knowledge might apply (Posner 45). Given the prominence of Washington's program, the first task for both Trotter and Du Bois was to deconstruct the façade of consensus to which the aforementioned public silence contributed. While Du Bois certainly played a part in this process, Trotter's more aggressive methods were most effective in calling attention to the fact that there was debate surrounding Washington's model. Stephen A. Fox notes the challenges Trotter faced in acquainting the public with the central objections to Washington's plan in the early years of the *Guardian* and characterizes Trotter's 1903

arrest as a significant moment that forced a number of news outlets, both black and white, to finally recognize the reality of anti-Washingtonian sentiment (49). The more widely accepted it was that there was no consensus surrounding the issue of racial uplift from the perspective of black Americans, the greater the demand for a variety of public-intellectual work on the issue, and it was this demand, once established, that Du Bois's work could fill.

As previously mentioned, however, establishing public demand for alternative models of public-intellectual work was important to Du Bois's public participation, but not in itself enough to guarantee that his participation would be effective. While the ideological content of Washington's message was fairly well-received by a range of audiences, appealing to the immediate needs of the country and trading on a number of commonly held assumptions that already circulated within public discourse, Du Bois's model required that the nation's thinking about race undergo a significant paradigm shift. Du Bois faced the additional challenge of directly confronting not only Washington's model, but also the long history of racial prejudice in which Washington's model was complicit. In her work on Harlem Renaissance periodicals, Anne Elizabeth Carroll argues that black writers and editors were engaged in projects similar to Du Bois's, constructing alternative textual representations of black identity to counter a long history of racist stereotypes that were created and circulated by the American popular press. Beginning in the eighteenth century, negative representations of black men and women were widely disseminated in books, newspapers, and other print-based mediums, many of them being used to justify slavery and racial violence. These text-based representations, Carroll contends, defined black men and women as "strikingly different from white Americans

and as incapable of significant intellectual, economic, or moral advancement, and thus incapable of assimilation" (5-6). Given the rate at with which these messages accumulated and circulated, particularly among white readers, they were extremely persuasive. They constructed an image of a black population that was "so significantly behind white Americans in intellectual development and so without a cultural past that they could make no contributions to American culture or society" (6), an image that black artists, editors, and patrons confronted during the Harlem Renaissance and continued to confront for many years after. While Du Bois's influence on the development of black artistic expression during the Harlem Renaissance has received a good amount of scholarly attention, much of which focuses on the literary work he published during his tenure as editor of *The Crisis*, less attention has been paid to the ways in which his earlier public-intellectual work, his essays in particular, negotiated similar challenges in terms of representing black men and women.

The assumption that black men and women were incapable of acting as "co-workers in the kingdom of culture" because of an innate intellectual inferiority was the exact type of racial prejudice that Du Bois's faith in higher education challenged. Arguing that black men and women were not excluded from participating in the development of American culture on the basis of essential or natural deficiencies, but rather due to a long-standing social conditioning resulting from the lack of adequate opportunities for education and intellectual development, Du Bois effectively reconfigured racial inequality as the result of a national literacy crisis. Representing the issue in this way emphasized the failings of Washington's program; if the issue was the result of a socially constructed hierarchy rather than a natural one, confining black men

and women to the social roles granted them during slavery would change very little. The most effective solution and the one that spoke most directly to the problem as Du Bois represented it was to provide the black Americans with access to an education that would enable their full participation in cultural production and, ultimately, citizenship practices.[15] Based on his rendering of the problem, Du Bois himself became one version of the solution. Because of his own educational background and efforts in cultural production, Du Bois was not only the most vocal proponent of this particular model of racial uplift, but also the leading example of the model's potential.

Due to this conflation of product and producer, Du Bois consistently confronted challenges associated with what Posnock refers to as the "threatening oxymoron" of black intellectualism. Just as public-intellectual work within Posner's model depends on a characteristically ethos-driven rhetoric dominated by appeals to authority, many of the earliest attempts at positive textual representations of black Americans relied on the strength of their writers' reputation and backstory. Within the genre of the slave narrative, for instance, authorship was rigorously interrogated. As Carroll explains, portraits of the former slave responsible for the account were considered a requirement of the genre because they verified the text's authenticity (9). Within this particular mode of ethos-based appeal, however, the efficacy of the argument presented by the written work still depended on racial difference and essentialist notions of abilities shared on the basis

[15] In their work on Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Royster and Cochran and Maegan Parker consider how arguments similarly grounded in discourses of citizenship contributed to her anti-lynching campaign. Representing themselves as full citizens contributing to American culture, black men and women could emphasize the "disconnect between the national belief in America as the land of the free and the home of the brave and the national policy and practice, which permitted mob rule against its citizens to go uncontested" (Royster and Cochran 220). Additionally, Parker contends that the debate between Wells and Frances E. Willard over lynching was directly related to concerns over the expansion of citizenship in the face of both the 15th Amendment and the women's suffrage movement. In both of these cases, Wells arguments against racial violence depend upon new understandings of citizenship within a newly emerging and controversial American context.

of racial identity; the author's own identity as a black man or woman determined whether the narrative effectively spoke to the potential of the race as a whole and, thus, whether it functioned persuasively as it circulated among a primarily white readership. Deriving persuasive power from a sense of racial authenticity, such representations were more in line with Washington's model of public-intellectual work than with Du Bois's, but Du Bois's public-intellectual work necessarily confronted the audience-based expectations of authenticity to which many similar textual representations, both past and current, responded.

Over the course of his early career, Du Bois's own racial identity contributed to ethos-based appeals that functioned much like the images of Phyllis Wheatley in the act of writing or of Frederick Douglass's "authentic" signature that travelled with each writer's respective work. Despite his adherence to an intellectualism capable of erasing racial difference in the interest of universal human endeavor, race never ceased to influence the reception of his work. In responding to a speech Du Bois delivered at an event for the Boston Literary Association in 1903, Trotter wrote that "the presence of this educated Negro must have won over every one present to the positive advocacy of the higher education of the race, through Prof. Du Bois said nothing of the subject" (qtd. in Rudwick 68). In this case, Du Bois's intellectual work could not be divorced from his racial identity. In fact, his status as an "educated Negro" and the way that this status appealed to the significance of higher education replaced the message he actually delivered, speaking more loudly than his own words. Shirley Wilson Logan addresses similar responses to the oratorical performances of Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, noting that reports of the events revealed a "tendency to record audience reactions to nineteenth-

century Black speakers as if those reactions originated solely within a group of self-regulated hearers responding to passive subjects" (21). Rather than responding to the content of the speaker's message, a large portion of such reports recounted the visual and auditory characteristics of the delivery, including the speaker's physical presence as well as his or her control over language. Given that speakers like Harper challenged the very racial stereotypes or assumed deficiencies that effectively disqualified black men and women from public performance, a number of these reports reveal the audiences' efforts to reconcile expectation with reality. As Logan describes, one common solution was to "praise the performance as the exception that proved the rule of inferiority," and another was to "call into question the identity of the performer" (27). Both of these strategies were applied to Harper. Some reports of her performances responded with surprise to her composure and intellect, remarking with disgust that such a woman might have lived as a slave. Others denied her race or gender in their descriptions of her; Logan provides an example that refers to Harper as "not colored" but "painted" (27), diction which reflects the respect for craft and purposeful artistry that attended nineteenth-century conceptions of oratory generally.

While these two modes of audience response did challenge assumptions of racial inferiority, they did so in ways that either acknowledged an exceptionality in the performer that might not immediately carry over to the race as a whole or that linked the performance to an element of identity that distanced the performer from his or her race or gender. Neither of these responses necessarily opened the public sphere to other voices, unless the power of those voices could be understood in similarly conservative ways. For discursive intervention to be truly transformative, it needed to produce and perform

difference in ways that were less easily co-opted or explained away. One way of approaching the symbolic production of black writers working during this time is in terms of how text-based strategies that gave the performer more control over the relationship between identity and argument were deployed in the service of creating a more inclusive public sphere. Pushing against traditional genres and constructing a public rhetorical space for the black body and voice by forcefully subverting audience expectations, such work provides insight into the strategies available to intellectuals who negotiate similarly challenging publics today.

First published only months before Trotter's arrest brought real attention to the anti-Washingtonian movement, Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk,* his most prominent piece of text-based public-intellectual work, can be seen as reacting to the conditions outlined above. A collection of thirteen essays, nine of which had known former lives in periodicals, and a single short story, *Souls* addressed the condition of black Americans at the turn of the century, reaching across conventional genres and methodologies in order to do so. In his exhaustive biographical study of Du Bois, David Levering Lewis defines the book as "an electrifying manifesto, mobilizing a people for bitter, prolonged struggle to win a place in history" (277), a description that attests to the collection's unprecedented influence in the years following its appearance. One of the book's most significant contributions was its aforementioned treatment of "double-consciousness," a persuasive and enduring framework for understanding the complex experience of black men and women in America. "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness," writes Du Bois, "this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others." Within this model, "one ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two

thoughts, two reconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (11). Caught between his black identity and white society, the black American is "gifted with second sight" (10), a cognitive rupture that allows him to see himself both from within and from without.

In addition to functioning as a central metaphor within the context of *Souls*, the principle of double-consciousness influences the rhetorical construction of the book itself. Susan Wells argues that "double consciousness was also a technique of writing, shaping the ironic and urgent voice of the book, by turns indignant and tender, eloquent and colloquial, a form of double address to both African American and Caucasian readers that allowed Du Bois to be in two places at once" (120). Double-consciousness as a communicative methodology allows for a particular model of the racial transcendence that Du Bois linked to more universal modes of intellectual work, especially given that the cognitive effect would be most forcefully felt among those participating in universities and other dominantly white institutions. If, as Wells argues, the book's formal enactment of double-consciousness contributes to a "discursive mobility" that allows Du Bois to speak with a single voice to a double audience, to speak above the racial particular, the function of the symbolic good itself might be capable of characterizing the public utility of the more universal intellectual. "If African Americans were veiled off from a public sphere," Wells writes, "double consciousness meant for them a painful awareness of what went on in the discursive space they were forbidden to inhabit bodily, a space that Du Bois's writing entered and transformed" (130)[16]. Elizabeth

[16] Melvin L. Rogers characterizes this transformation in terms of how the work empowers its audience. For Rogers, *Souls* crafts a relationship between sympathy and shame that strengthens its audience's power of judgment. Importantly, this influence is not manipulative or overly directive. Rather, it emerges from a collaborative and transactional communicative exchange. Here, Rogers emphasizes the ethotic character of

Alexander makes a similar case concerning how Anna Julia Cooper's written work moves among various linguistic modes, effecting a double-voicedness by switching between first-person and third and crafting a hybrid text that exists between "the first-person confessional of the slave narrative or spiritual autobiography and the third-person imperative of political essays" (338). Such work achieves in its rhetorical structure identification and dissociation simultaneously**.** The symbolic good produced by the aspiring universal intellectual, then, has the capacity to go where the intellectual cannot and to do work the intellectual himself cannot do; it can employ a rhetoric of the universal and aspire to labor within the realms of Truth and Knowledge, but in the process, it might influence the realms of the real and the particular. Through the discursive mobility afforded the in-demand symbolic good, Du Bois's black intellectual makes progress toward "the end of his striving: to be a co-worker in the kingdom of culture" (*Souls* 11).

From the Classroom to *The Crisis*: Barrett Wendell, Du Bois, and the Education of the Intellectual

Even within the contexts of written rhetoric, the relationship among Du Bois's model of ethos-based rhetorical production, his own racial identity, and his conception of the universal intellectual remained fraught. While the resulting tension remains evident in much of his work and its reception, Du Bois's rhetorical style can be read as an attempt at

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rhetorical persuasion, noting that manipulation moves a listener to adopt beliefs inconsistent with his or her own reasoning or thinking, thus violating what Rogers calls an "identifiability condition: Persons who are manipulated cannot recognize themselves in the belief that they now come to hold. And it is this violation that undermines one's reflective agency." On the other hand, true persuasion requires that an audience "will assent to the particular views in question as being their own, so that they will comport their political and ethical lives in light of those views" (196).

mediation, particularly when traced to the training in composition he received while one of few black students at Harvard University. After graduating from Fisk University in 1888, Du Bois travelled north to pursue the Harvard education he had always dreamed of, but based on the many written descriptions of his time there, his experience of Cambridge's ivy-covered campus was less than idyllic. Consistently confronting racial tension and carefully negotiating his relationships with white and black students alike, Du Bois focused his energy on his studies and coursework, but in some cases even this required that he be particularly attentive to the ways in which the act of mediating racial difference inflected the college's academic expectations, which proved to be exactly the case in his classes in composition and rhetoric.

In "A Negro Student at Harvard at the End of the 19th Century," an essay published in *The Massachusetts Review* in 1960, Du Bois reflects on his experience at Harvard, dedicating a relatively significant portion of the piece to his composition and rhetoric coursework. Despite the relative ease with which Du Bois completed the majority of his classes after having already completed his degree at Fisk, he writes that "it was in English that I came nearest my Waterloo at Harvard." In contextualizing the difficulty he had in his first composition course, Du Bois explains that he had "unwittingly arrived at Harvard in the midst of a violent controversy about poor English among students," noting that "a number of fastidious scholars like Barrett Wendell, the great pundit of Harvard English, had come to Harvard about this time" and that "New England itself was getting sensitive over western slang and southern drawls and general ignorance of grammar" (450). As a result of such issues, freshman English had become compulsory for all of the University's students, and not even Du Bois, who enrolled as a

junior, was exempt from the requirement. These conditions, Du Bois suggests, set the stage for what he remembers as the singular and most shocking academic failure of his many years as a student and scholar.

What Du Bois describes as a "violent controversy" was the result of a perceived literacy crisis not completely unrelated to that which Du Bois himself believed to be the cause of racial inequality. In 1879, Harvard's Adams S. Hill, who would hold the Boylston Chair of Rhetoric by the time Du Bois attended the school, publicly decried the fact that the majority of student writing that instructors encountered was "disfigured by bad spelling, confusing punctuation, ungrammatical, obscure, ambiguous, or inelegant expression" and contended that many college graduates were incapable of producing written work without "making blunders which would disgrace a boy twelve years old" (qtd. in Connors 185). In part, this crisis was seen as connected to the larger than normal influx of new and first-generation students from more diverse backgrounds that enrolled in colleges and universities following the Civil War. "From the province of a small group of elite students," writes Robert J. Connors of the transition, "college education became, during this time, much more available to the masses. The colleges were flooded with students who needed to be taught to write, who needed to be taught correctness in writing, who needed to know forms, and who could be run through the system in great numbers" (9). The result of these changes was a drastic shift in university curriculum that many contemporary composition scholars identify as the source of current models of writing instruction and which led to the ascendancy of a mode of rhetorical instruction referred to today as "current-traditional." At the center of current-traditional rhetoric's rise within the realm of college composition instruction, then, were issues of difference

and identity, and these issues were exactly those Du Bois confronted in the his composition class.

Current-traditional rhetoric addressed the needs of overworked instructors contending with overwhelmingly large groups of students by focusing largely on issues of style and surface correctness, thus speaking directly to Hill's characterization of the literacy crisis the nation faced. As a rhetorical mode, however, current-traditional rhetoric carried with it a set of epistemological assumptions, discourse rules, and characterizations of the public sphere, and these attendant principles are what can be seen as having most influenced Du Bois's own rhetorical style and model of intellectual production. Due to the transition from instruction in oral rhetoric, which required more time and individualized instruction than the conditions that Connors describes allowed, to instruction in written rhetoric, instructors turned from more traditional rhetorical treatises to composition textbooks tailored to writing instruction. Meant to streamline teaching by excising the now unnecessary canons of memory (*memoria*) and delivery (*actio*), such a transition also distanced current-traditional rhetoric from other elements of its rhetorical heritage. Offering an example of this very process, James A. Berlin contends that the American imitations of the rhetorical treatises of George Campbell and Hugh Blair, imitations written by early compositionists such as Harvard's own A.S. Hill and Amherst's John Genung favored a strictly positivist epistemology. "In this approach," he writes, "truth in written discourse is conceived exclusively in empirical and rational terms" (8). The view of written discourse Berlin describes here, in combination with the large class sizes, also popularized and justified the pedagogical practices associated with regular themes, short writing assignments that were read for surface correctness, marked,

and returned for correction. Such practices further conflated rhetorical instruction with exercises in grammar and other means of producing writing that was "correct" and, therefore, linguistically neutral.

In his assessment of the various epistemological models underlying the three primary categories of rhetoric, Berlin classifies current-traditional rhetoric within the class of "objective rhetorics," theories of rhetoric which adhere to a positivist epistemology and which, thus, define truth as knowledge that can be located in the material world and empirically verified. On the basis of this epistemological structure, such rhetorics characterize discourse as a neutral process requiring that the rhetor accurately transmit the experience of truth so as to recreate the experience for the audience. Given that truth and knowledge are located in the experience itself and pre-exist the communicative act, all elements of the communicative act have the potential to interfere with accurate transmission. To limit the potential for interference or distortion, both rhetors and audience must be neutral and objective, and language must function only as a "transparent device" (7-8). Providing a similar characterization of the rhetorical mode, Patricia Roberts-Miller contends that current-traditional rhetoric assumed a liberal public sphere structured by the "Enlightenment values of civility, rationality, neutrality, and autonomy" and in which "a good argument is presented in a rational, decorous, impartial manner, and appeals to universal principles" (18-19). As is the case with Berlin's description, the success of a communicative act in Roberts-Miller's requires that the inherent truth of the message be preserved in the process of communication. Both theorists, then, describe a system in which neutrality and objectivity are key. On the basis of these two characterizations, current-traditional rhetoric can be seen as having provided

colleges with a necessary means of confronting an increasingly diverse student population. Grounded in positivist and Enlightenment values, current-traditional rhetoric lent itself to the discourses of equality and inclusion underlying mass education. In her assessment of current-traditional rhetoric as the "pedagogical enactment of liberal political theory," Roberts-Miller considers that "the pedagogical tenacity of current-traditional rhetoric may well be the result of people's desire not to abandon the goal of a rational, critical, and inclusive form of policy discourse" (18). Understood in these terms, current-traditional rhetoric promises a mode of discourse accessible to all, requiring only knowledge of conventions and the ability to remain neutral and objective—neither of which are necessarily impossible on the basis of socioeconomic, gender, or racial difference.

When Du Bois first encountered this mode of rhetorical instruction, however, he was unaware of the relevant discourse rules and unsure of how to communicate the messages he wanted to communicate within them. In describing the challenge, Du Bois wrote that "I was at the point in my intellectual development when the content rather than the form of my writing was to me of prime importance. Words and ideas surged in my mind and spilled out with disregard of exact accuracy in grammar, taste in word or restraint in style." In this sense, Du Bois own immediate interest in expressive production conflicted with the college's concern with linguistic "accuracy" and neutrality, and his writing style, by the college's standards, required refinement. "I knew the Negro problem," he added, "and this was more important to me than literary form" (450). In further reflecting on his trouble with his first composition course, Du Bois recounts the experience of turning in his first theme in the following way:

> I knew grammar fairly well, and I had a pretty wide vocabulary; but I was bitter, angry and intemperate in my first thesis. Naturally my English instructors had no idea of nor interest in the way in which Southern attacks on the Negro were scratching me on the raw flesh…Senator Morgan of Alabama has just published a scathing attack on "niggers" in a leading magazine, when my first Harvard thesis was due. I let go at him with no holds barred. My long and blazing effort came back marked "E"—not passed!

Given Du Bois's own investment in the "Negro problem" and the bitterness and anger he felt in regard to the situation during his time at Harvard, it is, perhaps, no surprise that his first theme did not adhere to the college's standards of objectivity and linguistic neutrality by which they judged a piece of writing successful. In order to succeed under the current-traditional model of composition instruction, Du Bois needed to find a means of mediating his investment in his message and the college's investment in particular stylistic expectations.

Ever the dedicated student, Du Bois was committed to learning from the experience of failing his first theme and worked tirelessly to eventually pass the class with a "C." Over the course of the term, Du Bois "realized that while style is subordinate to content…solid content with literary style carries a message further than poor grammar and muddled syntax" (451), thus seeing the prime value in the current-traditional rhetorical mode as being its ability to "carry" a message further and potentially earn the message an audience otherwise unavailable to its author. Important, however, is the fact that "style" in this context remains tied to a perceived objectivity and neutrality, which at Harvard specifically often meant assuming the perspective of a white, well-educated

male. In this sense, Du Bois can be seen as having arrived at an appreciation of a style that could be seen as distinct from his message on the basis of its ability to assume an explicitly racial neutrality.

Having arrived at this appreciation, Du Bois elected to continue his training in composition and rhetoric and enrolled in Barrett Wendell's English 12 in the fall of 1890. In the same 1960 *Massachusetts Review* essay, Du Bois includes the nearly full text of a theme he submitted to Wendell and which Wendell chose to read aloud to the class. The fact that Du Bois had kept the theme and then dedicated half a page of his article to it more than fifty years later speaks to the significance of the achievement in Du Bois's eyes and suggests that the rhetorical training he received was, in fact, both memorable and influential. The theme, included below as Du Bois included it, describes Du Bois's reasons for enrolling in the Wendell's course:

> Spurred by my circumstances, I have always been given to systematically planning my future, not indeed without mistakes and frequent alterations, but always with what I now conceive to have been a strangely early and deep appreciation of the fact that to live is a serious thing. I determined while in high school to go to college—partly because other men did, partly because I foresaw that such discipline would best fit me for life…I believe, foolishly perhaps, but sincerely, that I have something to say to the world, and I have taken English 12 in order to say it well. (451)

While not responding to an issue necessarily related to the "Negro problem" and, therefore, treating a potentially less challenging topic in terms of mediating content and style, the above theme is interesting for no other reason than the relative vagueness that

results from its avoidance of race. Given Du Bois's previous education at Fisk, his later work on the Talented Tenth model, and his experience of racial difference at Harvard, it would not be unexpected that race factor into his discussion of his attending the University and of his choice of classes. On the basis of this theme, however, Du Bois could be mistaken for any one of his white classmates. While his "circumstances" and the "something" he has to say to the world might refer to race-related elements of his life and education, the theme itself, existing as a textual representation of its author, is effectively whitewashed as a result of its objective style.

If Du Bois's inclusion of the theme in the retrospective essay is a sign of its significance to him as both an achievement and as a learning experience, it becomes necessary to consider the particular influence that Barrett Wendell had on Du Bois's rhetorical development. Often in line with the rhetorical theories of Hill and Amherst's John Genung, Barrett's own work was founded on a conception of the elements and qualities of styles. The elements of style referred the components of written discourse (words, sentences, paragraphs, and whole compositions), while the qualities of style described the character of the written work (clearness, force, elegance). In his *English Composition*, which consisted of eight lectures he delivered at the Lowell Institution in 1891 and which was published in the form of a textbook in 1908, he defines style as the "expression of thought or emotion in written words" and argues that its purpose is to convey "the thought and emotion of every living being…an immaterial reality, eternally different from every other in the universe" (6-7). On the basis of this definition, he adds that "the task of the writer, then, is a far more subtle and wonderful thing than we are apt to think it: nothing less than to create a material body, that all men may see, for an

eternally immaterial reality" (7). In this sense, style becomes the means by which the "eternal difference" of every individual's experience can be given form and communicated to others. Within this description, current-traditional rhetoric and its concern with style is characterized as a means of encouraging true communication capable of moving beyond the limiting experience of difference and facilitating shared understanding.

Given Du Bois's experience of racial difference during his time at Harvard and his later characterization of the soul unmarked by race that transcends physical confines and lives above the Veil, Wendell's sense of composition as the construction of a "material body" for individual experience was likely compelling. In such a model, written rhetoric gave Du Bois the tools for a productive self-fashioning in the sense that the textual body he created could, in theory, communicate what his physical body could not. Returning to the efforts of Harlem Renaissance artists to re-represent black men and women through visual and verbal art, this engagement with written rhetoric can be read as a similar effort, but one in which the racial particular would more readily give way to an unraced, human universal. Such an approach to rhetorical style within the context of intellectual production, however, would undoubtedly call attention to the ways in which the textually mediated body remains, to use Wendell's words, "an imperfect symbol," contributing to the duality of self-awareness that Du Bois's refers to as "double-consciousness."

In the end, assessing Du Bois's contributions to the movement for racial uplift from the perspective of public-intellectual work accounts for how Du Bois negotiated the "impossible life" of the black intellectual within his historical moment. To effectively

respond to the "Tuskegee Machine," Du Bois could not merely counter Washington's programs and their underlying ideologies. Rather, effective response required that he and Trotter challenge Washington's dominant rhetorical mode and means of representation: his closed-market model of public-intellectual work. As a result of the public demand for alternative models, Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk* achieved a discursive mobility unknown to its author. Operating on the principles of supply and demand, the same principles Washington's industrial education programs took advantage of, the symbolic good circulated, and still circulates, within the public sphere, accruing additional symbolic capital and doing real, public work along the way. Part of this work was the creation of additional opportunities for discussion and deliberation among black men and women. By countering the inertia-driven silence on which the success of Washington's public-intellectual work depended, Du Bois's work opened the public sphere to discursive activity and, in the process, spoke to the significance of an educational model that would prepare all populations for this level of civic participation. That he named his paper *The Crisis* suggests that he saw the productive capacity of the crisis moment as an opportunity for meaningful and varied discursive exchange. That the voices populating *The Crisis* could do so only on the basis of the race crisis as he rendered it speaks to the influence of the public intellectual on the structures of public discourse.

Ultimately, this communication-based understanding of the public intellectual's social function is one of the most important for our contemporary moment. When they are attentive to the challenges facing free and productive public deliberation, whether these challenges are grounded in racial difference, literate ability, or some conflation of the two, public intellectuals can address their audiences in ways that confront these

challenges rather than adapt to them. The rhetorical construction of public-intellectual work can itself intervene in social issues by altering the form and function of public discussion. Du Bois used his position and the attention it afforded him to create forums for debate and conditions for public participation that welcomed black men and women who had previously been excluded. Today's public intellectuals can conceive of their roles in similar terms, asking whether their interventions create opportunities for additional discussion on the part of the publics that they address. The following chapter considers how Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem interacted with the feminist counterspheres created by women-run presses and periodicals in the 1970s, offering a further example of how public-intellectual figures either create or deny opportunities for discussion and debate.

CHAPTER III

SISTERHOOD'S SUPERSTARS: FEMINIST PUBLICS AND THE PARADOX OF PERSONALITY

In September of 1972, the feminist periodical *off our backs* confronted complications associated with the prominence of individual personalities within the women's movement with an article titled "twinkle, twinkle…the great superstar fiasco." Credited to regular contributor Georgia Jones, the piece took up the debate between Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem. Jones argued that this particular "difference of opinions" distinguished itself from previous ideological conflicts within the movement and was, thus, worth attention for two significant reasons: "One, that it is public—that is, receiving publicity—and two, beyond the personalities and issues involved, it gives us good reason to examine what and why movement superstars are" (2). While Jones's initial articulation of these two issues represents them as separate, her extended treatment emphasizes that they are integrally linked. The concern over publicity is almost exclusively a concern over publicity controlled by the "establishment press," and she contends that it is the mainstream media that has strategically selected for and made use of Friedan and Steinem as the faces of the movement. The particular modes of publicity responsible for the isolated debate's status, both among movement women and among their critics, are controlled by and reflective of forces external to the movement itself. In this way, they represent a type of discursive interference which Jones ultimately argues that the movement must recognize and actively resist.

In addition to revealing the magazine's own values and strategies for positioning itself within feminist textual networks, *off our backs's* response makes a number of

claims about the role of public-intellectual figures within the women's movement of the 1970s, claims reflective of the movement's efforts to complicate and offer alternatives to more "masculine" authority-driven models of public communication. By setting the magazine's characterization of the Friedan/Steinem debate alongside larger concerns surrounding the alternative literacies and media practices associated with the women's movement and feminist press, I suggest that the movement experienced a "paradox of personality" as a result of the rhetorical strategies it deployed in cultivating its own public forums and modes of active citizenship. As an example of the complicated relationship between a community's discursive practices and its publically visible leadership, this paradox offers productive insight into the challenge of public-intellectual intervention in social issues more broadly and emphasizes the central role of literacy practices in moments of social shift.

According to Jones, *off our backs's* treatment of the Friedan/Steinem debate was meant to overcome the influence that the establishment press had on the women's movement and on the public reception of the intellectual work associated with the movement's efforts. As "two of the media's favorite women's liberation superstars," Friedan and Steinem had been "pictured as generals in opposing camps" in its coverage of their activities. "Because the publicity comes from the establishment press," Jones writes, "it is neither sympathetic nor objective. Women are being affected by these stories, though, so we felt it was necessary to examine the issue from the viewpoint of the feminist press" (2). The discursive practices that Jones associates with mainstream media coverage have misrepresented the tension between Friedan and Steinem to the general public while also circulating a version of the debate that negatively influences women

within the movement and those the movement hopes to reach. In raising them to the level of "superstars," the media isolates Friedan and Steinem from the large numbers of women who comprise the movement, and in rendering the debate as a stand-off between "generals in opposing camps," it grounds this treatment in an analogy that masculinizes their work in the process of privileging conflict-driven hierarchical models of authority over inclusive and cooperative alternatives more characteristic of the movement's own rhetoric. *Off our backs's* intervention, therefore, takes the form of rhetorically minded revision, revision which grounds itself in the discursive norms and topoi representative of and dependent upon the alternative media forms at the center of the women's movement. In the process of "correcting" the mainstream account of the debate between two of the movement's most visible leaders, Jones asserts a discursively mediated authority that is based on her knowledge of the rhetorical practices of feminist discourse communities, and this more collectively constructed authority stands in contrast to the individualistic authority ascribed to both Friedan and Steinem in the mainstream press.

In what follows, I first examine *off our backs's* understanding of its role as a movement periodical contributing to the formation of feminist textual networks in order to account for Jones's assessment of Friedan's and Steinem's public-intellectual models as each relates to the movement's own communicative practices. Given Jones's interest in the particular discursive and rhetorical strategies characteristic of each women's public participation, I argue that her assessment speaks to the means by which public-intellectual work might contribute to the cultivation of functional literacies and rhetorical practices that are attendant to the goals of specific publics. The cultivation of such literacies was both a requirement of and a goal for feminist periodicals, and I draw here

on Ronald Walter Greene's treatment of rhetorical materialism and its relationship to the rhetorical subject and social knowledge. Noting that the materialist turn in rhetorical studies has largely encouraged the uncovering of "a generalized rhetoricality inherent in cultural forms and objects," he advocates for a different approach, one which would "pay closer attention to the emergence of a more concrete rhetorical subject, a subject that speaks and is spoken to, and the different techniques and technologies organized to transform individuals into a communicating subject." Within this model of analysis, Greene contends, "the rhetorical subject should be approached less as an effect of the constitutive process of a generalized rhetoricality and more from within a specific apparatus of production" (44). Such a model provides a productive lens for engaging with the feminist periodicals of the 1970s because it forces an awareness of the strategies that the women's movement employed for cultivating alternative literacies among its ranks and the ways in which its own rhetorical models became functional components of the social and ideological work it did.

For the purposes of the current project, the relationship between movement periodicals and the "superstars" associated with the movement in the mainstream press allows for consideration of how the movement's own "techniques and technologies" understood its contact with mass public discourse and of how the superstars accounted for this understanding. Offering two very different modes of public-intellectual engagement, Friedan and Steinem also modeled two distinct rhetorical approaches to movement discourse, and Jones's article characterizes these approaches from within the framework of a feminist press especially concerned with the pedagogical function of the movement's own textual network and communicative realm. The efficacy of the public-

intellectual models is, thus, linked not to direct social intervention, but to the discursive spaces and structures that each makes available for movement use. As this understanding of public-intellectual work pushes against contemporary biases favoring more tangible models of on-the-ground involvement,[17] it emphasizes the revolutionary potential of rhetorical intervention capable of creating and transforming discursive communities in the process of encouraging public discussion. Given this discursively focused conception of public-intellectual work, I begin my assessment of Friedan and Steinem as feminist public intellectuals with a discussion of the language's role in the formation of functional counterpublics, first generally and then in the specific case of consciously feminist publics. While I draw on general discussions of the "feminist press" at large, I ultimately ground my account in *off our backs's* own understanding of its mission and place within movement networks. To do so, I look specifically at the editorial statement appearing in the magazine's first issue in an effort to avoid homogenizing the vast array of varied voices and perspectives contributing to the larger networks. I work here to arrive at an understanding of the movement's literacy needs and of how the public-intellectual models Friedan and Steinem employed responded—or did not—to those needs.

Speaking to Others as Other: Counterpublics and Counterdiscursive Practice

The idea that language-use contributes to the formation of functional publics is by no means new, and that there exists a significant relationship between the two is more or less taken for granted in contemporary rhetorical scholarship. Jürgen Habermas laid the

[17] When considered in relation to the Gramsci/Foucault models surveyed earlier, Stanley Fish's *Save the World on Your Own Time* might be the most familiar example of contemporary work adhering to this perspective. In his characterization of what constitutes appropriate work for academics, Fish separates the cultivation and transference of knowledge from social change and political agency in a way that characterizes them as wholly incommensurate activities.

groundwork for such claims in his characterization of the press's role in the development of the early capitalist commercial system responsible for the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere. His work suggested that such developments in the "world of letters" ultimately facilitated a discursive relationship between traditional authorities and the people over whom they exercised control (20).What becomes important in Habermas's treatment are the particular forms governing these interactions. "The medium of this political confrontation," he writes, "was peculiar and without historical precedent: people's public use of their reason" (27). Here, political action is tied to the public performance of reason, and it is the "publicness" that lends both credibility and a sense of instrumentality to the performance itself. In emphasizing the means by which socially mediated concerns and interests infiltrated the public realm within the context of such performances, Habermas considers the role of the audience in the cultivation of the public voice. As culture circulated initially as a commodity and, in the process, created discursive spaces capable of sustaining public discussion and debate, it became a "topic of discussion through which an audience-oriented (*publikumsbezogen*) subjectivity communicated with itself" (29). In this sense, the bourgeois public sphere evolved out of a self-fulfilling process of community formation which assumed audience buy-in while creating audience demand in the very formation of the self as a publically-reasoning force. The performance of reason within these structural contexts responded to and initiated discourse with an audience, and the publicity of this performance, hopefully, resulted in discursive linkages connecting the speaker to the audience.

As an initiating model for the transformative possibilities of public discussion and debate, Habermas's conception of the public sphere is indispensable to work on the role

of language in the public realm. Nancy Fraser notes that his model, which "designates a theater in modern societies in which political participation is enacted through the medium of talk…the space in which citizens deliberate about their common affairs, hence, an institutionalized arena of discursive interaction," goes a long way toward countering work that unproductively conflates the realm of public discussion with the state and work that uses the term "public sphere" as a catch-all for anything outside of the familial or "private," household realm (58, 56-57). In her oft-cited "rethinking" of Habermas's public sphere, however, Fraser contends that his treatment is limited by its historicity and does not adequately respond to the political needs of the contemporary moment. In part, Fraser's critique responds to the somewhat Utopian inclusiveness Habermas assumes with his characterization of productive discursive interaction. For Habermas, Fraser argues:

> …the public sphere connoted an ideal of unrestricted rational discussion of public matters. The discussion was to be open and accessible to all; merely private interests were to be inadmissible; inequalities of status were to be bracketed; and discussants were to deliberate as peers. The result of such discussion would be "public opinion" in the strong sense of a consensus about the common good. (59)

Operating under the auspices of an all-encompassing equality, Habermas's public discussion offered participants a way to shared and collectively productive conclusions.[18]

In so defining itself on assumptions of access, parity, and consensus, the public sphere as Habermas articulated it effectively perpetuated, and even created, systems of

[18] Within the context of political theory, this equality is maintained on the basis of impartiality among an active citizenry that is committed to furthering general interests rather than their own. Nadia Urbinati treats such forms of political judgment in *Democracy Disfigured: Opinion, Truth, and the People*, emphasizing the role that public discussion plays in structuring public opinion relative to socially guided modes of decision-making.

exclusion and inequity that rendered opposition and disagreement invisible. Importantly, the public sphere's more sinister effects could frequently be tied to language-use itself. As Fraser notes "discursive interaction within the bourgeois public sphere was governed by protocols of style and decorum that were themselves correlates and markers of status inequality. These functioned informally to marginalize women and members of the plebeian classes and to prevent them from participating as peers" (63). In this sense, the access and inclusivity at the center of Habermas's model are, in fact, dependent upon a certain mode of linguistic conformity, which means that status inequalities can only be "bracketed" to the degree that one's public voice aligns with dominant norms. Participation in the public realm becomes a language game, and not every public citizen as access to the rulebook.

The discursive practices of the public realm influence literacy instruction and related pedagogical methods, which partially accounts for their conservative force. Patricia Roberts-Miller contends that a similar phenomenon is at work in conceptions of the liberal public sphere that inform the teaching of argumentation today. She argues that Enlightenment models of reason and rationality had the effect of rhetorically neutralizing certain linguistic and discursive modes in ways that obscure the value systems adhering to them and denigrate alternatives on the basis of their being inherently "irrational" (14). These value systems infiltrated schools and, consequently, continued to be associated with and characteristic of an educated populous. If participation in the public sphere is limited in such ways, however, public discussion and debate can be nothing other than conservative in the sense that they depend upon and, thus, enable hierarchies and

institutions already in place.[19] Despite its potential as a critical forum, a public sphere so dependent upon normative discursive conventions is, by design, nugatory, a point which further emphasizes the role of language itself in social intervention.

In attempting to recuperate some of the more productive aspects of Habermas's model in the process of addressing its shortcomings, Fraser offers critical theorists the notion of "counterpublics," suggesting that one major issue in the original model is the fact that it imagines a wholly singular public sphere and characterizes the emergence of secondary publics as a sign of political decline. Maintaining that a unitary discursive arena would be the mark of a prosperous and functional public system ignores the realities of stratified societies in which dominant and subordinate groups exists. Within such systems, the public sphere would necessarily adhere to the values of the dominant groups while further subordinating groups with unequal access by denying them "arenas for deliberation among themselves about their needs, objectives, and strategies." Subordinate groups "would have no venues in which to undertake communicative processes that were not, as it were, under the supervision of dominant groups…This, would render them less able than otherwise to articulate and defend their interests in the comprehensive public sphere" (66). Once again, power and influence are tied to language-use in the sense that a comprehensive public sphere would impose limitations on the discursive access of subordinate groups and would foreclose opportunities for alternatively structured discourse more attentive to the needs of such groups.

[19] This particular limitation is especially significant in relation to Jean Jacques Rousseau's model of republicanism, which understood freedom in terms of relative independence from such institutional rule and which invested in a communitarian form of authority. Political theorist Philip Pettit considers the degree to which this model is elaborated in Habermas's conception of a public sphere which relies on deliberative approaches to the common good (13-17).

Counterpublics capable of sustaining alternatively structured discourse reflective of non-dominant values and perspectives are, however, very much a part of progressive social evolution. Fraser originally refers to these communities as "subaltern counterpublics" in order "to signal that they are parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs"(67). In the process of creating new modes of communicative action, such groups arrive at a greater understanding of their shared social positions and the related realities of their lived experiences. In some ways, the formation of these counterpublics replicates the processes involved in the original formation of the discursive communities that would grow into Habermas's bourgeois public sphere, but the difference is that counterpublics work to resist institutionalization, to remain fluid enough to account for new needs that might arise, and to remain aware of their relative social status.

While Michael Warner is critical of some elements of Fraser's conception of counterpublics, he emphasizes the critical function of a counterpublic's oppositional self-positioning. In maintaining an awareness of its subordinate status, a counterpublic defines itself against a dominant "cultural horizon," and this "conflict extends not just to ideas or policy questions but to the speech genres and modes of address that constitute the public or to the hierarchy among media. The discourse that constitutes it is not merely a different or alternative idiom but one that in other contexts would be regarded with hostility or with a sense of indecorousness" (119). Operating within this understanding of counterpublic discourse, language-use is itself an exercise in critical agency to the degree that it self-consciously resists dominant conventions and embraces invented alternatives

that are reflective of the dominant conventions' shortcomings in the process of creating a community among otherwise isolated individuals.

Fraser offers the feminist movement as an example of a counterpublic that relies on such strategies, noting that "in this public sphere, feminist women have invented new terms for describing social reality, including "sexism," "the double shift," sexual harassment," and "marital, date, and acquaintance rape" (67). Jane Mansbridge makes a similar point about the power of counterdiscursive terminology to aid in identity and community formation: "Key texts and phrases by feminist writers have often framed certain issues, such as Betty Friedan's (1963) 'the problem that has no name,' Jane O'Reilly's (1972) 'click' in the first issue of *Ms. magazine*, or Audre Lorde's (1984) pithy conclusion, "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house'" (27). Within the context of the feminist counterpublic, the oppositional self-positioning to which Warner speaks serves as an inventional topos. The terms and phrases that arise from feminist counterdiscourse point to absences within traditional discourse that are reflective of a social inequality perpetuated by language, and the invented terms and phrases respond to these absences in ways that open up discursive space for new lines of inquiry.

Such an understanding of the motives underlying the discursive activities of counterpublics would suggest that the ultimate goal is to intervene in and transform the larger public structures responsible for their subordinate status. As Fraser writes of the activities of feminist counterpublics, "armed with such language, we have recast our needs and identities, thereby reducing, although not eliminating, the extent of our disadvantage in official public spheres" (67). Likewise, Warner writes that while

"dominant publics are those that take their discourse pragmatics and their lifeworlds for granted, misrecognizing the indefinite scope of their expansive address as universality or normalcy," "counterpublics are spaces of circulation in which it is hoped that the poesis of scene making will be transformative, not replicative merely" (122). For Warner, the transformative dimension of counterpublic discourse is tied to the "expansive nature" of public address generally, which he defines in relation to sociability and circulation. First, the "expansive force" attributed to public discourse is the result of its dependence on social bonds and on the creation of these bonds among strangers; publics "cannot be understood apart from the ways they make stranger relationality normative, reshaping the most intimate dimensions of subjectivity around co-membership with indefinite persons," and this mode of subjectivity is tied to the fact that "the address of public speech is both personal and impersonal" (76).

At a very basic level, Warner suggests that discursive interventions that hope to transform public speech at any meaningful level must be born of social connectivity. They must speak to someone, and they must express something which resonates with that someone on the basis of the speaker's own position. This community-oriented understanding of transformative public discourse aligns with Mansbridge's assessment of the ways in which the linguistic contributions of Friedan, O'Reilly, and Lorde mentioned above were dependent upon their communal context. Despite the fact that the phrases can be attributed to single individuals, the "discursive process is always collective. Producers of words choose their words by what they think will make sense to others. An author's anticipation of her audience already shapes the earliest version of what she says" (27). The linguistic interventions themselves are dependent upon a cognitive sociality that

allows the prospective speaker to intuit the needs of her future audience in the process of crafting her particular modes of self-expression. The ultimate result of this dependence on community and sociability is that the counterdiscursive realm itself has an informal judicial role in decisions about what linguistic offerings it finds useful or necessary. As Mansbridge describes it within the specific context of the feminist movement, once the individual commits the intervention to public address, "the movement then sifts and either discards or keeps and cherishes her words. The 'movement' is made up of women figuring out and telling one another what they think makes sense, and what they think can explain and help crack the gender domination that they feel and are beginning to understand" (28). Though the words themselves can be traced back to individual authors, their use-value within movement discourse is tied to their collective resonance and their ability to construct social bonds on the basis of shared sense-making.

Paul Strob emphasizes the transformative nature of this type of linguistic intervention in his assessment of the social role of language in the work of Kenneth Burke and John Dewey. While contemporary interest in the public sphere focuses on identity, access, or power, these same aspects of the public sphere might be more fully addressed by an analytical approach based in language and focusing on a "linguistic community coming together." Strob argues that both Burke and Dewey saw the ideal function of public discourse as answering "the call to alleviate the public's problems through a reconstruction in language". Recognizing that "the public faces a number of problems in circumstances continually born anew" and that "there is no way to deal with all of the public's problems in one Perfect Discourse," the public's task, as Strob understands it, "is not to create One True Language, but to confront specific problems

with an intimate understanding of the needs of the particular situation. To solve problems, the task is to reconstruct a specific thread in the discursive fabric that unites person to person in the public sphere" (43). The creative capacity of language becomes responsible for the social cohesion on which a functional public depends, but this ameliorative dimension of language is activated only by difference and disagreement, a point which speaks again to the significance of counterpublics and their discursive activities.

While counterpublic discourse does, as Warner notes, define itself in opposition to mainstream discourse and resist its governing norms, it is not without its own rules and legitimating standards. Daniel C. Brouwer and Robert Asen make a similar point about the "constraints" governing public engagement in any form, invoking Judith Butler's conception of gender performance as "improvisation within a scene of constraint" to suggest that all public participation is similarly determined by a set of rules and strict boundaries (Butler qtd. in Brouwer and Asen 10). Brouwer and Asen write that "social actors sometimes may loosen constraints on publicity—reforming institutions, removing exclusions, reshaping norms," but they emphasize that at other times, "these constraints may sustain privilege, maintain marginalization, delimit modes of action," concluding that "public engagement is shaped by the specific conditions of its emergence even as it seeks to refashion these conditions" (10). In the process of resisting mainstream norms and standards, that is, counterpublics are actively shaped by the conditions of their discursive interventions, and attempts at inclusivity and collectivity can just as easily lead to the further marginalization of certain voices and perspectives or the mere substitution of one privileged discourse for another. Ultimately, public-intellectual figures associated

with counterdiscursive movements and counterpublics must remain as aware of this possibility as they are of the transformative potential of rhetorical intervention in public discourse. I turn now to consider the ways in which women contributing to feminist-movement periodicals saw these periodicals relative to the discursive arenas constructed in their pages and in their networks of circulation.

Wresting a Women's World: Counterdiscursive Literacies and the Feminist Movement

As they worked to create discursive spaces suitable for feminist discourse, women's movement activists were well aware of the possible influence of such existing conditions on public engagement, particularly in terms of the material conditions associated with media outlets so thoroughly embedded in a capitalist system. One of the central goals of the feminist press was to offer outlets that existed outside of such systems and were capable of connecting and communicating with women. In large part, feminist organizations were not confronting complete exclusion from the discursive realms governed by these systems, but a more sinister partial and externally controlled inclusion. As Asen notes, exclusion in the public sphere "is never total because the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion operate on multiple levels. Participation in public discussions does not proceed only through voice and body; inclusions and exclusions also occur in the perceptions of others - the imagining of others. Sometimes, individual and groups "appear" in debates from which they are physically absent as images (linguistic and/or visual representations) circulate in public discourse" (347). The influence of this mainstream "imagining" on public discourse only amplified the movement's need to find points of entry into public discussion that were not already informed by similar

misconceptions or invested in maintaining them. This imagining, however, informed both the form and content of public discussions of feminism, meaning that the movement's intervention required attention to both subject matter and rhetorical strategies. Leadership models necessarily responded to each, as well.

I now consider the role of the feminist press and feminist periodicals in the formation of the feminist counterpublic of the 1970s in order to assess how the process of establishing alternative communicative networks influenced the rhetorical and discursive strategies the movement deployed, both among movement women and as the movement represented itself within mainstream media. Histories of the women's movement frequently draw on the textual artifacts associated with its efforts, but the literacies and related rhetorical skills responsible for each artifact's production and reception are just as often slighted in analyses more concerned with its informational function and dimension. The fact that these elements of the work can be so easily omitted speaks to the controversial nature of such literacies within the movement itself. Kathryn T. Flannery has worked to supplement histories that downplayed the centrality of literacy practices and the movement's related educational concerns. In particular, she notes that text-based exchanges tended to be overlooked in favor of face-to-face interactions, even in the women's own accounts of the movement and their work. She argues that the active "forgetting" of textual production, despite rich archival records and collections that attest to its significance, reveals the contested and complicated nature of the very literacy practices on which the movement was built. "Some movement participants expressed considerable ambivalence about the role of literacy in women's lives," Flannery writes, "because they recognized that it comprises not simply a benign set of skills but also

culturally loaded practices that had operated historically as class marker, sign of patriarchal power, or a means to exercise hierarchical authority" (2-3). Recognizing literacy as a performative component of the very institutions and systems against which they struggled led movement women to neglect that their participation both required and cultivated certain modes of rhetorically salient literate action.

For a number of movement organizers, however, the social and cultural consequences that attended traditional conceptions of literacy were central to feminist efforts. Activist Charlotte Bunch was one of the most vocal on this issue and consistently warned other organizers and movement participants against assuming that all of the women they hoped to reach were functionally literate. Citing both widespread illiteracy and the effects of the alternative media moving the country toward what she referred to as a "postliterate era," she emphasized that taking basic literacy for granted in the United States in the 1970s led to its being undervalued in terms of its revolutionary potential (249-250). Bunch effectively linked the social issues facing women to a gendered literacy crisis that required the movement's attention and active intervention. Reading and writing, she argued, were integral to the feminist project because they "provide a means of conveying ideas and information that may not be readily available in the popular media;" "help develop an individual's imagination and ability to think;" increase an individual's "capacity to think for herself, to go against the norms of social culture, and to conceive of alternatives for society;" "aid each woman's individual survival and success in the world;" and allow women to make use of the written word, which is the "cheapest and most accessible form of mass communication" (250). Ultimately, Bunch's sense of the role of literacy within the movement and the crisis rhetoric she employed in

underscoring its power aimed the movement's efforts toward the cultivation of a specific set of individual practices that contributed to an intellectual community capable of envisioning and demanding social change via the written word.

Cultivating such literacies among women, however, required public forums that modeled and created space for their practices, and it was this need that led to the development of the feminist press. Likewise, if movement women were to take full advantage of the opportunities for public participation that feminist media outlets offered, they needed to adapt to the discursive norms for which these outlets strategically selected. Based on the symbiotic principles at its center, my treatment of the relationship between movement periodicals like *off our backs* and the modes of textual production and consumption that came to be associated with the feminist movement of the 1970s is heavily influenced by Deborah Brandt's conception of "sponsors of literacy." As mentioned earlier, Brandt defines literacy sponsors as "any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold literacy—and gain advantage by it in some way" (166). Given that their theoretical and ideological interventions were grounded in textually mediated rhetorical action, movement periodicals certainly encouraged particular modes of literate engagement among their audiences. In many cases, periodical design itself became pedagogical as it modeled and sometimes offered direct instruction in purposeful and persuasive public discourse. Historian Tom Reynolds has made similar claims regarding the relationship between early twentieth-century mass-market magazines and the college system emerging at that time, arguing that the alliance between the two "offered training in a particular use or set of uses of reading and writing with advantages both to the buyer

and seller" and encouraged an understanding of literacy that would eventually be seen as "natural or inevitable" as a result of its pervasiveness (164). For the young men who were the magazines' target audience in Reynolds's account, collegiate life and its associated institutions set the standards for literate action in the public realm, and being active readers of the magazines gave these men access to the conversations at the center of this discursive community and to the economic and social privileges it conferred upon its members.

While the mass-market periodicals that Reynolds cites were complicit in furthering what might be understood as mainstream or traditional literacies, literacies which upheld existing power structures and reflected the values of these structures, movement periodicals like *off our backs* were more invested in establishing alternative literacies that subverted the discursive norms associated with patriarchal structures and institutions. As a result, the rhetorical strategies that these periodicals employed served a two-fold purpose. First, they actively worked to align normative discursive structures and forms with outgroup perspectives, a strategy which, when deployed effectively, succeeded in rendering the rhetorical and argumentative modes dependent upon these structures and forms ineffective within movement discourse. Having thus deactivated the rhetorics governing mainstream public discourse, the periodicals were able to imagine and build alternative structures of public discourse from the ground up and to ensure that these structures reflected and supported the movement's ideological goals and vales. To this end, the rhetorical action contributing to these new systems worked, too, as a model for would-be participants. This meant that the periodicals and participants must hold themselves to the standards that their initial critiques suggested. These rhetorics required

both oppositional and positive self-positioning; thus, they reflected both implicit and explicit engagements with the rhetorical strategies contributing to the movement. This makes movement periodicals rich sources for assessing the role of language and public discourse in the formation of counter-communities and in the leadership models that these communities develop and rely upon when it comes to interacting with mainstream media and representing themselves in more widely accessible public forums.

As a movement periodical that responded directly to these concerns, *off our backs* exemplifies some common rhetorical strategies deployed in the process of creating public forums capable of facilitating productive feminist discourse. In the magazine's first issue published in February of 1970, an editorial statement explains that "*off our backs* appears now at a stage when the existing institutions and channels for communication have ceased to meet the growing needs of the women's struggle" (1). This framing of the periodical as actively intervening in a communicative realm defined by failure and frustration as far as feminist discourse is concerned contributes a strong sense of rhetorical exigence to the magazine's mission. By suggesting that traditional discursive norms and forums are not capable of sustaining the type of public discussion and expression that the movement requires, the magazine positions itself as an invaluable outlet without which the movement will not be able to proceed.

On the surface, this intervention is a formal intervention rather than a theoretical or ideological one and is very much concerned with the issues of literate production that are important to both Flannery and Bunch. The formal critiques made against the mainstream media, however, are immediately linked to the ideological motives governing the movement in the way that the discursive norms that frustrate feminist discourse are

tied to patriarchal power structures. According to the editorial, it is the "male-dominated media" that has denied women "the space and freedom necessary to develop [their] journalistic talents," and this same media structure has "shown itself insensitive to [women's] needs, unaware of [their] oppression" (1). In so characterizing the gendered dimension of the mainstream media in its critique, *off our backs* effectively unites its female readership against a common enemy by emphasizing the connection between social identity and discursive style. If mainstream forums are incapable of facilitating feminist discourse and if this incapacity is the result of their being male-dominated and governed by masculinist values, then the only workable solution is for women to create and control forums of their own that actively resist the discursive norms responsible for the failure of the mainstream forums.

The case against the structural failure of these "public" forums is made even stronger by what can be read as the editorial's anticipation of accommodationist perspectives that might argue for women's working within existing structures in order to effect change from the inside out. The statement claims that, in fact, the women working in journalism and news media have been most forcefully affected by the media's "patterns of discrimination," patterns which "define and confine their news within the 'Style' and 'Fashion' sections" (1). Significantly, even the women who have in some sense infiltrated the media structures have fallen prey to the oppressive hierarchies that gender media content in ways that work against feminist news and discourse. This critique also offers further insight into the ways that the mainstream media has marginalized women's issues by relying on traditional conceptions of "news" that would create spaces within media outlets for less newsworthy pursuits, strategically maintaining

a kind of subordinate discursive space which would allow them to include female voices and perspectives while keeping them separate and while controlling their influence. Ultimately, responding to this particular mode of oppression as the magazine represented it required that the movement surrender the media structures that had been so forcefully co-opted by the patriarchy and build their own. “As we begin to create and support our own media,” the editorial contends,” the very definitions of news will change as we gain the power to describe it as we see it and as we make it” (1). For *off our backs*, the feminist movement had, in its dealings with the mass public, reached a point of definitional stasis that requires the creation of a more sympathetic and productive discursive sphere in which the term “news” refers to more than the expression and enactment of patriarchal agendas.

The pedagogical function of the feminist periodical has been well-documented, particularly in relation to how such publications sought to provide women access to information that the mainstream press and related institutions refused to make available.[20] My particular interest, though, is in how the literate and rhetorical practices fostered by these publications imagined and staged a carefully constructed mode of participatory citizenship in the process of building a pedagogical community rooted in feminist principles. This is the process to which the public intellectual could actively contribute. Adrienne Rich refers to this intellectual community as the "women's-university-without-walls," describing it as an extra-academic pedagogical realm that took “the shape of women reading and writing with a new purposefulness” and of “the growth of feminist bookstores, presses, bibliographic services, women’s centers, medical clinics, libraries,

[20] For an example of such work, see Flannery’s treatment of the distribution of women’s health information and her chapter on the “Do-It-Yourself Classroom.”

art galleries, and workshops, all with a truly educational mission" (126). Rich's description is significant in the way that it aligns individual reading and writing practices with the creation of communicative spaces in which such practices and the learning for which they allowed could be shared. In order to facilitate the transition from individual practices to public performances, the women's movement needed to find ways to control the media networks responsible for the dissemination of movement news and for providing women access to feminist public forums.

Identifying and enacting strategies for meeting this need became integral to assessments of public-intellectual models associated with the movement and its goals. At the same time, though, the structures of these feminist media networks and the rhetorical action for which they selected were largely at odds with traditional models in which individuals acted as spokespeople. In her work on the Women in Print Movement of the 1960s, Trysh Travis offers a productive reading of the relationship between the movement's goals and the textual networks it organized. Emphasizing the movement's attempt to "create an alternative communications circuit—a women-centered network of readers and writers, editors, printers, publishers, distributers, and retailers through which ideas, ideas, objects and practices flowed in a continuous loop," she contends that "the movement's largest goals were nothing short of revolutionary: it aimed to capture women's experiences and insights in durable—even beautiful—printed forms through a communications network free from patriarchal and capitalist control" (276). Resisting the hierarchical structures characteristic of the male-dominated media and public sphere was a primary goal for the women involved in constructing this "alternative communications circuit," and within the context of the periodicals, this resistance took the form of

editorial collectives that sought to share work and responsibility among a team of women with diverse perspectives on the movement and its goals.[21]

While the feminist network's emphasis on community and collectivity over the individuality and authority characteristic of traditional print media aligned with its ideological mission, teamwork was, in part, also a matter of necessity. As Junko Onosaka notes, women's organizations were among the many groups who benefitted from the technological advancements associated with offset printing that allowed for the relatively quick production of cheap papers and pamphlets, but the process required a number of people completing various tasks related to both assembly and duplication (15). Even beyond the material production of individual papers, however, feminist publishing depended upon the extended networks that Travis characterizes, and Onosaka explains that "women in feminist publishing were keen to take control of all aspects of publishing—from typesetting, photographing, printing, and binding, to selling—if they were to successfully circulate their information and disseminate feminist values" (43). Without the capital of traditional and commercial presses, feminist publishers were unable to pay women for their work or their service, which meant that generating interest and involvement required convincing prospective volunteers of the press's goals and values and cultivating an allegiance independent of financial compensation for the time and effort devoted to producing and distributing the magazine. In this way, the periodicals and presses were really only sustainable to the degree that they were able to build a community and function collectively.

For *off our backs*, these structural concerns and the role they played in the magazine's mission featured heavily in the first issue's editorial statement. Titled "dear

[21] For more on editorial collectives, see Junko Onosaka's treatment of the rise of feminist publishing.

sisters," the statement's form invokes epistolary conventions, and it also appears alongside two letters from women not directly involved in the magazine's production but interested in its project. By addressing their audience directly and showing an immediate willingness to share layout space, the magazine's editorial collective uses the statement to initiate a discourse that invites a response. Right away, *off our backs* portrays itself as an open forum within which editorial perspectives interact with and create space for readers' voices. The text of the statement only furthers these principles by grounding the magazine's success in the active participation of its audience. "In order to succeed," the statement reads, "we need you to use this paper to relate what you are doing and what you are thinking…We intend to build a national network of correspondents and welcome women from all parts of the country who will report regularly on the activities of their groups and cover the news" (2). In so representing itself as a collaborative project and making its readership responsible for its success, *off our backs* sought to disrupt more traditional publishing models that upheld strict boundaries between reader and writer and that drew on a more centralized and authoritative editorial power.

The fact that the two letters appearing alongside the statement speak to issues of distribution directly contributes to the statement's work. The first letter is from Barbara Burris of the Women's Liberation Coalition of Michigan, and Burris expresses excitement about "the idea of a Women's Newspaper to counter the male dominated 'movement' press," writing that "your paper – or should I say our paper? – *off our backs* may be the answer we are looking for." Based on this alignment with *off our backs's* mission and the collective "ownership" she invokes when referring to "our paper," Burris asks that she be sent bulk copies of the magazine for her coalition to sell and says that

they might eventually be able to get them on newsstands (2). This letter models the type of movement activity on which the feminist press depended. Recognizing the periodical's potential, Burris offers to take an active role in its distribution, thus extending its reach and expanding it readership by her own efforts. Given the statement's emphasis on the readers' role, Burris is offered as an example of productive participation.

Below Burris's letter is another from Ellen R., a postal worker in New York City. Ellen writes that she has seen the magazine's address on letters and expresses her interest in the journal, asking that they "either send [her] a sample copy or tell [her] the subscription rates" (2). While Burris's letter reflects how the periodical established and cultivated a readership through feminist channels that were already open, Ellen's letter speaks to a more diffuse version of community building. Interestingly, she learns of the periodical as a result of the correspondence it receives, rather than as a result of the material it puts out. While subtle, this point emphasizes again that the magazine is a collective enterprise as interested in hearing from other women as it is in speaking to them. Even within the context of this first issue, the magazine makes clear that its readers have an active role in furthering its reach; Ellen might never have heard about the journal had readers not sent their letters. Also significant is Ellen's position as a postal worker. While Burris's letter speaks to a physical space in which feminist news can be distributed, a number of women would not have access to such spaces. These women would depend upon the postal service, and including Ellen's letter suggests that this mode of involvement is possible. The models of distribution emphasized reflect the magazine's goal of giving all women access to feminist news. Below these two letters also appear advertisements for jobs associated with distribution, including one directed at students.

Both of the advertisements emphasize the movement's need, suggesting that such jobs actively contribute to the movement's goals.

In all of these ways, the layout of the page on which the editorial statement appears contributes to the goals and ideas that it expresses directly. The fact that the letters are published alongside the editorial statement emphasizes the periodical's function as an open forum welcoming text-based contributions from its readership. The letters' contents, however, speak to the various roles open to women wishing to contribute to the periodical's mission and reflect the magazine's goal of extending the feminist network already in place by widening its communicative channels. By offering Barbara and Ellen as models for how women might get involved or take action, and by doing so using each woman's own words, the magazine makes an otherwise invisible portion of the feminist publishing process visible. Finally, both the letters and the advertisements speak to the significance of distribution within the context of these goals, and they emphasize the degree to which the magazine's dependence upon other women for such tasks contributed to the statement's characterization of the collaborative publishing structure central to the feminist textual network. The rhetorical design of the page on which the editorial appears, thus, performs its goals and models its larger discursive principles

Karlyn Kohrs Campbell has discussed the community-oriented and connection-based communicative styles in feminist discourse in her work on feminine rhetorical style. According to Campbell, female speakers "strategically adopted what might be called a feminine style" in order to negotiate the cultural tension between public presence and gender. Feminine rhetorical style is personal in tone, relies on experience and

example, draws on inductive reasoning, welcomes audience participation, moves to encourage the audience's identification with the speaker, and aims at empowerment in the sense that its goal is to convince its audience that they can take action to produce change. Significantly, this style reflects the rhetors' "experiences as women and was adapted to the audiences and experiences of female audiences," but it is not an inherently "female" style and is often employed by men as well as by women (12-13). What is important about Campbell's identification of a feminine rhetorical style is the way in which it exemplifies the relationship between rhetorical action and social identity within the public realm and gives insight into the strategic value and persuasive potential of rhetorical forms that adapt to and make use of this relationship.

Extending Campbell's treatment of the influence of feminine rhetorical style Bonnie J. Dow and Mari Boor Tonn argue that the style can play a role in mainstream political discourse and can work to offer alternative models of political judgment. Dow and Tonn write that "the characteristics of feminine style are part of a synthesis of form and substance that works to promote an alternative political philosophy reflecting traditionally feminine values" (287). They argue that feminine discursive strategies like those that Campbell discusses contribute to the formation of what Rita Felski calls "the feminist counter-public sphere," "which operates to provide potential for oppositional ideology that counters hegemonic ideas of universality" (287). Significant here is how Dow and Tonn link discursive forms associated with feminine values and identities to alternative epistemologies and modes of judgment that have the capacity to actively intervene in social discourse within the a traditionally masculinist public realm. The rhetorical strategies associated with feminine style carry with them knowledge modes and

value systems that can infiltrate public discourse and reshape public consciousness. Ultimately, this alternative discursive style and its ability to transform the public discussion about women's social roles were what feminist periodicals were hoping to cultivate in their pages. Public-intellectual figures associated with the women's movement, however, were not always as ready or willing to push against mainstream modes and media, the same modes and media that were responsible for their public positions. Individual personalities like Friedan and Steinem, therefore, were not always contributing intellectual work attentive to the movement's larger discursive needs, and it is to this issue that I now turn.

What is a Feminist Public Intellectual?: *off our backs* and the Freidan/Steinem Showdown

At the opening of the article "twinkle, twinkle…the great superstar fiasco," Grace Jones assumes an interdependent relationship between rhetoric and social values in the process of characterizing the debate between Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem. This debate has been treated especially poorly in the establishment press, and it is this treatment that further emphasizes the need for *off our backs's* intervention. In addition to pointing out the counterproductive nature of the "generals in opposing camps" analogy, Jones speaks to the background contexts possibly motivating mainstream interest in the debate, namely significant events such as the National Women's Political Caucus and Democratic Convention. She suggests that the particular rendering of the debate within the establishment press has sensationalized differences within the women's movement rather than engaging with the larger issues surrounding the role of the feminist movement

in these national political forums. Taking this critique even further, Jones emphasizes the detached and shadowy nature of the press's reports, describing the stories as circulating "rumors" and "vague charges" in addition to their being "neither sympathetic nor objective" (2).

In this first section of the article, Jones effectively characterizes the failure of the mainstream media to represent the relationship between Friedan and Steinem in any sort of productive way, basing this critique on the relatively opportunistic nature of the coverage's timing and on the questionable epistemological and rhetorical conventions structuring the coverage itself. In so rendering the mainstream treatment, Jones creates demand for the feminist account she offers. Because these types of stories are circulating and are affecting women as they do, she contends that it is "necessary to examine the issue from the viewpoint of the feminist press" (2). In this sense, Jones's intervention is an intervention grounded in a different set of discursive practices that will allow her, within the context of *off our backs*, to treat the issue more fairly and more productively. Unlike the establishment press, she has knowledge of and skill in the discursive practices that will allow for a more effective engagement with the women involved, their contexts, and their points of view.

Once she has created demand for the account that is to follow, Jones moves to frame her discussion of Friedan and Steinem, and she begins by focusing on the structure of the interviews she conducted with each woman. This discussion of the interviews themselves follows a statement about the ways the women had interacted with the establishment press since the debate had begun receiving attention. She explains that Friedan contributed an article to *McCall's*, gave a press conference that was "straight

press only," and was then available for interviews following the article's publication. Steinem, on the other hand, "refused to comment to the press" (2). Because this account appears before her discussion of the interview strategies that each woman employed in their interaction with her, it functions implicitly as a productive point of comparison. Given the interest in alternative discursive modes at the heart of *off our backs's* mission, it is no surprise that women trained within these discursive realms might expect certain types of public participation from women positioned as movement leaders and be attentive to the ways in which these types of participation structured their involvement in various media forums.

The periodical's particular interest in its relationship to more mainstream media forums becomes clearer in Jones's explanation of Steinem's willingness to speak with her. "Gloria Steinem agreed to talk to me," she explains, "because *oob* is a movement paper. She feels that this subject cannot and should not be given to the establishment press for distortion" (2). For Steinem, any engagement with the establishment press subjects the movement to misrepresentation. Again, the suggestion seems to be that the discursive practices structuring the mainstream media are themselves ill-equipped for engaging with women's issues. In order to mediate this risk, Steinem takes a protective stance, and her media practices might be described as isolationist. Within the context of her own strategy for media engagement, as it is explained to Jones, feminist issues like the debate between her and Friedan should be confined to the feminist press, where they can be responsibly represented by those who have a vested interest in them.

In contrast to Steinem's strategy, Friedan's involves not only engaging the mainstream media outlets but also engaging them on their own terms. In this sense, her

strategy might be seen as accomodationist. Her willingness to use the debate's rhetorical currency to her advantage in the process of generating interest in her *McCall's* article and other work for and with the mainstream press itself suggests a certain compliance with traditional discursive practices and modes of publicity, especially given the masculinist rendering of the debate within mainstream contexts. This accomodationist stance applies, too, to her engagement with the feminist press. Jones explains that she spoke with Friedan on the phone for an hour and that, when she looked back at her notes, she recognized much of what she had written down as "Betty quoting Betty in her *McCall's* article," explaining that she, thus, will not "differentiate between our phone conversation and her article when I quote her" (2).

Jones's account of her interview with Friedan reveals much about how Friedan's own discursive practices inform her position relative to the women's movement and her modes of public-intellectual engagement. The fact that Jones feels no need to differentiate between their phone conversation and the *McCall's* article suggests that Friedan did not adapt her discursive modes to various media forms, which might be read as a challenge to the cultivation of alternative literacies and discourse practices that the feminist press saw as integral to the work of the women's movement. In this way, the discursive and rhetorical choices that Friedan makes in her public-intellectual work reflect her ideological stance regarding the strategies most useful in women's efforts to achieve social equality. As Jones's describes, Friedan favors a "slow" and "conservative" approach that will keep women from becoming "alienated" socially. To this end, she asks that women "be careful, avoid 'male backlash' at any cost, and 'obey at least the minimal

unwritten rules'" (2). Based on Friedan's media practices, these "unwritten rules" seem to include those governing discursive norms within the public sphere.

Jones ties Friedan's approach to linguistic convention, too, explaining that the *McCall's* article upset her primarily because "it was so thoroughly laced with a definition of WOMAN that would not greatly disturb the most conservative man" (2). Given that redefinition was one of the central rhetorical strategies employed by the feminist press as it moved to develop a communicative realm free from the oppressive influence of masculinist norms,[22] Friedan seemingly strategic conservation and rhetorical deployment of these very terms likely read either as a betrayal or as a mark of unpardonable ignorance. Either she was purposely choosing to work within the linguistic norms and conventions that the periodicals had identified as responsible for large parts of women's oppression, or she was so removed from the movement's current projects that she could not contribute to its mission. To take this critique even further, the fact that she used her interview with *off our backs* as an opportunity to quote from her *McCall's* article is reflective of a citational strategy that upholds the primacy of traditional print media and relies on the authority associated with the static and carefully edited texts at the center of this model. In quoting herself, Friedan again works against the discursive strategies and values characteristic of the feminist press in the sense that she replicates rhetoric appearing in mainstream venues and, in the process, relies on a univocal defense dependent only on her own thinking and experience and effectively untouched by the experience of other women or movement participants. On the basis of these particular

[22] Movement organizers like Bunch certainly addressed this strategy directly, but periodical titles themselves might be one of the best places to look for the deployment of this rhetorical strategy. Periodicals like the still-popular *Bitch*, for instance, looked to reclaim words typically used against feminists and women's groups and to offer women definitions of the reclaimed terms that were empowering and more reflective of the feminist values and lifestyles.

modes of engagement, Friedan fuels the mainstream media's fire, even going as far as implicating Steinem and the "*Ms*. Crowd" in the persistence of the "personality element that has plagued her efforts to publicize the issues" (2).

Once again, the media practices that Jones ascribes to Steinem stand in direct contrast to those she ascribed to Friedan. Steinem not only meets with Jones in person after refusing to comment to the mainstream press, but she also makes a point of speaking with another woman present. "Margaret Sloan and Gloria Steinem speak together," Jones explains, "so I was able to talk with them both. Gloria always speaks with another woman as a method of proving to the press and other women that the women's movement is full of women who can express themselves as well as she" (2). In addition to recognizing the role of the feminist press within the movement and the significance of how it counters the mainstream press in its coverage of movement news, Steinem shows that she is well aware of the rhetorical and the discursive practices that it has cultivated in order to productively intervene in mainstream discourse. The fact that she speaks with another woman present effectively deconstructs the more traditional and individualist leadership models on which the "generals in opposing camps" analogy is founded. It also works to reflect the movement's larger investment in representing a multiplicity of voices and perspectives whenever possible. Within the context of the article, Jones, too, works to preserve the discursive structure of the interview based on this choice by differentiating between Steinem's and Sloan's contributions and quoting their statements directly rather than summarizing them as often as she did Friedan's.

In addition to the way the choice to speak with Sloan structures the interview itself and puts pressure on traditional models of public-intellectual leadership, the

rationalization that Steinem offers Jones further reflects the movement's own aims and strategies. As was the case with the Friedan's rhetorical choices and self-representation within the communicative realms structuring the movement, Steinem's, too, speak to and reflect her understanding of the movement's mission and the means by which it hopes to achieve social equality. The fact that she wants to prove the capacity that women have for rhetorical performance and to disrupt patterns of thinking that might attribute her public position to her being one of few women capable of such performance reveals an attention to the role of literate rhetorical action within the public realm. It also speaks to the pedagogical function of the movement overall. In much of her work, Steinem represents the movement's work in terms of its responding to a literacy crisis, one that is in some ways the result of an assumed incapacity.[23] Here, though, it becomes clear that offering herself as a model of the rhetorically literate woman is not enough. The movement's success depends upon the cumulative and community-based rhetorical effort and public engagement reflective of these community's desires as well as their abilities.

Ultimately, Jones's account of each woman's public media practices leads to an assessment of their particular leadership models from the perspective of the feminist press. It is at this point in the article that Jones moves to consider the influence of "superstars" directly and to consider the leadership models most appropriate for the movement given the type of public the feminist press seeks to sustain. In a section with the subheading "who's who," Jones considers the status each woman has and how that status has been cultivated. In her discussion of Friedan, Jones characterizes the influence of *The Feminine Mystique*, describing the enthusiasm with which the book was received.

[23] See also Steinem's essay "Ruth's Song (Because She Could Not Sing It)," in which Steinem recounts her mother's struggle with anxiety and depression alongside her own literacy practices and relationship to feminism.

This reception, Jones argues, is partially responsible for Friedan's "founding mother position" (2), and Jones notes that *McCall's* has referred to her as "'the founder of the women's movement" and that Friedan as even said of herself that she "started it all" (3). While conceding the influence of the book and recognizing that Friedan put the publicity it received "to work to organize the thousands of women to whom her book spoke" (3), Jones nonetheless critiques this "founding mother" model on a number of fronts.

First, she emphasizes the ways in which the book as a statement of the movement's challenges and goals is too static a text to accurately reflect the needs of the movement as they adapt to new conditions and shift to account for a wider a range of women's experiences. Second, she points out that the work of the women's movement had, in fact, begun before *The Feminine Mystique* hit shelves. Other women had been contending with issues of social equality before Friedan, and Jones names Bella Abzug, Edith Van Horn, and Simone De Beauvoir as specific examples.

While Jones does not link these two critiques to the particular model of intellectual engagement underlying Friedan's participation in movement discourse, it is clear that a connection exists. Like the *McCall's* article, which the magazine refers to as Friedan's "definitive" statement on the movement and on her relationship with Steinem, the book relies on and navigates a realm dependent upon traditional print media and the intellectual authority that attends it. As a result of its participation in this system, it cannot sustain and does not allow for the consistent revision at the center of the movement's own textual modes, and it must adhere to common understandings of authorship. The significance of authorship here also speaks to the ways in which the book influences Friedan's self-positioning relative to the movement and characterizes the type

of discursive intervention that the book is believed to have made. In adopting the "founding mother" position and in attributing the movement's beginnings to the book's publication, Friedan gives the movement a cohesive origin story that can be traced directly to her initial intervention. Such a narrative certainly has persuasive power in the sense that it appeals to traditional models of linear historical progression and seems to unite the multitude of voices that make up the women's movement currently. This unity is, however, a façade that, in fact, does the movement a disservice in the process of making the movement more palatable for the mainstream press.

Again, Friedan's intervention can be understood as a productive intervention that worked within traditional discursive structures in order to generate awareness of an alternative point of view. The problem, however, is that the movement and its goals had since outgrown these structures, at least according to the feminist press and women like Jones and Steinem. Friedan's intervention is not, at this point, productive in the sense of generating new discourse or rhetorical resources for movement use. It continues to circulate, in the form of her book and article, within the mainstream media, as it was designed to do, but it does not makes space in this media realm for the exercise of the alternative literacies that the movement has developed. In part, the issue surrounding the nature of Friedan's intervention can be understood in relation to the rhetorical choices informing her constructed audience. As Chaïm Perelman and Lucia Olbrechts-Tyteca contend, "every social circle or milieu is distinguishable in terms of its dominant opinions and unquestioned beliefs, the premises that it takes for granted without hesitation: these views form an integral part of its culture, and an orator wishing to persuade a particular audience must of necessity adapt himself to it" (20-21). Based on the centrality of

audience within productive rhetorical action, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca note that much about an audience's, group's, or civilization's values and favored epistemological processes can be learned through examination of the texts associated with them.

For the many rhetors contributing to and working within the women's movement of the 1970s, audience was certainly a concern. They were, however, often writing for what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca refer to as "composite audiences," audiences comprised of "people differing in character, loyalties, and functions" (21), and the ways in which they reacted to this challenge, in particular, reveals much about their aims and methods. Because of the focus on discursive and communicative norms at the center of the feminist press's mission, the strategies employed for contending with the needs and expectations of potential readers who might currently exist outside of movement discourse carried a large amount of ideological weight relevant to the rhetor's beliefs about the nature of social equality.

In Friedan's case, the fact that her work conformed to traditional and standard discursive modes and appealed to dominant narrative structures and related topoi reveals her anticipation of a mainstream, commercial readership. Within the context of the feminist circles, the book's rhetorical structuring serves another purpose. In some sense, engaging with the book's ideological stance requires female readers to adapt to its relatively normative discursive modes, with Friedan assuming that they can or will rather than adapting to theirs. The book, then, becomes something of a model for the type of social mobility that this approach, in Friedan's opinion, affords, remarking from its position atop the best-sellers list, "See where playing by the rules got me?" Jones references Friedan's point that "'If [women's] goal is to participate in society as equals,

[they] must move through the doors that are open'" (2), and this is exactly the rhetorical strategy of which she makes use. Her goal is not to open new lines of inquiry or to introduce new discursive modes more attentive to the movement's aims. Rather, it is to move through the communicative channels as they are and to model the possibility of this approach. While not always unproductive or problematic, such a strategy does prove challenging within the context of the women's movement because so much of the movement's effort was directed at cultivating and creating outlets for alternative forms of expression, argument, and persuasion. Friedan's model essentially undoes or ignores a significant amount of this work, and because it employs dominant discursive modes, rather than working with and through the movement's alternatives, it has the advantage of social currency and momentum. Thus, it becomes the model that others must define themselves against and respond to within the context of their own rhetorical work.

In some ways, Friedan's public-intellectual model creates a closed -market system much like the one that I argue Booker T. Washington's created. Just as many of the industrially educated black men and women would be incapable of public rhetorical performance, the women who have learned from the feminist press and adopted its discursive strategies would be barred from participating in the mainstream realms that Friedan believed would be most effective. Given the pedagogical aims of the movement, a large number of the women involved in the feminist press's projects had learned to participate in public discourse only within the context of its own forums, forums which were structured to resist the values informing their mainstream and mass-public counterparts. The cultivation of such alternative literacies becomes, on the basis of Friedan's model, a liability for the movement and does the individuals involved a

disservice in the sense that this set of practices does not translate to the larger forums like those in which Friedan's book and article circulate. While the feminist press seeks to open discursive space for all women, Friedan appears to adapt a more traditional spokesperson-based intellectual model in which the women who can speak in the mainstream press and to the mass media in ways that are persuasive, meaning that they adhere and appeal to the culture's dominant doxa, should speak for the rest. Unlike Steinem who consciously resisted speaking for other women in such ways, Friedan, Jones suggests, welcomed the opportunity and saw it as necessary for the movement's overall growth.

The inequality that Fraser characterizes as ingrained in and perpetuated by the discursive structures and conventions governing mainstream discourse was exactly what the feminist press sought to address, and Jones's assessment of public-intellectual leadership models reflects this goal. In encouraging conformation and suggesting that equality would only be achieved by working within the existing systems and institutions, Friedan's approach did not account for the fact that playing by the rules might mean succeeding at the expense of other women. Likewise, her model did not attend to the significant revolutionary potential of rhetorical style within the public sphere as it interacted with and informed the formation of social identity. As Fraser describes, "public spheres are not only arenas for the formation of discursive opinion; in addition, they are arenas for the formation and enactment of social identities. This means that participation is not simply a matter of being able to state propositional contents that are neutral with respect to form of expression. Rather…participation means being able to speak 'in one's own voice,' thereby simultaneously constructing and expressing one's cultural identity

through idiom and style" (68-69). Based on Fraser's assessment, Friedan's model did not allow for true public participation, but rather for a stunted approximation of participation that stood at odds with the version toward which feminist periodicals endeavored.

Given Jones's position within the feminist press, her assessment of Friedan and Steinem certainly reveals a similar understanding of the role of discursive style and convention within public participation. The link between this interest and productive leadership models becomes even clearer when she moves from her critique of Friedan to consider the issue of superstardom directly. She explains that "Americans, lacking an aristocracy, have created the superstar mystique. American women, socialized to depend on an authority figure, find it very hard to be superstars, yet have a very great need to see women who are" (3). Here, Jones emphasizes the socially constructed nature of superstardom generally and for women in particular in terms of the pervasive influence of authoritative and hierarchical structures of power. As a result, the ascendency of women to the position of superstar can be productive in the sense that it shows the potential for women to assume such position but problematic in the sense that it can allow other women to remain in the background positions that they have always assumed in male power structures and institutions. Likewise, the women who rise to these higher positions are subject to the same power structures within the context of the mainstream discourse. Jones writes that "for the women who makes it there is the joy of finally getting someone (outside of the movement) to take her seriously," but she notes that "the press reminds you that even as a superstar, you are a second class superstar (the fact of the cat-fight publicity demonstrates that)." Despite this possibly uncomfortable treatment at the hands of the mainstream press, Jones suggests that women must recognize the media as "an

important medium for our growth" and includes as a parenthetical Steinem's point that "'we can't forget that the press is a powerful organizing tool'" (3). On the other side of the issue is the fact that assuming such positions also opens women to criticism within the movement and among other women. Within this context, "everyone is waiting and testing to see if the women UP THERE is a megalomaniac or just an all right sort who can't help that it happened to her, but doesn't let it go to her head." Ultimately, Jones concedes that "there is a 'damned if you do, damned if you don't' dilemma for stars" given this complex system and the socializing forces at work (3). It is at this point in the article that we begin to see the "paradox personality" emerging from Jones's critique. The women's movement needs leaders, but movement discourse resists traditional leadership models. The women's movement needs a public face, but movement discourse cannot be represented in the mainstream press.

This particular iteration of the publicity paradox shares some structural features with the similar challenges faced by the early female rhetors. In her treatment of feminist rhetoric, Campbell considers the ways in which the public sphere and rhetorical performance were gendered masculine and the problems that this posed for women who wished to speak publicly: "The public realm was competitive, driven by ambition…Similarly, speaking was competitive, energized by the desire to win a case or persuade others to one's point of view. These were viewed as exclusively masculine traits related to man's allegedly lustful, ruthless, competitive, amoral, and ambitious nature. Activities requiring such qualities were thought to 'unsex' women" (11). While Campbell writes in regard to early nineteenth-century women, a look at Bunch's assessment of women who participated in public rhetoric during the women's movement suggests that

very little had changed between the two periods. Bunch explains that "the media's portrayal of feminism and its leaders caused some resentment and confusion" because "as the movement grew, the media began to single out certain women as acceptable spokespersons for causes that received legislative legitimacy and widespread public attention. Though still frequently caricatured, these 'safe' leaders were most often while, middle-class, straight women who were portrayed as only wanting to learn how to play like the boys in order to get their share of the existing pie" (124). While women in Bunch's moment had much more access to the media and to a public audience than they did during the time which Campbell refers to, the same gendered dynamics were nonetheless at play. The media selected for acceptable spokespersons, and these spokespersons were "unsexed" in the sense that they were portrayed as endeavoring toward a masculine mode of public participation but as not fully meeting the requirements. The idea of "wanting to learn how to play like the boys" speaks to this, and the reference to "playing" and the idea of "getting their share of the existing pie" suggests that the same competitive and glory-based motives Campbell discusses continued to inform notions of "productive" public discourse during Bunch's time.

For Jones, Steinem is more effective than Friedan at navigating the dilemma facing the movement's leadership and at actively engaging its challenges. Steinem is aware of how her position as a "superstar" could negatively influence the women with and for whom she works, and this awareness is, Jones suggests, a necessary first step in the direction of responsible leadership. Reflecting on how this awareness surfaces in Steinem's public presentation, Jones writes:

> Why does Gloria feel she must begin her speeches by declaring that she has colds and dirty laundry just like everyone else? She's probably responding to our need to reaffirm our potential through her success; to reassure ourselves that the line of humanity and womanhood that holds our world to hers is still intact. Such reassurance is healthy among people who are just beginning to flex their abilities as long as it is a projection of our potential, not an authority beyond our control. That authority, which most of us consider almost unapproachable, is created by a system whose values are far from those of the movement. (3)

In this sense, individual superstardom can be productive for the movement at large, but only to the degree that it remains reflective of the community's potential rather than suggestive of the individual's exceptionality. The latter is especially counterproductive within the context of the women's movement because it reintroduces the hierarchies and individualistic values structuring the patriarchal systems the movement has worked to deconstruct.

Jones and *off our backs* were not, however, the only ones to recognize the challenges to female leadership and public intellectual presence posed by these social incommensurabilities. In "Woman Power and The Leadership Crisis," an article originally published in *Ms*. in July of1980, Bunch directly addressed similar issues in similar terms. She wrote that the movement's attempts to find functional leadership models "is complicated by society's inability to honor or even acknowledge leadership from women, as well as by our own desire to create new styles of leadership that are not male-defined or hierarchical" (122). Like Jones, Bunch ties the search for these new styles to a rejection of existing models undergirded by masculinist values and privileges

and a reconceptualization of what "leadership" can mean, effectively drawing on rhetorical strategies of redefinition like those mentioned earlier. "Reacting to the power concentrations and star systems of male-dominated groups," she writes, "the women's liberation sector was opposed to hierarchy and in favor of collectives, which were seen as a means of eliminating 'stars,' sharing power, and fostering in every woman the responsibility to develop her own capabilities" (123). Of particular interest in Bunch's characterization is the point about "fostering in every woman the responsibility to develop her own capabilities." Bunch ties the cultivation of these capabilities to collectives, but I contend that rhetorically conscious public-intellectual leadership models could have much the same function. Granted, in order to have such a function and to be productive within the context of the feminist movement, a "superstar" would necessarily occupy a very precarious position in which she is both apart from and a part of the movement at large.

While Jones suggests that Steinem is actively working to maintain a model that is more productive for the women's movement, she follows this discussion with a characterization of the media's role in sustaining such models. Because "a superstar is the child of the media," she writes. "Women can't CHOOSE HER…But with the help of a feminist press, women can support her or expose her as not speaking for the women who are the movement" (3). Within this context, the feminist press becomes responsible for policing public-intellectual work associated with it mission. Again, then, the magazine itself becomes a functional component of public-intellectual potential, but its readership is asked to make use of the feminist press in supporting or rejecting the individuals attempting to speak for them. While this particular understanding of the role of public

intellectual in regard to the feminist movement does fit within the movement's larger discursive goals in terms of its granting ultimate power to the participant-audience and its emphasis of the collective over the individual, it avoids accounting for the position of these particular superstars within the mainstream media. If women are to use the feminist press to support or expose the stars speaking for them, how is this support or exposure to become public enough to counter the prevailing assumptions about the stars that circulate to these wider audiences? It is at this point in the discussion that the relationship between the feminist press and its discursive strategies and the mainstream media becomes significant and intersects with contemporary work on the challenges of public-intellectual intervention.

Using the lens of public intellectual to account for women involved in the public sphere is challenging because so little work has been done on the gendered dimension of public-intellectual engagement generally. Most current work on public intellectuals is concerned with how they move between the institutional contexts from which they derive their intellectual authority and the public sphere, but this particularly contextual displacement has not always been the one responsible for the challenges facing feminist intellectuals.[24] Thinking about Friedan and Steinem as public intellectuals requires considering the ways in which they aligned themselves not with the traditional intellectual institutions like universities but rather with the intellectual community on which the women's movement itself was founded. Given this particular alignment and the pedagogical nature of the work that they did, I contend that movement women in leadership positions faced a number of the same challenges faced by traditional

[24] For a discussion of the distance between academic feminism and movement-oriented feminism, see Stabile.

intellectuals seeking to intervene in public discourse and make their work known outside of the academy. For such traditional intellectuals, discursive modes and rhetorical style are the keys to public presence, and feminist intellectuals are subject to similar, if not harsher, assessment on this front.

In her book-length study on styles of public intellectual engagement, Anna Young offers a schema for assessing the connection between public-intellectual work and rhetorical style, saying that rhetorical style gives academics a means of seeing "the term *public intellectual* not as a noun but as a verb" (11). Despite the fact that neither Friedan nor Steinem were directly linked to universities, their public engagement required similar attention to rhetorical style in the sense that they moved to account for the fact that the particular social realm with which they were aligned also had its own styles and modes of representation and required them to adapt these in productive ways when it came to representing the movement more public forums. To this end, Young's conception of fluidity becomes significant. In viewing Freidan's model in this light, we might describe her style as too fluid in the sense that it does not adhere to the rhetorical norms associated with the group for whom she is positioned as a spokesperson and whom she is meant to represent within these larger realms. Steinem's style, by contrast, might be seen as too rigid. She refuses to engage the mainstream press, neither adapting her style to theirs nor trusting their discursive modes to represent her message or position. The problem here, though, is that the press nonetheless portrays her and her relationship to the movement in ways most reflective of their goals. While, as Cheryl Glenn has persuasively argued, silence or abstaining from media engagement can be a powerful rhetorical move in its own right, the problem in this particular context is that the alternative literacies associated

with the movement require a public outlet. While the feminist press itself provides this outlet in the short-term, the ultimate goal of the movement is to change the dominant realm. As Travis describes, women working to establish a feminist press "believed that they would not only create a space of freedom for women, but would also and ultimately change the dominant world outside that space" (276). In the process of constructing a self-sustaining discursive system, that is, movement organizers and participants hoped for a more expansively transformative social shift.

Given this goal, it becomes important that the discursive modes for which feminist periodicals select and in which they train movement participants begin to infiltrate the mainstream media's practices. Otherwise, the skills that women have worked to cultivate through participation in the movement will only serve to separate them from these spheres of access and power. A productive intellectual model in this context would, then, need to strike a balance. It would need to find strategies for introducing and making use of alternative discursive models more reflective of the movement's goals and rhetoric within mainstream contexts. Steinem's speaking with Margaret Sloan is suggestive of such a strategy in the sense that it forces the press to acknowledge multiple perspectives and viewpoints and works against easy understandings of leadership and public intellectual guidance. The fact that this strategy is deployed only in the feminist press, though, robs it of some of its potential power. The movement's aims and goals really require an opening up of the mainstream discursive sphere, and the superstar's more public presence perfectly situates her to facilitate this opening. While such an approach to public-intellectual work here could be seen as adhering to an accomodationist stance similar to that which Friedan advocated in the sense that it requires making use of the

discursive structures and forms in place, it differs from Friedan's in the sense that it moves through the doors already open only in order to bust through the windows. By using the public presence afforded them by the traditional leadership models on which the mainstream press operates, feminist superstars had the access necessary to begin to introduce alternative discourse practices to larger audiences and to begin to open these forums to movement women who had cultivated similar practices within the context of feminist forums.

Ultimately, these modes of influence are important for public-intellectuals and the groups with which they are affiliated on a larger and more general scale. Just as Du Bois's and Washington's public personae shaped the social and political realms available to black men and women, and did so in drastically different ways, so too did these feminist intellectuals'. Public performances of intellectual work, including the discursive strategies to which they adhere and which they make available for public use, actively influence public discourse overall. It is important that would-be public intellectuals attend to this function of public-intellectual intervention, asking how their own rhetorical action or rhetorical modeling creates opportunities for meaningful public participation, especially on the part of groups or individuals frequently silenced or excluded. As discussed earlier, literacy crises often reflect anxieties over who is allowed to participate publically and politically and over what skill sets such participation requires. For this reason, arguments that adhere to rigid or conservative notions of what it means to be literate can function to exclude the very alternative voices and perspectives on which true democracy depends. These moments of exclusion call for public-intellectual intervention.

In contrast to the previous two, the following chapter examines public-intellectual work more directly concerned with literacy and educational reform. I read Cold War-era educational documents to consider how wartime crisis rhetoric characteristic of the World Wars continued to influence discussions of American public schooling into the late 1980s. Like public intellectuals responding to long histories of racial and gender inequality, public intellectuals writing during the Cold War confronted problematic conflations between literate ability and social identity. On one side, the country's technological needs trumped all, and the only way to truly contribute to your country was to be scientifically literate and productive. On the other side, the precarious state of world affairs required the democratic habits of mind and modes of critical thinking more characteristic of the humanities. It was in this modeling of democratic participation that Americans could set an example for citizens of other countries. Public intellectuals on both sides of the debate, however, faced the public pressure of Space Race crisis rhetoric, and I consider how the different thinkers and documents worked with, or against, this pressure.

CHAPTER IV

LAUNCHING THE AMERICAN CITIZEN: COLD WAR CRISES AND NATIONAL LITERACY NEEDS

In 1981, Ronald Reagan's Secretary of Education T.H. Bell assembled the National Commission on Excellence in Education, tasking the group of 18 educators, administrators, and politicians with examining the quality of education in America. After 18 months of data collection, a process which included soliciting papers from experts, hearing testimony from interested parties at a series of meetings and panels, and sifting through letters from concerned citizens, the Commission issued the 1983 *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform*. Fewer than seventy pages in length, *A Nation at Risk* made up for its brevity with its bombast and elicited equally extreme responses from both supporters and critics. In this way, *A Nation at Risk* set the tone for discussions of education in the years following its publication, and its brand of crisis rhetoric became characteristic of discussions of Reagan-era educational reform. *A Nation at Risk*'s rhetorical structure, however, reflects a much longer history of educational debates in the United States, and its framing of education as integral to national security and American identity aligns with a number of treatments of educational policy and literacy that appeared following World War I. Given the needs of the nation within global contexts, certain modes of literacy education were seen as more attentive to the Cold War climate than others, and these modes of education were subsequently linked to new models of American citizenship and political participation. As education became politicized in these ways, it, unsurprisingly, became a hotly contested topic, and a number of major intellectual figures contributed to the central discussions and debates.

One of the central educational conflicts that emerged at this time was that between the hard sciences and the humanities. Given the role of technological advancement in the Cold War era, many argued that scientific literacy and achievement were central to maintaining a position as a world power and that American citizens had a responsibility to contribute to this end goal. An intellectual speaking for this perspective was Glenn T. Seaborg, the Nobel Prize-winning nuclear chemist. As a lead member of the Commission responsible for *A Nation at Risk*, Seaborg worked closely with both educational and political institutions; he held a professorship at the University of California, Berkeley and served as chancellor from 1958-1961 while also acting as adviser to every American president from Truman to Clinton. Under Kennedy, Seaborg was appointed Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, and both Johnson and Nixon called upon him when the nation faced issues related to nuclear power.[25] As a scientist laboring on the forefront of both education and politics, Seaborg contributed to *A Nation at Risk* in ways that reflected a national interest in technological and nuclear development, an interest that was linked to anxiety surrounding the unmatched discipline and quick growth of Soviet programs seeking the same.

On the other side of debates over educational reform during this era was Mortimer Adler, the infamous public philosopher and founder of "Great Books of the Western World." Dedicated to introducing philosophy and philosophical thought to the masses, Alder regularly wrote for large popular audiences rather than for academic specialists, and he adhered largely to Aristotelian traditions and methods, preserving an interest in

[25] Seaborg's close relationships with the Washington elite were an aspect of his experience that he wrote about at length in his autobiographical work. His 1998 book *A Chemist in the White House: From the Manhattan Project to the End of the Cold War*, for example, recounts his work advising national policymakers on issues ranging from national arms control to elementary education.

"common sense" derived from deliberation in the public sphere and a commitment to moral and ethical models linked to republicanism. His *How to Read a Book* sought to connect everyday people to the cultural knowledge and understanding embodied in great literature and was itself a best-seller and reprinted numerous times. In keeping with his previous work, Adler's *1982* educational manifesto *The Paideia Proposal* represented the humanistic approach to educational reform. Rather than aiming to create a generation of scientists, American education, in Adler's perspective, should concern itself with modeling and cultivating citizenship practices grounded in deliberative engagement with a range of subjects. It should instill in students habits of mind that would allow them to thoughtfully enter into discussion with others. In its most extreme version, the scientifically interested party was seen as advocating for a vocation-based education that was more concerned with the cold facts of production and quantifiable innovation, while the humanists maintained a focus on the qualitative aspects of education that encouraged philosophical engagement with complex topics like the human-rights and justice based issues that stemmed from new global contexts and tensions.

As mentioned above, both approaches responded to the same set of ideological and economical challenges that defined the late Cold War climate of the early 1980s. Adler and his group were working on the *Paideia Proposal* while Seaborg and the Commission completed their inquiries, and the *Proposal* was first published less than a year prior to *A Nation at Risk*. While the two educational plans were not direct responses to one another or in immediate dialogue, they represent two very different intellectual approaches to education that were nonetheless born of the same crisis-heated crucible. As comparators, they also speak to the intellectual careers of Seaborg and Adler, functioning

as capstones to their decades of work on national education. While Adler arguably had more control over the *Proposal* than Seaborg had over the *A Nation at Risk*, many of the latter's central concerns do link to work Seaborg did individually in the years leading up to its publication. In what follows, I consider the intellectual perspectives and rhetorical approaches both men took to the issue of national education in late Cold War contexts as a means of examining how functional rhetorical intervention required a reconceptualization of American citizenship based on the needs of a nation very much at risk in more ways than one.

In addition to the direct influence of the Cold War on the American public and the place that this public envisioned for education, I work here to account for the intellectual climate more generally as it was affected by the moment's characteristic anxieties and their public expression. The rise of anti-intellectualism following the World Wars and peaking, or perhaps plateauing, in the 1950s and early 1960s is one of the largest forces structuring intellectual work produced during this time. A trend materially embodied in everyman Eisenhower's victory over the egghead Adlai Stevenson in 1952, the anti-intellectual movement seems oxymoronic when placed in its Space Race context and considered alongside the nation's desperation for technological and scientific advancement. An important feature of the anti-intellectual mindset as it manifested among the American people, however, was the distinction between functional brainpower, typically applied to scientific and technological fields, and ineffectual philosophical musing, associated with humanities fields and the soft sciences.

In his study of the development of the "egghead" as a highly politicized cultural figure, Aaron Lecklider considers "the role of brainpower in shaping political and

cultural movements" aimed at everyday Americans, and he notes that these movements responded to "the tension between affirming the intelligence of marginalized groups and resisting the narrowly defined labeling of intellectuals in the United States" (9). Significantly, brainpower was seen more in terms of production and social capital, whereas such definitions might exclude, or functionally occlude, the potential benefit of more cerebrally confined intellectual effort. The characterization of intellect as a requirement for social mobility still influenced discussions of brainpower, though, and the multitude of forms it took among various groups, especially when these forms seemed to be in conflict with one another or when they were applied for contradictory ends. In the first half of the twentieth century, the very idea of intellect and its role in American culture was in constant flux as a result of the shifting identity of the American populous itself, in part because the idea of intellect as social capital could function both conservatively and subversively. According to Lecklider:

> Intelligence represented a site of conflict that put the concerns of ordinary Americans—especially those who were not profiting from brainwork—at the center of a discourse concerning ideology and identities; class and conflict; and the shifting politics of race, gender, and sexuality. The tension between those who sought to use intelligence to enforce and maintain their power and those who imagined intelligence as a site of empowerment for ordinary men and women simmered below the surface of even the more seemingly innocuous cultural texts and practices. (227)

In this sense, the majority of American people had access to the social capital linked to intelligence only insofar as intelligence was decoupled from the intelligentsia or

academic class and could be tied to their everyday lived experiences and labor-based contributions. The national need for active engagement with and functional response to the cultural climate and its pressing anxieties facilitated this decoupling. Given the lived experience of the Cold War and the character of the Soviet threat in terms of scientific production and tangible technological creation, intellectual thought in, of, and for itself was rendered as a waste of resources, and within wartime contexts, there was no greater sin than wastefulness.

The most complete account of the anti-intellectual climate dominating American political development in the second half of the twentieth-century is Richard Hofstadter's oft-cited *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*. Published in the 1960s, the monograph engages the anti-intellectual movement at a relatively nascent stage, and the forces it outlines were only amplified by the time Seaborg and Adler made their contributions to the Cold War educational debate, although these forces took a slightly different form in the years following Sputnik. Focusing on the 1950s as the time at which the concept of anti-intellectualism entered the national consciousness and on the 1952 election between Stevenson and Eisenhower, Hofstadter writes that "the political ferment and educational controversy of the 1950s made the term *anti-intellectual* a central epithet in American self-evaluation; it has slipped unobtrusively into our usage without much definition and is commonly used to describe a variety of unwelcome phenomenon" (6). Here, and elsewhere, Hofstadter suggests that the term itself came into being and gained social currency as the name for a problem that Americans identified within their own political existence and national experience. He does, however, note that the emergence of the term in the 1950s does not mean that the problem itself, or the tendency to diagnose the

political atmosphere in question as a problem, had never been part of the American experience before. Such an assessment of the issue would suggest a lack of familiarity with American history in a general sense. "Our anti-intellectualism is, in fact, older than our national identity, and has a long historical background" (6), Hofstadter writes, contending that regard for the intellectual within American society is subject to the fluctuation and tends to increase or decline in a cyclical fashion across time.

Given that the Cold War intellectuals were primarily concerned with developing a model of American identity that would inspire a set of citizenship practices capable of sustaining this identity against the Soviet threat, the centrality of anti-intellectualism itself to the historical development of this national identity is a significant point to consider. The fact that Hofstadter links the concept and its popularity to its rhetorical force within crisis contexts makes this connection all the more resonant. Explaining that anti-intellectualism is itself subject to a number of definitions and argumentative usages, Hofstadter writes that the term's "very vagueness makes it more serviceable in controversy as an epithet," which speaks to the concept's function as a scapegoat for social or political ills that might not be attributable to a single source otherwise. Much like the concept of crisis itself and its capacity for sustaining argumentative engagement grounded in a problem/solution dichotomy based on its rhetorical deployment and framing, the amorphous concept of anti-intellectualism functions as a persuasive-because-common issue that can be held responsible for a range of public discontents.

In order to provide a history of the concept, Hofstadter must define it in some way, and he offers the following: "The common strain that binds together the attitudes and ideas which I call anti-intellectual is a resentment and suspicion of the life of the

mind and of those who are considered to represent it; and a disposition constantly to minimize the value of that life" (7). Immediately, this definition speaks to a notion of one's individual citizenship practices in terms of what they contribute to a national project. Within these contexts, dedicating oneself to living "the life of the mind" is a selfish endeavor, and the intellectual's seeming refusal to produce anything tangible for the betterment of his or her fellow Americans is suspicious insofar as it is un-American. In prioritizing the productive capacities of citizenship and the communal elements of national life, such an orientation to intellectual "work" constructs a value-system in which this work is judged in terms of what it fails to produce rather than in terms of what it can actually offer. Against the backdrop of wartime rhetoric and national policies obsessed with mobilization efforts, expedited production, and the hyper-efficient use of all available resources, this characterization of intellectual practice is easily seen as dangerous idleness and as a waste of human capital that the nation, facing its most drastic global crisis, could not afford. I turn now to this rhetorical backdrop and its discursive development within the contexts of the debate surrounding educational reform from World War I to the Cold War.

The Wartime Paradigm: Educational Policy, Literacy, and International Conflict

According to *A Nation at Risk's* introduction, the Commission was formed as part of Secretary Bell's response to what he viewed as 'the widespread public perception that something is seriously remiss in our educational system,' a perception linked to the international tensions of the Cold War and to the related uncertainty surrounding America's role as a world power. The "risk" referred to in *A Nation at Risk*'s title was

real and pressing, and the rhetoric of *A Nation at Risk* itself amplified this sense of danger in the process of proffering its educational assessment. Significantly, the threat that *A Nation at Risk* identifies is unlike others in the sense that it is a threat from within. Despite the nation's strong educational history, "the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our future as a Nation and a people" (5). Even so, the threat was continually framed within its international context and in terms commensurate with the experience of war. "If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today," *A Nation at Risk* reads, "we might well have viewed it as an act of war." The destabilizing force of the country's poor educational system is rendered here as powerful enough to have been weaponized and used against an enemy nation. Education is integral to national security, and attacks on the system of education are attacks on the nation itself.

As far as the Commission is concerned, however, the American people are themselves responsible for the dire state of things: "As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. We have even squandered the gains in student achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge. Moreover, we have dismantled essential support systems which helped make those gains possible. We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament" (5). Following the advances made at the height of the Cold War, Americans as a people mistakenly laid down their textbooks and microscopes; they became complacent and allowed the systems by which they had achieved relative security to fall to waste. Interestingly, this disarmament differs from the aggressive act of war perpetrated by an antagonistic foe in that it is dangerous

because of its passivity. Inaction on the part of American citizens has led to a decrease in educational achievement, and responding to the Commission's report will require a more active engagement.

Framing the country's educational needs in terms of international contexts, even when those contexts were determined by philosophical or ideological tensions not (yet) materially realized, was a rhetorical strategy employed in much earlier reform movements and their supporting documents as well. During WWII, a number of government groups and agencies issued reports regarding the state of education relative to the nation's current wartime status and in preparation for the country's post-war needs. These discussions of education and its role in national security aligned with the rhetorical strategies deployed in treatments of militarization and industrialization, and these tropes remained central into the late Cold War period, influencing the public-intellectual work of both Seaborg and Adler. One example of these reports is *Higher Education under War Conditions*, a handbook published by the University of Chicago's Institute for Administrative Officers of Higher Institutions in 1943 and edited by John Dale Russell, who would later become President Truman's Director for Higher Education. The Institute was organized for four purposes:

> (1) to provide opportunity for the discussion of common interest to administrative officers; (2) to stimulate critical discussions of current trends and proposed reforms in higher education; (3) to describe the methods employed under, and results secured in, experiments carried on in various colleges and universities; and (4) to stimulate further study of the many perplexing problems that arise in the field of higher education. (111)

Working toward these ends, *Higher Education under War Conditions* tackled four topics: "(1) voluntary education under the auspices of the armed forces; (2) use of educational institutions by federal agencies; (3) experiences of institutions with specialized training programs for the armed forces; and (4) problems of institutional management under war conditions" (111). Despite representing primarily militaristic and governmental perspectives regarding the intersection of public education and the wartime experience, the handbook nonetheless illustrates the central tensions structuring the nation's educational concerns at large and exemplifies a number of the rhetorical approaches commonly taken to address them.

In keeping with the quatrain structure outlined above, I identify four pervasive rhetorical topoi at work in the majority of the essays collected in the handbook, as well as in other texts constructed for similar purposes: crisis, efficiency, political neutrality/individual freedom, and victory. All four themes appear again and again in discussions of American education from WWII through to the Cold War. The first of these should come as no surprise given the central focus of this larger project. Within this particular wartime moment, though, a functional and persuasive rendering of the crisis moment in terms of educational need required a significant redistribution of anxieties. Given the very real, very evident threats associated with WWII, encouraging Americans to pay attention to the day-to-day activities of their relatively safe and secure schools posed a challenge. Why should resources be directed to the classrooms when men were dying overseas? Recontextualizing the crisis in a way that situated the country's needs in terms of long-term solutions that mobilized the forces on the homefront was a common strategy used to mediate these seeming inconsistencies. Still, limited resources were a

reality that Americans faced every day in the form of rations and related patriotic ad campaigns. For this reason, the rhetoric of efficiency likely proved especially persuasive, fitting with the overall narrative of the country's needs and recognizing the sacrifices that those on the homefront made for the war efforts. Based on this particular topos and its deployment in documents concerned with educational reform, education was to be viewed in terms of wartime industry; nothing was to be wasted, and every piece and possible resource was to be channeled toward the country's ultimate goals.

Despite the ways that the rhetorics of crisis and efficiency suggested collectivity and cooperation, maintaining a commitment to the central American values associated with individual freedom and one's right to choice remained important. After all, what good were such cooperative efforts if they were not aimed at protecting the cornerstone of American ideology? Responding to this need was the rhetoric of political neutrality, which the authors of these educational handbooks deployed to remind readers what exactly they were fighting for. In the process of contributing to the war effort by supporting and enacting such educational policies, citizens were maintaining their own freedoms. Such policies, then, might seem politically motivated or as if they were encouraging conformity, but the authors were quick to remind readers of the larger stakes and ultimate ends. In this way, the various rhetorics can be seen as working together in a telescopic fashion: arguments focused on the larger and more enduring issues of American ideology could be deployed to justify arguments concerned with the specific needs of the crisis moment as it was being experienced.

The final commonplace deployed consistently in wartime educational handbooks is that which concerns the need for victory. After relocating the crisis, identifying its

resource-based needs, and linking both of these issues to the conservation of American freedom, it seems necessary to remind readers that all remains dependent upon America's victory on the world stage. While efforts at home can and should be considered in terms of the contribution they are making to these longitudinally oriented aims, the real and most immediate goal is to win the war. Again, the effect here is that readers, including parents and teachers as well as educational administrators, were made to see themselves as contributing to a situation that was geographically distant to most, both in terms of their cooperative efforts and in terms of their individual commitments. Overall, these four topoi interact in *Higher Education under War Conditions* and in other educational handbooks focused on wartime schooling reform in ways that highlight the contested place of education during times of crisis as well as the need for a unified national narrative defending educational interests.[26]

In the *Handbook on Education and the War*, the published proceedings of the National Institute on Education and the War that was sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education Wartime Commission at American University at Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1942, the same primary concerns dominated. The result of a joint effort, the volume was edited by Administrator of the Federal Security Agency Paul V. McNutt and Commissioner of the U.S. Office of Education John W. Studebaker. Included in the front of the volume is a statement from Franklin D. Roosevelt addressing the "educators of the United States:" "Our schools, public and private, have always been molds in which we cast the kind of life we wanted. Today, what we all want is victory, and beyond victory a world in which free men may fulfill their aspirations. So we turn again to our educators and ask them to help us mold men and women who can fight through to victory. We ask

[26] For more on the political implications of educational reform during the 20th century, see Loss.

that every school house become a service center for the home front" (III). Blurring the lines between those at home and those abroad, this statement, appearing alongside Studebaker's introduction to the collection, speaks to the movement for the unification of American effort and the deployment of the country's resources. If the end goal was victory, then every citizen's work must be understood in terms of how it contributed to that goal. This figurative militarization of the home front is even more direct in the introduction:

> The army of education has a real job to do in helping to supply our army of fighters and our army of workers with properly trained men and women. Educators know the size of their job, but they do not shrink from it. On the contrary, from the very moment the war was forced on us by the Axis powers, educators have been asking, 'In what ways can we help the most?' (IX)

Those responsible for educating America's youth are themselves figured as an army, and Studebaker is sure to emphasize the extreme nature of their task and the courage with which they have already faced the enemy. The current conflict is not a war that America has chosen, he notes, but that has not stopped citizens for doing their part to help the war effort. And, as always, the stakes are clear: "For win this war we must, if we are to destroy the threat of world-dominant fascism, and preserve for ourselves and for the world our heritage of democracy and freedom" (IX). Based on his rendering of the educator's role in the war effort, Studebaker links education to the preservation of American identity and to the potential for democratic freedom the world over.

As was the case in the first handbook, this handbook's overall suggestion was that education was integral to victory in wartime and that educational systems could be

further adapted to account for wartime needs. In making the case for such targeted adaptation, Paul McNutt's "Statement to the U.S. Office of Education Wartime Commission Concerning the Work of the Schools in Relation to the War" emphasized the immediacy of the country's requirements. "It has become increasingly evident that the present world conflict has reached such proportions and such a stage that every force at the command of the people of the United States must be thrown into the war, at the earliest possible moment," he explained. "The time of victory will be reduced in proportion to the extent to which we fully utilize these forces. Education must make its special and particular contribution to the struggle. Fighting with learning is the slogan of victory" (XIII).

In service of this less-than-catchy slogan, McNutt and other contributors characterized the current moment in terms of its exceptionality. Given that the country had never before faced a challenge as great as that it faced currently, the standing systems and approaches were inappropriate, and continuing along already-forged paths was indefensible. Change was the only answer. In some cases, this notion of exceptionality was extended to the educational forces asked to undertake the adaptation efforts in ways that further cemented their relationship to the war effort. McNutt, for instance, proclaimed that "never was there a time when educational workers faced heavier responsibilities for adjusting the school program to a great national need. Never was there a time when these workers might take greater pride in the significance of their work, never a better opportunity to serve children, young people, and the Nation" (XIII). By acknowledging that the current demands made of educators were unlike anything ever asked of educators of the past, McNutt begins to unhinge educational policy from all that

is traditional and conventional. If contemporary educators want to rise to the needs of their country, they will need to innovate.

In an even more direct treatment of this final point, McNutt suggests that part of what the current moment requires is a redefinition of education itself. Linking this requirement again to the crisis moment, he contends that "the urgency of the situation requires that important adjustments be made in the programs of the elementary and high schools immediately. There is not time to be overly strict in definitions regarding the functions of education" (XIII). Again, the idea is that an overly traditional approach to education would be inappropriate and inattentive to the country's actual needs. Interestingly, McNutt seems especially aware of American education's long-time preference for tradition and convention. In offering his own definition, one suited to the wartime climate, he emphasizes the fact that education itself has, in fact, undergone a steady evolution over the years and is comfortably subject to rethinking:

> There have been many definitions of education. I will give you a short one suited to this grave hour. Education is the shortest distance between two points. Our Nation today is a contestant in the greatest war of all history. All our energies, all our resources of men and materials, are being mobilized to carry us from the position of contestant to another point—victory. Education can help us to shorten the distance to victory. (4)

By suggesting that education has meant a number of things and referred to a number of methods over the course of American history, McNutt simultaneously emphasizes the continuity of change and highlights the exceptional character of the current moment. While the crisis moment requires unprecedented effort, the forms of these practices

themselves are not unknown or unfamiliar within the country's development; therefore, they are not to be feared. The particular definition that McNutt provides here is important in its references both to efficiency and to wartime victory as the end goal of American educational reform. Within this context, education is instrumentalized, rendered as a means of making the war effort as efficient as possible. Working from such a definition justifies any practices or activities that serve this function in terms of their "educational" potential. The needs of the war effort take precedent, and the goal of education is to help rather than to hinder.

Acting under the auspices of the Civic Education Service, Director of the Service Walter E. Myer and his colleague Craig Coss, managing editor of *The American Observer* and the *Weekly News Review*, published a volume entitled *Education for Democratic Survival* that took up issues similar to those confronted by the National Institute on Education and the War. Published in the same year, the work responded to the same urgencies and concerns, but did so from a less military-driven perspective. Nonetheless, Myers and Coss deployed a number of the same rhetorical strategies in the process of making a case for their favored educational programs. As expected, the book opens with a description of the crisis moment:

> We are threatened today with the loss of almost everything we hold dear—comforts, security, freedom, independence, life. With our backs to the wall we fight grimly for survival. We expect eventual victory after a long struggle, but a victory won only through bitter sacrifices and sorrow. It is a situation which a few years ago would have seemed utterly unthinkable, but here it is. (vii)

Once again, we have the moment represented as a serious threat to the continuity of American life and identity as we know it. What is at stake is the viability of the most characteristic of American values.

In contrast to the authors of the handbooks discussed above, Myers and Coss take a slightly more critical approach to the current moment, grounding its most significant threats in mistakes of the past and offering a historical trajectory in which their educational efforts might functionally intervene. "Why are we in such a tragic position today?" they ask readers before immediately stating that "every thinking person knows the answer:"

> It is because a quarter of a century ago we fought a war that we didn't understand. We didn't know what to do with victory when it came; didn't know how to organize and maintain peace; didn't know how to handle our own domestic problems, how to maintain stable industry in a land of plenty. (vii)

Ultimately, these lapses in knowledge are the result of a single failure among the American people: "The trouble was that the levels of political enlightenment were not high enough." Not only were politicians not prepared for the unprecedented social and cultural shifts spurred by the First World War, but also the voters were often misinformed and steered otherwise knowledgeable representatives in unproductive directions. Given this particular rendering of the crisis moment, the fallout that might follow comes as no surprise. With the Nation "confronted by the necessity of winning a desperate war, and of restoring order amidst utter ruin," Myers and Coss contend that "we need to inaugurate a great campaign of political enlightenment, a campaign such as the world has never seen" (vii-viii). Emphasizing the unprecedented nature of the task at hand much like McNutt

did, Myers and Coss set the stage for a particularly extreme description of what is at stake: "If democracy is to survive, the political education of the masses must proceed step by step with the mechanical and military advances. If it does not, the little children of today will pay the price tomorrow in blood and tears" (viii).

While Myers and Coss use the rhetoric of militarization to emphasize the need for political competence, they are less invested in the unifying principles that might link life at home to life on the front. It is not that education must serve to prepare men and women for a seamless transition into the armed forces, but rather that it must prepare future leaders and citizens to contend with the political issues associated with and stemming from the war condition. More so than the previously discussed crisis narratives, Myers and Coss's seeks to contextualize the current moment in terms of its causes and in a way that encourages deliberative and philosophical engagement with its possible consequences. The narrative is grounded in and responsive to the current need, but it resists being wholly subsumed by it, as many of the other narratives are. In their assertion that the definitions of education not be so restricted as to be rendered unresponsive (I imagine that traditional models of liberal education would be counted among such potentially detached and, thus, irresponsible approaches), the previous discussions allow the immediate needs to overwhelm more longitudinally focused concerns. Success in educational reforms is linked solely to the outcome of the war, and there is no discussion of what it might mean for the post-war period. On the other hand, Myers and Coss invest in an educational model specifically designed to contend with the issues they deem responsible for the war, namely the citizenry's inability to respond to the political realities following the end of the previous war.

In some sense, this difference between the accounts offered by the first two handbooks and the account offered by Myers and Coss is a difference between thinking about literacy as an applied skill and thinking about literacy as a mode of analytical engagement. Within the direct, and indirect, discussions of literacy in two handbooks and in similar venues, literacy is largely rendered as a discreet skill set that can be deployed when the need arises, such as when one finds themselves in a bunker under enemy fire and faced with decoding the instructions for assembling a new piece of artillery. The need, however, selects for very particular skills, and one achieves literate standing only when their individual abilities align with these needs and their larger national aims. While Myers and Coss offer a similarly utilitarian educational model in the sense that it, too, responds to specific needs, the nature of these needs is that they require a more ideological, critical engagement with the forms of knowledge that schools might impart to their students. This mode of literacy is similarly dependent upon a base of knowledge, but it moves beyond direct application to allow for an informed overall orientation to the subject matter and to its role in particular contexts. If the handbooks' authors were concerned with cultivating skills that would allow students to know how to act within war contexts, Myers and Coss hoped to supplement this with educational models that would ensure that they knew the why, too. This orientation extends the crisis moment in a way that characterizes the current war itself as a symptom of a more enduring problem, thereby redirecting the urgency and immediacy that the crisis moment affords to less temporally dependent modes of thought and models for citizenship.

Despite this more philosophical engagement, Myers and Coss do still rely on the rhetorical tropes associated with the alternative models. They explain, for instance, that

other “industries” have been converted over the course of war, giving the motor industry as an example. “Organized American education,” however, “watches the battle of the giants from the side lines. The great work it might do in this crisis of civilization is being left undone” while “other industries are in the thick of the fight” (ix). From their perspective, they view the education “industry’s” failure to adapt as particularly egregious given the extremity of the situation. “We are in a far more dangerous war than we were a quarter of a century ago, they explain, and “if we win we will be confronted by problems of peace and stability infinitely more difficult than the problems which confronted and defeated us then.” If the nation stumbled following WWI, Myers and Coss foresee an even greater struggle following the end of WWII, even if victory is achieved.

Here and at other points in their discussion, Myers and Coss challenge the victory trope so common in the other crisis narratives. Based on their rendering of the crisis, victory itself will never be enough. In order for the nation to avoid the pitfalls victory brought following WWI, the general populace needs to cultivate an entirely new orientation to WWII’s political causes and consequences. This orientation requires that the American public be “better prepared in knowledge, in disciplined thinking, in scientific and reasonable temper” than they were in the past. Essentially, Myers and Coss are concerned here with enduring habits of mind rather than with discreet and directly applicable literacy skills. As it stands, however, such habits will not be cultivated through formal education “unless the schools rise quickly to meet the crisis, unless they do as the motor and other industries have done, unless they adopt a program of political preparedness suited to the needs of the hour” (ix-x). At this point, Myers and Coss rely on

the topoi so persuasively constructed by the more militaristic handbooks and so commonly circulated through mass media treatments of the wartime climate in order to advocate for a very different model of educational reform with a very different, though not completely unrelated, end goal.

Within the context of this more politically philosophical approach to the educational challenges facing the nation, Myers and Coss also speak to the invigorating nature of the crisis moment and its inherent potentiality. While there are a number of concerning developments tied to the experience of crisis, "the war has set in motion powerful forces which may be turned to peaceful and progressive uses" (5). Again, this approach to the issue forces readers to consider the state of things as they will exist beyond the war. Once peace has been achieved, the momentum of homefront militarization need not be abandoned or even scaled back; in fact, it can be channeled toward more enduring and productive ends. Myers and Coss contend that the war "has proved that miracles can be performed through organized effort where there is agreement on objectives. Achievements of science, engineering, organization, almost stagger the imagination. They have been performed in all warring countries, regardless of forms of society and government; in Germany, Japan, Russia, England, and the United States" (5). In making this final point, Myers and Coss put the United States in league with other world powers, both allies and enemies, effectively emphasizing the universal nature of human achievement within the current crisis contexts. This rhetorical alignment would have no place in the more victory-focused educational handbooks, which were interested in establishing a sense of American exceptionalism derived from the nation's individual response to the world crisis. Within the context of Myers and Coss's argument, however,

it functions to remind readers of the more humanistic nature of scientific achievement, a point which is further underscored by the references to miracles and imagination. While the technological advancements referenced took mechanical forms, Myers and Coss highlight the human element responsible for such creation. This again illustrates their interest in linking the moment's current education needs, even those concerned with science and technological development, to a more philosophical dimension, an interest which few of their contemporaries shared.

The force of nationalist sympathies, however, cannot be ignored, and Myers and Coss quickly return to such discourses themselves. Contrasting the current moment's movement to the "lethargy of the depression days," a time "when faith in the organizing power of nations was waning," they assert that "we can still act vigorously as a nation. The world's inhabitants can reach far-off goals when the national will is set at the job." In addition to distinguishing between the depression era and the wartime period on the basis of national response, Myers and Coss distinguish between the current moment's necessity and the future's possibility. "Today," they note, nations "are performing miracles of organizing how to destroy their neighbors. Tomorrow they may use their new-found powers in the interest of human welfare. Who knows? Forces of altruism and idealism are undoubtedly at work these days, along with the darker influences" (5). While this section of the discussion continues to emphasize the potential for wartime advancement to positively affect life in the post-war period, its references to destruction and the "darker influences" pass more of a judgment on wartime activities than previous sections' characterizations. In part, this more direct assessment facilitates a shift to an assessment driven by strictly American nationalist values, namely democracy. The authors argue that

"there is in the democratic countries a potent will to peace and justice. These forces cannot at this time be measured, but they are strong and pervasive enough to justify a hope that the peoples of the world may be shocked 'back into sanity' to such an extent that decline may be arrested" (5-6). While all countries, regardless of political structure, are capable of technical advancement, this final point positions democratic nations as being able to act as a moral compass for the rest of the world in the post-war period. If this is, in fact, the case and if America is poised to take its place as a model nation following the events of the war, then the ethical burden placed upon the average American citizen is all the greater, and the nation's educational institutions has a yet greater responsibility to prepare these citizens for such work.

Cooling Off and Heating Up: From WWII Trenches to Cold War Laboratories

The suggestion that Americans are, or will be, particularly well-suited to function as world leaders was not isolated to Myers and Coss's account, especially in the years immediately following the war. In 1949, the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association of the United States and the American Association of School Administrators published *A Nation at Risk American Education and International Tensions,* which addressed the post-war anxieties lingering in educational programs. As the Foreword reminds readers, the country and world have undergone significant changes in the last decade, and the pace of change is unlikely to slow:

> Although it is true that many Americans lack the experience, the ready access to reliable information, and the political sagacity necessary for a fully satisfactory performance in their role as leaders of the free world, it is also true that the

> American people have consciously accepted that challenge and that they ardently desire, within the limits of their understanding and power, to make every contribution of which they are capable. (19)

According to the authors, the American spirit is, in itself, something that individual citizens can model for the rest of the world and something which can have a positive effect in the contexts of post-war rebuilding. The description of what Americans lack, however, aligns with the assessment that Myers and Coss offer in the sense that there are limitations on the resources provided to Americans that to some degree inhibit their political abilities. American citizens are without "ready access to information" and without "political sagacity," but they are nonetheless expected to model democratic life for the rest of the world. The willingness of every American to assume this leadership role for the good of global society is rendered as compensating in some way for this lack.

Ultimately, this notion of individual responsibility becomes integral to the act of American citizenship, which is linked again to the current state of international affairs as well as to national influence. *A Nation at Risk* emphasizes that "just as every American is personally affected by the solutions found for the problems that trouble the world, so every American can play a part in effecting these solutions." As was the case in the wartime handbooks for educational reform, this post-war model depends upon striking a careful balance between individual freedom and national cooperation. While Americans as individuals have the ability to function as models for members of other nations, it is their status as Americans that grants them this power. While "the individual does have influence in world affairs" even if "the extent of that influence may seem very small in absolute terms since two billion other inhabitants of the earth also have some influence,"

A Nation at Risk argues that "the potential influence of the individual American in 1949 is relatively large" (19). Again, the national identity of the individual in question becomes an important qualifying characteristic, a point which is only further underscored when *A Nation at Risk* considers the global climate in the years to come.

While Americans in the postwar years might have already had the power that *A Nation at Risk* describes, it is especially important for citizens to realize that:

> …the American citizen of the 1950s will possess a considerably greater ability to affect world accords than his grandfather had. And his power will be, as it is now, significantly greater than that of most other persons in other parts of the world. Probably the typical American for years to come will have a larger role in shaping the future of mankind than will the typical citizen of any other country. (19-20)

Given the current state of international affairs, then, it becomes all the more significant that the next generation of American be better prepared than their predecessors to accept the burden placed on the citizens of such an influential world power. The need for this particular form of preparation is the point at which educational reform could intervene. The image on *A Nation at Risk*'s cover illustrates the potential promise of American youth in these same terms, showing a couple of schoolchildren—a boy and a girl—being lifted above the turmoil of poverty and oppression as it is represented in the figures of a woman and child enveloped in the shadows cast by a large hand shackled to a crumbling building. Supported by a second, and noticeably less oppressive, large hand, the boy and girl stand illuminated against the dark scene below, a halo of light surrounding them. Under their arms, they each hold a schoolbook, and above them is a pane of glass through which the outline of the North and South American continents can be seen, its placement

in the upper half of the image suggesting that the children alone have access to this "window onto the world." Overall, the image positions American children as the sole possessors of the special vantage point that contending with current international tensions requires and characterizes them as potential saviors who should be equipped with the global and political knowledge contained within the textbooks and educational materials to which they alone have access. They are, however, supported by, and dependent upon, the unshackled hand, which symbolizes a democratic freedom that stands in opposition to a Soviet totalitarianism and which again emphasizes the significance of characteristically American values and perspectives relative to the children's global influence. Despite the outcome of the war, the image forcefully contends, America's job is not yet done, and the children are the ones who must be prepared to face what is to come next.

It is, ultimately, within these international contexts that post-war educational policies developed, and the fact that they were responding to such a historically resonant and (literally) earth-shattering series of events was clear in their treatment of cultural and societal development generally. "Educational policy depends partly upon endeavors to shape the course of human events and partly on endeavors to predict them, a balance between ideals and anticipated realities," *A Nation at Risk* contends. "We can look back now over the past ten years and perceive that profound changes have occurred in American life, largely as a result of worldwide forces let loose by war and postwar conditions" (iii). Given that the postwar conditions that currently influence the course of national and international life are "likely to continue into the adulthood of the children now in school," the Educational Policies Commission explains that schools must respond to the extreme change brought on by the decade. The post-war moment is characterized

here as functioning somewhat as a hinge, and educational policy designed to respond to the moving target of a country defined by change and growth needed to be attentive to the actual life experiences of the populace facing this change and responsible for this growth.

This hinge-like function of the contemporary moment is further emphasized in *A Nation at Risk*'s understanding of the "world situation" as it is defined by "two major pairs of contradictory forces." *A Nation at Risk* identifies two paradoxes responsible for current international tensions: "the first of these paradoxes is that of a world brought closer together and yet of a world split asunder," and "the second paradox is that of a world sorely afraid and yet incurable hopeful" (1). Within the context of the first paradox, *A Nation at Risk* considers the role of science and technology as they have served to bring nations into closer contact with one another but have done so despite deepening ideological divides. The second paradox seemingly responds to the climate created by the tension of the first, emphasizing the fact that military preparations have not ceased since the end of the war and that future conflict seems inevitable.

Based on this understanding of the crisis moment and its needs, the Commission outlines three broad topics which the American system of education should consider and should attempt to reflect in pedagogical and literacy-based reform efforts. The Commission contends that students, in preparation for functional citizenship, should be equipped with an "ability to recognize and reduce the lag between social change and technological advancement," a "devotion to the ideals of peace and realistic efforts to promote international cooperation," and an "ability to understand and meet the ideological challenge of totalitarianism" (26).

Although *A Nation at Risk* does not deal with the exact means by which schools or individual teachers might go about instilling such abilities and commitments in students, it does emphasize the degree to which the same abilities and commitments are necessary for full democratic participation and would contribute to a better functioning American society overall. "In a society that grants universal suffrage," *A Nation at Risk* reads, "these insights, abilities, and drives should be developed through education to the greatest possible degree among the total population" (28). The modes of literacy being privileged here do not take the form of discreet skill sets or decoding practices, but rather they are philosophical orientations and judgement-based commitments that are rendered as capable of producing a strong population of knowledgeable voters. Based on this understanding of national and international crisis, both as it currently exists and as it might exist in the future, American schools must encourage a literacy that breeds democratic citizenship and which serves the national patriotic interest.

In its more direct treatment of how schools should contend with the threat of totalitarianism, *A Nation at Risk*'s patriotic project becomes all the more evident, particularly in terms of the school's role in securing strong national loyalties. Recognizing that "to develop the kind of patriotism that is true to the best ideals of America is a major educational task," *A Nation at Risk* argues that "the schools must act upon a reasoned conviction that patriotic citizenship involves responsible action with respect to the international duties and commitments of the people of the United States" (36). Importantly, the current state of world affairs requires a patriotism that is especially concerned with matters beyond national lines and the tendency to remain geographically and culturally myopic in such matters is, in fact, a form of forsaking one's national

responsibility. As *A Nation at Risk* explains, "it is deeply *patriotic* to attempt to protect one's country and one's fellow citizens from the calamities of war. The patriot who sees beyond the borders is a better citizen than the man or woman who is ignorant or unconcerned about the relations of his country to the rest of the world" (37). In part, true commitment to patriotic citizenship as it is understood here requires exposing students to the principles and practices of the very ideological systems that pose a threat to American democracy, including Soviet totalitarianism and Communism. The goal of such exposure is to increase "civil intelligence" on the part of the American population so that they might be better equipped to contend with these threats, but *A Nation at Risk* also clearly indicates that advocating alternative ideologies will not be tolerated in American schools and that the teaching of these alternative structures and systems must be done alongside the teaching of American principles, ideals, and values. Clearly, this "civil intelligence" is by no means neutral, and it is grounded in a model of cultural literacy that is meant to further students' commitments to the American way of life, a project which *A Nation at Risk* contends will make them better global citizens, as well. [27]

This interest in fostering productive citizenship practices among students at all levels of education grew concurrently with an interest in encouraging students to develop other types of life skills that would serve them beyond their educations and in the everyday. Reforms that sought to ground education in everyday experiences, including

[27] Today, it is impossible to use the phrase "cultural literacy" without invoking E.D. Hirsch's 1987 *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*. While Hirsch's critique of progressivist education, a catch-all term for a series of fragmented movements which is discussed more directly below, focuses on the ways in which its curriculum ignored the traditional canon and, in so doing, failed to provide students with the type of shared knowledge base on which cultural literacy depends, the meaning of "cultural literacy" as it applies here differs slightly. The post-war educational reforms and related reports approach cultural literacy not as a storehouse of knowledge that can be accessed in ways that directly inform everyday decisions and actions but as the democratic and citizenship-based practices and the habits of mind on which they rely and which are strengthened by the repetition of the practices themselves.

those associated with labor and industry, in order to make it more attentive to the actual needs of the country and of its citizens largely aligned with progressivist educational reform efforts, particularly in terms of their most foundational concerns. Over the course of their development, however, progressivist models and ideologies took a wide range of forms. While a complete account of the progressivist program is beyond the scope of this project, important here are both John Dewey's original principles as they relate to the post-war climate and the controversial "Life Adjustment" movement as it contributed to the intellectual zeitgeist with which Seaborg and Adler would later contend. [28]

As the widely acknowledged "father of progressivist education," John Dewey was principally concerned with the reformation of American democratic structures and with a reevaluation of the forms of civic participation for which they allowed. In this way, his significance to the post-war movement and reform efforts revolving around the construction of functional American, and world, citizens is evident. Of particular importance are progressivist education's strictly philosophical foundations. The most basic, and perhaps most democratic, of the movement's characteristic tenets was its student-centeredness. In part, the increased focus on children can be linked to WWI and WWII interests in the mobilization of youth, which ultimately prioritized children as resources in the war effort. This particular focus and its rendering of youth are also clear in the cover illustration of the post-war *American Education and International Tensions*

[28] Educational historian William G. Wraga has argued that the Life Adjustment movement was not nearly as popular or influential as educational historiography has suggested. He contends that the movement's early critics and historians writing after the fact have consistently tended to vilify the movement as "an outmoded form of progressive education that rejected academic subject matter and that was inimical to the necessary provision of a rigorous academic curriculum for all students" (185). This treatment, though, both overstates the effect of the program's principles and prevents contemporary reformers from assessing the program's potential merits. In essence, the Life Adjustment Movement was and is an easy target. While I find Wraga's assessment persuasive overall, I am less concerned with how the program's rhetoric manifested materially than I am with how it functioned relative to existing discursive frames, and it is for this reason that I spend some time with it here.

which is described above. Beyond this link, though, child-centeredness can be seen as an outgrowth of other related progressive movements. Educational historian Andrew Hartmann identifies two important educational movements that intersected at the concept of child-centeredness: "education for social efficiency, the 'order' variant of progressive education, and education for social democracy, the 'justice' variant" (9). Despite the differences between these two strands of progressive education, "both focused on enlarging and altering pedagogy and curriculum beyond what were considered traditional methods and programs that had relegated the child to a less important position" (9). As a result of this intersection, child-centeredness became a pedagogical concern that united otherwise diverse or disparate strands of progressivist education, making it indispensable to the movement at large.

One of the most extreme iterations to come from progressive education's development was the Life Adjustment movement, which reached its peak in the decade following the end of WWII. The phrase "life adjustment" was first popularized in a speech delivered by Dr. Charles Prosser at a 1945 conference hosted in Washington, D.C. by the Vocational Education Division of the U.S. Office of Education, and the movement is often blamed for the demise of progressivist reform generally based on the critique that its primarily vocational and "therapeutic" but intellectually vacant curriculum completely misunderstood the mission of general education. One of the most outspoken and prolific critics of the Life-Adjustment movement was historian Arthur Bestor.[29] His 1953 book *Educational Wastelands: The Retreat from Learning in Our Public Schools*, for instance, argues that educational theorists and pedagogues have done the nation a disservice by

[29] Given that Bestor was most known for his popular criticisms of life adjustment education and less known for his academic work on educational reform, his function as a public intellectual figure concerned with education is relevant to this project's overall aims, despite not being treated directly here.

moving school curriculum away from the traditional liberal arts models. Such devaluation of the core curriculum on which America's public school system was founded, he argued, contributed to "the growth of anti-intellectualist hysteria that threatens not merely the schools but freedom itself" (11).

According to Hartman, the life adjustment movement was the "pedagogical counterpart to the relativist theory of democracy," although it proved much more controversial that its political foil. As Hartman described it, the movement "assumed that U.S. society was ideal, and thus focused almost entirely on means rather than ends. The radically reformist ideas of progressive educators or pedagogical reconstructionists of the 1930s, democratic ends, were ditched by World War II in favor of educational stability, efficiency, and child-centered gimmickry" (5). In a 1960 response to a current state of educational reform, Bestor takes issue with these very approaches in terms of how they ultimately distract from the real aim of public education, namely civic training for every student. Within the context of this response, Bestor first attacks a California-based curriculum initiative to require 30 hours of driver's education from high school students. Given that those thirty hours can be used to satisfy credits typically assigned to social studies courses, Bestor pointedly jests that it might be more productive for the nation to award a driver's license to any student capable of demonstrating a familiarity with the American Constitution. "Let us, by all means enforce a high standard of competence for those who seek the privilege of driving on our highways," he writes. "But let us not do so by lowering the standards of competence for those who in the future will hold the steering wheel of the Republic itself" (550). If it is to replace the traditional liberal arts

core, Bestor sees education focused on life skills as irresponsible and as dangerous for the future stability of the country.

In addition to this critique of such educational orientations, Bestor focuses on the life-adjustment movement's interest in the personal over the civic or political, contending that this further lowers the standards of classroom instruction and learning. Important in these critiques, however, is Bestor's insistence that the humanities are the subjects on which civic life and well-being depend, and he barely mentions the hard sciences. Despite the fact that English and social studies courses are required in public education, the current state of the curriculum continues to be an issue. According to Bestor, the "widespread illiteracy that has resulted from deficiencies in public-school programs in English composition and literature is apparent," but "more menacing, is the situation in the social studies. Disintegration within this area of the curriculum poses a direct threat to American institutions of self-government, which demand of the citizen both a knowledge of history and a developed ability to subject public issues to rational analysis" (550). Even in the face of the Soviet threat and larger Cold War climate, Bestor characterizes the nation's largest challenge in terms of the humanistic education with which it is failing to supply its students. While his perspective on the issue aligns with many of the points made by Myers and Coss in response to the educational needs of WWII, the privileging of the humanities over the hard sciences was less common following Sputnik, and national discourse on educational reform took a greater interest in scientific advancement as the only viable course for a secure future.

Holding Democracy to the Bunsen Burner: Seaborg and Science vs. Adler and the Humanities

Despite the natural connection between technological innovation and a future-oriented perspective, Glenn T. Seaborg frequently worked to contextualize the scientifically invested crisis moment from a historical perspective, a move that linked the unknown to the known and served to ease anxieties related to the quickening pace of change. At the opening of an address that he made to students at Augustana College in 1959, Seaborg speaks of the "crisis" of human freedom that the nation faced with slavery and the Civil War one hundred years earlier. Describing that a century earlier, "our young democratic form of government faced a terrible test," Seaborg emphasizes that "we came through our crisis. Our humane society, with its emphasis on the value of the individual, survived. But only a civil war could confirm our democratic principles" (3). As a model for the role of crisis, this rendering of the civil war as a necessary affirmation of the values associated with American identity suggests that such crises are both requisite and ultimately reifying and that they are, therefore, nothing to fear, at least not in the long run. The impending crisis should be approached in similar terms: as "another test of our liberal democracy." Here, Seaborg acknowledges that "our problem is different in kind and, and the time scale is longer," but "it is not less important than the one we faced a century ago." In part, this importance stems from the fact that the crisis is invested in similarly American ideals, specifically those concerned with "individual human freedom." Slavery is not, however, the threat. Science is. "The question is," Seaborg writes, "whether science with all its bounty and mercy, will mock us by placing chains upon the individual," an image which invokes a terrifyingly Orwellian future (3).

Interestingly, this treatment emphasizes the potential tension between scientific achievement and democratic practice, a point which is more frequently ignored and actively obscured in the service of portraying the two as cohabitating peacefully and even as mutually dependent parts of a single American whole.

Seaborg's treatment of the role of science in national development harkens back to the 1949 Educational Policies Commission's contention that schools should consider more carefully the relationship between technology and social change. The Commission's report emphasizes the power of education to intervene in just the scenario that Seaborg describes. "Through education in its broadest sense," *A Nation at Risk* contends, "men gradually adjust the social institutions to the new conditions [brought on by technological advancement] in a fashion that will satisfy their moral standards" (26). Similarly, within the context of this address, Seaborg suggest that education in an overall sense can grant American citizens the critical and analytical capacities they need to ensure that they channel scientific learning and progress to their best advantage and are able to adapt their institutions in the process.

The concern about how scientific literacy will interact with democratic life and ethical codes is shared by a number of the individual contributors to an interesting volume entitled *Challenge to American Youth*. A generalized version of Seaborg's address to Augustan College appears in the volume, alongside transcripts of speeches delivered at other college and university events in front of student audiences. The volume's editor Philip Angeles speaks specifically to the collection's goals in his Preface, deploying a rhetoric of crisis much like that on which Seaborg relies. "A century that has harnessed the atom and invaded outer space is still groping to find a way for human

beings to live together in peace and justice," Angeles writes. "These are delicate times. The world seems unable to step back from the brink of destruction" (5). For Angeles, these delicate times require "the tempered advice of our wise men," and he offers the book as an "opportunity" for American youth to "'hear' inspiring ideas, cogently expressed" and to give Americans access to the "opinions of their own intelligentsia" (5-6). Intellectuals are responding to the nation's current crisis, but Angeles's attempt to preserve these responses in book form suggests that the intellectuals are not reaching the audiences they need to on their own. The emphasis on cogency, however, suggests faith in the ability of rhetorical expression to intervene in and influence the course of events as they will respond to the crisis moment. For this reason, this small volume seems especially interesting in light of my project at large. The collection's contributors are primarily educators, administrators, and authors, and the topics treated consider the relationships among national identity, education, and global responsibility.

Although less directly scientific in its orientation than Seaborg's contribution to *The Challenge to American Youth* and a number of his earlier responses to the state of American public and higher education, *A Nation at Risk* nonetheless participates in a similar mode of crisis narrative and targeted response, and Seaborg's influence can certainly be felt. Right away, *A Nation at Risk* links the national risk to the fact that "our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world" (5). While the Commission acknowledges that *A Nation at Risk*'s interest in education contends with only one of the many causes of this decline in global status, it notes that education is "the one that undergirds American prosperity, security, and civility." Furthermore, the current

situation is the result of the "squandered gains in student achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge" (5), again characterizing the educational crisis in terms of the technological innovation at once made possible.

The idea that America has fallen short of the technological promise it once showed is not, however, the whole story. Neither is the fact that American industry is falling behind its competitors in the most technologically innovative sectors. According to the *A Nation at Risk*:

> The risk is not only that the Japanese make automobiles more efficiently than Americans and have government subsidies for development and export. It is not just that the South Koreans recently built the world's most efficient steel mill, or that American machine tools, once the pride of the world, are being displaced by German products. It is also that these developments signify a redistribution of trained capability throughout the globe. Knowledge, learning, information, and skilled intelligence are the new raw materials of international commerce and are today spreading through the world as vigorously as miracle drugs, synthetic fertilizers, and blue jeans did earlier. (6-7)

What is most important in this context, then, is the fact that the technological competition signifies a loss for Americans in the sense that "trained capability," rendered as a limited and finite resource, is travelling overseas. In addition to the financial capital that follows technological innovation, *A Nation at Risk* recognizes the ways in which human capital follows similar patterns, and the redistribution of this type of capital is what concerns the Commission most.

In order to rebuild and maintain national stores of human capital, which is the most pressing outcome of the current international crisis as the Commission characterizes it, the country must reinvest in its educational efforts. If failing standards are to blame for the dire state of things, then stronger and more definite standards are the reasonable solution. Again, though, while the primary issue is not industrial or financial, *A Nation at Risk* does very little to decouple these issues from the educational program they prescribe at this point. "If only to keep and improve on the slim competitive edge we still retain in world markets," the Commission explains, "we must dedicate ourselves to the reform of our educational system for the benefit of all—old and young alike, affluent and poor, majority and minority. Learning is the indispensable investment required for success in the 'information age' we are entering" (7). Thinking both about the competitive edge that has been lost and about future requirements to adapt to the "information age," the Commission links a range of national anxieties to the current state of the country's educational systems, again creating meaningful demand for the reform programs its constituents put forth later in *A Nation at Risk.*

In addition to treating the commerce-based concerns driving these programs, the Commission acknowledges that educational reform can serve other purposes relevant to national need in global contexts. Education also contributes to the "intellectual, moral, and spiritual strengths of our people which knit together the very fabric of our society" and *Report* suggests that working toward these strengths is a component of every individual's contribution to social stability. The individual's role and responsibility is treated directly for the first time here, and a large part of that responsibility concerns effort on the part of the individual to attain the strengths outlined above for his or herself:

"The people of the United States need to know that individuals in our society who do not possess the levels of skills, literacy, and training essential to this new era will be effectively disenfranchised, not simply from the material rewards that accompany competent performance, but also from the chance to participate fully in our national life" (7).

At this point in *A Nation at Risk*, democratic participation is wholly dependent upon one's literacy-based skill sets. Literacy is important not only within the context of job markets but also within the context of civic life and the meaningful exercise of one's individual freedoms within democratic society. The phrasing here emphasizes the ease with which economic production and the production characteristic of democratic participation can be conflated in terms of the prerequisites expected for each, as un-American as that conflation might be in principle. What is even more interesting in this treatment of literacy and its role in national life is the way in which the Commission attempts to mediate the tension between community-based American values and the American ideal of individual choice. *A Nation at Risk* contends that "a high level of shared education is essential to a free, democratic society and to a fostering of a common culture, especially in a country that prides itself on pluralism and individual freedom" (7). At this point in the discussion, it becomes increasingly clear that the literacy practices required for economic and political participation, as *A Nation at Risk* imagines them, are not in any sense ideologically neutral and are imagined as protecting the characteristically American values associated with democratic life.

Despite the economic and cultural-preservation concerns at the center of *A Nation at Risk*, concerns which are frequently linked or represented as interdependent within the

context of the Commission's model, there are occasional glimmers of the slightly more philosophical models of civic engagement that emerged more frequently in post-war documents like *American Education and International Tensions*. For example, *A Nation at Risk* does invest in a certain form of "common sense" that is similar to Aristotle's *koine aesthesis* or *sensus communis* and does position this sense as integral to democracy, much like Aristotle positioned *sensus communis* as the keystone of functional republicanism. *A Nation at Risk* contends that "for our country to function, citizens must be able to reach some common understandings of complex issues, often on short notice and on the basis of conflicting and incomplete evidence. Education helps form these common understandings" (7). In this sense, education is the honing of the sensory faculty that allows individuals to make judgments about the issues they face, and shared educational experiences ensure that citizens are capable of producing the same judgments relative to the same stimuli or relative input. Given the explicitly community-based orientation of *A Nation at Risk's* understanding of the process, it might be more closely aligned with the Roman perspective characteristic of a Ciceronian treatment of the force as it manifests in the laws, social practices, and institutions characteristic of a group of people living together. In these ways, the "common sense" shared among members of the community shape the codes and norms that govern the community, thereby further enforcing commitments to the modes and terms of judgment that spur them.

This particular commitment to instilling in American youth a shared base of knowledge which could steer them towards similar judgments is also represented in terms of the contribution it makes to a more patriotic mission. In addition to investing in a national model of rationality, education enables individual citizens to take advantage of

the freedoms and opportunities that make America great. "Part of what is at risk," *A Nation at Risk* warns, "is the promise first made on this continent: All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost." This commitment to functional education as the means by which the community can ensure that every individual have access to a life defined by the "American Dream" shows another way in which *A Nation at Risk's* contributors attempted to negotiate the relationship between social need and individual freedom. While this initial phrasing suggests that the community is responsible for the individual, the next sentence emphasizes the multidirectional nature of what is, in fact, a mutual dependency: "This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests by also the progress of society itself" (8). Again, *A Nation at Risk* returns to concerns associated with economic stability, describing how the careful cultivation of the judgement capacity facilitated by "common sense" is a prerequisite for gainful employment, which is the sole means by which students should be expected to one day contribute to overall social growth on a national scale.

Despite these somewhat philosophical and qualitative literacy needs, however, there are very quantitative ways in which the American school systems seem to failing their students. In addition to the numerous "indicators of risk" drawn from comparisons made between American students and students in nations across the globe, *A Nation at Risk* notes that "about 13 percent of all 17-year-olds in the United States can be considered functionally illiterate. Functional illiteracy among minority youth may run as

high as 40 percent" (8). Here, *A Nation at Risk* turns to more traditional literacy concerns associated with decoding practices, and while these failures are concerning on a number of levels, the authors describe in more detail the challenge that they pose for business and military leaders. These leaders "complain that they are required to spend millions of dollars on costly remedial education and training programs in such basic skills as reading, writing, spelling, and computation" (8). *A Nation at Risk* even refers specifically to the Department of the Navy, which "reported to the Commission that one-quarter of its recent recruits cannot read at a ninth grade level, the minimum needed simply to understand written safety instructions. Without remedial work they cannot even begin, much less complete, the sophisticated training essential in much of the modern military" (9). Given the Cold War tensions and the ever-looming possibility of conflict with the Soviets, the fact that the men responsible for keeping America safe in the face of attack might be unable to read and understand even the most basic texts required for them to do their jobs is understandably considered a risk that the nation should address immediately.

Of additional significance is the way in which the literacy failings of American youth might further inhibit the growth of American technological advancement and make the country fall even further behind its international competitors. Given the growth of technological enterprises, the fact that American education is already having trouble keeping up is especially concerning. As *A Nation at Risk* explains, "these deficiencies come at a time when the demand for highly skilled workers in new fields is accelerating rapidly" (10), and the types of labor required of these workers depend upon their ability to adapt to new technologies and scientific advancement. Noting that "computers and computer-controlled equipment are penetrating every aspect of our lives—homes,

factories, and offices," *A Nation at Risk* cites one estimate that "indicates that by the turn of the century millions of jobs will involve laser technology and robotics." In addition to the development of the technological fields, however, technology is unavoidable in most work places, as it "is radically transforming a host of other occupations. They include health care, medical science, energy production, food processing, construction, and the building, repair, and maintenance of sophisticated scientific, educational, military, and industrial equipment" (10). It is, ultimately, within this technologically oriented context that *A Nation at Risk's* investment in the sciences becomes the most evident. Literacy here, in all of its forms, is valuable insofar as it facilitates economic growth, which in many sectors depends upon technological innovation. Overall, *A Nation at Risk* sets forth a scientific and technologically invested assessment of a literate citizenry, and this assessment harnesses the anxiety-fueled momentum attending the Space Race in ways that give it powerful persuasive appeal.

On the other side of the debate and working with a slightly different rhetorical arsenal was an approach to educational reform guided by humanistic concern and study. *The Paideia Proposal: An Educational Manifesto* was the collective work of the Paideia Group, a committee of professors, college administrators, researchers, and high school superintendents and principals. Acting as Chairman, Adler was the Group's clear leader and author of the *Proposal's* text. He dedicated the text to three educational philosophers: Horace Mann, John Dewey, and Robert Hutchins, who Adler explains "would have been our leaders were they alive today" (v). With this initiating gesture, Adler links his project and pedagogical approach to a particular lineage within the context of educational reform.

Below this dedication is a definition of "paideia" that serves a similar purpose. The definition explains that the word derives from the "Greek *pais, paidos*: the upbringing of a child. (Related to pedagogy and pediatrics.)" (v). Knowing Adler's Aristotelian tendencies, this connection to the Greeks is unsurprising. The concept of paideia in particular features quite forcefully in Aristotle's *Politics*, where it is described in terms of man's ability to discuss matters of civic life with his peers in the process of political deliberation and, ultimately, in order to determine a course of action. In her discussion of rhetorical *dunamis*, a term meaning ability or facility, Eskaterina Haskins considers how Aristotle was reacting to the distinction that Isocrates drew between *logos* and *paideia*. Whereas Isocrates "regards discourse (logos) as an artificer of civic institutions and embraces the performative and politically constitutive character of traditional Greek education (paideia) by making character and political identity dependent on recurrent performance addressed to the polis," Aristotle "aspires to protect the practical rationality and virtue of a properly habituated student from being corrupted by the norms of rhetorical and literacy culture" (237). Based on his conception of "dynamism," Haskins contends, Aristotle effectively distinguishes between "eloquence" and "virtuous action," linking the first to rhetoric and the second to politics. In making this distinction, Aristotle seems to be isolating, in order to privilege, a mode of citizenship very similar to the one that Adler hopes to instill in American students by means of his new curriculum.

In titling his project thus, Adler also connects it to a Greek tradition largely assumed to be the cornerstone of liberal arts education. This definition of *paideia*, however, extends beyond the Greeks, too. Adler notes that "in an extended sense, the

equivalent of the Latin *humanitas* (from which the 'humanities'), signifying the general learning that should be the possession of all human beings" (v). Adler here further connects his educational program's investment in certain modes of literacy instruction to a rich cultural heritage always concerned with civic participation.

Reflecting the humanities' interest in discourse and dialogue, the *Proposal* opens with a direct address to its readers, in an attempt to characterize the multiple audiences and groups who might be interested in its mission. In general, the *Proposal* addresses "Americans most concerned with the future of our schools," but this group is divided into subgroups, including parents, teachers, school boards, college educators, and elected public officials. Of particular interest here are the less expected groups: employers "concerned about the effects on productivity of a work force lacking skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, observing, measuring, and computing," minority groups "angered by widening gulfs between the better educated and the poorly educated, and between the employed and the unemployed," labor leaders "attempting to deal with workers who lack the skills to find jobs in the new high-technology industries," and military leaders "needing brainpower among the troops capable of coping with sophisticated weaponry" (xii). These final groups seem to represent interests more in line with the educational models furthered in *A Nation at Risk*, but Adler's direct recognition of them here seems to be an attempt to respond to the very real needs of the nation, too. He is quick to acknowledge that his more philosophical and humanities-based approach is not as disinterested in the everyday as critics might suggest and, in fact, has just as much to offer in terms of an applied "brainpower" as any other. This framing shows Adler's

familiarity with the popular critiques to be leveled at his program and illustrates how he attempted to confront them early in his work.

Finally, the *Proposal* speaks to its cumulative audience and their national needs, addressing "American Citizens alarmed by the prospects of a democracy in which a declining proportion of the people vote or endeavor to understand the great issues of our time" (xii). At this point, Adler links his program directly to the democratic failings of the masses, suggesting that the degree to which basic citizenship practices are informed by schooling. Despite this interest in national needs, however, Adler is quick to note that the contemporary situation requires locally focused reform efforts. As was the case in the WWII educational handbooks surveyed above, the tension between nationally oriented cooperation and the individual freedom at the center of American identity proves here a rhetorical challenge to which Adler must also respond. While the *Proposal's* program is "designed to improve the opportunities of our youth, the prospects of our economy, and the viability of our democratic institutions," all of which have national effect, these goals "must be achieved at the community level without resorting to a monolithic, national educational system. It must be, in Lincoln's words, of the people, by the people, and for the people" (xii). Just as *A Nation at Risk* justified its approach to education with a quotation from a founding father, thus linking its perspective to a long American heritage, the *Proposal* makes a similar rhetorical move here in its reference to Lincoln. Connecting its instructional program to American history served to exhibit the Paideia Group's patriotism and concern for the nation in ways that might appease a range of readers.

The connection between democracy and education is the focus of the *Proposal's* first chapter. Like the previously discussed handbooks and treatises, the *Proposal* begins by explaining the need for reform in terms of the exceptionality of the current moment. "We are on the verge of a new era in our national life," Alder writes, and "the long-needed educational reform for which this country is at last ready will be a turning point toward that new era" (3). In part, this new era is itself the result of recent shifts in the national role of education, and the *Proposal* emphasizes that it has only been within the current century that all American children have had access to twelve full years of schooling and that all Americans have enjoyed the full privileges of citizenship, regardless of race, gender, or ethnicity. Adler further emphasizes the mutually beneficial relationship between the rise of schooling and the extension of suffrage: "the two—universal suffrage and universal schooling—are inextricably bound together. The one without the other is a perilous delusion. Suffrage without schooling produces mobocracy, not democracy—not rule of law, not constitutional government by the people as well as for them" (3). In this way, the modes of literacy central to Adler's project were represented as integral to functional democracy and the American ideal.

Although Adler's discussion of national need is less directly concerned with forms of scientific and technological competition that could very well determine the fate of all in the face of the next active international conflict, he nonetheless deploys the same rhetorical modes in order to characterize and emphasize the scale of the crisis as he understands it. Like in *A Nation at Risk*, the current situation is described in terms of a failure to live up to past potential. In Adler's estimation, however, this past potential is to be found in the work of John Dewey, and the public's inability to enact his pedagogical

philosophies as they characterized the intersection between education and democracy is a squandering of the nation's possible greatness. Adler does recognize the extremity of the "ideal Dewey set before us," explaining that "it is a challenge so difficult that is it understandable, perhaps excusable, that we have so far failed." Again relying on rhetorical models like those deployed in more scientifically and technically oriented texts, though, Adler quickly moves to consider the dire consequences of complacency on this front: "But we cannot continue to fail without disastrous consequences for all of us. For the proper working of our political institutions, for the efficiency of our industries and businesses, for the salvation of our economy, for the vitality of our culture, and for the ultimate good of our citizens as individuals, and especially our future citizens—our children—we must succeed" (4).

While this section of the Proposal recognizes the economic and industrial issues facing the nation, these are not the fronts on which the most important battles are to be fought. Rather, a focus on political strength and citizenship practices is what the country needs. In focusing its efforts thus, what is to be gained is far more significant than the effort the nation must expend to achieve this ideal. Additionally, the current climate requires that the nation embrace this effort. Although we have survived this long, complacency now poses a clear threat. Taking this concept even further, Adler emphasizes the degree to which his readers, as individual citizens, are the ones most affected by this communal failure. He explains that "we are all sufferers from our continued failure to fulfill the educational obligations of a democracy. We are all the victims of a school system that has only gone halfway along the road to realize the promise of democracy" (4). Here, the failure is linked directly to the relationship between

education and democracy and rendered in terms of an inability to improve upon each individually in ways that would improve upon both collectively.

Ultimately, Adler's characterization of the country's educational and political failings serves as a call for Americans to reinvest in their national identity by means of particular citizenship practices that are functionally grounded in American ideals. "We must end that hypocrisy in our national life," he contends; "we cannot say out of one side of our mouth that we are for democracy and all its free institutions including, preeminently, political and civil liberty for all; and out of the other side of our mouth, say that only some of the children—fewer than half—are educable for full citizenship and a full human life" (7). As in *A Nation at Risk*, the dire state in which the nation finds itself is self-inflicted yet commensurate with the type of destabilizing influence that foreign enemies might attempt to exert. In failing to recognize its own ideological dependency on the habits of mind and informed practices associated with active American citizenship, the country has fallen prey to self-sabotage, and the distance between the "ideal" and the "real" of the American experience threatens to expose this failure to the public citizens that the nation as a nation needs to reinvest in and support its identity.

Facing the Firing Squad: Gauging Response to *A Nation at Risk* and the *Proposal*

Following its publication and initial circulation, Adler's *Proposal* elicited varied responses, even among those similarly invested in protecting the humanities. A number of these responses compared Adler's work to *A Nation at Risk* or similarly oriented projects as well, attempting to contextualize the *Paideia Proposal* relative to the ongoing national discourse surrounding education. In this way, Adler's voice secured a firm place

in larger pedagogical discussions, which was an accomplishment in its own right given the strength of government-authored work like *A Nation at Risk*. One of the most referenced responses to the *Proposal* was Michael W. Apple's 1985 article in *Curriculum Inquiry*. An educational theorist specializing in the intersection of education and political and cultural ideology, Apple began by aligning Adler's work with *A Nation at Risk* with special emphasis on the similarities in the rhetorical addresses both made to the "public" in order to consider the degree to which the *Proposal* benefitted from the exigence-related momentum created by the other. Interestingly, Apple suggests that the strong and extremely direct rendering of the educational crisis in *A Nation at Risk* had, perhaps, the unintended consequence of generating interest in and demand for alternatives and competitors. While the Commission's report might have been more rhetorically efficient within its construction of the "risk" facing the nation, Adler's work thrived in the discursive environment that it produced, a characterization that suggests a somewhat more symbiotic relationship between the two documents than might be evident otherwise. Based on this characterization, my earlier assessments of crisis as a catalyst hold, as both documents and their authors found demand for their intellectual work in the crisis moment. However, in this particular case, it remains significant that *A Nation at Risk* and similar treatments set the terms of the discussion and constructed the rhetorical frame driving public interest in educational reform generally. Alternative perspectives and voices, like Adler's, found themselves relying on similar appeals and discursive forms in order to appeals to a public already familiar with the more standard treatments.

While Apple acknowledges that a number of the issues Adler considers in the *Proposal* are significant within the larger educational landscape, naming classroom-based

power dynamics as a particular example of this, he characterizes the document as a conventional type of curriculum reform text known as a "slogan system," a characterization which even further emphasizes the rhetorical construction of the text over its curriculum-focused content. Apple also acknowledges that slogan systems can be effective and are not, as a genre, to be wholly dismissed. He does, however, describe three attributes that contribute to the slogan system's rhetorical appeal, all of which are significant within the context of Adler's overall public-intellectual persona, too. According to Apple, slogan systems must "have a penumbra of vagueness so that powerful groups or individuals who would otherwise disagree can fit under its umbrella," "be specific enough to offer something to practitioners here and now," and "have the ability to charm." On this final point, Apple clarifies that "put simply, its style must be such that it grabs us. It offers us a sense of imaginary possibility and in doing so generates a call to and a claim for action" (97). Here, we get the most direct assessment of the significance of rhetoric within the slogan system model and a particular reference to the centrality of style.

It is, ultimately, against this schema that Apple judges the *Proposal* and attempts to account for its ultimate influence on pedagogical practice. In terms of the first criteria, Apple judges that while the *Proposal* attempted to offer a wide umbrella, but it ultimately failed based on the identity of the group responsible for its authorship, particularly when compared to *A Nation at Risk*. While the *Proposal's* sponsors include administrators from large school districts, college presidents, and representatives from educational and professional groups, "conspicuous by their absence...are teachers, government officials, and, perhaps most important ideologically, capital. Because of this," Apple argues, "[*the*

Proposal] will have very little impact" (97). Here, Apple suggests that the *Proposal* fails to appeal to a broad enough range of interests based on the fact that its contributors represent limited perspectives, perspectives which do not account for the day-to-day experiences of the classroom or the workplace. In contrast to the *Proposal's* failure, *A Nation at Risk* succeeds, in Apple's assessment, on the basis of its contributors' more varied interests and allegiances:

> The National Commission was heavily loaded not only with university presidents, administrators, and academics, but had politicians and representatives of teachers and industry on it. *The Paideia Proposal's* impact will be lessened considerably because of its very historical roots in academic and old humanist culture, roots that limit the spread of its umbrella, as it were. Working class and rightist populist groups will not necessarily agree with such a definition of the basics, and historically have often been antipathetic to the transformation of schools back into academies for what may be seen by them as elite knowledge that has little bearing on their economic and cultural experiences. (97-98)

Apple's critique of the *Proposal's* rhetorical efficacy draws directly on the previously discussed climate of anti-intellectualism and the assumptions it furthered regarding the less productive nature of humanistic study and its subject matter. Adler's investment in the liberal arts tradition of American public education is described as being out of sync with the values and interests of the masses to the degree that it fails to account for their understanding of their own needs. The fact that the *Proposal* was constructed by men and women working from atop academia's ivory towers could be taken as a sign of its inability to reform education in meaningful ways for this particular population. On the

other side of the issue, however, *A Nation at Risk* more fully represented working-class and industry-based issues, and its Commission included a wider range of voices that were not as suspiciously out of touch as the academics working on the *Proposal*.

While Apple does not refer to the Commission's scientific and technological concerns directly, despite his frequent reference to the Paideia Group's humanist leanings, a look at the contributors' affiliations makes this difference clear. Representing the leaders of industry on the Commission is William O. Baker, former Chairman of the Board for Bell Telephone Laboratories. Additionally, the two college faculty members that contributed to *A Nation at Risk,* Seaborg and Gerald Holton, are both from the hard sciences. Seaborg's work in chemistry was certainly of value by industrial standards, especially his contributions to projects concerning nuclear energy. As the Mallinckrodt Professor of Physics at Harvard, Holton's interests extended to the history of science and to the development of scientific curriculum and culture.

In 1981, Holton delivered a Jefferson Lecture for the National Endowment for the Humanities entitled "Where is Science Taking Us?" He was the first scientist ever invited to deliver the annual address, and his differing perspective on the role of the humanities was clear in the way that his lecture disagreed with the very first Jefferson Lecture delivered by Lionel Trilling in 1972. In his lecture, Trilling argued that Thomas Jefferson had been wrong to name science and scientific achievement as the means by which societies improved themselves, claiming that the humanism was, in fact, the force responsible for such improvement. Holton, however, positioned Jefferson's faith in science as a still viable option. This shift in the lecture's treatment of the topic represents the zeitgeist of the early 1980s, emphasizing the degree to which even those concerned

with other academic arenas and modes of education were more and more committed to scientific achievement as a national project.

Also on the Commission was Charles A. Foster Jr., who represented the Foundation for Teaching Economics in San Francisco, a group which developed leadership programs for young Americans focused on economic approaches to national and international issues. While the group had aims similar to Adler's in the sense that it sought to prepare young Americans for modes of citizenship that spoke to national need, the group's particular orientation to global politics focused not on humanitarian concerns but on international markets and trade agreements. Overall, the make-up of the Commission does in itself represent a wider range of interests and perspectives than the constituency who collaborated with Adler on the *Proposal*, and this difference did influence the relationship between the texts and their audiences.

On the second characteristic of slogan systems, that related to specificity, Apple's critique is much briefer yet just as pointed. While the *Proposal* endeavors to identify specific reform efforts and pedagogical models, its discussions stay so abstract that a teacher or parent wishing to follow its program would have very little idea of how to start and of how to do so in relation to a larger school system following a very different program. This abstractness might be tied to the intellectual character of the *Proposal* outlined in the previous critique in the sense that it shows little familiarity with the practical and material challenges faced in the classroom. If teachers turned to the *Proposal* for practices to implement in their classrooms, they would largely be disappointed, as Adler's curriculum consisted of more universal, school or district-based types of reforms.

On the third point, the point of style, Apple acknowledges that Adler writes well, but he contends that the document "lacks the spark of newness because so much of it is really a defensive program, a call to return to a romanticized past in which 'ideas' dominated school life and all students paid close attention to the teacher" (98). While Apple is right to recognize the conservative elements of Adler's program, his assessment here is linked more to an understanding of the crisis moment as it is rendered in documents such as *A Nation at Risk* than to the crisis as Adler and the Paideia Group characterize and describe it. The tendency to judge the *Proposal* based on these terms speaks to the relative strength of the various crisis narratives, which Apple considers in his suggestion that the discursive atmosphere prepared by *A Nation at Risk* increased the attention being paid to Alder's work. *A Nation at Risk* is future-oriented in the sense that it attempts to account for a world defined by technological innovation and advancement at every level of its educational program. The *Proposal*, however, looks to the past, locating the current failings not in an inability to adapt but in a hasty forfeiting of meaningful and productive tradition. By the *Proposal's* own understanding of the current moment's needs, its program is "timely," but given the more powerful exigence associated with the technologically invested educational aims, the tendency to judge the *Proposal's* on the basis of its response to this alternative crisis narrative was understandably common.

Apple recognizes this mismatch as it manifests in the *Proposal's* discursive style, explaining that he notices a "self-consciousness in writing, a style in which the political artifice of the volume is all too visible. It tries so hard to preserve something for everyone that the very attempt to do that actually can make the reader even more wary

ideologically than might otherwise be the case" (98). The fact that the *Proposal* attempts to maintain discursive neutrality is, apparently, something that makes its program suspect. Again, though, this particular discursive character seems to be in line with the *Proposal's* own understanding of the crisis moment's primary problems as well as its potential. The *Proposal's* investment in the Aristotelian conception of paideia, for instance, emphasizes the need for the liberal arts approach to the rearing of the ideal citizen. Within this model, the idea that every citizen has something to contribute to the community and should be given the tools that he needs to make this contribution clear is important.

The project focuses on the shaping of character, a character based initially on a Greek ideal and, in Adler's re-rendering, on a democratic or American ideal. The persuasive potential of this approach to public education depends upon every citizen's ability to see himself living up to this ideal. In this sense, the open democratic style that Apple identifies as a problem is, in fact, endeavoring toward significant rhetorical ends. That this strategy does not work to generate the level of readerly investment that it should suggests that the version of citizenship that Adler's audience has come to expect of itself differs drastically from the models he imagines as productive. If there is something suspect about his democratically oriented address and his attempts to appeal to a wide audience on the basis of a shared sense of collective responsibility, the issue might lie in the difference between Adler's imagined audience and his actual audience, the former being more ready to accept this responsibility and the latter being resistant and expecting a more passive commitment to educational reform on the basis of past experience. This

understanding of the American public is one of the factors that might challenge Adler's public-intellectual intervention and persona.

Apple is not alone in his assessment of the *Proposal* and *A Nation at Risk* relative to these challenging ideological and rhetorical contexts. In his 1984 response for *The Journal of General Education*, pedagogue Marshall W. Gregory considers the reception of Adler's work among those with more sustained interests in educational reform. He opens with an analogy that highlights the role of national and military interests in educational reform overall. "For at least 35 years, perhaps longer," Gregory writes, "Mortimer Adler has aspired to be a five-star general leading the American public into a happy and productive attack on venality and sloth in education" (70). The militaristic tone is extended here in Gregory's discussion of how readers should react to Adler's *Proposal*. "This is our language; these are our prejudices, and hearing them uttered always makes the troops stand up more straight and march more smartly" (70). Gregory ties the rallying force of Adler's work to the "language" here, emphasizing the degree to which the communicative function of his program and the vocabulary it borrows from and gives back to readers is of prime importance. In essence, the rhetorical function that Gregory ascribes to Adler's work is that attributed to epideictic rhetoric in the classical tradition.

Deploying a similar model for the persuasive power of social cohesion, Chaïm Perelman and Lucia Olbrecht-Tyteca offer the concept of "communion" in their *New Rhetoric*, a text which was similarly born of war-time crisis. Acknowledging that the concept is relatively "understated" in the treatise and that direct discussion of it is "brief and scattered," Richard Graff and Wendy Winn nonetheless characterize it as a

significant element of the pair's revisioning of rhetoric's social potential. "In *The New Rhetoric*," Graff and Winn explain, "communion is used in a very general sense as the term denoting a community's agreement on questions of value, but also, more narrowly, as an objective sought in certain forms of discourse and as an effect of specific linguistic-stylistic devices" (46). In this way, *The New Rhetoric's* conception aligns quite directly with Gregory's discussion because it emphasizes the significant force of shared "prejudices" while also describing a scenario in which this force is strengthened, and the "troops'" commitment to the cause is amplified, as a result of specific language practices. This, too, speaks to Apple's conception of slogan systems in the sense that slogans themselves are meant to have the effect of a rallying cry.

Graff and Winn describe *The New Rhetoric's* treatment of communion in terms of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's revitalization of the epideictic genre, a strategy that links their new rhetoric to classical antecedents while also emphasizing the significant work the pair did in offering rhetorical models for contending with social values. Referring to this blending of new and old as one of *The New Rhetoric's* most important contributions overall, Graff and Winn explain that the treatise offers "an interpretation of epideictic discourse that claims to break with the tradition or Aristotelian understanding of the genre: ceremonial speeches fashioned for the present on topics of praise or blame crafted for occasions in which the audience's response is directed to an assessment of the speaker's skill" (47). Specifically, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca look to reorient treatments of epideictic, moving away from the more literary conception popularized by Aristotelian modes and emphasizing the rhetorical and persuasive potential. In this process, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca "insert into their framework the concepts of

value-judgment and *variable intensity of adherence* (as distinct from simple persuasion) they claim to be lacking in the classical presentations of rhetoric and also inimical to analytic logic or apodictic demonstration" (48). Both of these additions speak to the ways in which the epideictic genre works with, or against, an audience's existing value systems and creates attachments among the audience to the new or different subjects or ideas it introduces.

In terms of the intensity of adherence that a rhetorical act can generate, one of the primary considerations is whether or not the rhetorical act inspires action on the part of its audience. As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca explain it, "the intensity of the adherence sought is not limited to obtaining purely intellectual results, to a declaration that a certain thesis seems more probable than another, but will very often be reinforced until the desired action is actually performed" (49). More intense adherence manifests in following the line of reasoning not only to its reasonable conceptual conclusion but also to the actions and habits that this conclusion suggests. Within this context, it would not be enough for Gregory's troops to agree with Adler's orders; they must also carry them out.

Despite the predisposition to agree with Adler on the basis of shared values and the forces of community, however, Gregory ultimately encourages Adler's readers to approach his programs with a certain degree of critical distance. He explains that to construct a list of all the points of agreement might take a dedicated fellow pedagogue "a week and would only prove, in the end, that we all serve, philosophically at least, in the same army." Instead, Gregory sets forward for his colleagues the task of deciding "whether the position Adler advances in *The Paideia Proposal* is sufficiently coherent and compelling that we should all devote ourselves toward our realization, or, to put it

another way, whether we should widen our philosophical comradeship to include brotherhood in the trenches" (70). Here, there seems to be a significant difference between philosophical and value-based communion and action-oriented communion. When the persuasive force of rhetorical action is realized, when it successfully moves beyond the linguistic and conceptual realms and is transmuted into policy or other materially manifested forms, it requires a renewed sense of commitment. In part, this renewed or furthered sense of commitment is important in the sense that it recognizes the reality of putting plans or policies into action. As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca explain, "the intensity of adherence, aiming at effective action, cannot be measured by the degree of probability attributed to the accepted argument, but rather by the obstacles overcome by the action and the sacrifices and choices is leads to and which can be justified by the adherence" (49). All things being equal, the implementation of one policy over another might not require a greater degree of adherence, but when one of multiple options means more effort, more resources, or greater sacrifice, the degree of adherence must be amplified to account for these challenges.

This particular understanding of the rhetorical challenges characteristic of policy-based argument might be linked directly to the stylistic failings that Apple identifies as one of the *Proposal's* central weaknesses. While policy-based argument depends upon these amplifications, the epidictic genre works toward amplification primarily by a mobilization of already-held beliefs and traditional principles, which might be one of the rhetorically resonant reasons for the *Proposal* to lack that "spark of newness." In their assessment of the role of epidictic, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca explain that "the very concept of this kind of oratory—which, in Tarde's phrase, is more reminiscent of a

procession than of a struggle—results in its being practised by those who, in a society, defend the traditional and accepted values, those which are the object of education, not the new and revolutionary values which stir up controversy and polemics" (51). Given the conservative tendency of educational development generally, it is easy to see why the epideictic genre would be meaningful within such contexts. Again, though, given the intellectual climate of the Cold War and the ways in which common characterizations of the Soviet threat served to push an interest in the Space Age as brand new and formerly unknown, tradition was itself a tough sell. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca recognize in epidictic discourse "an optimistic, a lenient tendency" by which "the speaker readily converts into universal values, if not eternal truths, that which has acquired a certain standing through social unanimity. Epidictic speeches are most prone to appeal to a universal order, to a nature, or a god that would vouch for the unquestioned, and supposedly unquestionable, values. In epidictic oratory, the speaker turns educator" (51). This particular orientation is not, perhaps, the most persuasive in the face of a crisis which challenges the very nature of social order, and given the largely unchallenged appeal of more future-oriented narratives and their attendant need, the conservative approach requires a more forceful defense than these optimistic tendencies realize.

Given the rhetor's function as an educator, the character of the speaker is important to the rhetorical effect of epidictic. Before considering the specific structural elements that determine a pedagogical text's persuasive appeal, Gregory gestures toward the significance of ethos within such leadership contexts. This treatment speaks directly to Adler's function as a public-intellectual figure. Gregory explains that:

> The primary assumption underlying *The Paideia Proposal* is that the army Adler has always wanted to lead is at last ready to be led. In this slender document he attempts nothing less than to shape the future of American education—an attempt based on the optimistic assumption that the American public is mounted, armed, and ready to do battle for educational reform, momentarily holding back only because it lacks a commanding general with enough presence and authority to rally the troops and win the war. (71)

Within a democratic context, the general/troops analogy functions primarily as an uncomplicated and direct model of authoritarian rule, one rarely seen (or at least denied) in the government or the academy.[30] Still, though, the analogy provides a model in which power is meaningfully warranted by specialized knowledge and training.

As discussed in the earlier chapters, ethos-based appeals are at the center of most public-intellectual work. Importantly, though, authority itself is typically distanced from argumentation. According to Hannah Arendt, "if authority is to be defined at all it must be in contradistinction to both coercive power and persuasion through argument" (45). Within this Arendtian conception, true authority is undercut by acts of force, including violence, and by direct efforts toward persuasion. While the former calls attention to a power's need to enforce its position, the latter suggests an equality that distributes influence among the relevant parties. True authority is strongest when it is effective despite being undefended. Sociologist Frank Furedi, too, finds Arendt's treatment of the state of authority more persuasive than the treatments of her contemporaries and critics,

[30] The analogy functions very differently here than it does in characterizations of the debate between Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem that were treated in the previous chapter, but it is interesting to consider how it surfaces in both discussions relative to viable models of leadership.

noting in particular that her contention that authority has most consistently been treated and experienced as a problem since the onset of the modern age.

In *Between Past and Future*, Arendt contends that "authority has vanished" and that "most will agree that a constant, ever-widening and deepening crisis of authority has accompanied the development of the modern world" in the twentieth century (1). It is this crisis and the various forms that it has taken throughout history that concern Furedi and which speak to the relationship between persuasion and authority. Furedi identifies the rise of liberal theory as one philosophical and political trend that weakened the normative function of authority. "The belief that persuasion rather than force constituted the foundation of order," he explains, "has as its premise the belief that, through free speech and communication, the public could be influenced to act in accordance with reason and their interest" (350). This conception is similar to Habermas's theories of the bourgeois public sphere at its emergence, highlighting the constructive and productive nature of public discourse. On this same point, Furedi refers to Leon Mayhew's contention that the rise of liberal models of democracy in the eighteenth century positioned the "development of public opinion as a constituent component of the social order" (1285). Important here for Mayhew and Furedi is the conception of the "public" as "a solidary group, bound by their common reason and united by a process of dialogue through which the principle of socially limited state power is stated forcefully," and the liberal, or utilitarian, model "asserts that in any free exchange of ideas among rational speakers, truth will emerge victorious" (1283). Authority, then, is derived from consensus, but the process of reaching consensus requires adequate conditions for the "free exchange of

ideas." In moments of crisis, public intellectuals need to protect and foster these conditions in order to ensure that the public realm functions.

Within an Aristotelian tradition, ethos might be seen as an actively generated form of authority, although the reputation of the speaker as it exists separate from the speech act itself is nonetheless a functional component. In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle explains that "persuasion is achieved when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others" (I.ii.4). The speaker's identity is formulated as the background context for the content of his speech; if we believe a man to be good, we are primed to accept his conclusions and recommendations. In part, this stems from the impulse toward communion and consubstantiality discussed above. If we agree with the statements of a good man, we can see ourselves as good. His enviable qualities become our own over the course of the persuasion.

Aristotle's discussion also speaks to ethos as a means of determining the degree of adherence, suggesting that while it might not, in all cases, be wholly persuasive in its own right, it might be powerful enough to solidify an audience's commitment to certain ideals or values that they might only adopt tenuously otherwise. Given that the type of value-driven mobilization that Gregory suggests is Adler's primary goal, this understanding of ethos is especially significant within the context of his project. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca note that within a value-focused rhetorical model, "the speaker must have qualifications for speaking on his subject and must also be skillful in its presentation, if he is not to appear ridiculous" (52). Interestingly, however, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca link this increased significance of the speaker's authority and

position to the community-centered and cohesion-encouraging influence of shared values. As they explain, "it is not his own cause or viewpoint that he is defending, but that of his entire audience. He is, so to speak, the educator of his audience, and if it is necessary that he should enjoy a certain prestige before he speaks, it is to enable him, through his own authority, to promote the values that he is upholding" (52). Within this model, the speaker's strategy for himself as a member of the group to whom he speaks requires that he nonetheless be distant enough from the masses to warrant the audience's attention. This point, along with the characterization of the speaker's role as educator within this context, leads directly to the plight of the public intellectual generally, as the intellectual is consistently working to align herself with the values of the audience while retaining enough authority to grant her claims power.[31] Gregory's general/troops analogy works to place Adler in a position of authority that effectively achieves this model of relationship, although the authority within this model is derived from an institutional hierarchy.

Deploying a tripartite structure similar to that that Apple uses to characterize slogan systems, Gregory identifies the structural failings that he believes will limit the *Proposal's* influence:

> There are at least three hurdles—in addition to merit—that any polemical writer such as Adler must clear if he is going to make his position command general assent. First, he must introduce his position at a favorable time. Second, he must clarify and sharpen the issues not only so that they acquire increased focus, but also so that the different constituencies to whom he appeals can see good reason

[31] This complicated mode of self-positioning relates directly to the challenges that Mary Church Terrell faced and to Dick Pels's conception of spokespersonship, both of which were discussed in the first chapter.

> for accepting his version of the issues. Third, he must employ a literary form that grabs attention and propels people into concrete action. (71)

Overall, Gregory's suggestion is that the *Proposal* fails to clear these hurdles and will, thus, have limited influence on the reality of pedagogical practice. Based on his discussion, though, the failure has more to do with rhetorical form than it does with content or concept, and Gregory's assessment largely aligns with Apple's in this interest.

The first hurdle that Gregory identifies is one familiar to rhetoricians: the challenge of *kairos*. Historically, the conception of *kairos* in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* has received relatively little attention when compared to Plato's treatment in the *Phaedrus*, an imbalance that James L. Kinneavy and Catherine R. Eskin seek to redress in their article on the former. In earlier work on the subject, Kinneavy defines *kairos* as "the right or opportune time to do something, or right measure in doing something" (80). On the basis of the second half of this definition, the concept has been linked to decorum in the work of George Puttenham and Francis Bacon, an emphasis which informs James S. Baulim's treatment of the topic. Within the context of this treatment, appropriate timing is linked more directly to the ethos-building process in the sense that it conveys a sense of the speaker's sense of the situation that he or she addresses.

As I discussed in the introduction, Lloyd Bitzer's conception of the "rhetorical situation" characterized the responsive nature of the rhetorical act more directly than previous work on the subject. "In order to clarify rhetoric-as-essentially-related-to-situation," he writes, "we should acknowledge a viewpoint that is commonplace but fundamental: a work of rhetoric is pragmatic; it comes into existence for the sake of something beyond itself; it functions ultimately to produce action or change in the world;

it performs some task" (3). Similar to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's rehabilitation of the epidictic genre, Bitzer's intervention refocuses attention on rhetoric's social and political functions over its literary or merely linguistic form. In so doing, he identifies three elements of the rhetorical situation that exist prior to, and in some cases independent of, the rhetorical act itself: "the first is the exigence; the second and third are elements of the complex, namely the audience to be constrained in decision and action, and the constraints which influence the rhetor and can be brought to bear upon the audience" (6). Taken together, these three elements structure the background context governing the rhetor's intervention, and successful rhetorical discourse responds to them in proportionate measure.

While all three of Bitzer's elements could be, and often are, influenced by and exerting pressure upon the timing of the rhetorical act, his conception of exigence is the most closely linked to *kairos*. "Any exigence is an imperfection marked by urgency," he explains. "It is a defect, an obstacle something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be. In almost any sort of context, there will be numerous exigencies, but not all are elements of a rhetorical situation—not all are rhetorical exigencies. An exigence that cannot be modified is not rhetorical" (6). In making this distinction, Bitzer gestures toward a principle central in the Aristotelian definition of deliberative rhetoric, a point which, when combined with the Apple's and Gregory's characterization of pedagogical treatises, serves to highlight the hybrid nature of the genre. While it is a document concerned, at least superficially, with questions of policy, the pedagogical treatise is, ultimately dependent upon questions of value and the ideological systems that accounts for and justify the answers presented. This paradox, I argue, would characterize

most public-intellectual work on educational matters in general and on issues of literacy in particular.

Downplayed in Bitzer's account, however, is how the rhetorical act itself can function to bring the exigence to life for audiences and in some sense even construct an exigence-based justification of its own existence and significance. Richard Vatz's oft-cited response to Bitzer's article earned its position in the canon of contemporary rhetorical theory on the basis of this point. According to Vatz, "exigences are not the product of objective events, but rather are a matter of perception and interpretation" (214), and this understanding places more agency with the rhetor and his construction of events and the related framing of his argument. Within this model, "situations obtain their character from the rhetoric which surrounds them or creates them" (159), and this creative force is controlled by the rhetor and the narrative framing by which he or she presents the rhetorical discourse to his or her audience. Situations are constructed from the particulars of this narrative as the rhetor selects and presents them. For Vatz, the process of selection determines rhetorical salience: "Rhetors choose or do not choose to make salient situations, facts, events, etc. This may be the *sine qua non* of rhetoric: the art of linguistically or symbolically creating salience. After salience is created, the situation must be translated into meaning" (160). If the rhetorical force of an intervention is determined by an author's or a speaker's ability to make the pressing conditions requiring response immediate for readers or auditors, it is clear that Seaborg and the Commission responsible for *A Nation at Risk* had more to work with than Adler and the humanists. Linking his reform to more passive and more enduring structural issues was rhetorically

resonant in the sense that it allowed him to return to a classical pedagogical model long forgotten, but not even Aristotle can compete with the A-Bomb.

The second obstacle that Gregory identifies closely aligns with Apple's slogan system in the sense that it emphasizes both the need for a relatively narrow and manageable focus and the need to characterize the issues at play in ways that will be both accessible and convenient for a diverse audience. In some sense, Gregory's rendering of this obstacle speaks more directly to the seeming contradiction that exists between the first two attributes of slogan systems as Apple explains them. For this type of reform-minded pedagogical work to be persuasive, it must find a middle ground in which it is both specific enough and general enough. Interestingly, however, Gregory's description suggests that one can follow from the other; in the process of clarifying and sharpening the issues the author can not only treat them with increased focus but can also increase their general appeal by way of his "version." It is in contending with this obstacle that we see most forcefully how the pedagogical projects to which both Adler and Seaborg contributed relied on a certain version of past events, a certain historiographic narrative that positioned their suggestion for reform as meaningful within the social and cultural contexts as they themselves create them. The construction of the crisis narrative, then, is itself a way of preparing an audience to assent to action-oriented recommendations.

Ultimately, the mismatch between the moment as Adler understands and responds to it and the moment as the majority of the nation and various interested parties see it is one of the *Proposal's* most pressing challenges. Gregory contends that:

> Adler's *Paideia Proposal* begs the question by assuming what needs to be proved. Adler apparently thinks that complaints from business leaders, educators, military

> leaders, and school boards indicate that they agree about how to define the main problems and how to solve them. He jumps from the unsupported assertion that the troops are ready to fight, to the unsupported conclusion that what they are ready to fight for is to provide the citizenry with an education that will prepare them with lifelong learning and preserve democracy. (72-73)

It is, in this sense, the aims of educational reform that become controversial, despite Adler's work to render models associated with his particular goals as the most capable of meeting the nation's needs. In assuming agreement, Adler neglects to support this model in terms of these aims, which has the potential to undercut the entire argument set forth in his *Proposal* for those who do not share his initial orientation and foundational educational philosophy. The problem here is a failure to recognize the composite nature of his audience and their various investments in the issue of literacy. Given Adler's investment in the discursive practices of citizenship, this failure seems to represent a serious inability on Adler's part to model the types of rhetorical engagement with complex subject matter and diverse audiences would require. Gregory notes, as a pointed aside, that "educators are prone to mistake the echoes of their own talk for the voices of other people" (73). This speaks to a significant issue in rhetorical practice generally that democratically oriented education would, in theory, attempt to correct in its target population. Public intellectuals can intervene in public discourse by modeling meaningful rhetorical action, but Adler's work fails to engage his audience on these terms.

As was the case with the second, Gregory's third obstacle aligns with Apple's discussion of slogan systems, focusing on the issue of style. While Apple treats this point in terms of charm, Gregory similarly emphasizes the need for the literary construction of

the text itself to be capable of acquiring and maintaining an audience's attention and of spurring the audience to act. Classifying the *Proposal* as a manifesto, Gregory asserts that Adler has chosen to work in a particular difficult argumentative mode. This assessment, too, aligns with the Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's assessment of educational discourse generally. They characterize such discourse as similar to epidictic in that it "is not designed to promote the speaker, but for the creation of a certain disposition in those who hear it. Unlike deliberative and legal speeches, which aim at obtaining a decision to act, the educational and epidictic speeches create a mere disposition toward action, which makes them comparable to philosophical thought" (54). Of additional interest relative to Gregory's assessment is their consideration of in-group/out-group dynamics.

They emphasize that "entry into a specialized group requires initiation," but "while a speaker must normally adapt himself to his audience, this is not true of a teacher responsible for teaching students what is accepted by the particular group they wish to join, or at least which those responsible for their education wish them to join." Given that the pedagogue persona that he adapts is integral to Adler's work, this teacherly orientation seems a fitting characterization of his rhetorical self-fashioning, too. Under such models, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca write:

> …persuasion is preliminary to initiation. It must secure submission to the requirements of the specialized group, for which the teacher is the spokesperson. Initiation into a given discipline consists of communicating its rules, techniques, specific ideas, and presuppositions, as well as the method of criticizing its results in terms of the discipline's own requirements. These characteristics distinguish initiation from popularization, which aims at the public at large for the purpose of

> acquainting it, in nontechnical language, with certain interesting results, without enabling it, however, to use the methods which made it possible to reach these results or, a fortiori, to attempt to criticize them. (100)

If one of Adler's aims was to win over a particular subset of pedagogues and professionals already predisposed to a similar philosophical engagement with the issues of educational reform, then his style might be understood as an attempt at modeling these practices of discursive initiation. Nonetheless, Gregory's assessment suggests that the *Proposal* met a much larger audience than that for which such stylistic choices would have functioned productively, and the result was that a large portion of this actual audience remained unconvinced, or uninitiated.

It does, however, seem that the *Proposal* has had one of the effects required of productive public-intellectual work in the sense that it has encouraged additional engagement with the topic at hand. "Despite its flaws," Gregory writes, "[Adler's] book has served the useful purpose of allowing the rest of us to clarify our own ideas as we think through some of his" (78). Among educators, the book has functioned as a reminder of what can go wrong when argumentative structures and forms do not adequately assess the needs of their audiences. The *Proposal's* failure has acted as a cautionary tale and has inspired the text's in-group and incidental supporters to refine their own thinking on the subjects its treats. It has not, however, succeeded in modeling the means by which these ideas, once refined, can be communicated to the general public. Its failure might suggest some strategies to avoid, but it would be difficult to correct these with only the *Proposal* as an anti-model. The question of what style would be appropriate for such a document remains unanswered. As discussed in the previous chapter, the relationship between

rhetorical style and public-intellectual intervention is often under acknowledged in ways that negatively influence the intellectual's real-world effect. In general, though, the language-based aspects of persuasive discourse have been well documented by rhetorical theorists.

Jeanne Fahnestock seeks to explicate the relationship between rhetorical persuasion and language in her work on style. She argues that "of all parts of rhetoric, style is arguably the most implicated in the others, since linguistic choice is the point of realization for the rhetorical precepts and theories belonging to the other canons" (7). In traditional rhetorical theory, the "other canons" to which Fahnestock refers include invention, judgment, and arrangement, as well as memory and delivery. Fahnestock's point, however, is that decisions made at the level of diction and syntax both inform and are reflective of decisions made at the levels of argument, organization, and presentation. For Aristotle, linguistic style (lexis) was largely a matter of appropriateness within the context of genre. Although he discusses such matters in more detail in the *Poetics*, his treatment of style in the *Rhetoric* suggests that "the virtue of style [*lexeōs aretē*] be defined as 'to be clear' [*saphē*] (speech is a kind of sign, so if it does not make clear it will not perform its function)—and neither flat nor above the dignity of the subject, but appropriate [*prepon*]" (3.2.1404b). In his translation of this section of the *Rhetoric*, George A. Kennedy notes that "Aristotle here applies to word choice the concept of virtue as a mean between two extremes that is fundamental to his ethical philosophy" (198), a point which further links rhetorical style to social action. This Aristotelian conception also highlights the role that style plays in ethos-building, a point which further emphasizes the significance of style in a public-intellectual realm so defined by authority.

In her work with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's treatise, Fahnestock emphasizes the "foundational points about the language of argument made throughout *The New Rhetoric*: language choices encode selected objects of agreement and constitute techniques of argument" (30). While Gregory separates style from argument in his assessment of Adler's *Proposal*, his treatment of the document nonetheless emphasizes the ways in which the two are integrally linked. In their treatment of this link, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca take issue with the concept of neutrality in discourse. "There are no neutral term choices," they contend, "though there are choices that count as neutral (unmarked) in a certain context, and stylistic analysis is based on an awareness of options. To generalize this point: characteristics that are attributed to words are in fact products of their use" (45). Within this conceptualization, the significance of audience is especially clear, as every piece of language functions on the basis of the audience's orientation to that language generally and to the word or term in particular. Language, that is, can only be neutral under certain conditions that structure a relationship between a rhetor and his or her audience. According to *The New Rhetoric*, "ordinary, unremarkable language represents a set of agreements, a community of thought. Ordinary language promotes agreement on ideas, and an apparently neutral style increases credibility" (45). In this sense, language is itself rhetorically resonant, even in cases where it calls no notice to itself in any direct way.

If language itself is capable of constructing the relationship between rhetor and audience in a positive, rhetorically productive way, it can have equal effect in the opposite direction. This, it seems, is a central issue in Gregory's assessment of Adler's work and a major limitation to the work's wider reception based on my assessment, too.

The New Rhetoric explains that "many language choices construct or encode the rhetorical situation (communion with the audience is one aspect)" (45), but this assumed communion is self-defeating if not realized in the actual relationship between rhetor and audience. Gregory describes the controversial contexts surrounding educational issues, but he notes that "rather than contribute to an ongoing debate, Adler takes the tone of wrapping things up once and for all" (78). In adopting such a tone, Adler seems disconnected from his actual audience and unaware of the actual controversy surrounding the issues about which he writes. This disconnected, unaware attitude is, however, the exact type of attitude that Adler's educational program would seek to displace in its students. It is the very attitude that thwarts democratic engagement in the sense that it refuses to engage with issues as issues. Under such a model, *The New Rhetoric* explains, "the status of 'elements' as objects of agreement can be altered; personal tastes can be presented as standards or values; values can be presented as facts; judgments of facts as values" (45), all on the basis of style. This particular stylistic orientation threatens real engagement with difference and forecloses opportunities for debate or disagreement. Alternative styles, however, have the capacity to do the opposite, to create opportunities for real and meaningful discussion. Such styles would allow public intellectuals to productively influence a public realm tending toward less engaged and less inclusive characters.

Overall, the perspectives and related rhetorical strategies exemplified by Seaborg in his work in and leading up to *A Nation at Risk* and by Adler in his publically oriented philosophy and the *Paideia Proposal* speak to the challenges facing the public intellectual addressing issues of literacy in contested contexts. The Cold War

environment to which both men and projects responded remained reliant on wartime paradigms for "productive" citizenship, and these paradigms influenced public conceptions of literacy and learning. The anti-intellectualism associated with materialistic approaches to production and with the heightened focus on the brainpower required of workers in a growing industrial economy exerted influence on the public's relationship to education, as well. Set against this backdrop, both perspectives required rhetorical strategies that actively responded to the contradictions in notions of American citizenship that this cluster of concerns highlighted, strategies which rose to the crisis moment in its most heightened sense. While both borrowed from wartime rhetorics and grounded their reform programs in crisis narratives that sought to create a demand for the specific intellectual product each offered, *A Nation at Risk* proved more persuasive within the public realm based on its more practical and economically minded orientation, while the *Paideia Proposal* proved a tougher sell based on its philosophical grounding and more academically invested goals. As an act of public-intellectual intervention, the *Paideia Proposal* failed to engage its public audience on the audience's terms and to model the types of deliberative discursive engagement that its democratic mission depended on. While it stood as an antidote to *A Nation at Risk*, both conceptually and stylistically, its rhetorical structuring was ultimately unable to turn the tides of educational debate on either front.

While the educational debates of the Cold War era were very clearly concerned with the practices and character of American citizenship, contemporary debates are no less so. In the following chapter, I examine how Stanley Fish's 2005 op-ed "Devoid of Content" characterized and ultimately shaped a debate focused on the role of writing

instruction in college education. Fish's piece appeared in the *New York Times*, reaching a very large public audience. Most academics and composition specialists, however, responded via list-servs and forums accessible only to their smaller discourse communities. The reception of Fish's piece speaks to the public intellectual's power and to the role of discursive intervention and participation more generally. This reading of his piece and of the responses it elicited leads me to consider the particular rhetorical styles that his mode of public-intellectual work models relative to the literate practices that he views as integral to public participation and citizenship in the "real world."

CHAPTER V

DOING WHAT COMES RHETORICALLY: STANLEY FISH, COMPOSITION STUDIES, AND THE CONTEMPORARY ART OF PUBLIC INTELLECTUALISM

In his 2008 book *Out of Style: Reanimating Stylistic Study in Composition and Rhetoric*, compositionist Paul Butler fervently decries the fact that composition studies as an academic discipline is without its own force of public intellectuals. Butler contends that this situation leaves the field open to unwarranted criticisms based on misrepresentations of the work it does and without any direct means of addressing such misrepresentations. Citing literary critic and law professor Stanley Fish and his 2005 *New York Times* op-ed column "Devoid of Content" as a prime example, Butler argues that the "experts" addressing the public on matters of literacy and writing instruction within universities do so from outside the field of composition, from positions of authority not derived from their work on or scholarly interest in the subject. In order to address the distortions that such "experts" perpetuate, composition studies needs its own public intellectuals, true experts capable of wresting the bullhorn from Fish's hands and using it to tell a more accurate story of the field. If composition studies is to answer the cavalry call that Butler sounds here, the field must first determine what achieving a position of public intellectualism equivalent to Fish's requires, information that Butler himself does not provide. By assessing Fish's contributions to media outlets regarded as forums for public discourse in relation to various models of public intellectualism, particularly those models shaped by the modern university system and its relationship to the public, composition studies could arrive at a greater understanding of the rhetorical function of the public intellectual. This understanding would allow compositionists to make more

productive use of the role among their own ranks and, thus, to represent themselves publicly.

When Fish's "Devoid of Content" ran in the *New York Times* in May of 2005, the heated response the op-ed piece elicited from composition and rhetoric scholars was surprising given that Fish had made the same basic argument three full years earlier in an article for the *Chronicle of Higher Education* entitled "Say it Ain't So." In both pieces, in fact, Fish rehearses an argument that anyone familiar with Fish's previous work on language and writing pedagogy would find both expected and redundant. As is the case with "Say it Ain't So," "Devoid of Content" bewails the state of writing instruction on the basis of strategies that prize content over form. Fish contends that current trends in composition instruction subordinate the teaching of effective written form to the encouragement of content-driven critical thinking that is ultimately unrelated to the act of writing itself. He argues that such instruction assumes, incorrectly, that "if you chew over big ideas long enough, the ability to write about them will (mysteriously) follow." The column suggests that it is the result of such trends that a larger number of college students graduate without ever learning how to write effectively and provides an outline of the course Fish teaches specifically to ensure that his students are not among that number.

Despite the argument's lack of novelty, and its being founded on an overly generalized and unproven premise, the *New York Times* piece proved particularly inflammatory and ignited an immediate series of posts to composition and rhetoric message boards and writing program administration list-servs, an effect that Butler suggests was based not on the content of the critique alone, but on the fact that the critique this time took place in a public medium rather than in a specialized publication.

In support of this suggestion, Butler cites one of the many posts that appeared on the WPA-L list-serv in response to the article the same day Fish's column ran. In his reply to a post asking whether those involved in the list-serv might be taking Fish's column too seriously, Florida Atlantic University professor Jeffrey Galin writes that the piece would not have posed such a risk if it had gone to a more specialized audience, but "because it went to *The New York Times*, [the piece] circumvents the entire academic community and speaks directly to an audience that already believes that academics don't know what they are doing, especially when it comes to writing." The piece's power, then, lay primarily in its reaching a public audience, and Fish's access to this audience positioned him as a threat that advocates of composition studies could no longer simply ignore as they had previously.

Recognizing the importance of a public audience to the column's academic reception, Galin, like Butler, identified the obvious solution as speaking back in the same manner to the same audience. His post to the list-serv concluded that composition scholars "need to spend more time talking to the public about writing issues that don't sound like defensiveness, justification, or highbrow theory. We need to proffer an alternative, viable model that speaks to the average reader…dispelling persistent myths about the teaching and learning of writing." The irony here is palpable. In Galin's assessment, teachers of writing are unable to write clearly and persuasively about their teaching. In an earlier post, Galin expresses similar concern, writing "I worry how the popular press will spin [Fish's] pedagogy. Is there a voice among us who can articulate an alternative to the popular press that is viable?" For both Butler and Galin, exposing Fish as out of touch with the field's actual work requires finding, or perhaps producing, a

new public intellectual. This new public intellectual would be a voice among compositionists who could occupy the position that Fish occupies and speak directly to the public in order to provide them with a more accurate picture of writing instruction. A savior of sorts, this public intellectual could protect the field from potentially slanderous and deficient representations like those provided by Fish and others operating from outside of the composition community.

Ultimately, the controversy surrounding Fish's column and the resultant outcry speak to the fraught nature of the role of today's public intellectual more generally, inviting a consideration of the forces shaping current conceptions of the role and its potential efficacy in service to composition studies. In a 1977 interview, Michel Foucault explained how he saw his own work, his own contributions as an intellectual, as capable of intervening in the public political and social spheres. "It is necessary," he claimed, "to think of the political problems of intellectuals not in terms of 'science' and 'ideology,' but in terms of 'truth' and 'power.'" Re-conceptualizing "the political problems of intellectuals" in the way he suggests means that "the question of the professionalization of intellectuals and the division between intellectual and manual labor can be envisaged in a new way" (132), in a way that will put the effort of intellectuals in more direct and productive conversation with public life. As mentioned in the introduction, the idea of the "public intellectual" was first developed in Russell Jacoby's 1987 book *The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe* (Posner 26). Foucault's earlier treatment of the intellectual, however, already points to the natural divide between intellectual work and public life that the term "public intellectual" both emphasizes and attempts to bridge. For Foucault and others, the adjective qualifier "public" becomes

unnecessary in the sense that all intellectual work should have public relevance, thereby making all successful intellectuals public intellectuals to some extent. When it comes to considering the viability of training one to function as a public intellectual committed to specific causes, the process for going public remains a significant concern. In the section that follows, I consider how this process has been characterized by academics in the past and how Fish's public-intellectual development compares to these characterizations.

How Far is the Fall?: Measuring the Distance Between Academic and Public Culture

Since Foucault, the potentially problematic division between public and intellectual life has been resituated as a division primarily between the public and the academy. Today, the modern university system, as the institution responsible for the production of intellectuals, plays a more prominent role in structuring the relationship between intellectuals and the public than it has in the past. Despite this new configuration, or more likely because of it, interest in the role of the intellectual continues to warrant increased attention, occupying a particularly prominent position within the academy itself. While the constellation of concerns surrounding the question has changed relatively little since Foucault's explanation of his own work and while the conversation continues to circle around the intellectual's public function, the source of exigency has shifted as a result of the evolving relationship between the public and the academy. In previous accounts of the public intellectual, the role was characterized as a role performing a social function for the good of the people. Making intellectual work relevant to public life benefitted the public, bettering everyday life and creating space for social change. Contemporary characterizations of the divide between the public and the

academy, however, suggest that it is not the public who are currently in need of intellectuals equipped to bridge the divide, but rather the academy itself.

In recent years, academics have felt additional pressure to produce work that is useful and relevant, that can pass through and thrive outside of the ivory tower and that effects real change in the real world. At the same time, members of the public have become more and more vocal in demanding justification, in asking how the work being done by the institutions of higher learning that they support benefits society at large. Ultimately, this increased attention to the boundaries separating the academic and public sphere has done less to facilitate communication and understanding between the two than it has to breed confusion and resentment. While I offer an overly generalized account of a much larger and more complex situation, the general nature of the current divide between the academy and the public and the shift in communicatory dynamics is central to understanding the function of a public intellectual acting in the vein of Fish or filling the role as Butler and Galin believe is necessary for composition studies. If it is the academy or particular disciplines that have the most to gain from public-intellectual work, academics must pay closer attention to how today's public intellectuals function. Specifically, they must account for the systems of popular media and public address in which they operate in order to take true advantage of the opportunities that such positions and systems provide for communication beyond the bounds of the often isolated, and isolating, academic discourse which is readily available to them.

According to Fish himself, the state of the modern university and the character of the modern academic are directly at odds with producing functioning public intellectuals. Fish begins his discussion by placing the term in conversation with the oppositional

binary it suggests, the "private intellectual," claiming that there is no such thing, even within the context of the academy. Arguing that the academy is itself a type of public sphere, Fish thus troubles the notion of "publicness" on which the original term relies. The suggestion, then, becomes that the public intellectual must participate in a particular type of public realm, one that extends beyond that to which the academic, acting in the role of academic, has immediate access. Indeed, one of Fish's most controversial claims about the role of the public intellectual is that life in the academy threatens to immediately disqualify one to succeed in such a position; he contends that no facet of academic training or higher education prepares a scholar for the role of public intellectual. For Fish, a public intellectual is "the *public's* intellectual; that is, he or she is someone to whom the public regularly looks to for illumination on any number of (indeed all) issues" (*Professional* 119, emphasis in original). Additionally, Fish writes that "a public intellectual is not [only] someone who takes as his or her subject matters of public concern," contending that "a public intellectual is someone who takes as his or her subject matters of public concern, and *has the public's attention*" (118, emphasis in original). Given these points and their combined force, Fish argues that academics are not the natural choice for public intellectual positions based on their specialization, "academics are not trained to speak on everything, only on particular things," and on the difficulty they would have commanding attention, "academics do not have a stage or a pulpit from which their pronouncements, should they be inclined to make them, could be broadcast" (119). According to Fish, the structure of the academy, the value it accords to specialization, and its often wholly internal modes of communication make it nearly impossible for the academic to succeed as a public intellectual.

Fish is right to question the meaning of "public" in relation to an intellectual's role within the academy and to suggest that the academic might have additional challenges to overcome in pursuing the role of public intellectual, but he overstates the case in a characteristic fashion. While it is true that academics operating within the constraints of academia may not have training to speak on a wide range of subjects and may not have access to public forums, the suggestion that academics only function as academics within academic contexts seems odd given Fish's own career. In order to consider Fish's approach to the public-intellectual function, I return now to Richard Posner's economic model, which I discussed at greater length earlier. Posner considers the academic public intellectual, the public intellectual affiliated with a university, as the most common model, having replaced the independent public intellectual more frequently seen during early decades of the twentieth century. Although Posner ultimately contends that the quality of public-intellectual work has declined along with the "academization of intellectual life" (29), his critique targets public intellectualism more generally and suggests that there is overall room for improvement, even for academic public intellectuals. In this sense, it is not that academics cannot function as public intellectuals as Fish describes, but rather that they could function more effectively, at least based on Posner's understanding and assessment.

Posner's conception of the public intellectual is guided largely by an economic model in which all successful public intellectuals necessarily supply a good or fill a role that a given market demands. "Being an academic public intellectual," he contends, "is a career, albeit a part-time and loosely structured one, and like other careers it can be analyzed in terms of markets" (41). On the basis of this economic model, Posner

considers public-intellectual work as functioning like a symbolic good, a good "the principal content or function of which is expressive or informational" and which can include "art, propaganda, journalism, and scholarship" (6). Public intellectuals, academic or otherwise, can offer various types of these symbolic goods depending on market demand. For instance, in addition to being informative, a particular piece of public-intellectual work might also function as a solidarity good, a symbolic good that facilitates a sense of community investment for those who already share the author's perspective. Ultimately, Posner's economic model succeeds in demystifying public-intellectual work; if such work follows trends of supply and demand like any other economic good, the question of what type of intellectual supplies the good the public demands becomes irrelevant. If academics can provide the required good, they can succeed as public intellectuals regardless of their university affiliations or overly specialized areas of focus. What becomes important is that academics learn to read the market and to structure their contributions to public forums accordingly.

In his discussion of how the public evaluates the efficacy of public-intellectual work within the context of his economic model, Posner gestures briefly toward rhetoric, but he does not make use of the connections as productively as he could. "We might put it," he writes, "that rhetoric is to symbolic goods as advertising is to ordinary goods; the classic devices of rhetoric are well understood by Madison Avenue" (49). In this sense, rhetoric becomes the means by which a product is sold. Posner considers as an example Aristotle's conception of ethos, arguing that a symbolic good can be sold purely on the basis of the construction of a speaker's or writer's authority. What Posner does not consider, however, is the way in which rhetoric is largely responsible for structuring the

nature and form of the symbolic goods themselves, a point that seems particularly relevant given that economic trends reflect demands for specific goods despite the advertising used to heighten their appeal. Take, for example, the concept of a solidarity good described earlier. As a communicative form meant to encourage community among like-minded people, a solidarity good would seem to adhere to many aspects of epidictic rhetoric as it is described by Chaim Perelman and Lucia Olbrechts-Tyteca in *The New Rhetoric*. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca write that the epidictic genre is often characterized as having "no other aim than to please and to enhance, by embellishing them, facts that were certain or, at least, uncontested" (48).[32] Epideictic rhetoric, then, maintains or secures adherence to a set of beliefs that the speaker assumes his audience already shares, thus contributing to a sense of community just as solidarity goods are expected to do. This sense of rhetorical genre aligning with the type of good public-intellectual work is meant to provide extends, however, to other forms of public-intellectual work Posner considers and the demands they meet. Some public-intellectual work responds to and passes judgment on past actions or other intellectual works, thus adhering to elements of judicial rhetoric, while other public-intellectual work offers policy suggestions or prophecies about what a current event will lead to, thus adhering to elements of deliberative rhetoric. By addressing the ways in which the specific type of symbolic good that a piece of public-intellectual work provides can be understood in terms of rhetorical genre, the academy in general and composition scholars in particular could further enhance their understanding of how to produce the type of public-

[32] For a more fully developed account of the epidictic genre, see the discussion of the relationship between epidictic rhetoric and education in the final section of the previous chapter.

intellectual work that the public demands in order to secure positions as functioning public intellectuals.

While Posner's consideration of rhetoric within the context of public-intellectual work remains surprisingly cursory given the connections for which his economic model allows, Steven Mailloux has positioned rhetoric as central to his understanding of public-intellectual work and the potential for the academic intellectual to engage in such work. Responding directly to Fish's characterization of the academic as ill-suited for the role of public intellectual, Mailloux, like Posner, specifically considers "academic intellectuals" as a subcategory, positioning the term in relation to "public intellectuals" as a more productive oppositional term than Fish's "private intellectuals." Drawing on Foucault's definition of the role of intellectuals generally, which Foucault identifies as being able to "change something in the minds of people," and Foucault himself as an example of just such an intellectual, Mailloux writes that "academic intellectuals speak and write primarily for the professional disciplinary communities with which they identify. In contrast, public intellectuals not only rhetorically engage audiences beyond the academy but are recognized as doing so by both academics and nonacademics" (140). Primarily, Mailloux takes issue with the line Fish draws between academics and public intellectuals, seeking to bring the two roles back together by more fully engaging the common work of all intellectuals, the changing of minds. In this sense, Mailloux's model centers rhetoric by suggesting that intellectual work generally has a rhetorical function that might be adequately characterized as some form of persuasion. The distinction between the academic intellectual and the public intellectual, then, is not a distinction based on function or purpose, but a distinction based solely on audience.

Given Mailloux's characterization of the public intellectual, audience-centered rhetorical models become particularly apt models for engaging public-intellectual work. In addition to considerations of genre and convention, such models characterize communication between writers or speakers and their audiences in terms of the ability of a speech act or piece of writing to elicit a particular response in a particular audience. This facet of expressive and communicative "goods" seems to be the very element Posner overlooks in his economic model when he focuses on the external rhetoric surrounding a symbolic good rather than on the internal rhetoric structuring the work as a particular type of good fulfilling a particular function. As a rhetorician himself, however, Mailloux is particularly attuned to the potential for such models to contribute to our understanding of public intellectualism. In addition to the possibilities that such models have for rhetoricians who seek positions as public intellectuals, he recognizes the degree to which rhetoricians more generally may act as resources for other academics who wish to be involved in the public sphere. In the conclusion of his article "Thinking in Public With Rhetoric," he offers the following statement about the relationship of rhetoric and the rhetorician to public-intellectual pursuits:

> Rhetoricians have a special role to play as metacritics in their role as public intellectuals. They can analyze the audience specificity of the translation process, the persuasive success or failure of various commentaries, and the tropes, arguments, and narratives used in strategies of invention. More generally, they can trace the rhetorical paths of thought in the public sphere. Rhetoricians can produce for various audiences analyses of how academics and non-academics think in public and their shared and different rhetorics of thought, as well as what

> they appear to think about rhetoric itself. The rhetorical self-consciousness, so crucial to deliberative democracy, remains the major contribution rhetoricians can make as academic intellectuals who go public. (145)

As Mailloux states here, rhetoric, with its emphasis on audience and the effects, intended or otherwise, of communicative action, can be integral to understanding public-intellectual work by way of understanding its functional components. In this sense, rhetorical theory, itself an academic discipline, offers its scholars unique insight into methods for actively engaging in the public sphere and in public discourse while simultaneously positioning these scholars as a resource for aspiring academic public intellectuals in other fields.

Rather than hypothesize about and generate theoretical models for the ideal public intellectual as some accounts of the role do, Mailloux's account suggests that we might have more to gain from an analysis of the available public-intellectual work produced by public intellectuals judged to be successful. By engaging such work analytically, we will be able to identify and gauge the power of particularly effective discursive strategies that can then serve as models for the production of equally successful public-intellectual work. As Jeanne Fahnestock contends, "patterns defined analytically are…always susceptible to use as models" (18). Just as the first rhetorical scholars built their models of argumentation from observations of those whose arguments were successful, so too can academics interested in public intellectualism build generative models by observing those who succeed in the role. It is, then, with this aim that I return now to Stanley Fish and consider the rhetorical nature of his recent public-intellectual work. Based on the response elicited by his column "Devoid of Content," it is clear that composition studies

considers him a successful public intellectual, at least on the basis of the audience he reaches and the public forums in which he participates. Although it is possible that he is not the ideal model, and does not even consider himself a public intellectual, Fish's particular brand of public-intellectual work has nonetheless been the model against which other academic public intellectuals have struggled. For all of these reasons, Fish's work seems an appropriate place to begin such an analysis.

Something Smells Fishy: Assessing Stanley Fish's Public-Intellectual Presence

Having defended the emphasis that the term "public intellectual" places on "public" as significant in distinguishing the public intellectual from the academic intellectual while creating space for academic public intellectuals, I have already suggested that the nature of the public forum in which the intellectual participates is central to analyses of this participation. I have not yet, however, fully engaged the range of communicative forums appropriate for public intellectual pursuits. Given his interest in the expressive dimension of public-intellectual work, Posner defines such work as "communication with the public on intellectual themes by means of books, magazine articles, op-ed pieces, open letters, public lectures, and appearances on radio or television" (25). The public intellectual, then, necessarily makes active use of a range of communicative forms readily available to a general public, consciously structuring these forms for effective communication with general, non-specialized audiences. As the discussions of public-intellectual work in the previous chapters suggest, this process sometimes included the creations of new or hybrid rhetorical genres. Just as Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk* combined a range of rhetorical forms, so too did the feminist

periodicals of the 1970s, in ways that spoke to their particular audiences, aims, and objectives.

Over the course of his career, Fish made use of a wide range of media, including the digital. Given that my primary focus is the type of public-intellectual work that Butler, Galin, and others deemed so potentially detrimental, I consider here only work that Fish has published in the same forum. Based on the restructuring of the newspaper, however, *The New York Times* now publishes many of its op-ed columns as online-only content. The columns I consider here are, therefore, published digitally in the "Opinionator" section of the online version of *The New York Times.* Although it is not my primary focus, a comparative analysis of public-intellectual work available in electronic forms and public-intellectual work available only in print would be an interesting addition to work on public intellectualism generally, particularly in terms of considering how Fish and others have adapted to digital media and made use of the additional public discursive practices for which such media allows. While I do consider the influence of certain digital media elements here, including reader comments and links meant to ease the forwarding of certain content via email or through social media sites, I have neither the time nor the space to do such elements justice and, thus, consider them only in isolation and within the context of my current project.

While I am concerned with the rhetorical nature of individual pieces of Fish's public-intellectual work, I am equally concerned with the rhetorical means by which he sustains his position in the public eye. In what follows, I will offer a rhetorical reading of three sequenced op-ed columns, focusing on how the first piece functions individually and then shifting my attention to the ways in which the second two pieces function as

parts of a series. My ultimate goal here is to call attention to the rhetorical structures operating within Fish's public-intellectual work in order to arrive at a point of understanding from which I can offer suggestions to aspiring academic public intellectuals who might wish to take on the role in order to publicly represent the academy and academic work.

Before moving to consider the pieces themselves, it is important to consider the work the online forum does in positioning Fish as a voice worthy of the multiple bylines. The "Opinionator" section includes a number of op-ed columns organized by specialized subject, each of which highlights a particular contributor and provides readers with a focused biography describing that contributor's work. Rather than contributing to a column organized around a specific subject and which is shared among a group of contributors, Fish has his own column dedicated to his thoughts "on education, law, and society." Additionally, alongside each column appears an account of his professional work at a number of prestigious universities that heralds him as the author of thirteen books, naming a few of the most well-known. In this sense, the forum itself constructs a persona for Fish that might be considered in terms of an externally generated ethos that functions, in Posner's model, as a form of advertising for the column. The site on which the columns appear suggests that Fish is qualified to speak on the subjects he chooses on the basis of his university teaching experience and that these qualifications justify the newspaper's giving him his own regular column.

Additionally, the theme that the column description offers, "education, law, and society," serves a particularly important rhetorical function on the basis of Fish's own beliefs about public intellectualism and his own role as a public intellectual. Fish claims

that one of the things that disqualifies him from acting as a public intellectual is that he is not asked to speak on a broad enough range of subjects due to his particular academic specialization (Olson 120). His academic specialty, literature and literary criticism, does not, however, appear in the column description. While many of his columns refer to past work in his academic field, the column description seems structured to dissociate Fish from it in order to allow him to speak on a much broader range of subjects. In fact, I can think of very few subjects that would not fit under the heading "education, law, and society" in some way. It seems, then, that the column description can be seen as performatively distancing Fish from his academic specialization as a means of giving him access to subjects better suited to public-intellectual work and of constructing a sense of his being competent in his discussion of those other subjects.

The first of the three columns I move now to consider, "Staging the Self: 'The Hunger Games,'" appeared online on May 7th, 2012 and describes Fish's and his family's interest in Suzanne Collins's best-selling book series. The piece starts off with an anecdote recounting Fish's initial exposure to the books as a result of his daughter's interest in them and his subsequent surrendering to their allure. Fish's account of the experience would likely be familiar to a number of Fish's adult readers, many of whom would have come to the series at their children's urging and who could relate to his "devouring" all three after being hooked by the first. On the most basic level, the piece takes as its subject a popular topic with which public audiences would be well-familiar, and Fish employs the anecdotal opening as a means of aligning himself with an audience likely to have experienced the books in a similar fashion. In this way, Fish establishes a baseline of identification on which the success of his column ultimately relies.

This opening anecdote might, then, be seen as functioning in the manner of an exordium meant to condition the audience in order to prepare them to accept what is to follow. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca describe that "the purpose of the exordium is to make the audience well disposed toward the speaker and to secure goodwill, attention, and interest. It also provides certain elements that will give rise to spontaneous arguments dealing with the speech and the speaker" (495). Fish's opening anecdote functions similarly, securing goodwill, attention, and interest by representing himself as an involved family man who is as attentive to the same pop culture phenomena as his readers. Additionally, his use of the term "devoured" to describe the way in which he read the three books provides a "certain element" that will ultimately lead to his major contention, which is that the "hunger" the books create in their readers is the source of their appeal. While constructing a version of himself that elicits positive responses from his audience, Fish also plants the seed of one of his argument's major premises. Thus, the opening anecdote functions in two ways, conditioning the audience to accept the work on the basis of their feelings toward Fish and their identification with his experience and preparing them for the central argument by gesturing linguistically toward the conceptual framework under which he will be operating

Although Fish offers an analysis of the book's powerful appeal and popularity, he does so in order to explain a phenomenon which he expects readers already recognize and to which they can relate. He is not arguing for the power of the books, attempting to convince skeptics that they are worthy of reading. Rather, he is speaking to an audience already convinced of the series' worth, articulating the ways in which the work itself has structured his and others' responses to it. In this sense, the piece might be seen as a form

of epidictic rhetoric, justifying a set of beliefs that is itself not at issue or up for debate for the audience as the audience is constructed by the address. Toward this end, Fish implicitly engages a rhetorical strategy for partitioning or purging the audience. As Fahnestock describes, the popular trope allows speakers or writers to symbolically eject "some audience members as not worthy of being addressed" and constructs a specific audience in the sense that "after 'witnessing' this purging, those who continue to read [or listen] in the role assigned belong in a different group" (295-296). By writing as if the appeal and power of the books is a fact rather than a point that requires argumentative defense, Fish addresses only those who share these beliefs, pushing any dissenting voices to the periphery by refusing to acknowledge even the possibility of their existence within the context of his discussion.

Fish's strategy ultimately only heightens the identificatory impulses that he encourages with his opening anecdote in the sense that readers who do not align themselves with Fish's foundational belief cannot access Fish's arguments and, thus, risk alienation or expulsion from the group of normalized readers Fish addresses. In order for the identificatory impulse to remain persuasive, however, aligning oneself with Fish's in-crowd, his target audience, must offer readers some benefit. Otherwise, there would be no reason for them to feel compelled to remain within the group. The benefit of identification in this context derives from the authority of Fish's account, the remaining difference between himself and his audience that qualifies him to offer an explanation of the series' appeal that others cannot. In addition to the consistent reminder of Fish's educational background and intellectual prestige offered by the biography to the side of the column as it appears on the computer screen, Fish himself gestures toward his

authority at points throughout the piece. After recounting his family's experience with *The Hunger Games*, for example, he asks "What accounts for three overeducated adults being so caught up in the story of a teenage girl—Katniss Everdeen—who lives in a dystopian future ruled and controlled by the decadent and cruel denizens of the Capitol?" By describing his family as "overeducated," Fish effectively troubles the identificatory impulse the anecdote encourages by reminding readers that while his family may have experienced the series like other families did, his family is not any ordinary family. The self-conscious nature of the qualifier "over" preceding "educated," however, does seem to lessen the effect in the way that it simultaneously calls into question the significance of an education that can be seen as somehow superfluous, but the reader is still reminded that Fish is an academic and that his account of the books carries the sense of authority that accompanies such a position.

In addition to the explicit reference to his family's status as highly educated individuals in the second paragraph, Fish injects references to other literary works and forms throughout his discussion of the popular trilogy. While arguing that *The Hunger Games* taps into a larger social "hunger" for authenticity, he references *Hamlet* by incorporating Polonius's famous line to Laertes, "to thine own self be true," as an example of authenticity's being a matter of interest throughout literary history. Similarly, he considers the series' final scene alongside conceptions of pastoralism, complete with a phrase from the title of Renaissance pastoral paintings in the original Latin. Certainly, the *New York Times* audience is going to be familiar with *Hamlet* and a large portion of them will also be acquainted with the pastoral tradition, so Fish's references do not have the effect of alienating them to an extreme degree. The references do, however, remind

readers of Fish's role as a specialized academic, the very role the description of the column seeks to obscure. Thus, their inclusion serves to invoke Fish's specialized training as a literary critic as the source of his authority; it is based on his academic role that he is able to offer his audience insight into the experience of *The Hunger Games* that he has shared with them.

Maintaining the slight difference between himself and his audience for which such authority allows is an important element of the rhetorical work the column is doing. If the identification was complete, what would a reader have to gain from Fish's discussion that she could not gain from her own contemplation of her experience reading the books? What need, or demand, would the piece fill? The functional identification on which Fish's column relies, then, might be seen in terms of Kenneth Burke's model of consubstantiality, which attempts to account for the "elation wherein the audience feels as though it were not merely receiving, but were itself creatively participating in the poet's or speaker's assertion" as a result of the identifactory impulse (58). In this rhetorical model, the audience is more likely to assent to the assertion the rhetor presents when the audience is made to feel as if they are collaborators in the rhetor's very creation of the assertion, but the distinction between the rhetor and the audience is required in order for persuasion to be a viable option within the context of the discourse. Burke describes this sense of partial identification in the following terms:

> A is not identical with his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is identified with B. Or he may identify himself with B even when their interests are not joined, if he assumes they are, or is persuaded to believe so…In being identified with B, A is 'substantially one' with a

> person other than himself. Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus, he is both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another. (21)

Burke here addresses the means by which rhetorical motivation allows for a sense of identification, an aligning of oneself with another based on shared views. This consubstantiality encourages distinct individuals with distinct perspectives to focus on the points at which their beliefs and motivations converge.

Importantly, the alignment to which Burke points is not all-consuming. Integral to Burke's notion of identification is the idea that identification both maintains and requires individuality. Although the first figure identifies with the second, the first figure is still the first figure and not wholly subsumed by the second. This sense of remaining distance between the two figures is particularly significant to note given Burke's later discussion of how such rhetorical forms "would involve 'identification,' first by inducing the auditor to participate in the form, as a 'universal' locus of appeal, and next by trying to include a partisan statement within this same pale of assent" (59). Identification, then, becomes a means of achieving the Aristotelian middle ground between rhetor and audience that subsequently allows for movement forward, movement that ultimately depends upon the remaining degree of difference between the rhetor and the audience. If there is no difference, there is no movement, and identification would be the end goal rather than the transitional step.

Given that the particular demand that Fish's piece meets comes directly from an underlying question of what accounts for *The Hunger Games'* popularity and mass appeal, Fish's shuttling between identification with the audience and his position of

authority becomes his central rhetorical project. Being able to assess the appeal of the novel requires experiencing the appeal as the audience has experienced it, as well as being able to draw on a wide range of knowledge that the average reader might not be able to access on her own. It is within this context that the "hunger" for authenticity on which Fish bases his assessment of the series' far-reaching attraction structures the power of Fish's own work in a similar way. The title "Staging the Self," for instance, would be an apt description of the rhetorical model under which Fish himself is operating. The way in which Fish convinces his audience that his professional assessment of the books has merit is by foregrounding his own authentic interest in the series. Without convincing his readers of the authenticity of his experience of the books, his assessment could easily come across as just another out-of-touch academic's attempt to explain a popular text he knows nothing about, holding it at a distance so as to not confuse it with the "real" literature he studies. This approach would be a sure way for the academic public intellectual to fail. To succeed, the public intellectual's interest in the subject must be as authentic as his readers'. At the same time, Fish, like Katniss, understands that more is expected of him, that he has another version of his self to stage: the academic. Authenticating his academic self, however, requires additional construction, hence the references to other literary works and to the pastoral tradition as representative elements of the body of knowledge to which such specialized academics have access. By these means, Fish stages a dual self to structure the column in a way that supplies the exact type of public -intellectual work that its audience demands.

Moving from this first column to the next, the ways in which Fish's active engagement in the public sphere as a public intellectual is self-sustaining become clear.

The second column, "What Do Spoilers Spoil?," was published online in the same forum on May 21st, 2012 and responds directly to the reader commentary that Fish's previous column about *The Hunger Games* elicited. Fish opens the column by stating that "Over 10 percent of the comments on my "Hunger Games" column brought up the question of spoiler alerts," and he then quotes directly a few of the comments that account for this percentage: "'Haven't you heard of a spoiler alert?', one exasperated reader asked. Another reader, Jim, reported that he was 'trying rapidly to withdraw my forward of the article to my wife who's in the midst of the 2nd book.'" While Fish's first column encourages identification on the basis of shared experiences and aligning interests, the second column opens with an even more direct and explicit consideration of the relationship between the writer and his audience. Fish here describes and emphasizes the degree to which the reader commentary, a feature for which the online forum allows, plays a central role in shaping the public-intellectual work he publishes there. In this sense, he is actively constructing himself as a public intellectual who is, to use his own term and emphasis, "the *public's* intellectual."

By responding to the reader commentary as he does, Fish characterizes his public-intellectual work in the online forum as a dialogic discourse, a conversation in which readers productively participate. This characterization is further emphasized in the way that Fish incorporates reader comments directly into his text, including actual reader voices in a way that, at least momentarily, obscures the divide between writer and audience within the context of the public-intellectual act. The public, then, is represented as actively participating in the production of the column, and the public-intellectual work becomes, perhaps even more so than in the first column, a collaborative effort.

Reconsidering the earlier discussion of Burke's concepts of identification and consubstantiality, the persuasive nature of such a representation is certainly at work in the opening of this second column.

Despite his initial willingness to share discursive space with his audience, however, Fish is once again quick to differentiate himself from them and to reclaim a sense of authority. Citing a study conducted at the University of California at San Diego, Fish suggests that his reader Jim's assumption about spoilers negatively affecting his wife's reading of Collin's trilogy "may be incorrect." Based on the study's findings that spoilers can, in fact, make the reading experience more enjoyable, Fish here counters Jim's more emotional reaction to the effect that the forwarded article might have had on his wife with a more scientific, fact-based alternative. By "correcting" Jim's assumption, Fish steps back into an authoritative role from which his address takes an instructional, rather than collaborative, tone. The majority of the column remains in this realm, offering a number of more scholarly accounts of the tension between suspense and certainty for readers of literature. Fish finally offers Richard J. Gerrig's "paradox of suspense" alongside Fish's own reading of Milton's "Lycidas" in order to argue that in such understandings of the reader's relationship to a work, "the supposedly deleterious effect of a spoiler is diminished. Either spoilers give back more than they take away or they take away nothing because suspense and surprise survive them." With this strategy, Fish divorces the concept of a "spoiler" from the negative connotation of the root "spoil" and troubles understandings of the functional binary of "suspense" and "certainty" as necessarily oppositional terms. His model neutralizes the threat of spoilers, as they either have no effect or contribute to a reader's enjoyment of a text.

While there is certainly more to say about the internal rhetoric structuring the argument that Fish makes about spoilers within the context of the column, the way in which the column is functioning in relation to the first is of additional interest. Essentially, the column on spoilers can be seen as meeting a demand that Fish himself created in the column on *The Hunger Games*. By not including the spoiler alerts that readers expect to find in online discussions of books, movies, or television shows that reveal significant plot points, Fish's first column created demand for the second. Rather than adhering to elements of epidictic rhetoric and functioning as a solidarity good as the first column did, however, the second column necessarily functions as a different type of good based on the particular nature of the audience's demand. Given that Fish's second column essentially responds to charges brought against him on the basis of his first column, namely accusations that it was irresponsible of him to reveal so much of the series' plot without offering spoiler alerts, the second column might be considered as a form of judicial rhetoric. Here, Fish is called upon to defend his own actions, and he does so by arguing that the charges brought against him are based on a reductive misunderstanding of literature and its function, invoking his role as a literary scholar as he does in the first column. In this sense, Fish's second column is rhetorically structured to respond to a very specific audience demand, a demand that differs from the demand the first column meets.

Of particular interest is the way in which the relationship between the two columns characterizes Fish's public-intellectual work as self-perpetuating and self-sustaining. The demand for the second column is the direct result of the first, and Fish himself becomes in some sense not only the social commentator, but also the subject of

the commentary. In this way, the two columns illustrate the means by which Fish's sustained public intellectualism can be read as depending upon his ability to make himself more and more central to the ongoing conversation in which he participates. In the first column, he positions himself as one voice among many, but as voice who just so happens to possess a body of knowledge that authorizes him to speak to the group's shared experience; in the second column, however, his own work is the shared experience providing the impetus for the public-intellectual act, effectively making him inextricable from the public discourse in which he then participates as if by necessity. If it is, in fact, as difficult for academic intellectuals to secure positions as public intellectuals as Fish and others contend, it follows that Fish would be particularly aware of maintaining the position he has achieved, which seems to be exactly what the strategies used here allow him to do.

In relation to the first two columns considered here, the third marks a more significant shift in both tone and topic. The column, which was published online on June 4th, 2012, is titled "The Harm in Free Speech," and provides an account and assessment of Jeremy Waldron's recent book *The Harm in Hate Speech*. In essence, the piece adheres to Posner's description of public-intellectual work that responds to other public-intellectual work in the sense that Waldron's book, despite being published by Harvard University Press, has garnered public attention and that Waldron, himself an academic and professor of law and political theory, has been making the rounds of radio and talk shows as a result. Fish provides a relatively straightforward overview of the book's basic premise and is, for the most part, convinced by Waldron's argument. Given that Waldron's book ultimately calls for legal action that reconsiders what constitutes "harm"

in relation to hate speech and interrogates blind adherence to and support for notions of "free speech," Fish's agreement symbolically marks his support of Waldron's project. Based on the fact that so much of Fish's column merely restates Waldron's own argument and offers additional support of his points, it is as if Fish is making use of the column to further Waldron's agenda, channeling the public-intellectual force he has accrued in the previous columns into Waldron's project. Ultimately, Fish's employing the space of his column for these ends illustrates the degree to which public-intellectual work can be seen in terms of a collaborative network among academic intellectuals, much like Mailloux's characterization of the role of rhetoricians in examinations of public-intellectual work suggests. While the role of public intellectual is not necessarily transferable, Fish's spotlighting Waldron's book here does speak to the ways in which the position functions as a site of potential for fostering connections among academics and their readerships.

Fish's column itself strikes a tone of relative neutrality in the sense that it is describing an argument made in another context rather than actively constructing an argument of its own, but the column can be seen as operating in the realm of deliberative rhetoric in the way that Fish's support of Waldron's project aligns Fish with Waldron's call for legal action. Fish, then, is advocating a particular course of action in response to the problems Waldron identifies, albeit tacitly. Following the two previous columns, both of which participated in a greater degree of audience structuring and priming, this particular column seems to draw on the sense of ethos established previously rather than directly engaging the strategies for constructing authority and encouraging identification evident in the other two. In terms of its place within the series, this column might be seen

as participating in Burke's notion of moving from an established sense of identification to a moment of functional persuasion. Having aligned himself with the audience in *The Hunger Games* column and defended his judgment in the column on spoiler alerts, while simultaneously positioning himself as an integral element of public discourse, Fish here can make policy suggestions that draw their force from the reputation he has constructed through his previous work. In this sense, no individual piece of public-intellectual work is isolated, as each contributes to the nature of the public intellectual himself as an active voice within the public sphere, a voice the public cannot, or will not, ignore.

Although my analysis of Fish's work here is by no means exhaustive and would certainly benefit from more in-depth rhetorical analysis across a larger portion of his body of work, particularly as a means of assessing how his model has evolved chronologically, what I hope to have offered is a starting point. If academics in general, and composition scholars in particular, endeavor to secure positions as public intellectuals in order to actively address the public's misconceptions about academic work, conceiving of such positions as Posner does and approaching them as careers influenced by conditions of the market for public-intellectual work is an important first step. As careers, such positions necessarily require constant participation in public discourse in order to sustain them; a compositionist who writes a single op-ed piece for a single publication only when a controversy related to his discipline arises cannot expect to garner the attention or secure the audience that Fish does. Similarly, public-intellectual work will attract an even smaller audience if it is not rhetorically structured to meet public demand, to fill a need that the public recognizes and desires to have filled. By focusing on the rhetorical nature of public-intellectual work and the ways in which

successful public-intellectual work engages strategies related to audience construction, identification, ethos-building, and other rhetorical elements, academics have an opportunity to arrive at an understanding of such work that would allow them to use it to their advantage. Engaging analytically with public-intellectual work can easily lead to models for its production. It is, thus, that composition scholars who wish to answer Butler's and Galin's calls for discipline-specific public academic intellectuals can learn to do so by observing rivals like Fish. Rather than be overwhelmed by his voice and run to seek cover in specialized publications and private online list-servs, we might then be able to talk back, this time loudly enough to reach audiences beyond those who have to listen.

In the end, all contemporary public intellectuals must be aware of how their work determines access to discursive forums and debates. While an assessment of Fish's work shows the means by which he creates demand for his work, the question of whether his work facilitates meaningful and productive public discourse is a separate issue. Responsible public-intellectual work could use its reach and rhetorical structuring to create a healthier public sphere, particularly when it comes to more participatory digital and social media forums. In a world where sustained engagement with a single topic is rare, public-intellectual intervention might seek to transform the very nature of public discourse by modeling thoughtful, deliberative modes of speaking to and deciding with others. In many ways, this type of public-intellectual work is a pedagogical process, and I turn finally to theorize the relationship between the public-intellectual function and the classroom in more detail.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: THE PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL AS PUBLIC-LITERACY PEDAGOGUE

In all of the preceding chapters, the public-intellectual work discussed sought to characterize public discourse needs and to conceive of literacy models that spoke to these needs. For Du Bois, the widely held assumption that black men and women should prioritize economic production over direct civic engagement meant that their voices and perspectives were absent from public discussions of the race crisis. This absence left public discourse impoverished in the sense that the black experience only existed in the collective consciousness as it was rendered by white allies or by the black speakers who advocated for such accomodationist models. In order to adequately address the influence of racism and discrimination in national life, Du Bois argued, the black men and women needed the skills and the space to speak publically. Such a shift required both different approaches to literacy education and the creation of discursive venues capable of sustaining discussions of race. Du Bois's public-intellectual work sought to address both of these requirements in its direct argumentation, in its rhetorical modeling, and in its discursively productive function. He advocated for a different approach to public action and education, he employed argumentative strategies that spoke to the potential of open public discourse, and he engaged audiences in ways that generated interest and additional discussion. In these ways, Du Bois was able to negotiate a public-intellectual position that changed the shape and function of public discourse for the good of a once-silenced population.

For the feminist public-intellectuals of the 1970s, similar issues were at play in terms of the inclusion and exclusion of particular voices in the public realm. In the process of reacting to and pushing against patriarchal ideology, movement women developed alternative discursive modes that were more appropriate for expressing their experiences and ideas. The feminist literacies developed during this time through the creation and circulation of small-press periodicals, pamphlets, and other written materials provided women with new ways to participate in public discussion. The challenge, however, was that mainstream venues and publications adhered to more traditional literacies and were not always attentive to the limitations of these literacies when it came to feminist issues. Despite the movement's own preference for group-based leadership, Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem were identified as key figures, and their very different literacy practices speak to the ways that counterpublics, and the public intellectuals representing them, interact the mass public. While Friedan adhered to mainstream discursive norms in order to reach a larger and more diverse audience, Steinem resisted these norms in favor of the movement's own. Friedan's strategy succeeded in garnering attention for feminist issues, but it failed in terms of creating space for the multiple female voices making of the movement. She became a singular spokesperson, and her mode of publicity effectively overwrote much of the movement's work. By contrast, Steinem's strategy endeavored to create space for more voices and for the literacy practices more characteristic of the movement's work, but her reluctance to engage the mainstream press limited her reach.

The feminist periodicals and public intellectuals discussed worked within a non-traditional educational context, but pedagogues of the Cold War era asked similar

questions about what types of literacies citizens needed in order to participate in the public realm. Against the backdrop of wartime and "Space Race" rhetoric and in the shadows of a looming Soviet threat, public intellectuals like Glenn T. Seaborg and Mortimer Adler confronted anxieties surrounding the public character of the American populace. While scientists and humanists alike agreed that educational reform was needed to defend the nation's place in the global system, these reforms varied greatly in how they imagined the ideal American citizen. On one side, brainpower and scientific literacy dominated, but on the other, philosophical engagement and civic literacy were the only course. Intellectuals on both sides, however, faced a fearful public gearing up to fight an as-of-yet invisible enemy. Seaborg and the scientists offered this public something more solid and more tangible than Adler and the humanists did. Documents like *A Nation at Risk* provided numbers and statistics and advocated for programs that would create jobs and motivate technological innovation. For this reason, they were able to speak to the crisis moment as the public understood it and to ease their fears. Adler's *Paideia Proposal* advocated for educational reforms founded on the history of liberal arts and invested in civic leadership, but his program was not packaged for a forward-thinking public. In failing to recognize the needs of his audience, Adler failed, too, to model the types of rhetorical engagement that his program suggested American students could deploy in the public realm as national and global citizens.

For contemporary public-intellectuals like Stanley Fish, the needs of the audience are harder to ignore given that they can post comments and speak back in real-time. While these aspects of new and social media forums might seem more likely to create opportunities for additional discussion and debate than traditional print media, this is not

always the case. The public intellectual still has a responsibility to institute and maintain the conditions required for meaningful deliberation. In the case of Stanley Fish versus the compositionists, Fish did introduce an issue to public discussion. His particular mode of crisis rhetoric, however, largely foreclosed such opportunities in the way that it placed responsibility on educators who were unable to defend themselves in similarly public forums and excluded a large number of voices and perspectives on the basis of the definition of literacy that his critique employed and on which it depended. A closer look at Fish's regular op-ed column gives some insight into the rhetorical strategies that an intellectual can use to earn the attention of a large public audience, but public intellectuals hoping to make use of these public positions for the good of public discourse must be more attentive to the ways in which their interventions conceive of and model public participation.

While not all of the public intellectuals included in the chapter discussions were directly tied to educational or academic contexts, they nonetheless took on pedagogical projects in the sense that their work endeavored to shape the public realm and, consequently, the training required for participation therein. If education is seen as a means of preparation for real-world contribution, then it follows that the evolution of public discourse practices would require that educational contexts adapt to account for new approaches to communication and discussion. This rhetorically resonant public-intellectual influence functions alongside any more direct, topical interventions. A public intellectual concerned with public discourse or literacy might speak to his or her audience about the issue directly, but her influence will be limited if the form of the intervention itself fails to exhibit the viability of alternative approaches or to create additional space

for such approaches. If a public intellectual hopes to see change in the public realm, then her work must produce the conditions that this change requires. It is on this front that the rhetorical design of the public-intellectual work itself becomes important.

On the other hand, however, change is slow and difficult. As discussed in the first chapter, it is always easier to go with the flow than it is to swim against the current. In many cases, a public intellectual is only as good as her audience. If she endeavors to create space for a particular kind of rhetorical action or deliberative orientation, she hopes that her audience is able to make use of this space, that the audience is both able and willing to do so. For this reason, we might also consider how classroom practice could anticipate such changes in public discourse. How could the strategies that we use to teach student to read, write, and participate prepare them for a flexible and ever-adapting public realm? In what follows, I consider some of the ways that classroom engagement with public-intellectual work and literacy crisis narratives might begin to help students conceive of themselves as public actors responsible for the health of public discussion. In particular, composition courses that expose students to the constructive nature of public address and to the possibilities of rhetorically minded intervention might better prepare them to be the type of audience members that public intellectuals need.

One of the most challenging aspects of going public with composition instruction is the limiting force of a discourse community confined to the classroom. In his defense of public education, Quintilian contended that "there would be no such thing as eloquence, if we spoke only with one person at a time" (*Institutio Oratoria* 1.2.35). While concerned with the performative elements of oratory that require a wider audience or else cannot function to their full potential, Quintilian nonetheless identified a pedagogical

challenge that carries over into the modern-day writing classroom, namely the student's assumption that she writes for the teacher and the teacher alone. If rhetorical performance is limited by the audiences students have available, then the walls of the classroom must remain permeable so as to encourage students to imagine the public audiences beyond them. As public debates over the role of higher education rage on, these audiences respond to imagined versions of our students, our instruction, and ourselves, as well. To contend with the bilateral force of this imagining, students must interrogate the representational products which circulate through public discourse and which structure access to these debates and to the communities invested in them. Studying literacy-crisis narratives cultivates an awareness of how public representations of groups and individuals are linked to language-use and discourse practices. In such narratives, the force of crisis underwrites a critic's choice to select for certain modes of discursive engagement while discounting, or demonizing, others. Analyzing these narratives shows students that debates over literacy determine the public sphere's capacity to facilitate meaningful deliberation. Exposing the multiple discursive frames comprising a seemingly unitary "public" draws attention to the fact that students themselves are already included in certain discursive groups and excluded from others. If students are to imagine a public audience, they must realize that this audience is also imagining them; when imagining becomes a two-way enterprise, our students are better equipped to intervene in public discourse and to produce work that thrives outside the classroom.

On the other side of the issue, approaching public-intellectual engagement as literacy stewardship asks that intellectuals writing for public audiences consider the literacy practices and rhetorical strategies that their own work privileges, the modes of

rhetorical engagement that their public participation models for audiences, and the effects that these elements of the work might have on the shape and structure of the public forums in which they intervene. If the point of public-intellectual work is to move the work of academics beyond ivy-covered campuses and student-filled classrooms, it might seem strange for me to end by returning it to those very contexts. In the course of my research, though, I have been struck by the pedagogical opportunities that critical engagement with public-intellectual work and crisis narratives might offer. Situating this work and these models as objects of study within classrooms across the curriculum gives students the chance to reflect upon the discursive strategies that different disciplines rely upon when speaking to less specialized audiences, and this reflection might facilitate a critical distance from the in-house discursive modes of disciplines in which they write that will allow them to be more attentive to the fact that their rhetorical choices in this context connect them to a specific intellectual community. I would mention, too, that there is no better preparation for discipline-specific writing than confronting a discipline's recurring crises and recognizing that they are, in fact, from where the discipline derives its identity and polices its epistemological boundaries. Engaging crisis in this way, then, serves a significant initiatory function.

Additionally, if public-intellectual work oriented toward literacy stewardship is to succeed, it requires an audience capable of making use of the discursive space it creates, an audience comfortable with the discomfort of real, meaningful deliberation. Sometimes it is just easier to let others speak for us. But the public sphere is susceptible to the vacuum effect. When a topic is opened for discussion, something or someone will always fill the space, and if audiences are not ready to accept the public-intellectual's challenge,

dominant voices and perspectives will likely come rushing in and reconstruct the status quo. We can, however, work to prepare our students to rise to the deliberative challenge by modeling such discursive processes in our classrooms as often as possible and in encouraging them to pay as much attention to the conditions of argumentation as they do to their arguments. Finally, we want to consider how new media models are shaping the discursive practices by which our students assume their identities as public participants. That so many public platforms now exist is often read as evidence of a more democratic public sphere to which more voices have access and which destabilizes traditional notions of authorship. The reality, though, is that audience-contact within these contexts can be just as superficial as in print media and more conventional circulation models. Learning to exploit these medias for their deliberative potential is key, and audience demand can be a major factor. Again, then, asking students to pay attention to how the structure of new media forums is shaping their engagement with the issues discussed in these forums and can help them to make more informed choices about the rhetorical modes they find persuasive and the ones they use to persuade.

Finally, the examples of literacy-crisis narratives discussed here emphasize the degree to which these narratives might influence how public audiences perceive the students in our classrooms and the work that they are doing there as it intersects with public discourse. Based primarily on their assessments of students' discursive abilities, these narratives represent a youth population that threatens democratic discourse with laziness, anti-intellectualism, and an alarming disregard for rules and the stability they offer. In the absence of any real or concrete referent, representations thus derived from collective acts of imagining allow for what George Lakoff terms "cluster models," in

which "a number of cognitive models combine to form a complex cluster that is psychologically more basic than the models taken individually" (74). The shadowy mob of youth that embodies the cumulative threat to the public practice of democracy today is a much more persuasive imagining than one invested in a more nuanced engagement with student populations based solely on the ease with which it can be cognitively processed. Henry A. Giroux works from a similar understanding of youth's instrumental role in political discourse in *America's Education Deficit and the War on Youth*. Giroux, however, offers youth populations themselves as the ones who might be capable of rehabilitating the democratic public sphere. Importantly, language-use, one of the very markers often deployed in negative characterizations of youth and student populations, is central to Giroux's program of "radical imagination."

Claiming that "language is crucial," Giroux emphasizes the need for "language that addresses what it means to sustain a broad range of commitments to others and build more inclusive notions of community…There is a need to invent modes of communication that connect learning to social change and foster modes of critical agency through which people assume responsibility for each other" (19). In the process of imagining and then writing for a public audience invested in certain notions of literacy and public participation, our students will necessarily confront the points at which competing value systems or epistemological preferences threaten to exclude them or others from public discourse. At these points, we might ask them to imagine beyond today's audiences, to imagine an audience invested in a purely inclusive model of democratic deliberation. Asking students to look beyond today's audiences in this way is not to ask them to ignore the publics to which they might direct their work, but rather is

to encourage an ethical co-responsibility focused on the socially viable construction of public discourse. In seeing audiences' potential, students might begin to ask themselves how their own discursive interventions might help transform their real audiences into the ideal audiences they imagine, and their engagements with these audiences will be all the more meaningful as a result.

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