SILENCE AS A RHETOR’S TOOL:
RHETORICAL CHOICES FOR AND USES OF SILENCE

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ABSTRACT

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Historically, the field of Rhetoric and Composition has participated in little or no investigation of rhetorical silence. Previous scholarship suggests silence as a form of oppressed or suppressed voices and silence as a negative action; however, this dissertation investigates the positive, productive aspects of silence. The study posits that silence can be intentionally utilized as a rhetorical tool, and investigates possible connections between rhetorical silence and rhetorical amplification. The dissertation first reviews available scholarship and organizes a heuristic with which rhetorical silence may be analyzed; and, second, applies the heuristic to two case studies of historic women rhetors who employ silence. Three heuristic categories of invention, delivery, and audience are developed as a means of organizing the focus and direction of the study. The heuristics are applied to two case studies, historical figures Anne Askew and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, as a means of contributing theory and evidence to emerging field-wide discussions of rhetorical silence. Findings suggest that silence was intentionally used by both case studies; however, each rhetor used silence in unique ways.

This study is anchored in the scholarship of scholars such as Lauer, Ede, Lundsford, Saville-Troike, Bruneau, and Burke, and extends the contemporary study of rhetorical silence by scholars such as Cheryl Glenn. Conclusions of the research confirm that silence can be intentionally used by a rhetor, and can be positive and productive. The study contributes new findings to the field by revealing the connections between rhetorical silence and rhetorical amplification, especially when the rhetor relies on the audience to supply their own meaning. Similarly, this study contributes a methodology for analyzing rhetorical silences. Implications demonstrate the usefulness of feminist methodologies and methods, that silence can be positive
and productive, and that silence can be wielded as a rhetorical strategy; additional research will
develop ongoing concepts and analysis with regard to rhetorical silence. The heuristics I
designed can be applied to study rhetorical silences in other contexts in contemporary settings.
Further, silence relies on a dynamic interplay between rhetor, audience, and context for delivery,
reception, interpretation, and meaning.
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CHAPTER 1: RHETORICAL SILENCES

“…the use of language is lacking in its support of interpretation: those who set an example for other people without saying anything, or those who make use of a stick or carrot, can obtain appreciable results” (8).

Chaim Perelman, Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*

“What ever its shape, the form of silence (its delivery) is always the same. But the function of silence—that is, its effect upon people—varies according to the social context in which it occurs” (xii).

Cheryl Glenn, *Unspoken*

The power of silence is referenced frequently in our language: silence is golden, silence as tension, silence as assent, silence as strength, silence as deafening. The forms of silence are literal and figurative. Scholarly and popular literature have made many claims about silence. Silence can convey emotion, acknowledge weight and substance, or allow reflection or contemplation. Theatrical performance—without dialogue—can execute complex action, drama, and humor. Conversation can be punctuated with a “pregnant pause”. Silence has been used to discuss forms of oppression and marginalization. Silence can be perceived as productive or destructive, as chosen or as imposed; silence has multiple functions and interpretations. My experiences with performance poetry and coaching young performers, my own interest in language and language use, and my readings in the history of rhetorical practices lead me to an invested interest in silence: silence as the purposeful, productive, intentional action of a rhetor.

The available scholarship about silence—including studies and theorizing from as early as the rhetorical tradition and the 1900’s—has interrogated the forms and functions of silence as well as offered philosophical and rhetorical guides of silence (Picard, Dauhenhauer, Bruneau, Glenn, Nakane, Poyatos, Saville-Troike, and Tannen, among others). As the field of Rhetoric and Composition takes up the nature of language, communication, and structures of power with regard to making meaning, Cheryl Glenn reminds us “like speech, the meaning of silence depends on a power differential that exists in every rhetorical situation: who can speak, who
must remain silent, who listens, and what those listeners can do” (*Unspoken* 9). Traditional and ancient rhetoric is interested in the convergence of rhetor, audience, language, and situation and context. Echoing Glenn’s essential questions to the field of rhetoric, Oliver explores an Asian rhetoric of “how they addressed one another and why, under what circumstances, on what topics, in what varied styles, with what intent, and with what effects,” situating silence within rhetorical practices and framing rhetorical practices as cultural (354). The choice to use silence is anchored in context and situation as well as intended purpose and meaning; a rhetor considers not just the whole of a composition but who is listening and the nature of the situation and context.

To claim silence as rhetorical creates questions about language and power, as well as questions about the place of silence in a field of study. How does silence mean? Who gets to speak and who is silent? Who listens? Where is silence permitted, expected, or enforced? When is silence chosen? The decisions rhetors intentionally make when composing and delivering messages are also shaped by the perceptions and expectations of an audience, a situation and context, and an environment. Scott observes that “every decision to say something is a decision not to say something else, that is, if the utterance is a choice. In speaking we remain silent. And in remaining silent, we speak” (149). Scott echoes Burke’s concept that “any given terminology is a reflection of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a selection of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a deflection of reality” (1341). Silence itself is not precisely a terminology, but can be experienced and interpreted as a reality. So, when silence is chosen there is a meaning; this meaning can be taken up and interpreted in unique ways. Further, Brummett shows “Not only does the failure to speak have rhetorical meanings of its own, but a silent public figure’s non-verbal actions undertaken during and around the silence pick up definite meanings on account of the silence” (289). Silence is situated in language and together
silence and sound are interpreted based on the situation and context. Anchored in communication events and meaning-making, silence is rhetorical.

Rhetorical silences are those silences I define as chosen and placed specifically and intentionally by a writer-speaker; a rhetor will craft meaning from silences and sounds to affect an audience. Silence is embedded in language, and in the practice of making meaning. It is also inherently assigned to spaces, gendered practices, cultural practices, and political ideology. The didactic quality of rhetoric and the position of silences within language place silence within our communicative events and settings. Used to separate words and ideas, silence is already present in rhetorical practice and rhetorical situations. However, the literature available shows that, while some study of rhetorical silence is becoming available, little study has focused on how a rhetor may choose to use silence rhetorically. To organize the focus and direction of an analysis of silence, three heuristics will be utilized as a guide; these heuristics will examine silence as a rhetor’s tool through three categories of invention, delivery, and audience. This chapter will provide a review of literature focusing on rhetorical silence. Then, this chapter will preview the methodology and use of heuristics. This chapter will conclude by presenting the guiding research questions and an overview of the chapters in the dissertation.

A Review of Literature: Silence As Rhetorical Choice

The available scholarship presents various studies of silence from several academic disciplines. Robert T. Oliver provided the field of Communications with some of the earliest considerations for the role of silence in cultural communication while, more recently, Muriel Saville-Troike and Deborah Tannen provide multiple studies on and observations of silence in the edited collection Perspectives on Silence. Saville-Troike’s own chapter, “The Place of Silence in an Integrated Theory of Communication,” provides a classification of silence—
including institutionally-determined, group-determined, and individually-negotiated silences—that is critical to any study. For the field of Rhetoric and Composition, Cheryl Glenn’s *Unspoken: A Rhetoric of Silence* provides a more recent analysis of silence through the examination of specific, current examples of silence used in popular culture. Drawing on multiple fields of study, several publications examine silence and communication as it relates to cultural and ethnic perspectives. Fernando Poyatos provides some early, significant conclusions about culture, silence, and communication in *New Perspectives in Nonverbal Communication*. Ikuko Nakane’s *Silence in Intercultural Communication* examines silence in an Australian classroom between Australian and Japanese students. Nakane’s study extends Saville-Troike’s classification and provides a revised model from which to analyze silences. Max Picard’s *The World of Silence* represents early theoretical positioning for silence as communication and a state of being, and Picard’s work influenced Bernard Dauenhauer’s study and resulting publication *Silence: The Phenomenon and Its Ontological Significance*. Sociolinguistics has also taken up studies of silence in society; Adam Jaworski’s *The Power of Silence: Social and Pragmatic Perspectives* is one example. Of course, these publications are only a part of a broad base of available scholarship that includes journal articles, dissertations, book chapters and more that trace and study the relationships between silence and culture, communication, cognitive and composing processes, religion, social, and rhetorical practices.

The review of literature in this chapter includes scholarship from the fields of linguistics, psychology, anthropology, literature, communications and rhetoric to provide some important and historic erudition as a means of organizing concepts for the development of the heuristics in the second chapter. Chapter Two will synthesize the scholarship in such a way as to develop a lens for analysis of rhetorical silence. While study of silence has yielded much scholarship,
academics still think in terms of binaries which place silence in opposition to sound; and which value talk or language over silence. Cheryl Glenn’s work, and the work of some other scholars, has initiated a revision to the way we see and consider silence. To begin a study of the performances, meanings, and interpretations of silence, it is important to consider various forms and functions of silence.

**Forms of Silence: Invention, Delivery, and the Audience’s Perception**

Hugh Blair taught learners that pauses “must not only be in the right place, but also be accompanied with a proper tone of voice, by which the nature of these pauses is intimated; much more than by the length of them, which can never by exactly measured” (Lecture XXXIII, 374). Through Blair’s teaching, the complexity of choices and performances impose a weight on the rhetor—to get spoken words and silences just right so that an audience may be affected in precise ways. For Blair, silences are just as specific as sounds: they are planned, practiced, and performed with intention and conviction, silences imbue meaning for the rhetor and the audience. Therefore, silence is not only chosen, but the delivery is unique to the surrounding words and to the context of the situation.

Conversely, Cheryl Glenn observes “silence is a shape unseen but clearly recognized. And its delivery is always the same” (*Unspoken* 13). The delivery of silence can be considered as *not* speaking, thus the form is connected to speech. A basic perception of silence is a conceptual absence of sound; although basic perceptions of silence in scholarly work and discussion are contextually based. Therefore, the forms of silence have been identified in unique ways, and the forms frequently depend on the perspective of the scholar or discipline, or the context of the study. For communications and linguistics, silence relates to an absence or a lack of speaking as well as those silences within speech. For literature, silence can appear in blank lines, white space
on pages, and in the form of characters who do not speak. For music studies, some music scholars claim silence is the absence of notes and music, while music scholars such as John Cage claim that there is no such thing as a complete absence of sound. Our general perception of silence is the lack of sound, and Glenn points out “even when we imagine that we are experiencing environmental silence, something makes a sound” (*Unspoken* 10). Forms of silence are so frequently overlooked because of placement or delivery within communication, or because of our perceived experience of silence, that we do not attend to the use of silence until it is declared—we may even consider the declaration of silence to be a form of silence despite the use of speech to deliver the declaration.

Saville-Troike compares structures of silence to denote the unique ways that silence is perceived. Saville-Troike first notes that American perceptions of silence are “seldom in fact free of noise from electrical appliances, traffic, barking dogs, chirping birds, and other ‘background’ sounds which are ordinarily pushed out of consciousness” (7). So, the form of silence perceived as complete is not actually complete; an audience may perceive and experience silence as complete while other audiences may attend to background or other noises. In her study of intercultural communication, Ikuko Nakane suggests categories or levels for recognizing forms of silence. Nakane identifies a “macro level” which includes larger, social or public communication events and that “macro level” form of silence may mean “a total withdrawal of speech” in a classroom, courtroom, or ritual or religious event (5). A smaller unit of silence, according to Nakane, includes pauses during talk, pauses between turns in interaction (6). Nakane also distinguishes a “hidden silence” as what remains untold or unsaid in discourse, and this hidden silence is often related to power (6). A hidden silence might be “an absence of information through censorship” (6, 7). Nakane’s levels of silence add to the understanding and
recognition of forms of silence as well as classify the complexity of silence within communication events.

Considering forms of silence related to a communication event also involves considering language as in those forms of silence presented by Jaworski. The sociolinguist alludes to two categories as forms of silence by selecting the qualifiers “in” and “with”—“in” represents a state of being; when we are in silence it is a state; “with” implies an activity, when we communicate with silence we actively select silence as action (84). Jaworski says that because silence “does not manifest any particular assumptions in a strong way, it is more open for the audience to speculate about which assumption(s) the communicator had in mind to make manifest or more manifest in his or her use of silence” (85). Silence can be chosen; it has purpose and it functions in specific ways—though the form and function may be determined by both the rhetor and her audience. During invention, a rhetor considers multiple factors when making a decision to include the use of silence, especially to make a delivery of silence effective.

Dauenhauer focuses on silence in relationship to utterance, and acknowledges a difference between silence and pauses since “they do different kinds of work” (5). Similar to the way Dauenhauer divides forms of silence, Saville-Troike notes “just as not all noise is part of communication, neither is all silence” (4). Dauenhauer recognizes that Picard uses the term silence in several different ways which prompted Dauenhauer to study the ontological significance of silence (vii). Forms of silence within talk and within the performance of various kinds of communication events will also vary. There are pauses, articulated stops for sounds in words and between words, and there are long pauses or extended silences within a communication event or exchange. The multiple ways that a given language is used or deployed and the existence of numerous different languages in the world make it a challenge to identify all
possible forms of silence. Still, each of these forms has meaning. When composing either a written or spoken piece, a rhetor should consider forms of silence as not simply a moment of quiet, but should also consider what an audience may perceive and experience as silence as well as what an audience may interpret from those perceptions.

Daunhauer connects form with function and locates silences within specific situations or contexts. Similarly, Bruneau defines “three major forms of silence” as well as discusses “some of their corresponding communicative functions” (42). He suggests that silence is “both a concept and an actual process of mind” when he discusses the ways that humans create, perceive, and interpret silence (author’s emphasis, 17). Bruneau associates form with function: the two relate in that silence appears and performs in unique ways that rely on the situation and context. This connection is echoed in the work of Jaworski, Saville-Troike, and Nakane. Throughout the explication of the forms and functions of silence, Bruneau observes many “relationships of silence to such processes as sensation, perception, mentation, social interaction, and cultural communication” (42). These relationships as well as the forms and functions of silence inform my research, as I will argue that choosing silence is connected to processes for invention, delivery, perception, and interpretation of silence. Thus for a rhetor, such a choice is active and intentional, but also multifaceted.

Functions of Silence: Intention, Perception, Interpretation

“Neither speech nor silence is more successful, communicative, informative, revealing, or concealing than the other. Rhetorical success depends on the rhetorical situation” suggests Glenn (Unspoken 13). A rhetor must consider context and situation, and make decisions about delivery and performance based on many factors—this concept is an assumption about speaking and writing. With an understanding that silence can appear in many forms from pauses and gaps to
When considering the function of a given silence, Saville-Troike recommends consideration of certain kinds of silence because their functions may be to carry meaning or create structure. Saville-Troike asserts “a distinction be made between the absence of sound when no communication is going on, and silence which is a part of communication” and recommends “we should distinguish the silence which serves to structure communication, but is neither a communicative act in its own right nor an intervening phenomenon within or between communicative acts” (4). These acts are part of a cultural framework in a speech community that serve to “organize and regulate its social relationships” (4). These communicative acts range from silences between persons in rituals or ceremonies to silences that maintain social space between strangers; placing the form and function of silence together as dependent on multiple
factors. The silences perform a recognized function within a given community; this function is, then, a culturally recognized (and, learned) function. So, a function of silence may be to imbue meaning, create structure in a communicative event, or some combination of both, and this function is also dependent on features of the community—the audience—such as its cultural practices. Saville-Troike’s observation echoes Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s concepts of a “community of minds” which share a “common language” that allows “communication to take place” (15). A rhetor relies on an understanding of situation, context, and audience to craft a message; a rhetor plans for silence to function specifically during invention and delivery. The audience adds dynamic elements for a rhetor to consider; a multi-faceted set of elements impacts the function of a given silence.

In Nakane’s study of silence within intercultural communication, her research indicates four headings for classifying functions of silence. She asserts that silences in intercultural communication can perform cognitive, discursive, social, and affective functions (8). Each of these functions is context-driven. Similarly, each function is represented, identified, received, or interpreted according to social norms as well as cultural norms. Nakane demonstrates that within cultures (such as American culture or Japanese culture) there are still additional cultural norms that are geographically or class based—signifying that use, functions, and interpretations of silence are often bound by the community and culture in which the silence took place (12, 13). Nakane contends “the multifaceted and ambiguous nature of silence … suggests that research into the phenomenon of silence requires multiple perspectives and approaches to reach a reliable interpretation and understanding” (11). Nakane’s conclusions echo the concepts asserted by Saville-Troike, Poyatos, and Glenn.
Saville-Troike is not the only scholar to connect form and function with regard to communicative silences. Bruneau, too, aligned the form and function of silence. His three forms of silence—psycholinguistic, interactive, and socio-cultural—are partnered with function so that the delivery, meaning, and interpretation of silence are anchored in a situation and context together. Bruneau’s first form of silence, psycholinguistic, includes those pauses, stops, and hesitations which take place in communication (23). These silences are used in interpersonal as well as group communication; this kind of silence performs functions that can slow time during communicative events for invention, delivery, perception, and interpretation. Though different than psycholinguistic silences, Bruneau’s interactive silences expand the social and cultural aspects of perception and interpretation with regard to choosing silence rhetorically—which leads to Bruneau’s socio-cultural form and function for silence.

Related to “the characteristic manner in which entire social and cultural orders refrain from speech and manipulate both psycholinguistic and interactive silences,” Bruneau’s socio-cultural silences “define cultural patterns of communication much better than what is said” (36). Bruneau sees some of the theoretical underpinnings of socio-cultural silence as parallel and supportive of some claims with regard to interactive silences. Bruneau draws on concepts of power and control as he describes functions of socio-cultural silences in western culture, functions such as silencing by authority, as silences related to space or situation, and silence as rhetorical control. Socio-cultural silences help to understand religious ritual and worship, but also to understand silence as a form of control and power as they relate to concepts of authority. Bruneau observes that socio-cultural silences impact sense of place and behavior, and a sense of response to a rhetorical situation. Bruneau’s socio-cultural category reveals that silence is “a
strong rhetorical strategy to preserve socio-political ideology” (42). Communication, social, and cultural norms for silence and speech can advance and support political ideology.

Bruneau extends the theory of silence beyond just invention, performance, and delivery to include human concepts of time and memory as well as social and cultural communication; forms and functions represent not just independent or individual processes but also social practices, interactions, and expectations. His work helps to connect form and function to processes of understanding, interpretation, and meaning; his work demonstrates links between rhetor and audience, delivery and interpretation, audience and context. Though the forms and functions seem hierarchical, Bruneau’s theoretical discussion provides a distinctive view of silence as part of communication and culture making the use of silence rhetorical.

Like Bruneau, Fernando Poyatos takes a unique perspective. Poyatos explores communication as culture through studies in scholarship from cultural anthropology, psychology, linguistics, semiotics, and literature. Poyatos proposes three primary functions of silence and stillness: as signs proper, as zero signs, and as carriers (224-226). Poyatos includes stillness with silence—though does not equate silence with stillness—since his approach to communication includes motion and sound. Poyatos theorizes ways that both stillness and silence are used in communication, though sometimes independent or simultaneously. Included in his theorizing are concepts of communication activity and inactivity; the ideas of activity and inactivity relate to cultural and communication acts within a communication setting. As signs proper, the meaning is given in the silence or stillness; silence or stillness performs a function of communication on its own (224). His work contributes to my study through the performance aspects of delivery. Poyatos’ third function, carriers, is especially relevant to my study of silence
and its meaning and interpretation because this function performs a form of intensification for
the receiver of the message.

Similar to Hugh Blair, Poyatos takes up how silence relates to surrounding sounds. For
the third function, Poyatos contends that silence and stillness “act as carriers of the activity just
perceived” (226)—which means that silence and stillness modify the immediately preceding
communication acts. Poyatos explains a long pause following a specific verbal message
“prolongs itself more intensively in our minds, carried over and enlarged by the silence” (226).
In this sense, the carrier function allows silence and stillness to strengthen and augment a given
communication—more specifically, the communication activity that directly goes before the
activity of silence or stillness. Additionally, similar to Bruneau, Poyatos’ claims connect silence
to time and memory. The relationship between silence and Poyatos’ carrier function, as well as
the potential that silence can modify communication, time, and memory, suggest to me that
rhetorical silences may be used as rhetorical amplification.

Briefly, I see the connection to rhetorical amplification as it is noted by ancient,
traditional, and contemporary scholars of rhetoric. Kennedy’s translation of Aristotle’s On
Rhetoric begins to consider the relevance of rhetorical amplification with the acknowledgment
that “a common feature of all speeches is the matter of magnitude [megethos]; for all use
dimunition and amplification when deliberating and when praising or blaming and when
prosecuting or defending themselves” (2.19.4, Kennedy 157). Similarly, Quintilian highlights
four methods of amplification as “augmentation, comparison, reasoning, and accumulation”
(8.4.3, p. 265). In a more contemporary view, James Murphy explains that amplification is “the
dilation or verbal expansion of an idea or text” (297). Nearly all references to rhetorical
amplification posit definitions and explanations that are anchored in speech and words, so the
relationship between rhetorical silences and rhetorical amplification has yet to be fully explored. Thus, I will seek to discover relationships between rhetorical silences and rhetorical amplification in both the forms and the functions of silence.

Poyatos’ carrier function suggests that silence can modify communication to make the event more intense; Bruneau’s suggestion that silence can modify perceptions of time and memory could also intensify the experience of silence for a rhetor or an audience. As a secondary and supplementary thread to the study of rhetorical silence as a tool that a rhetor may use, I will suggest that one strategy is rhetorical amplification. I will take up my interest in rhetorical silence and rhetorical amplification and the relationship to Poyatos’ carrier function later in the second chapter’s discussion of methodology and heuristics. Poyatos’ functions of silence and stillness indicate the significance of silence and stillness to cultural communication as well as nonverbal communication. Each of these three functions (signs, zero signs, and carriers), it should be noted, is situated in a context—the examples are indicative of how significance and meaning are dictated from the communication situation.

Based on the scholarship, our perception of delivered silence is complex; our experience of silence shapes the function. Beyond the function of separating sounds and words as part of utterance and language formation, silence performs functions related to affect, time, power and control. The function of silence is impacted by many social, cultural, ethnic, and political factors. Additionally, the function is shaped by the context and form which should also include factors such as facial expression, bodily movements and position, and the environment or setting. Identifying the form and function of silence is not always simple: especially when the rhetor’s intention, the audience’s perception, and possible interpretations and meanings for both the
rhetor and audience are included. Glenn’s claim that the form of silence is always the same truly complicates the notion of what silence is in a given communication situation.

The depth and breadth of the available scholarship beg further question. Bruneau, Saville-Troike, Jaworski’s, and Nakane’s concepts of the integral relationships of form and function demand an interrogation of Glenn’s concept that the delivery of silence is always the same. I would claim Glenn’s observation asks us to consider the complexity of what silence is, how silence is perceived and experienced, and the potential meanings of silence. If silence is defined simply as being quiet or as not speaking, then the delivery is the same. Glenn’s theory suggests a singular form for silence, but her case studies call on different delivery or claims of silence as well as different functions for silence. Her case studies show the potential for breadth and depth of delivery and function of silence as a rhetorical art. However, when context, situation, and the physical body of both the rhetor and audience are added, when we consider rhetor’s invention and intention, audience perception, interpretation and possible meaning, we see that a form and a function for silence are not easy to generalize.

**The Significance of a Study of Rhetorical Silence**

A significant amount of scholarship has been dedicated to silence. However, the bulk of the discussion about silence does not cover *silence as a rhetor’s tool* even though examples of rhetorical silence exist and some scholarship about rhetorical silence is available. Glenn’s specific analysis of contemporary uses of public silences is just one example of study of rhetorical silence—and there are few. Glenn’s call for further research and study is one reason why a study of rhetorical silence is pertinent to our field. Considerable scholarship covers silence in other ways: silence as a trope (literary criticism in Achina-Loeb, Tagore, Duncan, and others), as a form of oppression by feminist and other theorists (Rich; hooks; Haraway; Kramarea; Foss,
Foss and Griffin; Glenn), and as a part of communication (Bruneau, Brummet, Clair, Saville Troike, Tannen). Additionally, scholarship that includes silence as a cultural practice or as a part of cultural communication is also prevalent (Nakane, Poyatos, Nwoye, Oliver, Stromberg, Powell, Bass). There is little examination of rhetorical silences—instances in which a rhetor chooses silence, and the potential intended or perceived functions of the rhetorical silence from rhetor and audience. Only recently has the field of rhetoric and composition begun to examine a multi-dimensional rhetorical silence in works such as Cheryl Glenn’s *Unspoken* and Nakane’s *Silence in Intercultural Communication*. Rhetorical silences, rhetorical choices, and the potential interpretations and meanings have not been a particular focus of the scholarship until recently. Further, specific examination of rhetorical situations such as those exhibited in Glenn’s *Unspoken* are needed if we are to better understand the selection of, the use of, and the potential consequences of silences as a rhetor’s tool. Our field has not given specific or studied attention to rhetorical silences as a set of available choices or moves. My project intends to provide precisely this kind of focus on silence. Moreover, this study will resonate with scholars of rhetoric who are interested in amplification as it will draw on classical and contemporary sources to explore the potential relationship between rhetorical silences and rhetorical amplification.

The available scholarship is an indication of our field’s interest, as well as the interest of other academic fields, but may also demonstrate that there are some aspects of rhetoric and rhetorical practices that are taken for granted. Though a great deal of theoretical publication and numerous empirical studies provide glimpses of silence, the significant ideas and studies need to be updated with projects that echo the work of Glenn’s *Rhetoric Retold* or Sandoval’s *Methodology of the Oppressed*. With the advancement of technology, the broad spectrum of possible venues, the reduction of divide between global audiences, and so many other changes to
our concept of the rhetorical situation, we have yet to reconsider the potential tools and decisions that make up the “available means”. Through careful consideration and analysis, it is possible to reconsider our own assumptions as speakers, writers, listeners, and readers. Consideration of silence as a rhetorical tool or choice can help us to re-see norms and ideologies for critical examination, expanding our understanding and our vision. Applying revisions to thinking such as feminist theory can help with that re-consideration and re-vision.

Further, the examination of agency, audience perception, interpretation, and meaning is connected to rhetorical theory, feminism, and postmodernism. Dialectic and Socratic techniques as rhetorical method for intellectual investigation and reasoning are among some traditional views for seeking “truth” through discourse. Additionally, more contemporary theorizing posits rhetorical practices such as dialectic and argumentation as methods for problem-solving and conflict resolution. Schilb suggests postmodern theory emphasizes the challenges of mediating conflict through discourse (16). If silence is one of many possible available means for discourse and meaning-making, then a study of rhetorical silences may also help to shape our ongoing feminist and postmodernist conversations about the productive potential of discourse. Schilb also proposes that scholarship in the humanities “is concerned with conceptualizing and rescuing agency, especially for decades the world of theory has stressed constraint” and that “rhetoric has always explored and taught strategies for verbal action” (17). Silence as an available tool can contribute to the field-wide discussions of agency, purpose, and advancement of discourse. Silence as a rhetorical tool involves further discussion of agency, intention, delivery, perception, meaning and interpretation. Schilb goes on to say “rhetorical theories informed by feminism, Marxism, multiculturalism, and other such perspectives have been much concerned with the asymmetries of power, especially with how they shape or thwart discourse” (18). The study of
the silences in the case studies offers opportunity to weigh rhetorical choice and context with
dpower and control. Similarly, a study of silence as a rhetor’s tool can advance discussions of the
dpower dynamics with which rhetors and audiences must contend.

Silences as Cultural Perspectives, Ideologies, and Oppositions

Silence—often considered the absence of sound, talk, or speech—is frequently labeled as
negative in traditional Western thought. Western society typically values talk and speech:
freedom of speech, speaking out, breaking silence, and making one’s voice heard are valued
whereas silence, silencing, being quiet, and censorship are considered to be negative. Stereotypes
of silence are ascribed to certain cultures: typically Native American, Asian, and third world
countries are imagined as inherently silent; cultures that are perceived as forcing silence on
women, minority groups, or political groups are viewed as less progressive or even as oppressive
or fascist or extremist. Stereotypes for non-western cultures attribute unique meanings for silence
as if the culture is assumed to have reasons for being silent or for valuing silence—and these
potential meanings will be addressed in this text. In some cases, these stereotypes feign a kind of
respect-through-acknowledgment for other ways of representing silence or being silent, but these
stereotypes do not account for variations in the context of a silence or a communication, these
stereotypes do not account for cultural histories, gendered communication, class or caste
expectations, and other social or political factors.

Bruneau, Saville-Troike, Glenn, and Nakane have each taken up considerations for the
social, cultural, and ethnic aspects of silence; each has identified how silence is connected to
value sets, expectations, and complex practices. Stereotypes generalize a set of values without
including complex interrogation or multiple perspectives. Western perceptions of ethnic or
cultural groups that are inherently silent or that silence members of their group also stereotype
these groups as exotic, marginal, tyrannical or even cruel; layers of generalizing ideology challenge us to rethink what we know and how we categorize rhetorical practices. For that matter, our concepts of East and West are often stereotypes and perpetuate oppositional perspectives. Saville-Troike points to the importance of culture in communication as well as the relevance of common language and community practices to making meaning. Nakane warns against investing in the concepts of East and West because the concepts are vague, the concepts can reinforce stereotypes, and the concepts do not account for complex factors of situation, context, and identity (15). Rather than focus on the problems created by stereotypes, it should be noted that some forms of silence are connected to value sets, generalizations, or stereotypes.

My research intends to acknowledge the ongoing academic conversation about silence through its analysis and production of scholarship, and to continue the conversation through contribution of perspective, synthesis, and analysis; however, this work does not wish to perpetuate oppositional ideologies. It is important to acknowledge difference, even in terms of oppositions or binaries. Rather than label or limit silence with ambiguous geographical or ideological terms, I will work inclusively to acknowledge weaknesses or strengths in references and analyses in the available scholarship. I may need to use the wording of authors who represent ethnic, cultural, gendered, political or social groups in ways that are less current and less understanding of complex identities as part of a critical examination and analysis of rhetorical silence.

Nakane, Glenn, and other scholars warn against investing to heavily in oppositional standpoints. Much of the scholarship available which focuses on silence does place silence in opposition to sound, and values speaking or sound over silence. In addition, some scholarship seeks to play upon and perpetuate binaries created between East and West, male and female,
public and private, and so forth. So, this means that my work and research will need to take up parts of those arguments that place silence in a binary or hierarchy, as well as to take up philosophies that influence a multi-faceted perspective and understanding of silence. For research and writing to make a difference, I will need to take up topics, perspectives and values as they relate to difference. However, I will work to acknowledge rather than advance unproductive and generalizing ideologies as I also work toward a fully developed, inclusive, and non-discriminatory analysis of rhetorical silences.

**A Philosophy of Silence**

Several theoretical and philosophical concepts for silence exist. Silence has been identified and studied as a state of being or a state of doing (Picard, Dauenhauer). Silence has also been considered in relation to activity and non-activity (Poyatos, Jaworski). Ideas of Western and Non-western depictions of silence and value sets for silence are context based (Poyatos, Saville-Troike, Nakane, etc.). Placing a western concept versus a non-western concept of silence does not always advance the goals of scholarship, and can work to advance oppositional ideologies. Similarly, the generalizing to create a concept of western or non-western is not necessarily productive. Nakane observes that the category of “Western culture” is ambiguous and may serve to “contribute to and reinforce the stereotyping of voluble or silent racial groups” (15). Focusing only on culture can mean that “immediate contextual factors and participants’ social identities other than their ethnic one may not be sufficiently considered” (15). Seeing silence only as western or non-western, only as a cultural element, can be problematic.

Silence is also metaphorical. Silence can be broken, silence can also be golden. Much of our colloquialisms and scholarship are loaded with metaphoric silence. Because of its connection to language and to rhetorical action, silence is prevalent in communication and in human life.
While silence can be ritualistic, celebrational, and spiritual—silence has negative connotations, too. Glenn posits silence as a rhetorical art, but silence has been seen as a means of oppression. To be silenced is to have one’s voice eliminated, to have no power; silence and voice are inherently connected. These oppositions are a part of how silence can be seen or shaped, but only so far as metaphors help us to understand or see differently. To accept silence as wholly oppressive or spiritual, as gold, virtue, or symbolic of ignorance, is to ignore the complexity of silence. The goal of this study is to focus on the use of silence as a rhetor’s tool. The metaphor is a technology or stylistic device with a specific application or use. To consider silence as an implement or utensil existing in a toolbox with other such devices, that has a set of uses or purposes, is to consider the potential choices, the invention and composing practices, delivery methods and media in complex ways that weigh situation, audience, and context.

This complexity includes concepts such as cultural and ethnic uses and meanings, bodies and environments, social and cultural expectations, and more. Wielded simply or sloppily, a rhetor’s tool may not perform the intended task and may create other problems. Silence as a rhetor’s tool implies a presence of mind, and a presence of meaning, rather than a simple absence of sound or talk. A metaphoric view of silence as a rhetor’s tool also involves consideration for agency, choice, and rhetorical practice. Similarly, the potential relationship between rhetorical silence and rhetorical amplification reveals compelling questions concerning agency, reception, and interpretation for both rhetor and audience; especially, as I will argue, as it may be possible for either the rhetor or the audience to create rhetorical amplification. I propose a set of heuristics with which rhetorical silence can be identified and analyzed. The heuristics will narrow the examination of rhetorical silence to invention, delivery, and audience as a way of better understanding the complexity of choosing, using, and making meaning with silence.
Methodology

The methodology for this project includes assembling a set of heuristics which focus on invention, delivery, and audience. This set of heuristics will be used to analyze the rhetorical silences of the two case studies. The categories of invention, delivery, and audience suggest that choosing, using, and interpreting rhetorical silences is complex. Part of the methodology has been to assemble aspects of silence from the available literature, reading inclusively and inductively. From that scholarship, elements of silence have been organized to connect aspects of rhetorical silence to rhetorical practices such as processes for invention and delivery and to complex rhetorical considerations such as audience.

Since there truly is a breadth and depth to the discussion about silence and the amount of as yet unanswered questions about silence, and since there is an often ignored division between scholarly disciplines and fields taking part in the conversation about silence, as well as a lack of empirical research regarding silences, it is often difficult to say with some precision how silence is chosen and used—identifying the motivations, perceptions, and interpretations for the application and understanding of silence as a rhetorical tool. By reviewing the available scholarship, we may see the gaps in research as not merely blind spots or quiet but as opportunities for study. These opportunities may give much needed acknowledgment and recognition to silence—rather than a voice, silence may be given proper attention by the eye and ear.

An inductive, interrogative, and inclusive stance permits a way of seeking opportunities for further questions and further study. The field of Rhetoric and Composition has been influenced by similar perspectives using feminist methodologies. Cheryl Glenn’s *Rhetoric Retold* is just one of many examples of re-seeing the past and present as well as shaping the field with
new perspectives. With this consideration in mind, being inclusive with scholarship is critical, as is the effort to focus on ongoing questions, new studies and the resulting questions, and revised interpretations as they evolve; I seek patterns and opportunities for discussion in the available scholarship. Glenn presents such a view of silence in Unspoken—seeking to synthesizing scholarship and perceptions about silence, creating potential for new ways of seeing, doing, and being silence as she imagines “an interpretive framework of speech and silence in a reciprocal rather than oppositional relationship” (7). Glenn demonstrates some of the drawbacks of thinking in terms of binaries and hierarchies with regard to silence, and offers opportunities to reexamine our perceptions and understandings. But, she acknowledges, the action to create oppositional ideologies is not new—as much of the scholarship she presents shows. Rather than pit silence in opposition to sound, or draw on other binaries and hierarchies, Glenn analyzes situations and specific examples in which the ambiguity and complexity of silence is revealed. Through Glenn’s lens, silence is depicted as a rhetorical art.

Because silence can be deployed in such a variety of rhetorical situations, because silence can be shaped by so very many critical factors, and because silence is perceived and interpreted in numerous ways, silence can be considered to be a rhetor’s tool. Poyatos shows us that silence can be performed stylistically while Bruneau tells us that silence can be interpreted through interpersonal relationships and that silence is habitual, norming, social, and requires multiple processes to be interpreted. Jaworski posits a theory that accounts for interpretation. Cheryl Glenn’s examination of researched examples also confirms that silence can be intentionally deployed in ways that are positive and productive. Saville-Troike’s classification demonstrates the social and cultural levels at which silence can be delivered and interpreted, and Nakane’s additions to Saville-Troike’s classification offer a multi-dimensional view of the complexity of
silence in inter-cultural communication. The whole of the scholarship shows silence can be chosen or used in specific ways, but the whole of the scholarship in rhetoric does not categorize silence as a specific tool. Brought together in synthesis based on the scholarship, the set of heuristics will provide a platform from which rhetorical silences may be seen and heard. The heuristics will be developed in the following chapter, and then applied to the two case studies of Anne Askew and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. The heuristics will be used to analyze the rhetorical situations of the two rhetors.

**Project Summary**

Cheryl Glenn reminds us “like speech, the meaning of silence depends on a power differential that exists in every rhetorical situation: who can speak, who must remain silent, who listens, and what those listeners can do” (9). To consider silence as a rhetorical tool, I will employ the use of a set of heuristics which focus on invention, delivery, and audience. Each category is supported with several guiding questions. These heuristics will be fully explained in Chapter 2.

The available scholarship informs the heuristics, and stands to test the general concept that silence is a tool that rhetors can choose to use. The overarching point of the study is to create a set of heuristics, which will be tested on two case studies, that can be used to analyze other instances of rhetorical silence. One hypothesis behind my study is that through using such a set of heuristics, or what Saville-Troike would consider a classification to “distinguish functions or events” regarding silence, researchers could recover the power of historic rhetorical practices that used silence as well as contribute to the current field-wide discussions that extend my argument (a rhetor can choose silence; silence can be used as amplification) to current rhetorical practices in online environments or using new media (16). The heuristics will subsequently
demonstrate the important situational and contextual relationships between invention, delivery and audience which shape a rhetor’s choice to use silence. These relationships as well as the forms and functions of silence will emerge in my research as I intend to show through the application of the heuristics that processes for invention, delivery, perception, and interpretation of silence are active and intentional, but also multifaceted.

My primary research questions are:

• What values and goals may influence or inform a rhetor’s choices?

• How is silence as a rhetorical choice represented or identified?

• How does a rhetor account for cultural, ethnic, social, political or gendered factors in establishing functions or meanings for silence?

• How does the rhetor negotiate intended meaning with an audience’s perception or experience?

• What are some possible effects, interpretations, or meanings that may reveal a relationship between rhetorical silence and rhetorical amplification?

Chapter Outlines

Chapter 2 Methodology & Methods: Heuristics for Invention, Delivery, and Audience

In the second chapter, I will elaborate on the set of heuristics for choosing a rhetorical silence or for analyzing an instance of rhetorical silence. The heuristics draw on available scholarship to focus on areas of invention, delivery, and audience. First, I explore how a rhetor may choose rhetorical silence through an examination of invention strategies as well as explore rhetorical choices through theories of invention and agency. Next, I examine how an intended silence chosen can be delivered in unique ways connecting the multi-layered choices and practices rhetors consider and execute with regard to a performance of silence. When considering
aspects of invention and delivery, the rhetor brings together multiple elements with regard to the form and function of a rhetorical silence. Third, I will examine necessary concerns with regard to audience that encapsulate the final set of heuristics. This area will connect the rhetor’s consideration for audience as well as audience’s perceptions and experiences of rhetorical silence to other critical aspects of a rhetorical situation.

Each heuristic set will seek potential relationships between rhetorical silence and rhetorical amplification as a means of pursuing the concept that silence may be used as amplification. The category of invention and delivery may suggest relationships between agency, perception, silence, and rhetorical amplification; similarly, the categories of delivery and audience may suggest relationships between agency, reception, silence, interpretation, and rhetorical amplification.

Overall, the heuristic categories provide significant opportunities to examine rhetorical silence as a choice. While invention and delivery weigh concerns about situation and context for a rhetorical silence from a rhetor’s point of view, the last set of heuristics’ focus on audience adds dimensions of gender, class, and culture—bringing to bear the multiple perspectives and factors which effect the choice to use a rhetorical silence and the potential interpretations and meanings for a rhetorical silence.

Chapter 3—A Case Study: Anne Askew

This chapter will apply and challenge the heuristics of synthesized research on rhetorical silence through an analysis on Anne Askew’s *Examinations*. Some biographic and historic information will be provided in Chapter 2 to introduce Askew and explain a rationale for selecting her. For the purposes of this chapter description, Anne Askew, who lived from 1521-1546, was selected because her writing claims silence as a response to interrogation and torture
in such a way as to make the silences appear intended—she chose to remain silent when interrogated, she did not cry out during torture. Askew’s rhetorical choices documented in a journal she kept during her incarceration, *Examinations*, demonstrates the worthiness of including Anne Askew in this study of rhetorical silence. This chapter’s study will focus on Askew’s text, *Examinations*, a written documentation of her arrest, incarceration, interrogation, and torture. This chapter will include a review of the literature about Anne Askew, and Askew’s *Examinations* to establish possible opportunities or absences for a study of silence in the available research. For example, one concern revealed by the available scholarship is the credibility of *Examinations*. The publisher, John Dale, allegedly altered the text prior to its publication, and the text has been altered since that time (by removing Dale’s edits or additions, or retranslation, etc.). Credibility, authority, agency, and identity are necessarily attached to a feminist theoretical lens, and the set of heuristics will provide a means for addressing these issues. The chapter will provide an opportunity to utilize the heuristics established from the initial research in the dissertation.

**Chapter 4—A Case Study: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz**

Similar to Chapter 3, this chapter will focus on a singular rhetor and apply the heuristics anchored in the research on silence. The rhetor analyzed here is Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz who lived from 1648–1695. In Chapter 2, some biographic and historic information is provided to introduce Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and explain a rationale for selecting de la Cruz as a case to study. Similar to the work completed in the preceding chapter, this chapter considers rhetorical silence and possible choices for a female rhetor. The analysis utilizing the heuristics to be conducted in this chapter will focus on the letters and communication exchange between Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Sor Filotea (the bishop of Puebla in “disguise,” Manuel Fernandez de
Santa Cruz y Sahagun). This communication exchange which took place between 1690 and 1691 is one primary location of Sor Juana’s rhetorical silence. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz composed a considerable amount of philosophical and poetic writing; however, this study will benefit most from an analysis of the exchange between Sor Filotea and Sor Juana since this is a documented example of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz’ rhetorical silence. The published letters will provide an opportunity to challenge the heuristics and advance the overall study of silence in the dissertation. The claim to silence and subsequent “publication silence” in the period before her death connect to the concepts that a rhetor may choose silence, and may use silence in a specific way. Her claim to silence and subsequent silence also provide a complex challenge to the areas of invention, delivery, and audience within the set of heuristics.

Chapter 5—Conclusion: Implications, Further Study

This chapter will begin with a review of the findings and interpretations based on the initial study of silence and the data analyzed in subsequent chapters. The goal of this chapter is to provide implications for further study, so the chapter will contain a vision for the application of the methodology and methods applied in the study to future work, noting drawbacks or recommendations for future study of rhetorical silence. It may also be necessary to discuss potential modifications to the heuristics. Accordingly, this chapter will carefully weigh the limitations of the study and whether the case study analyses suggest revisions to the heuristics. The implications of the findings and interpretations of this study may set a course for further study of rhetorical silence—and may open further opportunities to consider and study diverse forms and functions of silence as well as varied interpretations and meanings for silence. This chapter may offer connections to future study of silence in new media, technology and electronic environments. In addition, this chapter will offer final conclusions for the implications for the
future study of silence as a rhetorical tool, and the potential for the consideration of silence as amplification.
CHAPTER 2—METHODOLOGY & METHODS: HEURISTICS FOR INVENTION, DELIVERY, AND AUDIENCE

Silence appears between words, between thoughts, and between whole conversations; silence exists and silence has meaning. Rhetors understand how to wield intentional, eloquent silences so that audiences receive those silences, perceive those silences, and take up meaning from them. Silence can be chosen, and silence can be used in specific ways to make meaning. What this study argues, relying on scholarship about silence, is that speakers and writers choose silence and use silence intentionally, specifically, and meaningfully. Though much scholarship exists to discuss and analyze silence from various perspectives and fields of study, little is available in the way of considering expressly that speakers and writers intend their silences, speakers and writers mean within their silences. This chapter develops the set of heuristics that can be used to establish a method for examination, analysis, and understanding of those intentional silences—whether or not those moments are truly “silent”.

This set of heuristics considers intentional and meaningful silences through analysis of Invention, Delivery, and Audience. These three categories—Invention, Delivery, Audience—were selected based upon both a close reading of the case studies and available scholarship about silence; the categories emerged from readings about the two historic figures whose silences seem to be rhetorical and from patterns found in the depth and breadth of scholarship from various fields. Since the categories came to light, initially, from the publications about the case studies, this chapter will first describe the two case studies. Starting with the case studies, and the rhetorical contexts, will make way for the appearance of similarities in the rhetorical silences; will make way for the emergence of those commonplaces to be found in the heuristics. Second, the chapter carefully examines and explains the heuristic framework; the heuristic set is organized in the three categories, each with guiding questions. Clarifying the heuristics will
confirm critical connections between invention, delivery, audience reception and interpretation, and will reveal the systematic approach that may be used to analyze examples of rhetorical silence. The contents of this chapter shall provide a structure and means for analyzing silences, and for creating theory about silence to be utilized beyond the study in this dissertation.

Case Studies

Two case studies have been selected for the dissertation study of silence: Anne Askew and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. These case studies were selected specifically for their use of silence in a given rhetorical situation. Each of these case studies provides a unique means for knowing a silence occurs, an evidence of silence. In each case study there is a rhetor and an audience, there is a silence, and there is evidence of an audience reaction following the silence. These components allow for an analysis of a rhetorical silence—a silence chosen specifically and intentionally by a rhetor. These case studies invite theorizing about agency, modes of delivery and reception, and perception and interpretation of a rhetorical silence. I also argue that these rhetorical silences are examples of rhetorical amplification. Based on these considerations, the historic female rhetors were chosen as exemplary case studies for this dissertation. In the space provided here, I will introduce and describe the case studies with greater detail.

Anne Askew lived from 1521 to 1546, and composed a journal of her experiences during incarceration in Renaissance England. Askew wrote of her silence during interrogation and torture in Examinations, a published copy of her journal. Askew is unique in that she was an educated woman and a writer at a time that demanded subordination of women under law and religious beliefs of the time period (Bizzell, Glenn, Travitsky). Askew’s journal documents her experiences during interrogation and torture, and records a dialogue that demonstrates Askew’s knowledge of biblical texts as well as her ability to negotiate the question-and-answer
communication transactions in such a way as to represent Askew’s unflattering stance and her ability to maintain control of the conversation—despite the fact that she would have no control over the outcome of her arrest and imprisonment. For most every question, Askew disrupted the rhetorical situation (a situation in which she was expected to answer demurely) by blatant refusal, by asking a question in return, or by silence.

Askew documented her silences as well as her wording, counting those silences as responses and making those silences an integral part of the conversations. Anne Askew was selected for this study because her writing claims the silences in such a way as to make the silences intended: she chose to remain silent when interrogated, she did not cry out during torture. In addition, her documentation of the rhetorical situation provides her views and the responses of her audience. Further, the points at which she chose silence seem to be integral moments in the interrogation in which both speech and action seemed to escalate: the silences augment Askew’s presence and ability, and the reactions intensify. Though this may be an extreme example, the resulting text of Askew’s experiences offer rich opportunity for considering a rhetor’s choices, potential meaning, and an audience’s perception. The rhetorical choices documented in *Examinations* make the writing of Anne Askew worth including in this study of silence.

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz lived in colonial Mexico until 1695. Sor Juana was educated in Latin, reading, and writing, and became a published poet; she was also criticized for not meeting the social expectations for a proper woman. Some controversy surrounded Sor Juana’s birth since her father was of Spanish decent and her mother was from Mexico, and this made Sor Juana potentially illegitimate, changing the kinds of access Sor Juana had to education and other social opportunities—Sor Juana may or may not have been a “proper” woman. Further, a proper
woman would most certainly not pursue education, and would most certainly not speak openly or publicly. The criticism of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz emerged publicly in an exchange of newspaper-published letters between the bishop of Puebla (under the pen name Sor Filotea de la Cruz) and de la Cruz. The bishop openly criticized her and de la Cruz responded to the criticism: she plead for women’s rights to “intellectual development” and de la Cruz then claimed her own silence by agreeing with Filotea to do no further “speaking” publicly (Bizzell, Merrim).

That written claim, that claim that de la Cruz makes to silence in the letters, potentially signals her last publication. Even though Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz did have supporters who probably would have published more of her writing, she published very little. In other words, there was an audience for the philosophical and poetic writing of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. The claim to silence in the published letter to Filotea and the subsequent “publication silence” in the period before her death, provide a confirmation of the concepts that a rhetor may choose silence, and may use silence in a specific way. Further, different audiences received and perceived the silence in different ways: audiences include the bishop, the nuns living with de la Cruz, the benefactors of de la Cruz, readers of the newspaper, and de la Cruz herself, not to mention readers and scholars interested in de la Cruz’ work over time. The rhetorical choices of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz are relevant to this study of silence: there is record that a silence occurred, it seems that the rhetor is using silence intentionally, and there is record of the rhetorical situation. Existing scholarship about these two historic women and silence, especially discussions such as Glenn’s, cast the situation as rhetorical silence. Conversely, the existing scholarship also points to the difficulty of interpretation.

Neither rhetor, Anne Askew nor Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, seemed to be silenced, rather each seems to make the rhetorical choice to use silence. Each historic woman was selected
because of the unique rhetorical situation in which women, in general, were not privileged to participate in public or scholarly discourse, and both Askew and de la Cruz used silence as part of a public discourse. Additionally, each historic woman was selected for the available scholarship focusing on their silences and on their rhetorical practices; this scholarship provides varying insight into the historic women, their lives, and the range interpretations of their rhetorical practices. Their rhetorical choices are significant to the study of rhetoric and considerations for who speaks, who listens, who is included in a rhetorical situation, what is said, and how it is said. Within a given rhetorical situation with more than one possible “available means,” these two historic women rhetors chose to use silence. These two case studies will provide a point from which to start, a point where silence may be considered among many choices as a tool for intentional use with specific meaning in a given context. This chapter outlines a set of heuristics from which an analysis of silence as a rhetor’s tool can commence.

**Introducing Heuristics: Analyzing Silence as a Rhetor’s Tool**

In her article “Toward a Metatheory of Heuristic Procedures,” Janice Lauer discusses heuristic models available as a “series of question or operations which guide writers to examine their subjects from multiple perspectives. Neither a set of mechanical steps nor trial-and-error searches, they are conscious operations that are useful in open-ended inquiry which seeks new meanings” (268). Though Lauer uses this description prior to launching an argument that proposes a revised vision for theorizing classroom writing processes, it is this description that assists the thinking about analyzing rhetorical silence. Barbara Johnstone and Christopher Eisenhart echo Lauer’s concept that a heuristic is not a set of mechanical steps and suggest that “the procedures of a heuristic do not need to be followed in any particular order, and there is no fixed way of following them” (11). Johnstone and Eisenhart identify a heuristic as a “set of
Discovery procedures for systematic application or a set of topics for systematic consideration” (11). Following the concepts advanced by Lauer and by Johnstone and Eisenhart, this chapter proposes a set of categories and questions to be used as a heuristic.

Heuristics offer a systematic approach to analysis and understanding. Further, Enos and Lauer extend the potential for Aristotle’s concepts of heuristics when they posit that a “Heuristic is not only an instrument for inventing techniques to articulate to others but is also a techne enabling the rhetor and audience to cocreate meaning.” (80). Additionally, Enos and Lauer conceive that heuristics are also used to invent “entirely new proofs generated by the rhetor” (82). Their added scholarship on the multiple uses of heuristic demonstrates the value of using such a tactic for analysis such as this. The purpose of this study is to provide theory and evidence to support my claim that silence can be chosen—and to contribute to the ongoing conversations in the field. Not only does this heuristic set offer a means for my study, but for other examples of rhetorical silence and for other studies. The heuristic is not rigid, but can be used to analyze silences and can be modified to cocreate meaning and knowledge in the field as we analyze the choice and use of rhetorical silences.

Covino and Jolliffe suggest that topoi becomes Aristotle’s metaphor for “the places or seats of certain types of arguments” (88). This heuristic set is a starting place for analysis of rhetorical silence as well as a place for connecting that silence with a rhetor’s choice, the delivery of silence, and the reception and interpretation of a rhetorical silence by an audience. Thus the heuristic set of questions focuses on Invention, Delivery, and Audience. When considering a rhetor’s choice, the decision to use a strategy or tool, a place from which to start should be invention. Labeling and ordering categories appears to create a hierarchy or linear progression. Even though invention is treated first this should not imply a hierarchy of
importance. In the past, writing processes were perceived for their product-oriented hierarchy or linear progression (i.e., first, next, last). Invention is simply where I chose to begin though I insist that these heuristic categories may be tested in a sequence other than the order in which they are presented here.

**Invention**

As a heuristic category, invention allows this study to explore the rhetor’s opportunity and ability to choose silence, to investigate silence as a potential “available means,” and to consider how agency or choice may or may not be a part of using silence as a rhetor’s tool. Invention as a process that involves exploration of possible topics or strategies and as a process that may or may not involve rhetorical decision-making is critical to considerations for silence as a rhetor’s tool. Defining and describing invention will be a challenge as invention is a topic which has generated much scholarship and publication. Among the five canons of rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery), invention is frequently debated in Rhetoric and Composition because the goals for invention (whether to discover what is known, or to create new knowledge, etc.) are a challenge to resolve. Definitions differ, too. Janice Lauer, who has contributed significant scholarship with regard to the study of invention, offers an extensive look at invention as it has been discussed historically, theoretically, pedagogically, and epistemically in *Invention in Rhetoric and Composition*.

In Lauer’s inclusive examination, invention was at first partially defined as “simply a process of selecting, narrowing, and amplifying” (43). Lauer’s study demonstrates a broader scope for invention and a broader perspective of invention has developed over time. Beginning with ancient Greece, Lauer shows that Aristotle saw invention as “a process that engages a *rhetor* (speaker or writer) in examining alternatives: different ways to begin writing and to
explore writing situations; diverse ideas, arguments, appeals, and subject matters for reaching new understandings and/or for developing and supporting judgements, theses and insights; and different ways of framing and verifying these judgements” (author’s emphasis, 6, 7). According to Lauer, sophists added concepts such as kairos to those practices for invention already in place, Romans added stasis, and concepts for invention and connected to invention were further developed, employed, and taught (7). While they may have had other applications, heuristics such as stasis and commonplaces became associated with invention processes. Lauer identifies numerous perspectives for the purpose, nature, and epistemology of invention—from recalling what is known to creating new ideas, from the use of methods and heuristics to processes of interpretation or inquiry. There is not one singular definition for invention that can be applied without denying or excluding significant contributions of scholarship and study.

Invention can be identified as a point where a rhetor generates and develops ideas, though there is not always a clear dividing line between developing ideas and arranging ideas. Hugh Blair proposed that Invention is the first of three “requisite(s)” and “the groundwork of the rest” (356). Blair further suggests invention will “discover the reasons that are most proper to convince men” (356). Rather than simplified or linear steps, Paul Prior suggests “Invention […] is widely understood as a process that goes on throughout the entire work”—meaning that invention can occur at any time during a composition process (8). Further arguments about the definition of invention can be found in Karen Burke LeFevre’s *Invention as A Social Act*.

LeFevre shows a variety of perspectives from invention as a platonic or “private, asocial act of recollection aimed at uncovering the ultimate truth” (11) to invention as a social act which “stresses the dialectical relationship of the individual with society and culture” (47). This chapter will not take up the field-wide arguments about purposes or definitions for invention;
however, my study does wish to recognize invention as complex, as non-linear, and as a process itself. Wherever invention occurs for a rhetor on LeFevre’s continuum of individual and collective action, the concept that invention is a point at which a rhetor develops and makes decisions about ideas should be adopted. The classic processes used for invention such as stasis and use of the commonplaces allow for a rich discussion of invention—and the potential decision-making process which may reveal a rhetor’s choice to use silence. This study of silence and its relationship to invention shall take up concepts and scholarship about invention that are most relevant to understanding a rhetor’s choice to use silence, silence as a rhetorical strategy or tool, and the meanings of silence.

This heuristic category uses the following guiding questions:

- How might writer-speakers choose elements (or wording) such as silence?
- How are forms of silence and agency connected?
- How are invention and silence connected?
- What relationship exists between invention and rhetorical amplification?

1) How might writer-speakers choose elements (or wording) such as silence?

The beginning of any rhetorical exchange or the exigence of a rhetorical context elicits a response from the rhetor—whether that response is to be composed in writing with time for craft and revision; to be prepared as a speech and then spoken; or to be immediately answered with little time for thought or preparation. Scholarship about invention shows that most choices about strategy, arrangement, and delivery occur during invention—even though invention may be considered as a constant and ongoing process, even though invention may be individual and internal or social and external. While there is a range of possible ways to consider how a rhetor might choose rhetorical elements or tools, four concepts are relevant to this study: the
preparedness of the rhetor, the consideration of audience during invention, specific invention activities or heuristics, and the consideration of kairos.

One possible consideration for a rhetor’s choice is through the development and practice of ability with rhetoric. Ancient Greek and Roman beliefs centered on training, practice and preparedness of the rhetor; only through training and practice could one master the art of rhetoric. Aristotle considered the art of rhetoric as a path to be followed through study “for it is possible to observe the cause why some succeed by habit and others accidentally, and all would at once agree that such observation is the activity of an art” (1362a-1364a). Through practice and familiarity with words, phrases, and strategies such as those taught by Aristotle, Cicero, Quintillian, Erasmus, Blair, and other scholars when they recommend that rhetors be well-read, well-studied, and well-prepared, a speaker-writer could master this art. This preparedness and practice came from training and study, and allowed rhetors to possess multiple strategies and tactics and the ability to make decisions on how and when to use them. This ability to master the art was also anchored in memory. Crowley and Hawhee note that “memory was not only a system of recollection for ancient and medieval peoples; it was a means of invention” (318). Further, Crowley and Hawhee posit that:

Whenever the need arose to speak or write, they simply retrieved any relevant topics or commentary from their ordered places within memory, reorganized and expanded upon these, and added their own interpretations of the traditional material” (318).

Ultimately, rhetors should be prepared for anything and should have a great vocabulary and set of strategies from which they can draw ahead of time (while inventing, pre-writing, or composing) or in the moment (whether for extemporaneous delivery, refutation, or other
purposes). The importance of invention (and the complex multiple facets, interpretations, and strategies of invention) as it is brought to bear on a rhetor’s choice is underscored through the numerous scholars who emphasize the practice of invention for exploring all of the available means and all possible arguments on a given topic. Bizzell and Herzberg identify the first two books of Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric* as having a “focus on the rhetor’s attempt to organize what he knows and to structure his arguments” (30). Further, they summarize the books as suggesting that invention “be guided by formal procedures” such as topoi; similarly, Aristotle’s suggestions for invention include that the rhetor “should consider his audience,” should appeal to reason, emotion, and trust in the speaker’s character (logos, pathos, ethos) (31).

Another factor contributing to a rhetor’s choice is audience. Aristotle spoke at length about audience. When offering suggestions on topics of praise and blame, Aristotle notes one should “consider also the audience before whom the praise [is spoken]; for, as Socrates use to say, it is not difficult to praise Athenians in Athens” (1367b). When discussing various interpretations of invention, Lauer notes “invention was devoted to ways to impact the audience and the faculty being addressed” (61). Considering audience is connected to context, to *kairos*, and to other studied, practiced, and interdependent aspects of rhetorical strategies. Since audience is a heuristic category, a more in-depth discussion of audience will take place later in this chapter.

Another possible method which may allow a rhetor to choose silence is through various invention techniques. Through the use of invention techniques such as stasis, enthymeme, commonplaces or others, a rhetor considers arguments, topics, and means to achieve a rhetorical purpose. Using an enthymeme, for example, would allow a rhetor to consider particular premises, rhetorical probability, values of an audience and particular patterns for specifically
communicating to effectively achieve the rhetorical goal (4th Ed., Crowley and Hawhee, 166-67). Hairston points out that enthymeme “becomes an investigative tool, a stimulus to discovery, and an aide to finding rhetorical support” (65). Synthesizing scholarship on *stasis*, Lauer shows that during invention “one had to debate all sides or one would not have fully invented” (26). Further, Lauer discusses invention techniques such as enthymeme and stasis entails a “mutual construction of knowledge between the audience and the writer, with the audience supplying the question or issue to be pursued and the premises for arguing toward probable truth” (88).

Invention techniques are designed to provide a rhetor with topics, content, and effective means for achieving their goals.

Four concepts will be brought to bear as they apply to the analysis of the case studies: the preparedness of the rhetor, the consideration of audience during invention, specific invention activities or heuristics, and the consideration of kairos. It is during invention that rhetoric’s guiding scholars—from Aristotle to Quintillian to Cicero to Erasmus to Blair to even those more contemporary teachers—say that a well-read and well-practiced individual may have many available means from which to draw. For a rhetor to consider silence as one possible means to achieve a purpose, silence must be considered as one of the available means—a tool, a device, a strategy. Little scholarship exists that explores the point at which a rhetor might consider silence as effective or as a rhetorical tool. However, it makes sense that a prepared and practiced rhetor would engage in decision-making with regard to silence during invention. Given that invention is a point at which a rhetor might choose to use silence, this question will examine such qualities of the rhetor and invention during the analysis of the case studies.

2) *How are forms of silence and choice or agency connected?*
Agency is related to a kind of power to act, and is connected to subjectivity. Agency implies various kinds of subjectivity—whether or not one is an individual and in charge of one’s decisions and actions, or whether one is made up of multiple kinds of desires and an identity that is fluid and multiple whose actions and decisions are a result of variant social and political motivations exerted upon the individual. Agency implies one is able to choose and able to act, the idea of agency—depending on the perspective—might make certain assumptions about power in a given rhetorical situation. Since this study asserts that silence can be chosen and wielded as a rhetorical tool, agency and subjectivity should be considered. The fact that a rhetor may make such a choice indicates certain kinds of assumptions about power and agency; the concept asserts an ability of a rhetor to act on a given rhetorical situation and this implies the rhetor has agency, the rhetor has power. Such a set of assumptions is a challenge since complex factors such as class, gender, culture, societal, material, and political factors exert power on a given rhetorical situation. Considering the factors which weigh on rhetorical choices, there is a constant play of external and internal force shaping the potential ‘available means’ for a rhetor.

While admitting that there is no one single way to perceive agency, this study calls upon postmodern and feminist views of agency and subjectivity as a starting point for considering connections between silence and agency. Postmodern concepts of subjectivity “pose a challenge to the modernist view of individuals as independent, individual sources for the expression of insights” (125). Especially as agency relates to postmodern views of communication under new modes such as those available in cyberspace, Ward notes that new ways of speaking and acting “upsets the traditional logic of communication: senders of messages become receivers of them, consumers are at the same time producers” and these new ways of interacting “encourage[s] ‘unstable, multiple and diffuse’ ways of communicating with each other” (125). The concept of
choice in communication also connects to concepts of agency and subjectivity. To consider one as a subject does not deny the complex factors surrounding a rhetorical context, rather it presents an opportunity to question the complex factors as well as the relationship between power and resistance. Complex ideas of subjectivity and agency also consider that identity is formed from the tension between being “constructed by the social and [are] ultimately determined by it” and being able to freely “fabricate our identities for ourselves” with some “degree of choice about how to represent ourselves” (136). Further, subjectivity implies a subject, “not simply a conscious person” but “a being which is at least partially subjected to socially produced constraints and divisions” (142). So, the “subject cannot be reduced to individual consciousness; there are only practices or techniques of the self” (142). In postmodern concepts of subjectivity, the concept of discourse is also linked. For Foucault, discourse was particularly important when investigating the nature of power. Discussing Foucault’s views, Ward asserts that discourse puts “a limit on what is sayable at any one time: [discourses] define what counts as ‘legitimate’ or ‘illegitimate’ statements” (143). For a rhetor to have agency, a rhetor must be attuned to context including but not limited to notions of power and discourse.

Describing a new regime of discourses in *History of Sexuality Volume I*, Foucault observes:

> Silence itself—the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name, the discretion that is required between different speakers—is less the absolute limit of discourse, the other side from which it is separated by a strict boundary, than an element that functions alongside the things said, with them and in relation to them within over-all strategies. There is no binary division to be made between what one says and what one does not say; we must try to determine the different ways
of not saying such things, how those who can and those who cannot speak of them are distributed, which type of discourse is authorized, or which form of discretion is required in either case. There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses” (27).

Foucault’s observations about silence align with concepts about power and resistance, and align with the concept that power can be productive; power can make things. In addition, with silence as a strategy of discourse that a rhetor may choose, that rhetor may then have some agency though the constituents of that agency may need close examination and analysis. Chapter 1 briefly considered a rhetor’s intention and choice. Scott observes that “every decision to say something is a decision not to say something else, that is, if the utterance is a choice. In speaking we remain silent. And in remaining silent, we speak” (149). Scott echoes Burke’s concept that “any given terminology is a reflection of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a selection of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a deflection of reality” (1341). Silence is connected to agency in that it can be chosen, can be wielded as a powerful tool.

This is also confirmed in some literary theorists view that analysis of silence reveals insights to identity, agency, power, and the construction of reality. For example, in Silence As the Currency of Power, Maria-Luisa Achino-Loeb introduces the edited collection suggests silence can give voice to “unencumbered experience” (1). Achino-Loeb asserts “meaning is inherently tied to the agency of both speakers and hearers whose intentions and perceptions are key to the communicative capacity of speech” (6). She further argues their “analysis of silence shows that such agency is inherent to the meaning construction process” and so “the very experience of depth is created by the process of suppression and the perception of reality is forged in the privileging of silence” (author’s emphasis, 12). Through the analysis of silence Achino-Loeb
claims “the outlines of habits of power surface in multiple guises of empowerment, domination or resistance on the heels of self-interest” (17). What needs further investigation is the concept of a rhetor choosing and then using silence, the use of rhetorical silence—especially in the ways that Ann Askew and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz chose to use silence. For the purposes of this study, a broad concept of agency will allow opportunity to review potential power, power struggles, and choices for a rhetor in a given context.

3) How are invention and silence connected?

In *On Rhetoric*, the devotion of such a lengthy focus to invention and invention techniques suggests that Aristotle wanted to help rhetors find available arguments and available means in a given context. Though various strategies (through invention), a rhetor could select the best way to achieve their goals with regard to affecting an audience. For silence to be chosen, it is important to recognize that silence is among the means available to a rhetor, that it is a rhetorical tool. Invention is one point where a rhetor makes decisions and seeks the best possible strategies and tools to accomplish a goal. Thus, invention is one point at which a rhetor would choose to utilize a rhetorical strategy such as rhetorical silence.

The invention strategy of *stasis*, for example, which determined a point to start or where there was disagreement, uses questions and often juxtaposes concepts of answer and response, or who controls the discussion. Lauer points out “this strategy initiated the discursive process with a question to answer or a conflict to resolve, not with a judgement or thesis already at hand” (7). Citing Michael Carter, Lauer shows that stasis “offered a way for the rhetor to gain some control over the moment” (14). Anne Askew used questions and silence to gain control over the interrogation process. In *Rhetoric Retold*, Glenn asserts that once “Askew sees the advantage of not speaking, her words are few, but when she does speak, she deflects the question back to her
examiners or uses the Scriptures to her disputational (if not mortal) advantage” (154). Further, the documented interrogation and silences in Askew’s *Examinations* “especially emphasize her controlled response” (Glenn, *RR*, 154). Whether or not Askew was employing a kind of stasis or adhering to a kairotic moment is not the point of this question. The point is that invention and techniques of invention allow a rhetor to consider all of the available means.

In *Unspoken*, Glenn reminds readers that silence can be used rhetorically; she says “When silence is our choice, we can use it purposefully and effectively” (13). Equally, Kim suggests silence can carry an “illocutionary force” and should be considered a “communicative strategy” (139). To effectively use silence as a rhetorical tool, rhetors must weigh many elements of a context such as *kairos*, audience, environment, and so on. The use of silence can create the affect the rhetor seeks for a given context. Saville-Troike asserts “speech sounds and silences are symbolic in nature, and the meaning of silence is thus also derived by convention within particular speech communities” (10). And Glenn shows that “silence as a strategic choice, one growing directly out of *kairos*, works differently from silence as a position enforced by others” (14). Invention is a point when a rhetor may weigh out the value of a silence with conventions and expectations of audience and context: a kairotic moment. The connection between silence and invention is this: invention is one point at which a rhetor may consider silence as a rhetorical tool and select silence as an effective means. If, as Lauer’s suggests, invention is continuously part of a rhetor’s process, then silence is also an ongoing possibility. Connections between silence and invention will be analyzed in the case study as part of the overall study of silence.

4) **What relationship exists between invention and rhetorical amplification?**

Some interpretations of invention in the scholarship synthesized by Lauer suggest that invention was once simplified to mean a “process of selecting, narrowing, and amplifying” (43).
Amplification was also seen by some scholars as a means of expanding vocabulary—and acting as a technique of invention. Rhetorical amplification has been briefly defined Crowley and Hawhee by as “the ancient art of saying a great deal about very little” and by James Murphy as “the dilation or verbal expansion of an idea or text” (428, 297 respectively). Although it may seem as though the quickest answer to the heuristic question is simply that amplification is one rhetorical element and invention is the point at which a rhetor selects elements and techniques, this argument wishes to explore further the kinds of decisions that are made during invention or an “inventive act”. Rhetorical amplification may be best known as an element of style or eloquence but rather than focus only on form, the purpose or function which rhetorical amplification can perform may offer more substantive weight to this study of rhetorical silence. Beyond its use for style or eloquence, it is possible that rhetorical amplification may also be strategically used for different purposes. So the connection is not only that rhetorical amplification may be selected during invention; but that when a rhetor considers particular rhetorical goals, specific audiences, and broader contexts, the rhetor is also considering the best means available for addressing multiple concerns and reaching complex objectives. When analyzed closely, there may be richer connections between invention and rhetorical amplification.

Being able to select from many possible tools or strategies is critical to being an effective rhetor. Ancient and medieval scholars focused on training and invention techniques to help develop a student’s abilities as a rhetor. Crowley and Hawhee outline one of the progymnasmata, the common-place, as an amplification of a commonly held belief (154). In this case, the rhetor uses amplification as a kind of elaboration, utilizing skills that learners acquired in early progymnasmata activities (154). In this case, I interpret amplification functioning as elaboration...
as well as functioning as a kind of practice. On the topic of training, Erasmus recommends that amplification and conciseness as well as all manners of style and eloquence be practiced. Erasmus argued “no artist will better compress speech to conciseness than he who has skill to enrich the same with as varied an ornamentation as possible” (14) and he further concludes that “No one certainly will see more quickly and more surely what can be suitably omitted than he who has seen what can be added and in what ways” (15). Amplification, in some cases, is considered to be ornament, an element of style. However, Erasmus is also implying that a well-trained rhetor will be able to best evaluate the situation and draw upon the best possible means to create the right rhetorical move at the right time.

The ability to develop ideas or compress them, and to decide whether or not there is kairos or the rhetorical situation to do so, is indicative of a successful rhetor. Invention techniques (such as stasis, enthymeme, and so on) and practice help rhetors develop a kind of knowing—an epistemological rhetoric—to help them address specific situations, specific audiences, and specific goals of speaking-writing. Lauer helps us consider the ways practice and invention were considered in her discussion of Cicero’s De Oratore; she acknowledges the concept that prominent rhetors (such as Crassus and Antonius) had “internalized their education and had used it to enhance their own powers” (27). So, beyond acting as simply a tool to be wielded, rhetorical amplification must also be weighed with concepts such as ethos or kairos. Amplification is among the means available to a rhetor during processes of invention; thus, what is relevant to this study of silence is how amplification may function, and so then may be chosen as an intentional rhetorical element.

In “Stylistic and Argumentative Function of Rhetorical “Amplificatio”,” Montefusco suggests that amplification may have more than just a form as ornament or style, and suggests
that over time a broader perspective of amplification has evolved. After synthesizing interpretations of Aristotle, Isocrates, Cicero and other historic scholars, she observes “amplification is no longer merely a tool of persuasion; not even particularly suitable to epideictic rhetoric; rather the whole performance of the orator depends upon his ability to use it” (74). In “Conciseness and Amplification,” Laib presents a thorough historic review of amplification and a set of compelling arguments about the purposes or effects of amplification. If we teach amplification, he says, we teach “the ability to extend, vary, and expatiate upon one’s subject at length, to shape, build, augment, or alter the force and effect of communication, and to repeat oneself inventively” (443). In doing so, Laib’s argument suggests more about the use of amplification than as just a mere restatement and repetition: amplification can perform different functions as determined by the rhetor. Laib argues that amplification is “an essential part of explanation itself, a basic skill of interpretation and inquiry, a means through which we explore and articulate what we perceive and what we mean” (449). Throughout his discussion, Laib suggests that amplification can intensify, transform, heighten emotional appeal, emphasize, interpret, develop, invent and investigate. With many possible functions for amplification, a rhetor may be able to determine effective uses for rhetorical amplification as well as the various ways that rhetorical amplification may be deployed. This study of silence, and this heuristic, will consider invention as a point where forms and functions of amplification are chosen and utilized.

Thus, invention encompasses a particular set of abilities, as well as forms and patterns for which to compose an effective speech or piece of writing. The rhetor, through invention techniques, becomes able to select from a variety of tools, styles, and ways of knowing. Within this frame of invention techniques, a rhetor may have more opportunities too choose from and apply forms and functions of rhetorical amplification. With this possibility of richness and
complexity in form and function of rhetorical amplification, and the use of the heuristics, I intend to consider ways rhetorical amplification and rhetorical silence may also be connected through analysis of the case studies.

Delivery

The case studies, both historic women rhetors, are known for using silences; each delivered silence. Analyzing their rhetorical delivery is relevant to a study of silence as a rhetorical tool. By selecting the canon of delivery as a heuristic category, this study can explore silence as among the potential available means, and consider how agency or choice may or may not be part of a rhetor’s delivery of silence as a rhetorical tool. A definition for the rhetorical canon of delivery is not easily labeled as ancient rhetoric views delivery as anchored in orality while contemporary rhetoric views delivery as anchored in literacy or modes of discourse. Lindal Buchanan observes that the “traditional fifth canon—variously described as hypokrisis, elocution and delivery—examines how orators convey their messages in terms of volume and tone, rhythm and speed, gesture, movement, and expression” and includes “two distinct facets of rhetorical presentation: pronuntiatio, the vocal elements of delivery, and actio, the gestural” (author’s emphasis, 2). Additional points from Buchanan’s comprehensive historic scholarship will be especially relevant to this study of silence.

Noting historic changes in the introduction of Rhetorical Memory and Delivery, Winifred Bryan Horner notes that “Renaissance rhetoric limited itself largely to figures of speech, and eighteenth-century rhetoric was concerned with the last canon in its emphasis on elocution, where style became delivery” (ix). Hugh Blair connected delivery to pronunciation, eloquence, and the “management of the voice and gestures” (Lecture XXXIII, 368). Similarly, Crowley and Hawhee encapsulate delivery as “appropriate management of the voice, gestures, and
appearance” but also note connections to performance, expression, and interpretation (36, 330). Robert J. Connors suggests a broad concept of delivery as having “to do simply with the manner in which the material is delivered” (65). It should be noted that Crowley and Hawhee’s text is organized to have a section for “Delivery of Written Discourse” and a section for “Delivery of Oral Discourse” as well as a section for “Visual Rhetoric” and a section for “Cyberrhetors”—acknowledging delivery as a broad and evolving canon of rhetoric. (334, 336, 343, 348). Thus, as a canon, delivery is still evolving and a rigid definition of delivery can be contested.

Though concepts of delivery are still being defined and discovered as the field of rhetoric and composition changes, what is especially relevant for my two case studies within the canon of delivery is the relationship of gender and context. The heuristic categories of Invention, Delivery, and Audience draw on certain assumptions about Aristotle’s “available means”. Ritchie and Ronald assert that the “discovery of the available means was for Aristotle an act of invention that always assumed the right to speak in the first place and, even prior to that, assumed the right to personhood and self-representation” (xvii). Roxanne Mountford adds to this discussion about gender hierarchy and space, and her contribution will appear later in this chapter. Rhetorical choices for historic women rhetors differed from those of men; women were not allowed to publicly deliver speeches. Beyond social conventions for public speaking, education and training for delivery to an audience was not available to women. Finally, certain spaces and contexts carry expectations for gender, culture, and social practices.

Lindal Buchanan’s careful research of Antebellum women rhetors in Regendering Delivery reveals much in the way of social convention, rhetorical practices, and Buchanan’s identification of masculine and feminine delivery styles. Buchanan verifies
“women selected the available (and gender-appropriate) means of indirect influence rather than direct persuasion and devised a manner of rhetorical presentation to match, one that simultaneously subverted social norms dictating women’s silence and invisibility and cloaked the public and persuasive nature of their discourse” (79).

Buchanan’s study and findings demonstrate the complexity and the flexibility of choices for rhetorical delivery—and will complement this study’s investigation of rhetorical delivery and rhetorical silence.

Further, contemporary scholarship offering revised perspectives on issues in rhetorical delivery may provide additional insights. Connors’ chapter, “Actio: A Rhetoric of Written Delivery (Iteration Two),” addresses composition and print literacy, and offers some comparison with oral delivery, suggesting a strong link between delivery and ethos since within those manuscripts “writers are creating images of themselves for their readers” (66). Drawing on the role of actual images in a comparison and contrast of verbal and visual rhetoric with regard to hypertext, Jay David Bolter reasons that delivery “will likely draw on the visual rhetoric of the graphic artist or animator as well as the oral and verbal rhetoric of speaking and writing” (110). So, delivery will need “a new balance between verbal and visual presentation” (111). Further, scholarship from social semiotics may contribute to a contemporary consideration of rhetorical delivery and the combining of elements. Hodge and Kress claim that “meaning resides so strongly and pervasively in other systems of meaning, in a multiplicity of visual, aural, behavioral and other codes, that a concentration on words alone is not enough” (vii). Rhetorical silence is complex because the silence delivered could be verbal or bodily, or some combination
of other elements. Therefore, this study will consider how a rhetorical delivery of silence may have differing forms and how those forms may function.

Similarly, Sam Dragga envisions delivery as “displaying of typographic and illustrative characteristics on a page or screen” (79). Like Connors, Dragga insists that developments in rhetorical tools and materials lends writers “new rhetorical power” which also means that “new power to design information” is inextricably linked to “ethical obligations” (80). Bolter, Connors, and Dragga, as well as other scholars, see delivery as possessing a kind of power over audiences—the choices a rhetor makes with regard to delivery have some effect and must be weighed ethically. Connors especially attends to the link between delivery and ethos as he claims “contemporary actio is concerned with learning to use effectively the instruments that are being put into our hands” (author emphasis, 66). In this case, ethos is not just the rhetor’s character but a consideration for the ‘right’ or ‘good’ delivery.

It is during the act of delivery that rhetoric’s guiding scholars say—from Aristotle to Quintillian, through the concepts handed down from Cicero to Erasmus to Blair, and even contemporary teachers—that a well-read and well-practiced individual may further kairotically and inventively draw from the many means available. Elements such as ethos, kairos, and invention contribute to a rhetorical delivery, as well as the delivery style of specific rhetorical strategies such as enthymeme. So, this study will develop this heuristic to analyze the delivery of silences, and then apply the heuristic to the case studies in chapters three and four. This heuristic includes the following questions to guide analysis:

- What kinds of silence are delivered: in what specific ways (i.e., bodily, textually, spatially) and for how long?
- How does the rhetor create the silence?
• What are connections between rhetorical delivery and rhetorical silence?

1) What kinds of silence are delivered: in what specific ways (i.e., bodily, textually, spatially) and for how long?

This question is intended to examine the way that we know a silence occurred, to identify and, as necessary, to analyze the form of the delivered silence. We know from several scholars who study silence that there are many ways to deliver a silence (Glenn, Saville-Troike, Poyatos, Jaworski, Bruneau, Nakane, and others). The scholarship on delivery and silence preview the challenges to a rhetor for creating an effective message—a message not only composed effectively, and delivered effectively, but one that reaches an audience as it was intended. When we consider Buchanan’s perspective of delivery, alongside Connor’s link between delivery and ethos, and Dragga’s concept of the ethical implications, we see a multifaceted vision of delivery that includes a complex and rich set of connections. Add to this forms of silence such as those discussed by Nakane, Jaworski, and Bruneau. There are a complicated set of elements for delivering effective rhetorical messages which also rely on an audience, a context, and the perceived delivery of the message for clarity and meaning. This complex and rich set of elements will need to be unpacked, with care, for each of the case studies.

The case studies present unique opportunities for considering the form of silence and form of delivery. In the case of Anne Askew, her silences are documented as not-speaking but smiling, not-speaking but perhaps crying or wincing: her silences are rhetorical moves situated within a context, and those rhetorical practices include her method of documenting the conversations. Askew practices a method of not-saying when she deflects questions, asks questions, and disrupts expectations of a rhetorical situation: silence as deflection or disruption. Askew informs the audience of a silence; similarly, at some points the dialogue is absent of her
interaction. Askew describes the rhetorical situation as well as her primary audience of interrogators and those attending the interrogations, court proceedings, torture, or her public death. There is a secondary audience, though: the readers, or future readers, of Askew’s journal. Askew tells the journal’s audience she was silent, tells the journal’s audience about her action or gesture (that accompanies silence), and tells what others around her did or said. The silence is described by text complicating the question how do we know the silence occurred? There is a conceptual contradiction between claiming or saying a silence, and actually being silent.

One challenge with this heuristic is the evidence of the silence; the evidence of an actual silence is not the silence itself, there are texts and words representing or claiming silence. If definitions of silence are excluded to “no noise or sounds” or to “blank pages without texts” then there are no silences in these two case studies. The evidence is textual—it is not blank, it is not soundless. Evidence of a delivered silence, then, would be provided from external or secondary sources—devaluing or discrediting the works of Askew and de la Cruz.

In both case studies, there are ‘outside’ accounts of both women’s silences. Some accounts exist of Anne Askew’s actions; some accounts of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz’s actions. Yet, what does it mean to disregard a rhetor’s own account of or claim to silence? Potentially, the kinds of rhetorical silence are textual, aural, vocal, and spatial; and, these silences are repeated through their own accounts of their lives and their experiences. The actual rhetorical practices of the rhetors, the case studies, are relevant as evidence of silence because these writings can represent the rhetor’s intended meaning and intended rhetorical delivery. It is possible that these women relied on a set of women’s rhetorical practices in both the public and private sphere, and utilized this set of practices uniquely to achieve a specific rhetorical delivery of silence. To analyze the delivery of a rhetorical silence, this study includes first-person or
primary accounts such as the case studies to study the form of rhetorical silence that is delivered rhetorically.

2) **How does the rhetor create the silence?**

This question will attempt to consider how the form and function of a delivered silence complement or contrast the rhetorical context and the rhetor’s purpose or meaning. When speaking of a pause, Mark Twain suggests a correct delivery “must be exactly the right length—no more and no less—or it fails of its purpose and makes trouble” (12). Hugh Blair also implies a ‘just rightedness’ to the use of rhetorical silence. Blair states “It is the sense which should always rule the pauses of the voice; for wherever there is any sensible suspension of the voice, the hearer is always led to expect somewhat corresponding in the meaning” (373). Scholars of speaking, eloquence, and rhetoric attend to purpose and meaning with regard to rhetorical silences especially with regard to audience. The surrounding words—as well as the surroundings themselves, including context and audience—can effectively shape a delivery.

Rather than look only at a form such as textual or aural silence, a richer examination with depth and breadth will consider those functions of a delivered silence in conjunction with communication aspects of a culture, gender, class or society, will look at how the surrounding elements contribute to function. Saville-Troike and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca contributed to how audience, community, and context will not just shape and organize communication, but shape and organize meaning. First, a delivery of silence assumes, in part, some agency of the rhetor: the rhetor has the power or authority to choose to deliver a silence based on a myriad of factors. Second, the context and community shape a silence through norms and expectations of that culture or community. The delivery of the silence in a given context matters for both the rhetor and the audience, it shapes the intended meaning by complementing or by conflicting with
expectation and familiar rhetorical practices. So, to create a meaningful silence, the rhetor brings together many considerations for the rhetorical delivery.

To explore ideas of choosing silence in a given context, I wish first to consider concepts of agency, authority, and power such as Bruneau’s functions of silence, specifically socio-cultural silences. Bruneau demonstrates silence can function to reify social structures and ideology (38). Important to the case studies and to other chosen silences, a thorough analysis of a context or a silence cannot simply accept one view of power or hierarchy. Foucault addresses what he believes is a problem in perceiving power relations in only one way: “an essentially negative power, presupposing on the one hand a sovereign whose role is to forbid and on the other a subject who must somehow effectively say yes to this prohibition” (140). Foucault suggests that such a limited view of power resists and denies analysis (139). Foucault suggests in many of his works that power is productive. In relation to this study, a rhetor can create a silence by drawing on the already available dynamics of power. With both Askew and de la Cruz, scholarship suggests the typical hierarchy of power is disrupted or upset in some way possibly related to silence. The context and community which shape the communication situations—whether the interrogation proceedings or the letter of refutation—are productive in that the functions and meanings for silence are produced. With the potential resistance of power in the case studies, the Foucaultian view of power and resistance as productive forces is one updated theoretical position that can help with an analysis of silence. For my study of silence, I draw two initial hypothesis: first, that silence is productive; second, that silence can be produced by the audience, the rhetor, the context, or some combination of all three.

In the case studies, the women are applying a generalized set rhetorical practices for silence as it meets societal and cultural expectations; however, the application of silence is
unique and productive because of the way that the rhetorical silence is used specifically. So, the rhetor is creating a silence for rhetorical means; the production of silence may be different. The generalized notion of a woman’s silence depends on context, both case studies utilize the rhetorical practices in a way that is not expected in the given context and juxtaposes the expectations for rhetorical activity. For example, in an interrogation one is expected to answer questions but Askew chooses silence instead. Considering a more rounded view of power as productive, there is an opportunity to also consider that a rhetor can choose how to respond to a context, to hierarchies of power, and to the expectations for a given context. While considering how Bruneau, Saville-Troike, and other scholars have emphasized context as a way to make meaning from a given communicative silence, the analysis of the case studies should consider how the expectations for the context may shape the rhetorical delivery and meaning for a rhetorical silence. Rhetorical delivery includes what surrounds the silence; the surrounding elements help the rhetor create the delivery of a rhetorical silence.

One such surrounding element is that of ethos. In both case studies, the rhetors are relying on social expectations for the silence of women anchored in a Christian tradition—silence in public speech, but also the silence of a non-educated (non-reading, non-writing) woman. Askew and de la Cruz both call upon this type of silence—a silent woman—to demonstrate their ethos. Each woman must deliver silence as it is expected to be/become a “good” woman. So, to deliver a silence is ethical. Each woman, though, uses such expectations to her own purpose. In chapters three and four, the heuristic analysis includes context as well as power and resistance when evaluating how a rhetor creates the silence.

3) What are connections between rhetorical delivery and rhetorical silence?
Consideration for scholarship in rhetoric, elocution, and public speaking shows how a rhetor can set a tone and convey meaning through sounds and through silences—the delivery of these sounds and silences. Thus far, the form of the silence and function of a silence depend not just on the rhetor, but on the context and audience. Multiple forms of delivery—such as textual, visual, aural—indicate a parallel to the multiple forms of rhetorical silence: there is more than one way to deliver a rhetorical silence and create meaning with the silence. Connecting the rhetorical canon of delivery to rhetorical silence is significant because, like the emphasis of particular words, the audience can take clues from the rhetorical delivery of a silence.

So, delivery is a rhetor’s chance to shape meaning for an audience even through rhetorical silence. Glenn claims that the delivery of silence is always the same but the “function of specific acts, states, phenomena of silence—that is, its interpretation by and effect upon other people—varies according to the social-rhetorical context in which it occurs” (Unspoken 9). Glenn suggests that “silence remains inescapably one form of speech and an element in every dialogue” (5). Delivery is an act administered by the rhetor, using intention and purpose to express and communicate; part of this expression lies with emphasis. Thomas Sheridan, a scholar and teacher of eloquence and rhetoric, provides some insight when he acknowledges “And the only general rule by which pauses can be regulated has been either unknown, or unattended to: which is, that pauses in general depend upon emphasis” (80, 81). Sheridan discusses the importance of the wording surrounding pauses and stops, but focuses on emphasis for determining meaning. Noting the significance of a speaker’s words, Sheridan contends that “to point out their meaning when ranged in sentences, emphasis and pauses are necessary” (81). Sheridan suggests here that pauses—rhetorical silences—can create meaning for an audience. But, meaning requires some insight and practice from the rhetor. He further suggests “The tones
appertaining to these pauses, and the time taken up in them must be left to his own judgment; and his best rule will be to reflect what tones he would use, and what time he would suspend his voice, were he to speak them as his own immediate sentiments” (82). To communicate well using silences, a rhetor must practice but also consider the affect of the delivery. Delivery itself can effect meaning for an audience. In Blair’s lectures Sheridan is echoed: “If the Emphasis be placed wrong, we pervert and confound the meaning wholly” (372). Public speakers, with attention and practice, will “find their care abundantly repaid, by the remarkable effects which it would produce upon their Audience” (Blair 372). Rhetorical silence and delivery are connected through practice; through the education and training of a rhetor. This skill and practice are recognized by an audience.

Rhetorical silence and delivery are also connected by ethos. Silence relies on context and a rhetor’s delivery for effectiveness; the rhetor’s ethos is connected to this effectiveness. Thus, ethos is a key element of delivery as it, too, is tied to context, audience, and a rhetor’s intended meaning. Depending on the type of delivery, ethos can be established through different means. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca suggest ethos is “the impression which the speaker, by means of his words, gives of himself” (319). In addition to words, the social and political constraints of context, space, and gender play an important role in creating ethos. Without ethos, certain groups or persons would not be able to gain the attention or support from an audience. Buchanan contends that ethos was often a critical component as “women rhetors had to discover means to justify their speech and participation in extradomestic affairs” (78). Ritchie and Ronald reveal “Many women rhetors appropriated whatever rhetorical means they knew in order to argue for the right to speak, and they subverted conventional rhetoric by using traditional means to argue for radical goals” (xxiv). Buchanan’s study analyzes that “Antebellum women who spoke
publicly were often perceived as masculine or sexually suspect; to compensate, they had to project convincing feminine ethos and prove their domestic competence to audiences” (136). A rhetorical performance often relied on elements of the rhetorical context to supply a rhetor with means for projecting the appropriate ethos at the appropriate time. In Buchanan’s study of Antebellum women, a feminine delivery style or a masculine delivery style might be selected to advance the goals of a particular rhetor. These styles are relevant to the historic rhetorical practices of the women in the case studies.

Buchanan discloses differing delivery styles based on gender. A masculine style may include actions such as “directly delivering their own speeches, addressed same- and mixed-sex audiences in public spaces, and used genres like lecture, debate, and oratory” (79). A feminine delivery style meant “asking male family members to support and promote women’s public efforts, employing conversation rather than oratory, and avowing a commitment to conventional gender roles while behaving contrary to them” (79). So, too, a rhetor’s ethos can be drawn from the delivery style of rhetorical silences. As Roxanne Mountford observes, “Delivery is based in and on cultural norms and the breaking of those norms” (152). The delivery of silence may have been, for both Askew and de la Cruz, a gendered performance that was also ethical.

Connections between delivery and silence are also reliant on the surrounding aspects of the rhetorical situation such as space, context, and relationship to the audience. Though most scholarship on rhetorical strategies is linked to words and the arrangement of words, an alternate consideration is one that includes the transaction between audience and rhetor during delivery: one that considers how a message and delivery are interpreted beyond the rhetor’s intent, in the moment of delivery that includes the addition of audience. For example, Hairston’s explication
of Aristotle’s enthymeme indicates “the listener will supply the missing premises that are common knowledge” (62). Hairston reasons:

Basing an argument on an enthymeme necessarily involves drawing the audience’s attitudes, beliefs, and experience into the argument. Those attitudes, beliefs, and experience form the groundwork for the argument; the very fact that the rhetor does not need to articulate them establishes a bond of intimacy and trust between speaker and listener” (63).

Hairston’s careful explanation of the enthymeme as well as her argument for greater use of the enthymeme represent one way a rhetor can rely upon the surrounding context and audience such as space, gender, political, and social expectations to affect an audience. Hairston shows that the enthymeme “represents a process, a dynamic activity—the listener or reader contributes to his own persuasion” (63). A well-educated and well-practiced rhetor will know how to utilize every aspect of rhetorical strategy, including how silence may work as a strategy with specific audiences in specific contexts.

One other example comes from Mountford’s description of *energia*, or vivid narratives, in sermons (author’s emphasis 4). Mountford illustrate how a preacher might describe the presence of God peering in a window to look at us, and then “effects these pictures through voice, posture, stance, and his relationship in space to the congregation” as he “stoops to look through the imaginary window” (4). The special choice of wording and arrangement of wording as well as the use of the body, gesture, gender, and space during delivery create a performance that reinforces the congregation’s beliefs by working the imagination (4). What both Mountford and Hairston’s description also includes is the connection to memory—as it is the cultural, spatical, political, and gendered memory that is called forth by a rhetorical strategy. Rhetors can
utilize rhetorical tools to call upon imagery, memory, and other elements that draw on an audience’s ability to persuade themselves. Every aspect of delivery, from the physical, visible, and audible to the abstract and invisible elements such as gender or space, is key to creating a rhetorical effect and achieving the aims of the rhetor. Silence is one strategy that when delivered with intent and practice can work to achieve such aims. A rhetor uses specific understanding and practice when creating a delivery of rhetorical silence.

While connections between delivery and silence might begin with the rhetor’s intended emphasis and effect, other complex factors such as time, memory, context, and audience reception must be included in connecting the two concepts of delivery and silence. The way we know a silence has occurred is through our socio-cultural experiences making meaning from sounds and from silences, through our memory of other cultural, class, or political contexts, and our experience of time. The way the rhetor creates the silence is by understanding the audience, drawing on the context and the socio-cultural expectations for that context, relying on the memory and meaning-making of the audience, and the use of time or length of silence. Delivery implies a kind of publishing—whether in text, voice, or body. While invention provides a means for considering how and when a rhetor may choose to use silence (if we also consider invention as recursive and constant), delivery includes an inventive and interpretive decision-making moment in which a silence is utilized in a specific way with an audience. Delivery presents the silence from the rhetor to the audience; and, if well-considered, well-practiced, and ethical, delivery of a silence will also indicate an intended meaning with an intended effect. In the case studies, the analysis will potentially reveal a dynamic connection between delivery and silence.

Audience
An analysis of any rhetorical strategy (including this study of silence) should include audience to consider how that strategy might be received, perceived, and interpreted. From ancient to contemporary scholarship, one thing is very clear: audience matters. Aristotle acknowledges the importance of audience in several ways throughout *On Rhetoric*. He varies from an audience which is implied (including the rhetor with the audience) in the discussion of character when Aristotle’s says “we believe fair-minded people to a greater extent and more quickly” (1361a) to a more concrete version of audience in his lengthy discussion of “emotions useful to a speaker” in chapters two through eleven of Book 2 and the chapters which discuss topics about ethos, useful in adapting the character of the speech to the character of the audience (audience is often referred to as hearers). Early concepts of audience shaped the practice and understanding of rhetoric. Referring to Aristotle’s perspective as well as his teaching on the enthymeme, Maxine Hairston observes “Speakers who hope to persuade or even to teach effectively must work with the whole personalities of their listeners, actively engaging their wills and their emotions and showing them that they share common interests and common goals with the speaker” (63). In his well-known discussion of *kairos*, James Kinneavy touches on the importance of context as well as audience to the choices a rhetor makes and the practice of rhetoric as “persuasive language will often have to be intensive, even impassioned, audience based and biased, and stylistically appropriate to a given subculture” (102). So, with rhetorical strategies or concepts such as *kairos, stasis*, and *topoi*, the audience should be a part of the many factors weighed by a rhetor when preparing and delivering a message.

Audience is yet another facet of rhetoric that has received much scholarly attention, and one that has been widely contested. From ancient scholars such as Aristotle to more contemporary scholars such as Lisa Eda and Andrea Lunsford, the field has discussed the
relevance and weight of aspects of audience such as context or gender, the role of audience awareness in rhetorical practices, whether or not audience awareness should be taught, as well as how much weight audience awareness should receive in a classroom. Though audience is often “assumed” (there is always an audience), the concept of audience, therefore, is not easily defined or described—Ede and Lunsford caution scholars against oversimplifying (AA/AI, 157). My study will need to draw on the available scholarship about audience with special focus on how consideration of audience relates to and effects a rhetor’s choice to use silence as well as possible ways silence may or may not affect an audience. Audience has been a part of the heuristics from the beginning. Certain techniques and decisions made during invention would require a rhetor to consider audience; similarly, rhetorical delivery implies there is an audience who receives a message or communication. Audience is a particularly important aspect of rhetorical choices as noted by many important scholars; thus, audience is inter-related with and interdependent to the heuristic categories of invention and delivery.

Hugh Blair invests time acknowledging the effect of style, eloquence, and other rhetorical choices on an audience, and the role of audience when considering rhetorical choices. Audience is referred to throughout Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, but especially so when Blair discusses different kinds of orations and their purposes (Lecture XXVII). Though there are not specific sections labeled “Audience” or dedicated specifically to audience awareness in the *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, Blair emphasizes the importance of considering audience and the effect audience may have:

Of whatever rank the hearers be, a Speaker is never to presume, that by a frothy and ostentatious harangue, without solid sense and argument, he can either make impression on them, or acquire fame to himself. It is, at least, a dangerous
experiment; for, where such artifice succeeds once, it will fail ten times. Even the common people are better judges of argument and good sense, that we sometimes think them; and upon any question of business, a plain man, who speaks to the point without art will generally prevail over the most artful Speaker who deals in flowers and ornament, rather than in reasoning. Much more, when Public Speakers address themselves to any Assembly where there are persons of education and improved understanding, they ought to be careful not to trifle with their hearers” (Lecture XXVII, 289).

This example demonstrates Blair’s emphasis upon the importance of considering context and audience when an orator makes decisions. Audience, for Blair, is implied, but its importance is tied to context and decision-making for rhetorical practices. I see Blair’s references as showing specific connections between audience and practices such as invention and delivery.

Issues of audience can sometimes revolve around what audience is and what role audience has. Bitzer identifies audience as one of three constituents of a rhetorical situation (6), and further identifies differences in various audiences such as scientific, poetic, and rhetorical (8). Bitzer ultimately suggests an audience is “capable of serving as mediator of the change which the discourse functions to produce” (8). Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca broadly define “speaker” and “audience” as “the one who presents the argument, and those to whom it is addressed,” respectively (7). They further add that the “orator indeed is obliged to adapt himself to his audience if he wishes to have any effect on it” (7). Definitions of audience may have once seemed simple. Though, complications of audience have also been part of the discussion in rhetoric and are represented by concepts such as those asserted by Walter Ong in “The Writer’s Audience Is Always a Fiction”. Though not denying the importance of audience, Peter Elbow
argues that a writer may benefit from “writing without audience awareness” (50). Elbow’s discussion of the “many different entities called audience” (i.e., present, absent; listener, reader) acknowledges the complexity and importance of audience to a composition process as well as demonstrates one of many differing viewpoints with regard to audience awareness (footnote, 50). Indeed, the definition and role of audience has changed greatly over time, not just because of scholarly study, but because of the vast ways that people create and deliver messages as well as the ways that people seek out and take up messages beyond just “reading” and “listening”. Clearly, there is not space here to come to a complete or concrete definition of audience or the role that audience plays. Though, Ede and Lunsford perhaps offer the best suggestion that:

A fully elaborated view of audience, then, must balance the creativity of the writer with the different, but equally important, creativity of the reader. It must account for a wide and shifting range of roles for both addressed and invoked audiences. And, finally, it must relate the matrix created by the intricate relationship of writer and audience to all elements in the rhetorical situation” (170).

Ede and Lunsford’s suggestion will help guide my inquiry. The study of silence values the importance of audience and the dynamic role of audience as those ideas connect with regard to a rhetor’s choices and uses for rhetorical silence and the potential interpretations of a rhetorical silence.

My two case studies present unique opportunities for considering audience as part of a study of silence. Ann Askew’s composition Examinations provides unique opportunities to consider how audience factored into her rhetorical choices, with an imminent audience of interrogators and legal officiates, but also a possible future audience of journal readers as well as
those witnesses to her public execution. Similarly, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz’s letter of refutation to Sor Filotea de la Cruz provides unique opportunities to study silence with audience awareness as her letter is addressed to a person in disguise (the bishop of Puebla), and is then published and so becomes a public letter—though, it was published without her permission. Both historic women rhetors have been studied and so their rhetorical choices have reached other audiences. Thus, not only their silences but their rhetorical choices have been read and repeated to many audiences. Keeping a broad perspective of what audience is and the role audience may take in a rhetor’s decision-making will be key to considering silence as a rhetor’s tool and the effects silence may have on a message. Audience is a critical factor to a rhetor’s decision-making and so must be a part of this study; similarly, audience is directly connected to the categories of invention and delivery because these categories, too, represent the points of decision-making for a rhetor. This heuristic is organized by the following guiding questions:

- What are audience expectations for a given context with regard to the use of silence?
- How might a rhetor use a strategy such as silence to elicit a specific audience response?
- How does the rhetor create a role for the audience to receive, perceive, or interpret a rhetorical silence?
- How can audience and context connect or contribute to rhetorical amplification?

1) What are audience expectations for a given context with regard to the use of silence?

This question is intended to examine a rhetor’s awareness or interest in audience and the rhetorical situation. Analysis of context and audience is key to an rhetor’s success during both invention and delivery. Analysis of audience awareness and an audience’s expectations also allows consideration for elements such as context, kairos, and agency, also connected to invention and delivery. Hairston’s mentions the critical importance of “the audience’s attitudes, beliefs, and experience” for effective persuasion. Glenn observes “Ever sensitive to kairos, to the
appropriateness and timeliness of the occasion, of words, or of silence, we attempt to fashion our communication successfully” (author’s emphasis, 13). Mentioned earlier in this study is Glenn’s observation that “When silence is our choice, we can use it purposefully and effectively” (13). Recalling some scholarship about silence such as that of Jaworski and Bruneau, the form and the function of silence fit a given context. So, this heuristic will focus analysis on the expectations for audience and context with regard to silence.

A rhetor may try to assess expectation through audience analysis. Some common ideas for audience analysis are consideration for the audience’s background, attitude, values, beliefs, gender, class, geography, politics, social-rhetorical practices, hierarchical structures or norms, and the history (and connected memory) of a particular group. These elements help a rhetor consider how to position the message during invention, and how best to effectively present the message and reach the audience during delivery. Additionally, these concepts can contribute to considering how the audience might perceive the rhetor, and how these qualities of audience might also contribute to their expectations for the rhetor. Concepts of context can include quite a range of elements and perceptions but can include genre, time, place/setting/geography, the larger community or conversation. Schilb says “an audience’s sense of a typical frame may stem from several factors, whose individual importance may vary from case to case” (author emphasis 6). Schilb discusses an audience’s expectations for a context based elements such as on a previously announced agenda, an institutional setting, and genre. He suggests “various elements can affect what audiences anticipate as well as how they interpret what they subsequently perceive” (9). The scholarship suggests a dynamic relationship between expectation, perception, and interpretation—all anchored to a specific context and audience.
However, rhetors often choose to create and present messages that are not what the audience expects. Schilb’s rhetorical refusal presents a unique opportunity to consider how an audience’s expectations can allow us to consider agency—especially when a rhetor defies norms or expectations. Schilb’s study is significant to a study of silence because rhetorical refusals are connected directly to audience expectations as well as a rhetor’s decisions related to context and expectations; and, the scholarship about silence has called the silence of the case studies resistant. Schilb claims three criteria are met when using the strategy of a rhetorical refusal: the refusal challenges audience expectations, is clearly deliberate, and has an ethical component which “suggests that a higher principle trumps common rhetorical decorum” (4, 5). Rhetorical refusals relate to a study of silence by remembering that expectations—of the audience, for a rhetor—surround a context. The context and audience may have a common history, may expect a particular ethos on the part of the rhetor, may revolve around a kairos or timeliness and appropriateness.

This question assumes the audience is real, and that awareness of the particular details of the audience and context can be known; what Ede and Lunsford would call an “audience addressed” (157). For both Askew and de la Cruz, their contexts and audiences are actual; the available scholarship can provide some glimpse of these elements through the documentation of historic events. Askew documented the conversations, interrogation, and her own experiences in her journal; there are some public accounts of Askew’s trial and her death. Glenn shares that Askew was “responsive to her rhetorical exigency” and “she had a keen sense of her immediate audience (her inquisitors) and of her ultimate audience (her contemporary and future supporters)” (157). De la Cruz, too, demonstrates a sense of agency and awareness with regard to rhetorical choices. Julie Bokser argues that “Sor Juana consciously engages with rhetorical
theory; her nuanced understanding of the rhetorical potentials of silence adds to more traditional rhetorical knowledge that focuses on speech only” (6). When considering the rhetorical strategies that enact a kind of contextual and audience awareness, concepts from Sandoval’s opposition consciousness that takes and uses “whatever is necessary and available in order to negotiate, confront, or speak to power” (29). A rhetor may indeed use rhetorical silence to address or disrupt the audience expectations for a context. Audience expectations for a rhetorical silence are dependent on multiple factors such as context, genre, gender, and occasion. Chapters three and four will analyze expectations for silence as they relate to audience.

2) How might a rhetor use a strategy such as silence to elicit a specific audience response?

This question means to analyze the reception of a cue—a rhetorical strategy—and the interpretation when possible, as well as the response. This question also means to consider, as do the other audience questions, the multiple possible audiences and the possible roles fulfilled by both rhetor and audience. For example, Ede and Lunsford address two concepts of audience: one that is addressed, one that is invoked (157). They argue a revised concept of audience that a writer “as writer and reader of his or her own text, one guided by a sense of purpose and by the particularities of a specific rhetorical situation, establishes the range of potential roles an audience may play” (166). Both of the case studies provide a venue for a complex set of roles for rhetor and audience as Askew’s journals addressed an audience who was not present even though Askew faced an all-too-present audience of interrogators, and de la Cruz’s writing addressed an audience-in-disguise and an awareness of public readers.

Rhetorical strategies are used by a rhetor and provide some cue for a response from an audience. However, the context and audience may also create an interpretation or response that differs from the rhetor’s intention. Similarly, a rhetor may deliver a rhetorical silence in
opposition to audience expectations and contextual norms—potentially a conclusion in the cases of Askew and de la Cruz. While most scholarship about rhetorical strategies relies on words and sounds to create meaning, rhetorical silences rely on the rhetor-audience-context dynamic to draw out meaning; thus, analysis that is closest to non-spoken rhetoric will come from rhetorical strategies that rely on how the audience makes meaning or contributes meaning. Analysis of the potential for possible responses will come from some of the rhetorical strategies discussed previously in this chapter such as enthymeme, and will provide a perspective for analyzing audience response to rhetorical silence.

The rhetorical concept of ethos provides an opportunity to analyze a potential audience response. Ede and Lunsford warn against a concept of audience that does not include a concept of ethos because they assert an objection to the idea that “style is somehow value free” (160). Ede and Lunsford suggest that concepts of audience “undervalue the responsibility a writer has to a subject,” because “rhetoric has traditionally been concerned not only with the effectiveness of a discourse, but with truthfulness as well” (160). From ancient to contemporary scholars, the message has been: a rhetor must speak or write with ethos in mind, as well as be the ethical person. The case studies utilized what Buchanan calls a feminine ethos (78). Mountford also discusses a connection between gender and delivery and warns “women who assume traditionally masculine roles face a series of double-binds” since the acts are not feminine (69, 70). Mountford documents a kind of ethical acting (ethopoia) in which a rhetor exudes “a presentation of self in appropriate character” (69). Ethos elicits a response from an audience that can meet the expectations for a context; ethos allows an audience to accept the rhetor, and to take up the message and be persuaded. Audiences typically respond positively to good character and to good will because ethos is a quality that allows a kind of understanding, relating, and report
between rhetor and audience; an ethical rhetorical silence should receive a positive audience response.

Another possible strategy contributing to this study of silence and this question regarding audience response is stasis theory. Crowley and Hawhee note different ways of describing and using stasis as a heuristic. Noted as a “systematic way of asking questions about rhetorical situations,” stasis can mark a point of disagreement but also a point “where two opposing forces come together” (71, 72). Stasis can be used to “find all the available arguments,” assuring a rhetor’s “position is defensible and that they have found the best evidence to support it” (72). Crowley and Hawhee also suggest that the act of finding and then using all available arguments “also supplies a rhetor with copia” (author emphasis, 73). Crowley and Hawhee, using the Dissoi Logoi as an example, show how utilizing all available arguments can “amplify support” (74). So, stasis presents an interactive perspective to the dynamism between rhetor and audience. Specific to the case study of Anne Askew, it is possible that the use of stasis theory (on Askew’s part) allowed the rhetor to determine the issues, to rally some control of the rhetorical moves, and to amplify her position with the audience of interrogators and officiates. Stasis theory lends itself to a dynamic concept of rhetor and audience, and the play of possible roles and responses either might take. Stasis theory, though anchored in words, is useful to the analysis of silence in a rhetorical context with a specific audience to determine the points at which rhetorical moves elicited types of audience responses.

Two other possible strategies that would add to an analysis of audience response are enthymeme and energia. Energia is defined by Crowley and Hawhee as vivid description (34). They explore the use of such a strategy in which a rhetor can “picture events so vividly that they seem actually to be taking place before an audience” (258). Crowley and Hawhee suggest it can
be used as an emotional appeal to “supply audiences with a reason for identifying with an issue, the moving them away from indifference” (257). Mountford’s discussion of *energia*, as discussed earlier in this chapter, is useful in a “womanist narrative strategy” that used a “rhetorical emphasis on vivid narratives that reframed core beliefs about the self and the Other around the experience of black women” (102). While used to analyze an African-American female preacher, Mountford’s conceptual example of energia extends to a study of silence as both case studies utilized both ethical and emotional appeals through narrative descriptions of their gendered and political positions in the rhetorical context. For example, Askew uses narrative to describe her interrogation and incarceration in the journal entries. The narratives discussed by Mountford use vivid description to appeal to an audience; potentially persuading the audience to identify with the plight of both Anne Askew and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and allowing the audience to respond positively. Considering *energia* as a possible strategy connects to this study of silence as it opens an opportunity for analysis of how a rhetor may utilize strategies to elicit specific responses, during which the audience may supply their own meaning and persuasion.

The enthymeme is another strategy which can support an inquiry of audience response. More contemporary theories of enthymematic thought, which relies on what is common between a rhetor and audience, include the contextual and social as part of a process of making meaning, as well as are inclusive of intertextuality—the construction of meaning through the use of multiple texts. Scenters-Zapico denotes the enthymeme as a “discursive structure that inscribes consensus, for the elided assumptions of an enthymeme are supplied by the intertextual network of experiences and associations shared by readers, writers, speakers, and hearers” (71). This dynamic consideration for how audiences construct meaning compliments a perspective of the
case studies that incorporates historic contexts and more modern standpoints. An audience may respond by supplying information or meaning through reflection on the interdependent aspects of speech, texts, contexts, audiences, and the rhetor and how those aspects shape meaning. Smith argues that Aristotle’s enthymeme is based on probabilities and “provides a complete rhetorical approach to argumentation studies involving probabilistic reasoning, ethical and emotional appeals, and audience involvement” (117). Enthymematic thinking draws on the relationship between rhetor, context, and audience; and, it relies on audience response to be complete: the enthymeme requires the audience fill in what is not said based on what they know or what they discover from other texts or other audience members. Similar to enthymeme, a rhetorical silence relies on an audience response: the audience creates meaning, creates their own meaning, and, in the process, persuades themselves.

Rhetorical strategies that require an audience to respond by appeals to emotions or to ethics or that rely on audience and context to supply information are useful when considering how an audience may respond to a rhetorical silence. Such strategies will support the heuristic analysis through comparison. In the case studies of Anne Askew and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, it is possible that the rhetors’ use of silence relied on an ethical presentation of gender and discursive performance. Conversely, the rhetor may make assumptions about ethos or expectation and deliver a silence in opposition to the norms of the rhetorical situation. With stasis theory, questions are often used to discover an issue or shape a stance and frequently require some kind of response between participants in a rhetorical context; stasis allows for a dynamic analysis of possible roles of audience and rhetor, and possible stands that participants may take. Anne Askew frequently disrupted the interrogation proceedings with her own stasis-like questions which centered on the assertions or questions of her interrogators. Other strategies,
such as both energia and enthymeme, rely on audience participation for processing context, adding conceptual elements, and supplying meaning to a rhetor’s message. A rhetorical silence would certainly rely on a dynamic relationship between rhetor, audience, and context for meaning. An audience responds to a rhetorical message through the audience’s own perspective, understanding, memory, and knowledge; considering responses to rhetorical silence will contribute to the overall study.

3) **How does the rhetor create a role for the audience to receive, perceive, or interpret a rhetorical silence?**

Roles are established in a rhetorical situation. Roles are complex, though, and connected to the various factors of a context. These concepts all contribute to the dynamic roles of rhetor and audience. A rhetor will incorporate consideration for a complex and rich set of interrelated factors during invention and delivery—since invention is an ongoing activity throughout a process, and delivery is the moment(s) a message is presented to an audience—to establish their role as speaker-writer and the audience’s role as listener-reader. These roles are established often, too, depending on hierarchies of power and resistance. A successful message, and therefore a successful silence, will rely on the audience’s acceptance of the rhetor’s role through prior relationships, through expectations for the context or rhetor, and through situating or framing strategies the rhetor chooses to employ.

Relationships between rhetor and audience as well as expectations have been discussed in this chapter and included elements such as ethos, kairos, and strategies such as stasis and enthymeme. Ethos can help establish a rhetor in a context, and establish a rhetor as reliable or trustworthy, as a good citizen who fulfills their gender role or other roles such as supervisor or advocate (Bruneau, Buchanan, Mountford, Glenn, Lauer, Hairston). Ethos can even address a
rhetor’s ability or authority to address others or address a specific topic (Buchanan, Mountford, Glenn). Kairos allows a rhetor to appropriately address an audience in a context with the right topic at the right time with the right measure (Lauer, Kinneavy, Glenn, Saville-Troike). Kairos allows a rhetor to make decisions about the rhetorical strategies to employ with an audience to achieve particular rhetorical goals. Analyzing the case studies will need to consider how the relationship between rhetor and audience contributes to the roles a rhetor might establish.

When analyzing the relationships between rhetor and audience, as well as a relationship to the topic or issue, a power dynamic must also be considered. Glenn categorizes “rhetoric always inscribes the relation of language and power at a particular moment (including who may speak, who may listen or who will agree to listen, and what can be said)” (1). Crowley and Hawhee observe that “the relative social standing of participants in a rhetorical situation can effect a rhetor’s persuasiveness” (228). And Mountford adds to this by considering how the nature of space and architecture contribute to and often emphasize the power of a rhetorical position since rhetoric was “understood to be an art performed in material spaces” by males of ruling classes (5). Crowley and Hawhee also note “a differential power relation inheres within any rhetorical situation simply because rhetors have the floor” (228). Though, “few rhetors enjoy absolute power over either hearers or readers” (Crowley and Hawhee 228). And, the traditional assumptions connected to the “available means” often leave out important power dynamics such as space, gender, or class.

A rhetor may utilize ethos or kairos to address a dynamic of power and resistance—and to recognize and address the role (or lack of a role) of rhetor and audience. For example, Askew writes of this interaction with an interrogator in The first examinacyon:
A. Then he asked me, whye I had so fewe words? And I answered God hath geven me the gyfte of knowledge, but not of utterance. And Salomon sayth, that a woman of fewe words, is a gyfte of God, Prover. 19. (Travitsky 177).

It is possible that Askew was establishing roles of rhetor and audience through the concepts of the power dynamic—she acknowledges her gender (woman), the appropriate response of a woman (silence), and the rhetorical expectation that women be silent. It is possible that she is reinforcing expectations for the context, reinforcing expected roles, while also undermining the context to claim her own role in the standard dynamics of power-resistance. Further analysis using the heuristics is needed to consider how concepts such as ethos, kairos, and gender are used to create the role of rhetor and audience—and how that role contributes to reception of a rhetorical silence.

The role an audience can or will take is often anchored in how the rhetor constructs the audience. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca suggest “knowledge of an audience is also knowledge of how to bring about its conditioning, as well as of the amount of conditioning achieved at any given moment of the discourse” (23). During invention, a rhetor considers the audience and context to make decisions such as word choice, arrangement, style, depending on the rhetorical goals. Thus, “there is the conditioning by the speech itself which results in the audience no longer being exactly the same at the end of the speech as it was at the beginning” (23). So, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca suggest that the rhetor can shape an audience by adapting to the audience. However, this does not indicate that an audience does not make their own choices. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca also show that “an audience can be praised or blamed depending on the kind of speech to which it will listen, the kind of speakers it likes to hear, and the kind of reasoning which meets with its approval” (321). There is an interaction and a complex set of
factors that work to allow flexibility with the roles of rhetor and audience. Even though Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca claim “all argumentation aims at gaining the adherence of minds, and, by this very fact, assumes the existence of an intellectual contact,” they also imply that there is a kind of agency within that intellectual contact—the rhetor makes decisions with regard to the audience, the audience makes decisions with regard to the rhetor and the speech (14).

One example of the interactive and interdependent roles pertinent to a study of silence comes from Schilb’s discussion of audience and rhetorical refusals. Schilb says “rhetorical refusals evoke two different audiences” (39). He claims “One consists of people who count on protocol’s being followed. […] The other audience consists of people who accept the refuser’s break with custom” (39). Schilb describes a process upon which the refuser embarks, connected to the potential decisions and roles of rhetor and audience. He observes the idea that audiences judge the rhetor as well as judge each other (38). In this concept of judging, an audience may change their minds—“conditioning” to Perelman and Olbrecht-Tyteca—and side with the refuser after all. It is through the use of rhetoric, Schilb observes, that the refuser attempts to create a conditioning or transformation so that “only the second audience will exist at the end” (39). In this case, the rhetor creates a stance or position for the audience initially, and then through the use of rhetoric transforms the audience by the end.

To create a dynamic role for the audience to receive a silence, the rhetor must weigh multiple interrelated elements of the rhetorical situation. During invention, and during delivery, the rhetor creates a role for the audience through elements which evoke the audience’s participation. Whether ethos or kairos, or another strategy, the rhetor attempts to create the audience’s role. Scholarship also shows that the rhetor, while creating a role for the audience,
will also utilize feedback, space, or other elements to allow the role of the audience to change or transform. Enos and Lauer, in their work focusing on the use of heuristics, claim:

rhetoric can not only be a way of arguing but can also generate its own way of knowing, its own kind of epistemic processes. All such ways of knowing are grounded in and predicated on the rhetor’s construct of the audience and its participation in the meaningfulness of the discourse. In short, all rhetorical situations can be invention situations between the rhetor and the audience” (83).

The rhetor and audience create knowledge, create meaning, together. Ede and Lunsford’s examination of audience suggests that the rhetor creates a role for the audience through wording. They suggest “only through the text, through language, that writers embody or give life to their conception of the reader”—even though their work focuses primarily on written word (167). The invention and delivery of the message are key points where the rhetor can create a role for the audience through language. Anne Askew creates the role for herself through her choice of words. Ede and Lunsford suggest that the writer invokes the role of the reader through the language they choose, “by using all the resources of language available to them to establish a broad, and ideally coherent, range of cues for the reader” (167). In claiming silence, the rhetor will need to consider the elements of language and the context surrounding that rhetorical silence to create a role for the audience to receive, perceive, or interpret the silence.

4) How can audience and context connect or contribute to rhetorical amplification?

Amplification functions to emphasize and intensify a concept—thus the unique restatement and repetition. Rhetorical amplification can perform other functions as well such as elaborate, transform, heighten emotional appeal, interpret, develop, invent and investigate (Crowley and Hawhee, Laib). Amplification also functions between the rhetor and audience—
the rhetor may intend for amplification through decisions during invention, and through the
delivery of a message, but the element needed to make that happen is the audience.

Just as in the examples of *energia* and of *enthymeme*, amplification is completed by the
reception and interpretation of the audience (Mountford, Hairston). The audience and rhetor co-
create meaning (Enos and Lauer, Ede and Lunsford). Amplification is connected to the audience
via word choices that elicit an intensifying effect whether through an ethical ploy (what is good,
what is right, what the audience should do or how the audience should act as in the
Progymnastmata activity) or through an emotional ploy (such as those Laib suggests). The
audience is a necessary part of a meaning-making process—the audience makes the
amplification based on the role and cues provided by the rhetor.

To revisit Poyatos’ concept of silence-as-carrier, he finds as an aspect of silence and
stillness “their capacity to act as carriers of the activity just perceived” (226). He explains the
example:

“If a long pause follows a rotund ‘Stop it!’, that verbal negation prolongs itself more
intensively in our minds, carried over and enlarged by the silence which makes it more
conspicuous and better defined in a sort of mental replay, its effect being quite greater
than if our interlocutor continued to speak” (226).

Poyatos believes the same holds true for other utterances, gestures, and facial expressions—that
these messages are “greatly magnified and intensified by the stillness that may follow” (226). So,
the role created for the audience as well as the surrounding cues delivered by the rhetor allow the
audience to experience silence or stillness intensely. Poyatos goes on further to suggest that
during the silence, there are “re-echoing sensations of the gradually vanishing signs (which can
still re-echo back through memory)” (226). So, the audience’s expectations and the memory of
the audience are also part of experiencing a rhetorical silence. The audience supplies an appropriate response, an emotional response or their own persuasion, by imbuing their own aspects of meaning from memory, expectation, cultural or social elements and more.

Adding to the idea that the audience is a critical part to creating a rhetorical amplification, Poyatos discusses that silence and stillness are modified by what is labeled costructuration—two parts of the structure are the duration and the intensity (227). What is important here, according to Poyatos, is the relation of the speaker’s silences and stillnesses to the simultaneous and succeeding behaviors (of the speaker) as well as to the verbal and nonverbal behaviors of the cointeractants (227). Meaning and meaningfulness are anchored in what surrounds the silence as well as how the recipients respond. Additionally, it is not just a silence but bodily movement or stillness, environmental aspects or elements of setting, mental activities and memory which shape the meaning—all that surrounds the silence, as well as the memory of what came before and the memory for context, genre, gender, expectation and so on, shape meaning interactively.

Audience expectation for a context or genre is part of the meaning-making process. Expectations—whether for an occasion, based on an agenda, anchored in a memory of similar situations, or founded on a familiarity with a genre—allow an audience to anticipate and receive a message. The use of rhetorical amplification’s emphasis or repetition may create a kind of intensity or emphasis in the audience’s perception so that they feel and experience a building up or tension of anticipation. The case studies provide a unique opportunity to consider how silence works with an audience. Both rhetors mention silence a number of times to their intended audience(s), connecting silence to gender, space, and genre as well as other potential factors. in saying silence they call a silence to the mind of the audience—relying on rhetorical memory of culture, genre, gender, and so forth—so that the audience thinks of silence, imagines silence,
conceptualizes silence, symbolizes silence. Connecting the audience to each silence prior to delivery of an actual silence helps create the emphasis and effect of the delivered silence. The audience has already imagined the silence more than once, and then the experience may be heightened during the actual silence. The heuristic analysis will need to be conducted to see if silence can be amplification for an audience.

**Conclusion**

These heuristics will be used to analyze the silences of the case studies in the next two chapters. Chapter 3 will focus on the silences of Anne Askew; Chapter 4, the silences of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Each rhetor will be analyzed systematically using the heuristic categories and the supporting questions of Invention, Delivery, and Audience. Each heuristic should allow an exploratory interrogation of the choices to use silence, the ways silence was (is) used, and the reception and interpretation of silence as a rhetorical tool for each of the case studies. Additionally, Chapter 5 will examine the results and discuss implications of the study. Further, chapter five will consider possible future applications of and potential revisions to the heuristics.

Rhetorical concepts such as *kairos* and *ethos* connect the heuristics of Invention, Delivery, and Audience; the relationship between rhetor, audience, and context shape the meaning of a silence. Similar to the rhetorical strategies of enthymeme, energia, and stasis, the silence as a tool invokes an audience response in such a way that the audience will supply an interpretation and persuasion of their own. Whereas tactics such as *stasis*, anchored in words and sounds, may provide a model of strategies that incorporate a rhetor’s agency. Considering the placement of each silence, the claims to silence, and the actual silence itself may also reveal a connection to rhetorical amplification—the heuristics may help develop the connection between rhetorical amplification and rhetorical silence. Invention and delivery of rhetorical strategies will
focus on a rhetor’s agency and intention, while aspects of rhetorical delivery and the heuristic of Audience will consider the other elements outside of the rhetor’s intentions. The three heuristics together represent an attempt to engage in a rich and complex analysis of silence as a rhetorical tool.
CHAPTER 3: THE MORE YOU ASK, THE LESS I SHALL SAY—

ANNE ASKEW: A CASE STUDY OF RHETORICAL SILENCE

Can silence be used effectively as a rhetorical tool, be wielded as one means among many in a given rhetorical situation? I will explore this question by utilizing the heuristics explained in the previous chapter to analyze the case studies which follow in this chapter and in chapter four. The first application of the heuristic set is applied to the use of silence by Anne Askew. In her journal of the events, also known as The Examinations, Askew resists pressure from interrogators and officiates to go against her beliefs. She answers questions at first, but Askew becomes less verbal and adds gestures or silence to her documentation of the interrogations—the more she is questioned, the less she speaks. Her use of silence during interrogation and torture are a focus of this overall study of silence as a rhetorical tool. As a case study of an historic figure, the available scholarship presents interesting opportunities and limitations, limitations for a study of rhetorical silence which will be addressed in this chapter. Initially, though, this case study presents what is known historically about Anne Askew, and then examines what is available from Askew in writing—noting there are complex considerations to negotiate between the historic and the textual depictions of Anne Askew. Before applying the heuristics to Askew’s Examinations, some historic information about context, and some biographical information about Anne Askew will help frame the context of the silence under study.

Historical Context: Reformation England

A religious crisis that separated Christians into either Protestants or Roman Catholics, the Reformation was a turbulent time. Two texts of significance published during that time were The Act of the Six Articles, published in 1539, and The King’s Book or A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for Any Christen Man, published in 1543 (Beilin xxiv, xxv). The Act of the Six
Articles—also called *The Acte Abolishing Diversity in Opynions*—brought about a legal end to the spread of Reformation literature and Bibles as it outlined the offenses, and identified those offenses in one’s being charged a heretic and the punishment of death by burning (Beilin xxv). Coles documents that the writings of “dissidents such as William Tyndale, [John] Frith, and [John] Bale present a significant threat to order” since advocates of the Reformation sought to dissolve the connection between the actual sacrament and its meaning of the Roman Catholic church and advance the ideas of the symbolism of remembrance of the act of Communion as practiced by Protestants (525). The *Act of the Six Articles* sought to abolish publishing or speaking anything that was contrary to His Majesty’s government (Coles 525). Thus, anyone who spoke against transubstantiation would be accused of heresy and burned at the stake. The *King’s Book* amended some of the legal practices, allowing the accused to recant up to two times before being sentenced to death. The heresy trials of Reformation England sought to establish authority and order by executing the letter of the law according to *The Act of the Six Articles*, and disciplined and controlled the population with the threat of torture or death. Additionally, records of the heresy hearings and trials were published, as were documents of the Privy Council (who conducted inquiry and proceedings). In fact, several genres of writing documented this time period, including that of examinations (these examinations were later assembled in Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments*).

Each side of the argument produced records in writing to advance their claims to truth. Mueller offers an analysis of the political and religious conflict between Catholic and Protestant truths as that conflict manifested in the protestant figures accused of heresy and subsequently burned at the stake. Mueller notes that neither side of the oppositional forces could completely excuse or discharge the other “because their opposition develops as a clash of ontologies,
through contrary formulations of what is religiously true and real” (162). Interrogations were specifically designed to elicit particular responses resulting in the acknowledgement of the point of difference—allowing authorities to condemn and burn heretics. The battle between the two took the form of political and religious force and was exacted on the bodies present at the trials and burnings. It was during this upheaval of religious beliefs and struggle of authority and power that Anne Askew was arrested and accused of heresy.

The focus of this particular case study centers attention on a specific text—*The Examinations*—and on Askew’s silences documented in that text. The analysis will discuss the text and the silence (or lack of silence) present in the text. *The Examinations of Anne Askew* is one example of a popular genre: examinations. Examinations are a genre of writing that appeared during Reformation England as men were arrested, questioned, tortured, and often executed, for heresy. Survivors or those persons connected to the heretics would compose an “examination” that documented the events and the interrogation. Most writers of this genre were men. The genre itself is organized by questions and responses; that is, the primary feature of the genre is the questions of the interrogators and the responses of the accused. Though other features of the examinations genre often varied, men often cited from multiple outside sources including religious texts or other public writing during the course of composing the content of an examination. Sometimes, men referred to other examinations or famed court proceedings. The primary content of an examination focused on the judicial process of arrest, interrogation, and torture; the conclusion often highlighted the opposing views of Catholics and Protestants emphasizing the bias or improper actions of the Catholic Church, and might have also demonstrated the perseverance of the writer or the accused (if written by a witness or relative) as an exhibition and expression of the accused’s great religious dedication and faith. Contrary to
genre expectations, there are times when Askew gives no verbal response to questions. Further, Askew’s text shows some difference because of her focus on only the Bible as an outside source.

**Historical Anne Askew**

Anne Askew, born to Sir William Askew in 1521, received an education “according to aristocratic humanist principles” (Glenn, *RR* 151). Married to Thomas Kyme of Kelsey very briefly, Anne Askew traveled to London in 1545 (Travitsky 168). First arrested in 1545 for heresy, Askew was arrested numerous times during 1545 and 1546, and executed by fire in July of 1546 (Glenn, Travitsky, Kemp). Since England was experiencing both political and religious upheaval, Askew was arrested and accused of heresy because of her alleged religious views though during interrogation she effectively disrupted and deflected any claims of heresy by the officiates, that is, the Church officials in charge of the proceedings. Betty Travitsky posits “it is quite possible that her torture and death had larger political implications” though little evidence is available to connect Askew with political figures who may have been the target such as Katherine Parr (169). Still, Askew was questioned about her relationship to several gentlewomen. According to Travitsky, Askew symbolized an opposition to “the position of Henry VIII and the conservative elements in British society”, and it was “very likely that she was persecuted in an effort to attack more influential and powerful figures with whom she was associated” (170). Many publications resulted from the heresy trials and executions, from official court documents to examinations authored by those condemned as heretics; many persons wrote their own examinations such as John Frith and William Tyndale (Mueller 163). Askew’s *Examinations* drew renewed scholarly attention from King (1982) and then from Beilin (1985).

Anne Askew has attracted the interest and scholarly attention of the field of Rhetoric and Composition. In the text of *The Examinations*, Askew’s responses to arrest and interrogation are
considered rhetorical in that Askew used language to create meaning, to establish and advance her position, to assert her values and her position, to utilize texts such as the Bible to support her claims, and to control a rhetorical situation in which a woman would typically have thought to have been powerless and submissive. During the 1545 and the 1546 arrest and interrogation, Askew employed rhetorical strategies such as composing her own autobiographical account of the experiences called *The Examinations*. Some scholarship considers Askew’s rhetorical practices to be aligned with resistance (Mazzola, Glenn, Beilin). Since Askew was arrested, interrogated, tortured, and executed at a time when writing and materials were rare and often controlled by men, there is some ambiguity about the records of Askew’s experiences. The facts of her education, the composing process and materials of Askew’s *Examinations*, and the details of how Askew’s writing was delivered to John Bale are still a mystery. Several scholars have tried to unravel the complexities of Askew’s life and death, without reaching a clear consensus about these matters.

**Textual Anne Askew**

There are various interpretations of the texts published during the time period including the newspaper accounts, as well as Askew’s own text, first edited and printed by John Bale in 1546, and later printed by John Foxe in 1563. For example, Theresa Kemp’s “Translating (Anne) Askew: The Textual Remains of a Sixteenth-Century Heretic and Saint” argues that Askew’s knowledge and use of rhetorical strategies were indicative of Askew’s awareness of audience and the power of documentation, and were an attempt to retain control of her own voice and meaning. Thomas S. Freeman and Sarah Elizabeth Wall explain the editorial work of Bale and Foxe as an act of contribution and collaboration in their article “Racking The Body, Shaping The Text: The Account of Anne Askew in Foxe’s ‘Book of Martyrs’”. In contrast, Elizabeth
Mazzola’s “Expert Witnesses and Secret Subjects: Anne Askew’s Examinations and Renaissance Self-Incrimination” argues that Askew’s *Examinations* are Askew’s own work, her own words, exemplifying one kind of feminist autobiography during an era in which little feminist or feminine writing was permitted at all. Cheryl Glenn’s *Rhetoric Retold* positions Askew as using her education as a means for representing herself against accusations and a court system whose operations were less than even-handed. Glenn claims Askew “implemented the rhetoric and dialectic of the Protestant reformers to understand and propagate her beliefs and to defend herself, using the masculine religion of Christianity” (144). Reading through Askew’s *Examinations*, it is evident that Askew uses both feminine and masculine delivery styles (Buchanan) in different ways and at different times. The context of the heresy trials is significant in that it represented one set of rhetorical practices and a discourse charged with political and religious power. Askew’s *Examinations* are one representation of the dynamics of power and resistance within a discourse of rhetorical force such as the interrogations. The interest of this study is Askew’s use of silence, and so consideration for the rhetorical, political, and religious contextual elements will situate speaking and silence.

**Limitations & The Focus of this Case Study**

Using an historic text as a case study presents unique limitations. Freeman and Wall suggest that readings of Askew’s writing must be qualified “with the knowledge that it is not purely her voice that we read, remembering the many editorial hands through which it has passed, and by which it has been shaped” (1194). More contemporary scholarship, such as that of Freeman and Wall, posits new questions and arguments about Anne Askew’s identity, agency, and authorship. Freeman and Wall suggest that the “existing texts can only be regarded as the joint work of the author and her editors” (1194). I do not wish to enter the conversations about
whether or not Askew’s text suffered an imposition or encountered collaborative editing—however, I do intend to consider those diverging arguments in the scholarship when they relate to this study of silence. This case study and the study of silence is limited by the texts available, by the historic information available with regard to the accounts of Askew’s life. Since multiple versions of Askew’s text exist—and since no versions survive without editing of some kind—multiple interpretations and representations of Anne Askew exist. In light of the available scholarship about Anne Askew, especially with regard to the questions surrounding specific dates, authorship, and edits to the text, it is important that I recognize my own approach to this study and analysis. It is my stance to accept that Anne Askew did compose the examinations and to accept her documented dialogues as having happened as described in the sections of the examinations attributed to Askew. The various representations of Askew consistently show her as resistant to her captors, articulate, and able to demonstrate more than adequate knowledge and skill with rhetoric and with religious texts.

For the purposes of this exploration of silence, I will be using Askew’s writing as compiled, studied, edited, and published by Beilin in *The Examinations of Anne Askew*. Beilin’s reprinting of Askew’s *Examinations* accounts for the various versions of the text printed (i.e., in Bale, in Foxe, etc.), provides a textual publication history, and explains the variations in spelling, punctuation, and pagination. Beilin’s book contains copies of the original text published by Bale and by Foxe (both versions are included); she notes the eight locations at which the original texts are kept (Beilin xliv-lix). Beilin’s presentation of *The Examinations* as first published by Bale will act as a central text for this study. It may also be beneficial to the study to refer to Askew’s *Examinations* as they appear in Travitsky’s *The Paradise of Women*. Travitsky offers an historic account of Askew’s life; additionally, Travitsky’s printing of Askew’s *Examinations* are without
commentary from Bale or edits from Foxe, and are reproductions of the text as it was printed in the historic *A Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640* (a frequently referenced publication; also called *STC*).

In addition, historiography and other scholarship about Askew’s life and the lives of her contemporaries as composed by other scholars such as Kemp, Coles, Glenn, and Travitsky may be utilized during the course of this analysis.

Some discussions during the analysis utilizing the heuristics have of necessity separated the “Historic Askew” from the “Textual Askew”. For example, during the study of silence utilizing the heuristic set of questions for Audience, it was necessary to consider the various versions of Askew that were created after the publication of her *Examinations* by Bale and Foxe as well as the various retellings of Askew’s story that occurred. This is especially important to consider since stories about Askew as well as her *Examinations* were printed and re-printed, and often changed as Askew’s experiences were re-told by new authors. The language and conventions of the context often varied depending on the value of asthetics and other factors, so the texts will use the language and conventions as they are printed. One other note for both Chapters 3 and 4 is to acknowledge the use of the word ‘Bible’. I will be capitalizing the word ‘Bible’ in these chapters not to devalue the myriad of holy books across cultures and contexts but to acknowledge the value placed on the Christian Bible at the particular places and times of both Anne Askew and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Thus, the capitalized word refers to the text valued by the individuals and in their specific rhetorical contexts. Other references to Askew’s *Examinations*, such as those cited from the scholarship conducting a literary or linguistic analysis, will be incorporated as necessary to provide a broad and inclusive understanding of
Askew’s authorship, agency, and rhetorical practices only as they directly relate to this study of silence.

**Invention**

The rhetorical canon of invention invites a study of silence as a rhetorical tool by considering the rhetor’s choices, the means from which a strategy might be selected, and the ways that invention itself is an ongoing and constant practice. The following discussion and analysis is organized by the heuristic questions for Invention:

- How might writer-speakers choose elements (or wording) such as silence?
- How are forms of silence and choice or agency connected?
- How are invention and silence connected?
- What relationship exists between invention and rhetorical amplification?

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, the heuristic categories are interdependent and non-linear. Even though we begin with the heuristic of Invention, this does not imply an order of composing processes.

**1) How might writer-speakers choose elements (or wording) such as silence?**

A rhetor’s education, training, and practice(s) are key when considering how choices might be made about rhetorical strategies or rhetorical practices. Little information has been documented about Askew’s education, and most information about her life prior to the arrest and interrogation of 1545 cannot be confirmed. Beilin and other scholars have studied Askew’s life; Beilin has written an extensive and thorough history of Askew and her text in *The Examinations of Anne Askew*. Anne Askew was the daughter of a knight, and her brothers were educated. According to Wilson, Askew’s brother Francis attended Cambridge (35). Though her family and upbringing afforded Anne Askew a unique set of opportunities and political and social
connections, not much is known about the development and practice of her rhetorical abilities. Women were not typically permitted to be educated, but it is evident that Askew possessed skills with reading and writing. In addition, her knowledge of the Bible is evident in the responses she delivered to interrogators, and often exceeded the knowledge of those officiates in charge of the interrogation (Beilin, Travitsky, Glenn). Based on Askew’s *Examinations*, the documentation of the interrogations and torture, it is evident that Askew had some essential knowledge of and practice with rhetorical strategies.

For example, in Askew’s *First Examination*, in the first question asked, Askew writes:

…asked if I ded not believe that the sacrament hangynge over the aultre was the verye bodye of Christ reallye. Then I demanded thys question of hym, wherefore S. Steven was stoned to deathe? And he sayd, he could not tell. Then I answered, that no more wolde I assoyle hys vayne questyon (Beilin, 20).

In this part of the text, Askew is asked a direct question about her views on the sacrament. This is an essential question for, in context, this is the largest point at issue in which the early Reformation diverged from the Roman Catholic church: whether or not a person believed in The Sacrament. Essentially, examinations were often aimed at getting the incarcerated to confess to their views on transubstantiation, and then, possibly, convincing them to recant their views. In this example, Askew is aware that the question is targeted at revealing her views: Askew takes control of the interrogation in two ways. First, she uses a question to answer a question. Employing the use of questions is also a technique of *stasis*. During invention, *stasis* was often applied to discover the point of difference, the issue at the heart of an argument. *Stasis* could also be a means of controlling an argument by using questions to direct the focus of the discourse (Carter). By using a question, Askew engages as a rhetor and uses what might be considered (in
masculine means to participate in the discourse of interrogation. The use of the question gives Askew control of that question-and-answer transaction.

Secondly, the question that Askew employs about St. Stephen both demonstrates her superior knowledge of the Bible as well as reveals a weakness in her “opponent”: they do not know the answer to the question, for they do not know the text well enough to see the connection that Askew is making. In the seventh chapter of Acts, verse 48, Stephen claims God “dwelleth not in temples made with hands” and is consequently stoned to death. Askew’s own position, which interrogators wanted her to say openly, was against transubstantiation; this makes Askew’s beliefs similar to Steven’s. In this instance, Askew’s question is, according to Kemp, a kind of riddle. Kemp explains Askew’s “riddle enables her to maintain without lying her conviction that belief in transubstantiation amounts to idolatry…” (1039). Askew’s knowledge of the Bible allows her to utilize examples effectively and at will: Askew selects an example in which she sees a parallel to her own beliefs, but to which her interrogator cannot respond. Askew’s question also reveals her strength and her opponent’s weakness. Overall, by asking a question using content that the interrogator cannot address, Askew applies a tactic that takes control and dominates the interaction. It is not just the use of the question that gains control, the content of the question itself assumes her dominance. Askew’s choice to issue a non-answer by selecting a specific biblical example demonstrates, too, a sense of audience awareness as well as a right-time, right-measure sense of appropriateness. Askew chooses rhetorically with her audience and with kairos in mind.

Another consideration of invention and strategies from which to choose is memory. Askew’s Examinations are also anchored in memory, and different uses of memory. Her writings document conversations using her memory to recall events as they happened; and yet, Askew
adds to these recollections, providing her perspectives and adding to her depictions, even though Askew speaks concisely. The use of scripture is anchored in her memory—Askew utilizes her word-for-word knowledge of the Bible during interrogation, but she must also recall her own answers and biblical references to interrogators on multiple occasions (i.e., what she did or did not say when last asked the same question). This kind of recall—her own answers under different circumstances—is one other way that Askew uses memory, too, to defend herself as well as to re-assert, in some instances, her position. (i.e., the St. Stephen example is used twice by Askew.) Not only does memory act as a bridge between the heuristics of invention and delivery during the interrogations of Askew, but because of the recall of repetitions it draws on the strategy of amplification.

In each entry of Examinations, Askew carefully recalls and documents each conversation. In Bale’s version of The Examinations of Anne Askew, Askew has forty-seven entries in the First Examination and forty-one entries in the Latter Examination—each separated with Bale’s own entry including his interpretation, explanation, or analysis. Each entry is Askew’s description of a question or an order and Askew’s response, or a description of some action such as her being sent to prison or an officiate writing a document. Of those forty-seven, each recalls a portion of the interrogation (also known as an examination). Except, in one instance, Askew claims to not remember a dialogue between herself and a priest that took place in London. It is noted in Beilin’s historic account that Askew was warned not to go to London, yet she did (xxvii). The interrogator asks about Askew’s visit to London:

Then my lorde asked, if there were not one that ded speake unto me. I tolde hym, yeas, that there was one of them at the last, which ded speake to me in dede. And my lorde than
asked me, what he sayd? And I tolde hym, hys words were of so small effecte, that I ded not now remember them (Beilin 57).

In this example, Askew utilizes memory. Throughout each entry of both the First and the Latter Examination, Askew is able to recall with fair amount of detail at least eighty-some instances of the events described. However, when asked, she is unable to remember the words of this one person, in this one instance. It is possible that, in this singular instance, Askew is intentionally using memory for effect, intentionally forgetting, in other words. She claims that the words had so little importance or consequence that she could not recall the words at all. This is one entry that demonstrates how Askew utilizes memory throughout her Examinations.

Possessing multiple techniques, Askew applies unique rhetorical practices to each interrogative, using scripture as her sole source, relying on the right stratagem at the right time. In the existing literature about Askew, there is no dispute that Askew possesses rhetorical skill. It is also evident that she is a practiced and skilled rhetorical thinker. Evidence of strategy, memory, and kairos appear in each of the interactions of Askew’s Examinations. Considering her attention to audience and the situation, Askew selected rhetorical tactics and used scripture; she utilized questions, examples, memory, and other strategies based on the situation. No doubt Askew was utilizing invention techniques and making specific choices.

Scholarship commenting on Askew’s writing offers a wide range of perceptions, but commonly agrees that Askew uses rhetorical abilities to accomplish her goals. Glenn sees rhetorical power in Askew’s strategies, suggesting that the “records of her two arrests document her skill at disputatio and logical argument, as well as her vast knowledge of the Scriptures” (RR, 157). Coles assesses Askew’s tactics as a defense; during the interrogations, Askew uses only two types of defense, either “silence or Scripture” (519). Beilin’s research suggests that Askew’s
strategies included conciseness, and limiting her sources to scripture. Using only one source differs from “accepted methods of rhetorical argument [that] called for citing of past authorities and exampla”—which is what authors such as Bale did (Anne Askew’s Self Portrait, 85).

Freeman and Wall posit that Askew’s tactics included “evading questions or giving equivocal replies” (1167); similarly, they note that Askew refuses to discuss her religious convictions making her tactics different from other tactics used in the genre of examinations (1182). The available scholarship does not always agree on what Askew’s goals were; however it does imply Askew’s ability to consider audience, to select specific strategies for replying, and to respond rhetorically.

2) **How are forms of silence and choice or agency connected?**

To first examine ideas of choice and agency, historic and societal information should be reviewed to situate the case study in a context. Cheryl Glenn’s *Rhetoric Retold* documents a history of rhetoric and opportunities for women rhetors. Glenn observes “the educated Renaissance woman was silenced and marginalized, deprived of all but a few limited outlets for her intellectual abilities” (128). An ideal woman would be an educated, Christian woman whose devotion focused attention on domestic issues, educating her children, and serving her husband (Glenn 127). However, an ideal man would embrace values of individuality, spiritual morality, and worldly accomplishment (Glenn 128). Women might be allowed an education, but only as a means to better serve a woman’s role in the home. So, while choices for women’s societal and political interaction were limited, some choices were available and some women were able to take advantage of these choices—such as education, reading, writing—to participate as acting agents in their own lives rather than as submissive subjects. Women such as Anne Askew and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz may be considered as examples of the kind of societal and political
acting-agents, in this time period, within this set of socio-political expectations for women, as they found ways to maintain their womanly roles while engaging in other societal and political spheres that would be considered masculine.

Since the ideal Renaissance man should aspire to being well-educated, rhetoric was an important aspect of being well-spoken and appearing intelligent, and to being male. Men should pursue knowledge and accomplishment, and the values for women were virtuous, preserving their “chastity, obedience, and humility” (Glenn, RR 125). Women were not to use education for public speaking or writing, and were not to interpret texts; women were allowed to write in private spheres, using writing for translations or composing letters. The purpose of education and of rhetoric privileged men with broader applications for learning. For women, the acceptance and application of education was limited. Glenn indicates “if the educated woman was exceptional, the writing woman might be absurd” (RR 131). Rhetoric was a male-dominated practice and included writers and theorists such as Desiderius Erasmus and Sir Thomas More (Glenn RR 125). Further, it would be dangerous for a woman to contradict Renaissance political or religious doctrine, which is exactly what Askew did. Beilin posits, when considering context, that matters of “church and state were intertwined” and this is also why Askew’s execution (and those executed with her) was “attended by so many powerful officials of the city and the state” (xxiv). Further, Beilin recommends that since religion, politics, and social policy were connected, Askew’s texts “can be seen in the context of evolving Protestant doctrine, Henry VIII’s religious conservatism, court politics, and cultural attitudes to women” (xxiv). Askew’s actions of resistance and argumentative rhetorical practices during masculine rhetorical processes such as interrogation, and during the writing of Examinations are an example of Askew’s agency.
Gender is one part of understanding Askew’s rhetorical context. Societal pressure and norming would have informed Askew’s choices—and evidences of her recognition of a ‘good’ woman’s role in her writing demonstrates her knowledge of what was expected as well as the precise points where Askew deviates from those norms. In the First Examination, the entries attributed to Askew mention gender nine times; of those nine, five instances are used by Askew to point to her gender as “poore woman” or as a “Christian woman” (Beilin, 19-66). In the Latter Examination, entries ascribed to Askew mentions gender eight times, and she points to herself as woman three times. Beilin believes “Askew created herself in the plain style as a godly preacher and teacher with a mission to perform. She thus joined the process of redefining women’s role in the Church and in her society” (Anne Askew’s Self-Portrait, 91). Glenn seems to agree when she asserts that Askew “served as a role model for those Protestant women who might not otherwise have viewed themselves as sufficiently important or learned to witness for their faith” (151).

There are limitations to assuming Askew’s agency as an actor in Renaissance society and as an author. Freeman and Wall warn that a narrative that claims Bale and Foxe imposed masculine edits and interruptions to Askew’s text “imposes contemporary notions of the author onto a culture that conceived of the production of texts in a radically different way” (1168). My argument considers context to be critical to this analysis of silence, especially since it is agreed that silence depends on context for meaning. However, this argument does not intend to imagine Askew is the one and only author of The Examinations texts that are available to us now. After all, Askew lived in a time that did not always allow women to read or write, or to publish their own writing. Scholarship from theorists such as Foucault and Bakhtin suggest a more complex view of the authorship, or author-function. Some recognition is given to the fact that Askew’s text is available for study because of the men who helped make it available. This study assumes
the potential for agency or choice appears within the entries that are attributed to Askew, specifically in Bale’s publication of The Examinations in November, 1546, just months after Askew’s execution in July (Beilin xliv).

To acknowledge Askew’s subjectivity also means to include the various ways that her text was appropriated and used by others. Specifically, the two primarily known publications that printed Askew’s text with modifications were the Examinations as edited by John Bale in 1546 and 1547, and Acts and Monuments by John Foxe in 1563 (Foxe published subsequent revised versions of Acts and Monuments). First, Bale printed Askew’s Examinations and created a forward that introduced Askew and compared her to several famous martyrs. Bale edits Askew’s text by creating diary-like entries; between each entry Bale adds his own narrative including interpretations and analysis of Askew’s writing. Bale’s added analysis appearing in-between entries of Askew’s Examinations attempts to justify Askew’s choices and character to the audience. Foxe, too, shapes Askew’s Examinations. When Foxe published the text, he eliminated Bale’s commentary but does his own editing; among several changes, Foxe adds structural changes through paragraph divisions showing “a much greater sensitivity to the text’s dramatic possibilities, its pace and rhythm” (Freeman and Wall 1176).

As mentioned above, in the context of Medieval and Renaissance England, Askew would be expected to conform to societal values for women—chastity, obedience, and silence. Askew’s choices for responding to interrogation, arrest, or any formal interactions with men or officials would be limited by social and political norms. However, in the forty-seven entries ascribed to Askew in the First Examination, each response is engaged, articulate, and resistant—not typical responses of a Renaissance woman. The Latter Examination also exemplifies these qualities in Askew. Additionally, whether one considers Bale’s or Foxe’s active shaping of Askew’s text and
identity or not, it is fair to say that the entries represent an uncommon set of responses for a female speaking in the context of Renaissance England’s heresy trials and executions.

I suspect that whether or not Bale and Foxe shaped Askew to best-fit their own causes advocating the Reformation, both men could have created an entirely different feminine identity without also showing Askew’s forthright combative responses, her written additions to the confessions produced for her by the officiates, and her refusal to answer questions. While her resistance and active claims to faith are supportive of Bale’s claims that Askew is a martyr and Foxe’s historic accounts of the Reformation and the martyrs, either man could have easily hidden Askew’s adversarial nature from a reader’s view. Still, this Textual Askew seems to retain her own voice and her own choices. For example, in the Latter Examination alone, Askew’s voice is asserted strongly. The LE uses 165 first-person references, including but not limited to “I beleve”, “which I wrote”, “I sayd”, or “I answered”; there are nine instances of the use of her name Anne Askew in the entries such as “written by me Anne Askew”, “of me Anne Askew”, or “I Anne Askew” (Beilin, 87-148). Askew’s entries are unique in that Askew uses several tactics to resist revealing her own views at each point in the Examinations.

Several scholars observe Askew and the Examinations as speaking for herself only. Glenn observes that Askew could not be forced “to speak for or incriminate others, whether reformist or otherwise. All those subjects were extraneous to her religious beliefs” (RR 153). Even when given the chance to speak for an entire movement, on behalf of a congregation, or to assume what others know, Askew emphasizes her own experience; Askew speaks only what she knows, what she understands, what she believes. When asked about her faith and beliefs, she answers “I beleve as the scripture doth teach me” (49). When asked about who gave monies to her, Askew answered “For I am not suer who sent it me, but as the men ded saye” (126). Despite
challenging and unanswered questions about authorship, I believe we can safely assume that during the actual event the Historic Askew demonstrated her ability to advance her own identity, position, and choices—and then document those demonstrations in writing as a record of her experiences. It is not my stance to impose certain aspects of agency on that time period or writing process; I am not claiming that Askew saw other possible positions for herself in the hierarchy of power and knowledge, only that she was aware of hers. On the whole, Askew speaks for herself and on behalf of herself.

Silence and agency are connected in this way: though it is a duty, responsibility, or state of being for a Renaissance woman, Askew’s choice to refute, argue, or amend the words of interrogators opposes the social and political conventions for a silent woman. In opposition to the expectation or norm that Askew be silent, submissive, and obedient, she is not; she juxtaposes an identity that is Renaissance woman claiming silence-as-obedience with a logical, assertive masculine delivery. However, Askew takes great care to connect her verbal and non-verbal responses to the expected roles for women. She uses biblical as well as societal doctrine to align herself as a silent, submissive, and obedient woman. In addition, she justifies her non-verbal responses and her silences as being aligned with that proper womanly activity. Since Askew deploys verbosity and silence as it best fits the rhetorical situation and immediate interaction, she actively chooses her words, her silences, and her means and methods of responding to the incarceration and interrogation on the whole. Silence is her choice in specific instances as are her words. Askew responds substantively and strategically, and thusly demonstrates her own sense of choice for those responses.

3) How are invention and silence connected?
Invention and techniques of invention allow a rhetor to consider all of the available means; invention is one point where a rhetor makes decisions and seeks the best possible strategies and tools to accomplish a goal. For silence to be chosen—rather than imposed—it is important to recognize that silence is among the means available to a rhetor, that it is a rhetorical tool. The connection between silence and invention is this: invention is one point at which a rhetor may consider silence as a rhetorical tool and select silence as an effective means of communication, or means of persuasion. If, as Lauer suggests, invention is continuously part of a rhetor’s process, then silence is also an ongoing possibility.

Thus far, it is established that Askew’s *Examinations* demonstrate the rhetorical skill of an educated, practiced individual; the entries exhibit the use of specific examples that address the rhetorical context of the heresy trials. The reading and interpretation of scripture were at issue; the difference of belief between Roman Catholicism and Reformation Protestantism were at issue; thus, scripture served as a relevant source for Askew. Her immediate audience of authorities leading the proceedings as well as anyone attending the quest, interrogation, and so forth, would find the biblical references relevant, would be interested in Askew’s use of scripture. Askew made decisions to address interrogator’s questions with responses that Askew crafted and delivered to her achieve her own means. To address this part of the heuristic, I collected data from the entries attributed to Askew in Bale’s first publication of *The Examinations* (Beilin, 1-161).

The first set of data I collected concerned counting the number of times Askew was silent or used some form of non-verbal communication. Then, I counted the number of times Askew used wording such as “never said”, “will not say”, “hold me excused”, or “no more would I assoyle”—essentially, I counted the number of times Askew suggested silence, implied silence,
or openly refused to answer a question. I thought that collecting these two data sets would present a range of forms that Askew’s silences took such as an implied silence or a threat of silence. As I collected data, I found that there were a number of times that those persons who interrogated her prompted Askew to speak or confess. I began to question the relationship between Askew’s responses to questions and the number of times she was asked to or commanded to speak. As an additional piece of data, I then counted the number of times Askew was asked to speak by authorities.

I also began to wonder about the context and particular factors that may have contributed to Askew’s perception of available rhetorical means: where was Askew during questioning, what was her physical or mental state, what is in plain view for her to see. I began to consider how discourse is used to gain a confession; I began to consider how the genre of interrogation-with-intent-to-yield-a-confession presents several elements to convince the subject beyond the verbal utterance of questions; the genre of interrogation during the heresy trials executed the power of coercion, a rhetorical force. The pressure to speak through repeated suggestions, the pressure to answer in the way authorities see fit, the physical toll of illness, the physical toll of torture and the threat of bodily harm—each of these considerations may contribute to a rhetor’s perception of the available means and the subsequent rhetorical decisions made under duress.

The number of times that Askew suggested that she “never spake”, “never said”, asked to “hold me excused”, “ought not to speak”, or other forms of suggesting and implying silence through wording in the *First Examination* was thirteen; and, in the *Latter Examination*, was six. The first set of data revealed that there were some instances in which Askew suggested silence verbally; the actual number of silences overall was three compared to a total of nineteen implied silences. However, the number of times that Askew is asked to “speak her mynd”, “saye her
mind”, told by authorities that she “shuld utter” is significantly higher. In this data set, a smaller sample is used; in the First Examination, within a range of seven pages, the pressure to speak is issued by authorities twelve times (Beilin, 40-47). In the same section, Askew’s implied silences occur three times (Beilin, 40-47). Askew’s implied or suggested silences are significantly fewer than the suggestions to speak from authorities.

As I analyzed the text to discover connections between invention and silence, I found an emerging pattern. Askew’s primary strategies are to use biblical references, questions, and direct refusals as responses to interrogator’s questions. When seeking specific references to not-speaking or not-answering, there is also a pattern. The pattern of implied silence seems more significant, though, when compared with the pattern used by authorities to gain a confession from an accused heretic. The number of times that Askew is told to speak is exceedingly high; the conditions under which Askew undoubtedly experienced such rhetorical force also would have shaped Askew’s perception of available means. It is possible that, in this instance, since speaking and saying were so highly valued by authorities a rhetor, under duress and unable to change the mind of an audience, would find not-saying and not-speaking of equal value and to be possible tactics among the rhetorical means available. Thus, in this instance, the connection between invention and silence would have been established in the juxtaposition between both Askew’s and the authorities’ use of speaking and not-speaking.

4) What relationship exists between invention and rhetorical amplification?

Beyond its use for style or eloquence, it is possible rhetorical amplification may also be used strategically for different purposes. Recall the many possibilities for amplification that Laib suggests: “extend, vary, and expatiate upon one’s subject at length, to shape, build, augment, or alter the force and effect of communication, and to repeat oneself inventively” as well as
intensify, transform, heighten emotional appeal, emphasize, interpret, develop, invent and investigate (443). As more than as just an act of mere restatement and repetition, rhetorical amplification performs different functions as determined by the rhetor. The rhetor, through invention techniques, becomes able to select from a variety of tools, styles, and ways of knowing. Rhetorical amplification is among the numerous means available to a rhetor during processes of invention; thus, what is relevant to this study of silence is how amplification may function, and so then may be chosen during invention. And so it is possible Askew’s Examinations may demonstrate evidence of the form or function of rhetorical amplification in relationship to rhetorical silence.

Beginning with the idea that some repetitions, restatements, or patterns may indicate the use of rhetorical amplification in the Examinations, I attended to seeking out patterns of repetition or restatement in the text. I counted repetitions that included but were not limited to the number of times Askew used a particular Bible verse, used deflection to avoid answering a question, the number of times she responded or did not respond to a question, and the number of times she was silent (not speaking). As I attended to various elements in the text, I also noticed the wording of the authorities who questioned Askew, and I began to notice the pattern of repetition and restatement within the interrogations. Authorities followed a repetitive pattern of questioning, repeated the use of similar examples, and implored Askew to speak. Within the interrogation, there is significant pressure placed by the authorities on Askew to confess—but not just any confession. The interrogations during the heresy trials were designed to elicit specific responses and specific results. Coles, relying on other scholarship, discusses the ways that the process of the trial “denied silence as an alternative for the accused and maintained the legally sanctioned mode of execution, burning at the stake, as a present threat” in the interactions
of an interrogation (517). In other words, the authorities leading an interrogation would employ a rhetorical, coercive force of words to pressure a subject to submit and confess. According to Beilin, it wasn’t until 1543 that the interrogations allowed subjects to recant (xxv).

The verbal pressure that the questioners used is what Coles calls “veiled speech” because the threat of bodily harm and the punishment of burning was always present in the subtext (518). There are several documented interactions between Askew and interrogators in the Examinations. Askew writes that the Lord of London, Edwin Bonner the Bishop “requyred me also in anye wyse, boldelye to utter the secretes of my harte, byddynge me not to feare in any point. For what so ever I ded saye within hys house, no man shuld hurte me for it” (41). There were numerous instances where the Lord of London suggested to Askew and to Askew’s cousin or personal guarantors that Askew should speak her mind, unburden her conscience, or simply say anything without fear. This example shows the kind of veiled speech that included rhetorical force: Askew should speak, and she should fear bodily hurt or pain. So, in closely reading Askew’s account and attended to potential repetition or restatement, I noticed the repeated appeals by officiates for Askew to “utter all thynges” and “saye [her] mynde without feare” (44, 45). The pattern of rhetorical force—of the context—directed toward Askew to do what the authorities wished became more apparent. The exhortations to speak were especially numerous in comparison to the number of times she did not answer a question, along with Askew’s own silences (only three silences; contrasted with numerous responses). In one section of The First Examination, there were eleven instances of officiates urging Askew to speak in contrast to Askew’s consistent action to respond to all questions (40-47). Authorities during interrogations most definitely utilized repetition and restatement to intensify the hierarchy of power, heighten the emotional experience of the subject being questioned, and to alter the force of their
communication—rhetorical amplification was a strategic element for effective discipline and control of the subject.

Anne Askew did use variations of repetition and restatement; however, any repetition of Askew is often a response to interrogator’s questions. Askew maintains her stance in spite of questioner’s various techniques attempting to unseat her ability to articulately and consistently answer questions. She maintains her steadfast beliefs without revealing those beliefs in specific or incriminating ways. The most notable of these interactions is an example in which the interrogators utilize a series of questions employing oppositions, to which Askew responds very consistently; the set of questions is reworded each time in a new form (shown below in Figure xx).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lorde of London, Edwin Bonner, Bishop</th>
<th>Anne Askew</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Then asked he me. what my faythe and beleve was in that matter?</td>
<td>I answered hym. I beleve as the scripture doth teache me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then enquired he of me, what if the scripture doth saye, that it is the bodye of Christ?</td>
<td>I believe (sayd I) like as the scripture doth teache me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then asked he agayne, what if the scripture doth saye, that it is not the bodye of Christ?</td>
<td>My answere was styll, I beleve as the scripture infourmeth me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And upon thys argument he tarryed a great whyle, to have driven me to make hym an answere to hys mynde (49).</td>
<td>Howbeit I wolde not, but concluded thus with hym, that I beleved therin and in all other thynges, as Christ and hys holye Apostles ded leave them (49).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example dialogue, Table 1

In an attempt to “discover” Askew’s beliefs, the question is posed as what if this and then reworded to create an opposition such as what if that—all of which Askew replies similarly: “I beleve as the scripture doth teache me” (49). First, Askew answers using “doth teache”, then uses “infourmeth”, and finally she believes “as Christ and hys holye Apostles ded leave them” (49). Askew describes the lengthy repetitious questions when she notes “And upon thys argument he tarryed a great whyle, to have driven me to make hym an answere to hys mynde” (49). Askew acknowledges the persuasion, the coercive force at work, to provide an answer that is desired by
the questioner—to give the answer they want rather than what is right or true to Askew herself. She uses her own form of restatement to repeat her unwavering stance: she reads and believes the text, not the interpretations as handed down by the Pope as the Roman Catholics believed. Yet, Askew’s responses, while validating her firm belief, elaborately veil her stance without directly incriminating her.

As one of the available means, rhetorical amplification can function strategically. The authorities used repetition and restatement for emphasis and effect to strategically influence the subjects of inquiry during the heresy trials. The rhetorical force of coercion is evident as asking a question fifteen times has a different impact than asking it twice. Askew’s Examinations documents that tactic of rhetorical force well. Further, Askew is able to develop a strength of consistency and exemplary faith through her own use of particular repetition or restatement. So the connection is not only that rhetorical amplification may be selected during inventive acts of rhetorical practice and engagement; but that when a rhetor considers particular rhetorical goals, specific audiences, and broader contexts, the rhetor is also considering the best means available for addressing multiple concerns and reaching complex objectives. In this case, rhetorical silence is indeed an element to be chosen during invention to achieve a particular rhetorical purpose with an audience.

**Delivery**

The heuristic of Delivery plays an interesting role in the analysis of silence because of its relationship to Invention and to Audience, and because of the multiple ways in which we understand Delivery. Delivery can be spoken, written,gestured, and executed in new, different ways in digital, electronic, and multi-modal environments. Since delivery is interdependent with Invention (as a canon of Rhetoric) and Audience (since the act of delivery implies some kind of
reception), this set of questions should not be considered distinct or separate from the previous or from the forthcoming category. To analyze the uses of silence, I use the three guiding questions:

- What kinds of silence are delivered: in what specific ways (i.e., bodily, textual, spatial) and for how long?
- How does the rhetor create the silence?
- What are connections between rhetorical delivery and rhetorical silence?

1) What kinds of silence are delivered: in what specific ways (i.e., bodily, textual, spatial) and for how long?

   Based on the existing scholarship, silence can be delivered in multiple ways (Nakane, Poyatos, Bruneau, Glenn, etc.). For example, from not-speaking and from providing no facial expressions or gestures denoting bodily or oral silences to textual silences in which pages are left blank, white space is used. Other silences exist when persons and their writing are simply absent or missing. Additionally, to understand that a form of silence is being delivered, the function of silence should also be considered (Nakane, Glenn, Bruneau, etc.). Many scholars connect Anne Askew with silence and with resistance (Glenn, Beilin, Travitsky). Askew’s Examinations reveal a complex and rich set of opportunities for identifying forms and functions of silence. First, the silence or silences delivered are present in a textual representation of events in The Examinations of Anne Askew—so a reader will experience the silences through the text. Additionally, we should consider that the silence or silences delivered during the actual interrogations would have been bodily in the form of facial expressions or gestures, aural, and oral. Those bodily, aural, and oral silences documented in Askew’s Examinations are now experienced through text; the textual versions of those silences are now mediated by writing. Askew delivers to readers a description of the interrogations and her experiences; Askew does this by describing the interrogations and
the words and actions of the officiates involved in the arrest, incarceration, interrogations, and torture. So, readers take up the silence from Askew through the mentions of silence or of not-saying—including her own words as well as the words of others present, through descriptions of bodily, gestural, or non-verbal responses, and through her own non-speaking or non-answering responses.

It is important to note that *The Examinations* are essentially a description of dialogue. So, any silence experienced is done so in comparison or in contrast to speaking. Much of the scholarship about Askew offers analysis of the dialogue, and Askew’s responses to questions. During my analysis of the entries in Bale’s version of *The Examinations*, I have documented patterns in the language used and repetitions of language such as the number of times a gesture is documented by Askew or the number of times the interrogators implore Askew to “speak her mind”. Other scholars have theorized Askew’s silence by searching for the presence or absence of her body, the versions of *Examinations* and their differences, or the presence of self or identity in the text (Coles, Beilin, Kemp, Freeman and Wall). As silence or sound was analyzed and documented, I felt it important to keep in mind the difference between the historic personage of Anne Askew, and what remains available for study in textual record of Askew’s writing.

The text delivers the silence to an audience of readers, but, for the immediate audience of authorities during Askew’s examination, the silence was delivered aurally, bodily, and gesturally. When scrutinizing the text, first I considered the silence(s) as aural-bodily. It is important to note that there are only three documented silences in the text. In the *First Examination*, Anne Askew documents this exchange:

Besydes thys my lorde mayre layed one thynge unto my charge, which was never spoken of me, but of them. And that was, whether a mouse eatynge the hoste, received God or
no? Thys questyon ded I never aske, but in dede they asked it of me, wherunto I made them no answere, but smyled” (27).

In this example, Askew does not answer a question but remains silent. The silence is accompanied by a gesture; Askew offers the facial expression as a response to the question. The rhetor, under duress of the interrogations, under the pressure to speak and answer in specific ways, does not. Instead, the rhetor responds with silence and gesture—the gesture acts as a non-verbal response to the question and adds to meaning-making cues in context. However, the non-verbal response and ironic gesture of smiling is not part of the set of social and political expectations; while it is appropriate for a woman to be submissive, obedient, and silent, this silence is neither obedient nor submissive.

The second silence appears in the *Latter Examination*. It, too, is accompanied by a gesture that is delivered instead of a verbal response. Askew documents:

“After that they wylled me to have a prest. And than I smyled. Then they asked me, if it were not good? I sayd, I wolde confesse my fawtes to God. For I was sure that he wolde heare me with faver. And so we were condempned without a quest” (112).

The context of the *Latter Examinations* is one of greatly heightened tension, and the authorities are seeking any reason to condemn or sentence Askew as a heretic. Throughout, the officiates use repetition in the form of questions, as well as repeating Askew’s answers from previous sessions of interrogation. The level of coercive force to comply and confess is definitely higher. In this example, Askew is told a priest will come to take her confession—this is a statement with multiple potential meanings: the authorities are prompting Askew to comment on her beliefs about confession; the authorities are prompting her to comply by suggesting that the process is nearly over and she is about to be sentenced to death; and the authorities are pressuring Askew to
respond (notice how this is a statement and not a question). Following Askew’s smile, the authorities ask a question—acknowledging the possible irony or sarcasm in her smile, prompting Askew to comment on her beliefs.

The last silence documented in *The Examinations* occurs during a scene in which Askew is tortured. Askew is questioned by Master Rich, Lord Chauncellor Wrisley, and Sir John Baker about other possible members of her “sect” (121). They ask, and they suggest names to Askew, but Askew does not admit any names or admit to being connected with other Reformists. As a result, Askew is put on the rack and tortured. This last silence is documented by Askew:

> Then they ded put me on the racke, bycause I confessed no ladyes nor gentyllwomen to be of my opynyon, and theron they kepte me a longe tyme. And bycause I laye styll and ded not crye, my lorde Chauncellour and master Ryche, toke peynes to racke me their owne hands, tyll I was nygh dead” (127).

The text here is compressed, and details are noticeably absent. However, Askew tells us that she did not cry and that she lay still during torture—a powerful statement considering the context of being questioned *and* tortured. Askew’s bodily and verbal silence is documented: she lies still, she does not cry. Additionally, Askew does not answer questions, admit to heresy, or confess names of other Reformists, despite the coercive rhetorical force of the context. The silence is not received well; Wrisley and Rich use their own hands, the actions of their own bodies, to employ coercive force rather than delegate that task to the persons—servants, knights—who ordinarily conducted the torture while questions were issued to the subject being interrogated. The body of Askew, and her non-responses, are absent from the textual record. There is no documentation of gestures or expressions as there had been when she smiled in silence—and her body was not under torture. The frustration and efforts of the authorities is documented, though only briefly. In
the historic context of Reformation England, and under duress of coercive rhetorical force of the examination and of physical and rhetorical force in the form of torture—when the appropriate response is submission in the form of answers and admissions, Askew documents three uses of silence.

2) How does the rhetor create the silence?

For this case study, the “created silence” is one that is documented by Anne Askew in text—the text describes for readers when, if, or how a silence occurred. This study of silence, though, is especially interested in the silence that occurred in the context of the interrogation, in the actual event; so, considering the difference between the historic and textual Askew is relevant. There are other accounts—from authorities involved in Askew’s incarceration and execution, from newspaper descriptions, from letters about the heresy trials and executions—that describe Askew’s demeanor, speech, or behavior. However, this study is focused on those silences which Askew creates during the interrogations documented in *The Examinations*. For Askew to document a silence indicates that the silence is intentional, that the silence is rhetorical rather than a lapse of thought. These rhetorical silences are described by Askew to her audience of readers, but the silences were experienced first-hand by the authorities, Askew, and others present (noting here the multiple audiences). These silences are recollections of interactions in which Askew was interrogated or tried. Askew creates silences for future readers of the *Examinations* in text; however, in the interrogations and hearings as described in her writing, Askew creates a silence in three ways: by the mention of silence, through gesture or non-verbal response, and by non-response or non-answer.

Her mentions of silence, of no words (or, lack of words), and of not-saying are examples of repetition for emphasis and effect. Askew creates a linguistic connection between speaking
and remaining silent. Through the mention of silence, Askew is able to call the experience of silence up in an audience’s mind, whether the audience is the authority interrogating her or those present during interactions. This strategy is similar to the authorities’ use of the threat of torture and death during interrogation—questions and answers are linked to punishment, to bodily harm.

Bakare-Yusuf argues that “the economy of violence which characterized the middle passage and epoch of slavery had as its primary motive the extraction of capital and wealth through slave labour” (311). While Bakare-Yusuf engages a discussion on the enslavement of African people, her insights provide one potential view for considering the discourse of interrogation during Reformation England and the heresy trials. Bakare-Yusuf, synthesizing Foucault and other contemporary theorists, suggests “both power and discourse are interconnected. Discourse then becomes just one of the modes in which political power manifests itself” (313). Power and control worked through the interrogators and authorities facilitating the heresy trials and executions as in turn those authorities tried to control religious knowledge—and doing so through coercive rhetorical force and the threat of bodily pain.

Mueller posits “In moving to inflict lethal pain, the ecclesiastical authorities brought to bear the extremity of what they could do, but by demanding that the accused speak, the mode of destruction became productive because it granted embodied subjectivity, if only for the purpose of eradicating it” (165). The pressure to answer allowed a progression of the discourse to achieve the ends of interrogators: by answering, the accused participated in the discourse and their answers could fuel the interrogation, sentencing, and execution. Further, when the sentencing enacts the punishment or burning, the relationship between Catholic and Protestant ideology becomes more reciprocal. Mueller suggests that the performance of torture and burning served the Protestant truth “to the extent that the condemned maintain, during their torture, the integrity
of self-possession that signifies the truth of their being” (165). The context and discourse created significant rhetorical force with which Askew attempted to contend through engagement of rhetorical features and strategies to defend herself. Askew’s *Examinations* document the repetitious and coercive rhetorical structures used in interrogations as well as Askew’s attempts to effectively wrestle within that discourse. What heightens the silence-as-response is the political context and rhetorical, coercive force of the interrogations.

Silence is present throughout the interrogations since silence is *not* an option—each subject under examination must answer, must admit, must confess. In Reformation England, there is no right to remain silent. Speaking is always required; silence is not allowed. This is a key strategy for creating rhetorical silences throughout: Askew answers nearly every question with some use of words; use of answer in the form of refusal, deflection, and rhetorical skill creates experiences for her audience prior to the actual experience of silence. The demand for answers, the pressure to respond in the way the authorities assert, and the insistence to speak, and the growing tension between the dissonant wills of both Askew and the authorities all help to heighten the experience of silence when rhetorical silence is delivered.

3) **What are connections between rhetorical delivery and rhetorical silence?**

Connecting the rhetorical canon of delivery to rhetorical silence is significant because, just as when a speaker emphasizes particular words, the delivery of a silence provides cues for the audience. Thus far, it has been established that the use of silence in *The Examinations* is complex because of the unique ways that the text can be identified, analyzed, and attributed to multiple authors with multiple audiences: the text as socially-constructed, the text as narrative, the text as record, the audience as immediate, the audience as future-readers, and so forth. The silences come in the form of implied or suggested textual silences, appear as textualized
narrative description, as bodily or gestural. Multiple forms of delivery—such as textual, visual, aural—indicate a parallel to the multiple forms of rhetorical silence. Thus there is more than one way to deliver a rhetorical silence and to create meaning with the silence.

Effective delivery is also reliant on the relationship between rhetor and audience and the *ethos* of the rhetor; connecting delivery and rhetorical silence through the rhetor’s understanding of and relationship to an audience. Ethos is established through different means as suggested by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, Ritchie and Ronald, and by Buchanan in Chapter 2. *Ethos* for Anne Askew, was connected to gender and to upholding one’s beliefs. Askew relied on her gender in specific responses to questions; she used her gender to achieve rhetorical goals. In one example, Askew is asked about her beliefs repeatedly. The questioner asks first what Askew believes, to which she responds “I beleve as the scripture doth teache me” (49). The questioner then asks a similar set of questions but rewords the question each time in a new form. In an attempt to “discover” Askew’s beliefs, the question is posed hypothetically as *what if this* and then reworded to create an opposition such as *what if that*—to all of which Askew replies similarly: “I beleve as the scripture doth teache me” (49). Initially, Askew’s tactic is to remain consistent despite the inconsistency of the questioner’s strategy intending to cause Askew to make a verbal mistake. Then, Askew is asked a new question and she, too, calls upon a new tactic—re-asserting her gender, and possibly attempting to establish an ethos.

The exchange is documented as follows:

“Then he asked me, whye I had so fewe words? And I answered. God hath geven me the gyfte of knowledge, but not of utteraunce. And Salomon sayth, that a woman of fewe words, is a gyfte of God, Prover. 19” (49).
Askew uses scripture to point to a socio-political expectation for women and calls upon her gender as a woman to justify her short, similar-but-consistent answers. Askew calls upon a feminine ethos which expects Askew to be obedient, submissive, and silent. For Askew, she is obedient to her beliefs and submissive to God—and non-answering to the interrogators. Askew seems to draw on social expectations for women as an ethos, but to uphold her own ethics by sustaining her beliefs without revealing any new information during the series of questions.

Similarly, another example in which Askew uses a kind of feminine ethos concerns an instance when a questioner asks Askew’s opinion of a biblical reference; the question is aimed at getting Askew to commit an act of interpretation of scriptures, which was forbidden for women at the time. Askew responds, “And I answered, that it was agaynst saynt Paules lernynge, that I beynge a woman, shuld interprete the scriptures, specyallye where so manye wyse lerned men were” (54). Askew calls upon a feminine ethos using gender and beliefs; but, also attempts to live up to a ‘created’ ethos of staying true to her beliefs, a self-determined ethical set of principles. Even though Askew may be perceived as combative or resistant, her non-answers or not-saying protected her during the First Examination, her ethos perhaps kept her alive.

Recalling the scholarship on delivery and ethos, it was noted that without ethos, certain groups or persons would not be able to gain the attention or support from an audience. Askew relied on gender and on faith to establish ethos. Though her interrogators may or may not have been responsive or sympathetic to Askew’s ethos, Bale and Foxe used Askew’s gender and her devotion to her faith to advance their advocacy of the Reformation. In essence, they utilize Askew’s ethos to achieve their own Reformist goals.

To refocus attention on the connections between silence and delivery, Askew’s ethos allows her to choose and to use silence. Askew’s ethos as a devout woman creates a rhetorical
context in which silence is permitted and may even be a proper response. The coercive force of
the interrogations, and the emphasis on answering and confessing, also created an opportunity to
use rhetorical silence. In the context of the interrogation, silence is—for the authorities and their
subject—not an option. However, for the devout ethos Askew created, speaking becomes
improper, and the use of silence becomes a response that best fits her presentation of a faithful
woman of religious conviction. Glenn, in Rhetoric Retold, says of the choice to use silence:

    Askew realized that she could not use language to change the attitude, modify the
behavior, or stimulate a particular course of action on the part of her examiners.
Therefore, what she unfolds in this specific section of her Examinations is not so much an
argument as it is her essential, Christian self. Yet that presentation of argument and ethos
(to say nothing of pathos) influenced the thoughts and actions of other reformists, and
this self soon became a popular Protestant martyr, the focus not only of her fellow
reformists but of other gentlewomen as well. (156)

A rhetor uses specific understanding and practice when creating a delivery of rhetorical silence;
Askew’s understanding of available means, and subsequent use of silence, best fit the rhetorical
context and her goals to remain steadfast in her beliefs. She presents her self, her ethos as a
Christian woman, in her responses to questions—including those responses that are non-verbal,
gestures, or silence. The connection, here, between delivery and silence lies in the context, in
ethos, and in the stories of Askew as they continued to be told by Bale, Foxe, and others.

**Audience**

The third category in this set of heuristics is Audience. This case study provides an
interesting opportunity to examine rhetorical silence and audience. Anne Askew, herself, is
positioned as an audience to the interrogators due to the nature of the proceedings. She is also
positioned as a speaker-rhetor when responding to questions. And similarly, the textual record positions Askew as a speaker-rhetor in supplying an account of what happened to her, and also as an audience for the wider public’s responses. The audience represents a key part of this examination of rhetorical silence: the audience is key to the potential result or effect that a silence wielded as a tool may have. If silence is a rhetorical tool, then silences will have a purpose and a stance as well as a result or consequence. As a secondary point of inquiry, this argument is interested in discovering connections between amplification and silence. Amplification, too, is used to yield some effect on an audience. This category has been organized with the following guiding questions:

- What are audience expectations for a given context with regard to the use of silence?
- How might a rhetor use a strategy such as silence to elicit a specific audience response?
- How does the rhetor create a role for the audience to receive, perceive, or interpret a rhetorical silence?
- How can audience and context connect or contribute to rhetorical amplification?

The case studies selected for this analysis of silence are particularly unique because of their relationship to Audience and the multiple concerns surrounding Audience. Anne Askew faces multiple audiences—first, she faces interrogators and hearings in front of her contemporaries; second, she crafts the *Examinations* to reach an audience beyond her immediate set of circumstances. Additionally, Askew’s *Examinations* were published and re-published with edits and additions from John Bale and John Foxe—so, audiences changed with each press run. The subsequent representations and interpretations of Anne Askew’s *Examinations* complicate the notions of audience, audience reception, and the use of silence. Similarly, the category of
audience does not stand separate from Invention or Delivery but, rather, acts interdependently to shape an analysis of silence.

1) **What are audience expectations for a given context with regard to the use of silence?**

   Silence was expected in a number of contexts for Renaissance society. As was noted earlier, it was part of a woman’s social role to be silent since silence represented a kind of obedience and submissiveness (Beilin, Travitsky, Glenn). Silence would also be expected in context of ritual such as religious customs or ceremony, and judicial practices such as legal council or court hearings; silence was customary in rhetorical practices where interaction was dependent on listening and speaking in turn-taking or linear procedures (Bruneau, Poyatos, Nakane).

   In this case however the genre of interrogations (and the subsequent genre of examinations) expects the accused to *speak* in the form of answering questions, admitting guilt, and recanting—from authorities’ perspective. The political and religious authorities expected compliance, obedience, and *answers*. Examinations as composed by other men in the time period often used the situation to proselytise or advance their argument through citing many sources and exemplars as seen in Frithe, Bale, Foxe and others (Beilin, Freeman and Wall, Coles, Kemp). *Examinations* differs in that Askew does not reveal anything or admit to anything because she rhetorically avoids answering, deflects questions, or uses silence. Askew defies audience expectations through her constant referrals to her own gender, a woman’s role, and her use of scripture; she uses all of the content and strategies rhetorically.

   Subsequently, Askew’s actions as rhetor are also in dynamic play with her role as an audience to the interrogators. Askew was an audience to the heresy trials and court proceedings. Further, she was a gentlewoman and so this shaped her perceptions of the incarceration, trials,
and examination. Her expectations, as an audience, were different. Whereas the authorities expected admission, confession, and recantation, Askew expected fairness, truth, and due process. Her responses to interrogations also indicated her understanding of the coercive rhetorical force being exerted on her. She acknowledges on more than one occasion that the questions or the dialogue were designed for a specific purpose. When questioned by a priest, Askew posits that he should answer his own question and adds “For I wyll not doi it, bycause I perceive ye come to tempte me” (34). At another point, during the *Latter Examination*, Askew notes that Bishop sticks to a particular line of questioning “to have driven [her] to make hym an answere to hys mynde” (49). Askew’s text demonstrates her awareness of the context, and the rhetorical pressure to answer in specific ways.

The dynamic play of the roles of rhetor and audience reveals a unique set of expectations and circumstances within the context of Reformation England. Beyond the expectations for a Christian woman to be obedient and silent, the expectations of the context of the heresy trials adds significant tension, pressure and rhetorical force in the form of questions and the way those questions were delivered. Expectations for the subject being examined were obedience, compliance, and adherence to Roman Catholic beliefs—and would need to result in an admittance, a confession, and, potentially, a recantation. However, expectations for the subject would have the added elements of gender and class—Askew, as a gentle woman, was the first woman to be judged (Glenn 151). It was rare for a woman, and a woman of a certain class, to be treated as a subject in the heresy trials, and this adds a dimension to Askew’s speaking and actions as responses to interrogation.

2) How might a rhetor use a strategy such as silence to elicit a specific audience response?
The focus of this study utilizing the “Textual Askew” as published by John Bale provides a complex set of potential answers to this question. There are several potential audiences, each with a unique set of potential responses. Keeping Ede and Lunsford’s dynamic play of roles between audience and rhetor, as well as the complexities of audience, in mind, the possibilities range from Askew as her own audience to those present during her examination to the future readers. Askew’s writing as autobiography, and as a development of self and identity, have been discussed in Glenn, Beilin, and Mazzola. The authorities of the quest, Askew’s personal guarantors, and other witnesses would have been an immediate audience to Askew’s rhetorical practices during interrogation, torture, and subsequent execution. The Textual Askew also acknowledges her future readers. To assure a consistent focus and scope, this study will limit the consideration for audience response to the events documented in the entries attributed to Askew in Bale’s publication of The Examinations.

Askew utilizes several tactics in her own defense, as has been discussed. The response of her immediate audience is not always pleasant or positive, though the context of an interrogation during the heresy trials is combative, coercive, and hierarchical. So, Askew’s rhetorical practices are shaped to her own means, to defend her against leading questions, to present her in ethical terms (from the Reformist perspective). Askew used masculine rhetorical tactics, but often fell back on a feminine ethos. Askew was careful to draw her gender into the conversations, as well as the expectation that a woman be obedient, submissive, and silent. So, in part, and especially in the First Examination, the authorities would desist from the questioning possibly to recuse themselves because Askew was a woman, a devout woman. Askew’s rhetorical strategies of refusal, interrogatives, deflection, and silence disrupted expectations for the context of the interrogation—and authorities simply could not allow for continued disruption or an imbalance
of power. Askew impressively handled each rhetorical transaction, and established her dominance initially. In the *Latter Examinations*, the immediate audience of authorities eventually responded aggressively with torture, and ultimately with execution by burning.

Askew’s three silences elicited responses, too. Below are examples of Askew’s use of silence in the form of non-verbal gesture, and non-verbal-non-speaking response. The examples provide the last line of the entry just prior to the silence, the entry in which the silence is documented, and the response to the silence (whether or not that response is in the same entry or located in a subsequent entry). The first silence occurs after an entry in which Askew documents that she responded to and answered all questions. So, first Askew answers all questions, and then, Askew responds with only a smile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anne Askew</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…I answered hym dyrectlye in all thynges, as I answered the qweste afore (27)</td>
<td>Then the Byshoppes chaunceller rebuked me, and sayd, that I was moche to blame for utterynge the scriptures. […] (29, 30).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Besydes thys my lorde mayre layed one thynge unto my charge, which was never spoken of me, but of them. And that was, whether a mouse eatynge the hoste, received God or no? Thys questyon ded I never aske, but in dede they asked it of me, wherunto I made them no answere, but smyled (27). [<em>a silent response</em>]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Askew’s First Silence, Table 2

In this example, the first silence is situated immediately after Askew displays some compliance in answering the questions of the interrogation. The entry in which Askew responds to a question with only a smile is separated from the interrogator’s response by a very long entry composed by Bale (note the difference in page numbers in Beilin). The response to the non-verbal gesture is assertive and aggressive—moving from having all questions answered, to one question not
answered, the questioner uses a defensive and blaming (i.e., “it’s your fault”). The use of silence in this instance certainly does create change in the tone of the questioning.

The next silence is also a non-verbal gesture and appears in the Latter Examination during a particularly heightened set of questions in which Askew is condemned as a heretic. The example below shows the first and last line of the entry just prior to the silence, and the entry which contains the silence (Figure xx, below). The entry documenting the non-verbal gesture also contains the interrogator’s response:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anne Askew</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They sayd to me there, that I was an heretyke and condempned by the lawe, if I wolde stande in my opynyon. [...] Wherupon I am persuaded, that it can not be God (110, 111).</td>
<td>(continued) Then they asked me, if it were not good? I sayd, I wolde confesse my fawtes to God. For I was sure that he wolde heare me with faver. And so we were condempned without a quest (112).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After that they wylled me to have a prest. And than I smyled. (112). [a silent response]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Askew’s Second Silence, Table 3

The entry in the Latter Examinations just prior to Askew’s documented non-verbal response denotes a threat: Askew is about to be condemned unless she changes her opinion. The last line of that entry documents that she refuses to change her opinion, she willfully retains her belief. In the next entry, since Askew is going to be condemned, the authorities offer to have a priest take her confession. To that offer, Askew only smiles in response—a non-verbal gesture. The immediate response, another question, elicits Askew’s expression that she would not need a priest for confession—that would be something Askew would share with God. Her silent gesture as response is taken as verbal irony or sarcasm: given another situation a smile might be
appropriate, but in this case Askew does not want to confess to a priest. The question that draws out Askew’s meaning is also the question that helps to seal her fate.

The third or last silence documented in the *Examinations* is textual, and occurs during torture in the *Latter Examination*, after Askew had been sent to prison, and immediately after she was questioned about other persons who share her beliefs. This silence is particularly interesting because of the way it is documented, and because of the timing or context of the silence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anne Askew</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether it were true or no, I can not tell. For I am not suer who sent it</td>
<td>...my lorde Chauncellor and master Ryche, toke peynes to racke me their owne hands, tyll I was nygh dead (127).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me, but as the men ded saye (126).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then they sayd, there were of the counsel that ded maynteyne me. And I sayd,</td>
<td>Then they ded put me on the racke, bycause I confessed no ladyes nor gentyllwomen to be of my opynyon, and theron they kepte me a longe tyme. And bycause I laye styll and ded not crye, <a href="127">...</a>. [a silent response]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no. Then they ded put me on the racke, bycause I confessed no ladyes nor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gentyllwomen to be of my opynyon, and theron they kepte me a longe tyme.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...my lorde Chauncellor and master Ryche, toke peynes to racke me their</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owne hands, tyll I was nygh dead (127).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Askew’s Third Silence, Table 4

The instance of this silence—during torture—tells us that Askew “lay still and did not cry” despite the torture inflicted on her body. Scholarship on this particular section of the *Examinations* notes the absence of deep description, detail, and an absence of Askew’s body (Kemp, Coles, Beilin). Askew shares only that she was being questioned, and that she did not answer; she was being tortured and she did not respond with movement or crying. Freeman and Wall provide additional information relating to this scene which appears in a later copy of *The Examinations* in Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments* and which may add perspective to the context (1183). According to this additional historic information narrated by Foxe, Askew was on the rack, the Lieutenant’s Gayler was going to release Askew (because he thought they were done), but Wrisley the Lord Chauncellour and Sir Baker both insisted that Askew stay on the rack and
then went about torturing her and questioning her themselves (1183). Askew, in Bale’s and in Foxe’s versions of her writing, does not describe so many events. Askew relays only that she is questioned under duress of torture, that she lies still and does not cry, and that they torture her further “with their own hands”. Her body and the presence of others, the details of description, are absent—only her resistance and silence are present. The response of the interrogators is aggressive: they torture Askew until she is nearly dead. A close look at the silences, and responses, indicates that Askew did choose to use silence as a rhetorical strategy. Because of the unanswered questions regarding authorship and historic detail, the intended meaning of the silence and the specific meaning of audience responses is undetermined.

To take up Bakare-Yusuf’s theoretical concepts on the economy of violence and the body in pain, we might gain another view of the absence of Askew’s body from this section of The Examinations. Bakare-Yusuf suggests “the ability to verbally express the presence of pain is unavailable to the person in pain” (315). She posits that “the body in pain is not able to participate fully in civic life, because pain destroys the capacity of language” (315). This view separates the body and mind, but Bakare-Yusuf suggests instead that pain doesn’t necessarily resist all language, but resists “everyday speech” (314). Askew’s body is absent, but her faith and devotion are present. This may connect to Bakare-Yusuf’s idea that “what cannot be spoken in language is evoked through other cultural representation” (315). The details of the torture and pain, as well as the questions, are not present; though, readers can imagine the questions based on the repetitions earlier in the documentation, what Mueller calls a “mounting refrain” (164). Askew continues to maintain her position of not-answering, not-responding through the absence of documentation—her silence establishes a presence in opposition to the commands to answer, to the instructions to speak, to the political and religious rhetorical forces at work in the context
of the discourse of the heresy trial. Mueller, studying narratives created during the heresy trials, notes the circumstances “of protestant truth as a condition of the soul, a spiritual self-possession at total odds with the judicially imposed restraint of the body” (165). Askew did not use language to articulate pain; instead, she has silence to articulate her steadfast commitment to her beliefs and her ethics. Askew’s record constructs something other than violence and pain; the body doesn’t matter, only the beliefs do.

The role of audience in this case study also implies a future reader, and future uses of the text. Askew attempts to elicit response by addressing that future reader of her writing in some of her references to “you”, “good people”, and “your”. The initial publications of her Examinations were utilized by Bale and by Foxe to advance arguments on behalf of the Reformation (Kemp, Coles). The audiences for these publications comprised those in favor of the Reformation as well as those against. Depictions of Askew as they were created by Bale represented traditional Renaissance expectations for women; Bale describes her as frail, delicate, beautiful. Beilin, relying on historic documents, cites Bale’s description of Askew as “a remarkable young woman endowed with grace and intelligence who resembled the early martyrs Cecilia and Blandina in her struggle to the death with wicked tyrants and idolaters” (xxxv). The identity Bale creates for Askew in his own passages is contrasted by representations of her own argumentative style and forthright and resistant responses to interrogators. The assumption is that Bale attempted to convince an audience of Askew’s virtue as a Christian woman and so painted her qualities, and emphasized her, as such.

In addition to historic accounts and the identities created for Askew by Bale and Foxe, another interesting aspect to consider when analyzing potential audience responses is genre. Glenn shows that Askew’s Examinations not only fall within a genre of narrative writing popular
during this period of time, but that Askew weaves in other genres within her *Examinations*. Askew uses letters, a confession of faith, a prayer, a translation of the fifty-forth Psalm, and an original ballad (RR 157). Other scholars have labeled Askew’s writing with similar genre categorizations such as narrative, self-portrait, autobiography, in addition to the multiple genres appearing within the *Latter Examination* of letter, ballad, and confession (Coles, Beilin, Mazzola, Kemp). By demonstrating the unique rhetorical strategies of various genres, Askew was able to yield a strong response from her various audiences—each audience may recognize and respond to different genres. Glenn observes that Askew was “responsive to her rhetorical exigency” and had “a keen sense of her immediate audience (her inquisitors) and of her ultimate audience (her contemporary and future supporters) and was thus readily able to take her rhetorical stance” (157).

Askew received greater audience response in the years after her death, when her story was told and re-told by the Reformists. Even though the authorities described Askew in unflattering ways in the official documents of the heresy trials to advance their own terms of power and control, Askew became a widely-known martyr for the Reformation. It is evident that Askew’s *Examinations* consider that there will be a future audience, but did Askew consider that audience while she was interrogated? Did Askew consider how to elicit a response from the future audiences? Audience response to Askew’s rhetorical practices of questions, refusals, and repetitions ultimately resulted in her sentencing as a heretic and her subsequent execution. Though, as documented in the *Examinations*, Askew’s initial strategies (especially in the *First Examination*) may have earned the exact responses from her audience that Askew intended. She asked questions some were unable to answer, she often dominated a line of questioning, and she
caused them to leave or leave the room, frustrated—Askew resisted and met with their equivalent response.

3) **How does the rhetor create a role for the audience to receive, perceive, or interpret a rhetorical silence?**

A rhetor will incorporate consideration for a complex and rich set of interrelated factors during invention and delivery—since invention is an ongoing activity throughout a process, and delivery is the moment(s) a message is presented to an audience—to establish their role as speaker-writer and the audience’s role as listener-reader. These roles are established often, too, depending on hierarchies of power and resistance. A successful message, and therefore a successful silence, will rely on the audience’s acceptance of the rhetor’s role through relationships, through expectations for the context or rhetor, and through situating or framing strategies the rhetor chooses to employ. In the context of the case study, Askew is the subject of interrogation and accused of heresy. This context employs a hierarchy of power in which Askew is expected to answer questions, be submissive and obedient, and potentially confess and recant.

During the interrogation, however, Askew takes on a stronger rhetorical role; she asks questions, takes control of the dialogue, refuses to answer some questions, and establishes her abilities as an educated woman. Though, it has also been established that Askew relied on her gender and her faith as part of her ethos—she did live up to some of the social expectations for a devout Christian woman in Renaissance England. So, her role as a rhetor is established in complex ways throughout the writing of the Examinations. To provide focus and scope, this study of silence is going to utilize only the entries ascribed to Askew in Bale’s version of the Examinations (Beilin). Additionally, to consider the role that the rhetor—Anne Askew—established for the audience, this study will consider only the entries that describe Askew’s
experiences during interrogation (interacting with her immediate audience) and briefly consider her writing to create a role for future audiences.

Anne Askew addresses her immediate audience (members of the quest, authorities in charge of the incarceration, officiate participating in the interrogation, etc.) in unique ways, and creates a role for the audience using assertive, articulate, rhetorical means. Rather than submit to the coercive rhetorical force of the interrogation, Askew frequently uses her role as a woman, as a devout Christian, and as an educated person able to read the text of the Bible (and therefore able to learn from that act of reading). Below are some examples of the ways that Askew asserts her status as a faithful, educated rhetor as she addresses questions from interrogators (Figure xx).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Whom / Audience</th>
<th>Her Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christofer Dare (quest, FE)</td>
<td>I answered, that I wolde not throw pearles among swine (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Priest (quest, FE)</td>
<td>For I wyll not do it, bycause I perceive ye come to tempt me (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Priest (quest, FE)</td>
<td>Non other answer wolde I make hym, because I perceived hym a papyst (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Mayre, William Laxton (quest, FE)</td>
<td>I answered hym dyrectlye in all thynges, as I answered the qweste afore (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Mayre, William Laxton (quest, FE)</td>
<td>I made them no answere, but smyled (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archdeacon; John Wymesley (quest, FE)</td>
<td>Then I desired hym, nomore to be so swift in judgement, tyll he throughlye knewe the truthe (43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor Standish (interrogation, FE)</td>
<td>I answered, that it was agaynst saynt Paules lernynge, that I beynge a woman, shuld interprete the scriptures, specially where so manye wyse lerned men were (54)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples in which Askew addresses Audience; Table 5

The examples show the way that Askew created a role for herself as rhetor through the tone and style of her answers. She implies the motives of the questioners as unappreciative (swine), as adversarial (tempters, papist), as uninformed (thoroughly know the truth); she juxtaposes her own education or ability with their knowledge as “wyse men”. By using these kinds of
responses, Askew is asserting herself as an active participant in the discourse of the interrogation and acknowledges the kinds of relationship that she and her audience have through gender, faith, or flat-out refusal to answer. Askew is also demonstrating her own ability to adapt to the audience: in the first responses she describes in her interaction with Laxton, Askew seems compliant; then, Askew changes and offers non-responses (she smiles). Askew makes choices and utilizes specific wording to acknowledge the rhetorical roles, and she allows herself a dynamic, engaged role.

Now, to also consider the audience that Askew addresses beyond the imminent rhetorical situation of interrogation. For those future readers, Askew begins her text of the First Examination with “good people” and the text of the Latter Examination with “dere frynde in the lorde”. Askew addresses her future audiences in good will, expecting that they are interested in this account—and that there is some common ground that they (Askew and her readers) share. In the address to a future audience or outside audience, Askew develops a different kind of ethos in a potential community of like-minded Protestants. Askew also creates a position for an audience to make ethical evaluations. In the Latter Examination, she says

I understande, the counsel is not a lyttle dyspleased, that it shulde be reported abroade, that I was racked in the towre. They saye now, that they ded there, was but to fear me. Wherby I perceive, they are ashamed of their uncomelye doynges, and feare moch least the kynges mageste shulde have infourmacyon therof. Wherfor they wolde no man to noyse it. Well, their cruelyte God forgive them. Your hart in Christ Jesu. Fare wele, and praye. (134).

Askew refers to the Privy Council, and to the torture on the rack from Wriothesley and Rich. Beilin notes that a letter was written about the heresy trials in which Askew was mentioned,
which may be one way that information about the torture was spread (xxvii). In a later account of the events, Foxe details an account that the lieutenant of the tower who refused to take part in torturing Askew traveled to tell the king about the torture personally (Freeman and Wall citing Foxe, 1184). Askew posits to readers the displeasure and the shame of the Council and her tormentors.

This example demonstrates Askew’s awareness of audience. Askew leaves the king out of the ethical question; Askew relies on social policy and expectations for women as a guide for ethical treatment. In this example, Askew addresses her audience by placing ethical process or behavior in their view, as well as acknowledging her position within these procedures and the power of rumor and the written word. Glenn suggests “her sense of a contemporary audience eager to read her work engenders Askew’s careful attention to the nuances of language and to a style not of private revelation of self but of a public celebration of the virtues she values: piety, privacy, constancy, learning, and fortitude” (157).

Askew’s Examinations provide a depth and breadth of opportunity to consider the many ways that a rhetor might establish a role for the audience, and establish a role for the rhetor to be accepted by an audience. In fact, because of the complex set of audiences, and because of the unique considerations for authorship, much more research and analysis could be done in this area. For example, Kemp’s argument positions the interrogators and the reformers (including Bale) as groups using Askew’s voice and actions to advance their own causes—the interrogators for political strength and religious stability (with a broad audience as Reformation England), Bale on behalf of the reform movement (with an audience of Protestants). Still, the focus and scope of this research as it relates to the use of silence is especially interested in the role that
Askew creates for herself and her immediate audience. Enos and Lauer, in their work focusing on the use of heuristics, claim:

rhetoric can not only be a way of arguing but can also generate its own way of knowing, its own kind of epistemic processes. All such ways of knowing are grounded in and predicated on the rhetor’s construct of the audience and its participation in the meaningfulness of the discourse. In short, all rhetorical situations can be inventional situations between the rhetor and the audience (83).

For the interrogators and other officiates who took part in her incarceration and torture, their role was established for Askew in her rhetorical stance. For her future readers, Askew finds an approachable position and ethos for herself on the common ground of faith. Askew uses expectations for gender roles and socio-political conventions for the discourse of interrogation, and for the rhetorical possibilities of narrative and autobiography. Askew uses rhetorical strategy and wording to assert a role for herself and her audience.

4) **How can audience and context connect or contribute to rhetorical amplification?**

The audience and context are co-creators of meaning; therefore, the audience and context make contributions to rhetorical strategies. Amplification functions as a relationship between the rhetor and audience: the rhetor may intend amplification, but for the intention to be fulfilled, the rhetorical amplification must be communicated to the audience. So, the role created for the audience, the various elements of context, as well as the surrounding cues delivered by the rhetor allow the audience to experience a rhetorical strategy such as amplification, silence, or stillness.

In the instances of repetition and restatement used by the interrogators in the context of the heresy trials, the role created for the subject is that of the accused, one who needs to be disciplined and punished, one who should be afraid. The expected response of the trial is
submission, obedience, and responses asked for by the questioners. The role created by Askew as the accused, however, does not follow this model. Despite the veiled speech of threats, Askew asserts answers or questions, resistance or refusal, and does so to meet her own rhetorical goals. Askew’s various rhetorical strategies seem to be delivered effectively—she disrupts and resists the interrogation. The authorities have only one effective tactic: to sentence Askew as a heretic and burn her at the stake. Askew ultimately resists the pressure of the interrogation and the coercive rhetorical force of the authorities.

This study’s secondary interest seeks any connection between silence and amplification. It would be important to consider how an audience and context contribute meaning to various rhetorical strategies, and how examples such as enthymeme, energia, and amplification are effective because the audience’s response adds to the meaning. Connecting the audience to context of a delivery is key: prior to a delivery of silence, the audience should be aware of the surrounding utterances and context (even if those utterances include referring to silence) to help create the emphasis and effect of that delivered silence. In the interrogations, Askew was told to speak, expected to speak, and pressured to confess—the emphasis was on sound and speech, not on remaining silent. Her immediate audience of authorities would not expect silence, and their processes would be disrupted by silence. This may have heightened their experience during the actual silence. The audience supplies an appropriate response, an emotional response or their own persuasion, by imbuing the delivered silence with their own aspects of meaning from memory, expectation, cultural or social elements and more.

**Conclusion**

Askew’s resistance grows during the interrogations: the greater the rhetorical force of her examiners, the more she is questioned, the less willing Askew is to provide lengthy answers, the
fewer—and more strategic—are her responses in words or gestures. Her use of silence during interrogation and torture are a focus of this overall study of silence as a rhetorical tool. Important to note is the intentional use of silence. Askew provides an exceptional example of rhetorical example in her choice to respond to questions with gestures and with silence. Askew’s choice, too, to document the silence indicates the intention and agency of the rhetor—the silences are not accidents or mistakes. Askew’s use of gesture—her smile, for example—indicates the importance of context and the surrounding “utterances” as those elements connect to a rhetorical silence. The surrounding gestures, expressions, movements, and the space can provide clues to the use of and interpretation of rhetorical silence. This case study adds to scholarship suggesting that rhetorical silence can, in fact, be used as a rhetorical tool. Further, this case study suggests that elements such as gesture and facial expression contribute to the delivery and interpretation of a rhetorical silence.

As the analysis utilizing the heuristics shows, Anne Askew applied rhetorical thinking to her experience in the context of the heresy trial. Askew utilized various strategies including her own gender and the socio-political expectations to achieve her own goals. Askew’s abilities were then also used by Reformists Bale and Foxe to advance the arguments of Protestantism and support the Reformist movement. The story of Askew was told and re-told in different time periods but retains the elements of rhetorical thinking and practice as well as Askew’s use of silence. Guided by the set of heuristics, this analysis of Askew’s rhetorical practices and her use of silence can help us consider how rhetorical silence might be used effectively, along with the connecting complex factors at play when a rhetor chooses to deploy a rhetorical silence.

Additionally, it is important to note the interdependent and interrelated nature of the categories analyzed as revealed by the format of the heuristics. We understand that little is
known about Askew’s education, or what influenced her choices, and so it may be that it was the availability of several strategies and Askew’s ability to assess more than one strategy as being available that shows how recursive and mutually supporting the invention process and delivery process (the process of composing) can be. This may also suggest the strength of connections between the set of questions comprising the heuristics, and may further contribute to an understanding of silence as an effective rhetorical tool. In the next chapter, I will turn to a contemporary of Anne Askew to apply the heuristics. The historic time period is similar, but the context is different than Reformation England—the next case study will focus on Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Sor Juana also chose to use silence, and so the application of the heuristics will provide a second opportunity to study rhetorical silence.
CHAPTER FOUR: SILENCE HAS MEANING, SO LISTEN—
SOR JUANA INÉS DE LA CRUZ: A CASE STUDY OF RHETORICAL SILENCE

Whereas the previous chapter demonstrated the use of this heuristic model by investigating the use of rhetorical silence in Reformation England, this chapter will apply the heuristic model to a different rhetorical situation within a similar historical context: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz’s use of rhetorical silence in colonial Mexico, just 100 years after Anne Askew’s use of silence. By selecting a similar time period but with different elements of context, this study hopes to discover similarities and differences inherent in historical studies of rhetoric and rhetorical practices using silence. Sor Juana has earned scholarly and popular attention for her poetry and prose, and her claim to silence is renowned. In Sor Juana’s writing, she presents a theory of silence and uses philosophical prose to provide her own stance on rhetorical silence. Sor Juana asks her reader to notice silence in its many possible forms and functions, and then to consider what silence means.

While Sor Juana is known for a wide range of genres and a large scope of writing, the focus of this case study will center upon a specific letter—The Poet’s Answer to the Most Illustrious Sister Filotea de la Cruz / Respuesta de la poetisa a la muy ilustre sor Filotea de la Cruz. This letter is a particularly dynamic artifact to use as a case study not only because of its unique discussion of and use of silence, but also because of the public perception of Sor Juana’s silence in the many years after the letter’s publication. Many scholars have contributed to various readings and interpretations of The Answer, and several have posited concepts concerning the genre (or genres) used by Sor Juana. Among these many scholarly voices, Arenal and Powell acknowledge that every single written detail exchanged between Sor Filotea and Sor Juana is relevant and has meaning (19). Arenal and Powell demonstrate that “simple readings [are]
insufficient” (19). Essentially, the letter is most like the genre of religious epistolary that was frequently used in the time period. Arenal and Powell note that, while “Epistolary prose and verse were fashionable literary genres”, there were “strict rhetorical rules” that guided “formal letter writing” (23). Upon initial reading, *Answer* appears most like the genre of formal letter writing with its use of courtly manners, self deprecation, and conventions of the time period (23). The expectations for the genre are used by Sor Juana, but genre expectations are also mediated with other genre features found in formal argument and in another popular genre, nun’s vidas. Sor Juana wields the genre parameters of formal letter-writing, judicial and forensic argumentation, and biography as would a university-trained expert in colonial Mexico. Unlike Anne Askew, Sor Juana directly addresses the subject of silence and her philosophical commentary on silence forms a central part of this study. First, I will review historical context and provide biographical information. Then, I will move on to an heuristic analysis of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz’s rhetorical use of silence.

**Historic Context: Colonial Mexico in the 17th Century**

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz’s life occurred in a Renaissance and Baroque period set in newly colonized Mexico, and this cultural context directly influenced both her literacy and her use of silence. During the Renaissance, Humanism (emphasizing the power of human abilities, and the power of the individual) and then Christian Humanism impacted theories and practices of education, rhetoric, and civic engagement. Cheryl Glenn’s research in *Rhetoric Retold* elucidates the connections between traditional rhetoric and the Humanist movements, and documented that the Humanist movement “joined religion and education, aimed no further than the production of learned women who could harness their intellectual and religious potential to the domestic sphere” (125). Further, popular Christian humanists, such as Sir Thomas More, Juan Luis Vives,
and Desiderius Erasmus, promised that “learning would increase women’s virtue (i.e., their chastity, obedience, and humility)” so that “women’s knowledge was (still) under control and directed to enhancing only their womanliness—and their piety” (125, 126). The Baroque period encouraged a dramatic style that focused on form, complex images, tension, and elaboration (Paz, Merrim, Ludmer, Franco). Also encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church, Baroque writings would heighten the expression of religious themes with emotional and dramatic appeals. The grandeur of Baroque complemented the regal political climate of the royal courts in Spain and Mexico. The Baroque and Humanist focus on the power of the individual, the knower, and the focus on what is known were themes that appear in Sor Juana’s writing. The cultural and political ideals of Europe and Spain were carried to colonial Mexico; those influences on Sor Juana placed her among other well-known writers of Baroque style, which also included Antonio Vieira, a Jesuit preacher.

Early European government and religious rulings provided the structures which effected Spain’s operations of colonial Mexico. For instance, the tensions between Protestantism and Catholicism created opportunities for religious authorities to establish specific guidelines and for scrutiny; the echoes of England’s Reformation resonated with Spain’s Inquisition. The Council of Trent (1545-1563), in Italy, “regularized and systematized the behavior of the members of the secular church, giving a clear sense of direction to Roman Catholicism” (Lavrin, 63). These structures and guidelines were carried over from Spain to the governmental and ecclesiastical operations of Church and state in colonial Mexico. Paz, drawing a comparison between governments, suggests that what has been historically documented about politics in Madrid’s royal court can also be applied to Mexico’s court (81). In fact, Mexico was often called New Spain (Paz, Merrim, Bergmann, Arenal and Powell).
Bizzell and Herzberg explain “The viceroy was the head of the colonial government of Mexico” representing “the Spanish king and thus had great political influence in Spain” (780). The Viceroy the Marquis of Mancera and his wife, Lenor Carreto, were head of the court from 1664 to 1680; then, the Marquis de la Laguna and his wife, María Luisa Manrique de Lara y Gonzaga, Countess de Paredes, led the viceregal courts but returned to Spain in 1689 (Bizzell and Herzberg, Arenal and Powell). Paz focuses on courtships and courtly love in the palace, noting “marriages were arranged between the heads of families, and the crux of the negotiations were something that Juana Inés did not have: a dowry” (85). The politics of the courts, and of marriage, often focused on assets and political gain rather than romantic love. Therefore, not many women could participate in society without a husband or job. Given few societal choices, which seemed to point to an either-or choice between either marriage or the convent, Sor Juana chose the convent. Thus, the lives and writing of nuns are part of the historical context.

Convents represented part of the local and broader social concerns for the poor social conditions during colonial Mexico’s transformation. Schons suggests that people living at that time perceived “moral conditions in Mexico were very bad. The presence of many races, of adventurers, of loose women and worse men brought about the conditions” that created the need for churches, convents, and houses of refuge (40, 41). Arenal and Powell explain that nuns were “subjects of the Spanish church and crown; to serve as agents of the church’s mission to Christianize heathens; to guard orthodoxy; and to ensure social obeisance” (5, 6). Paz also suggests that the convents of the time period provided unique opportunities for women such as “a career that will give them both economic support and social respectability” (89). The options for women, especially poor women, were limited, offering almost no possibility for living independently.
According to Kirk, the “pivotal role the convent held in New Spain” is demonstrated in the “size, location (in the center of the city), and the grandeur of these spaces” as well as the numerous sites which often housed hundreds of women at one time (47). Schons notes that the new structures being built “would not accommodate all the women clamoring for admission” (42). Further, Schons documents that the Church, not the civil government, used convents and houses of retreats to combat social and moral problems, hoping to protect women as well as correct perceived moral and social problems (41). Kirk documents the perceptions dictating “how to lead an exemplary life in the convent” (48). The model nun would be one “who denied self, mind, and body to give herself completely to God” (48). However, with so many women living in the space of the convent, and considering the historic religious dual perspective that women’s bodies were both an “incarnation of sin and guardian of purity,” Kirk notes a perceived dichotomy of the convent, that “women are separated from society to conserve their purity yet are then susceptible to the bad influence of an all-female weak-willed community” (48, 49).

Schons and Kirk both document both the government and Church authorities’ negative perceptions about women, and the contradictions inherent in protecting, preserving, disciplining, and controlling women in convents.

Nuns did participate in specific reading and writing practices within the community of the convent. The activities of nuns included specific prayer and worship times, confession, and Communion; nuns also received visitors at the convents, and some nuns—such as Sor Juana—received orders to write compositions to observe special days or events (Arenal and Powell, 6, 7). Franco documents that some nuns were suspicious of writing, and religious authorities often thought woman’s writing ran counter to St. Paul’s suggestion that women be silent in church (28). Franco notes that “Confessors both encouraged and tightly controlled the writing of nuns,
often confiscating and hiding their notes on mystical experience” (28). Kirk noted that nuns often acquired their own power through writing. In fact “letters, poetry, convent chronicles, and religious autobiographies demonstrate that, through the act of writing women rejected the role of victim and awarded themselves authority through text,” and, Kirk adds, “nuns wrote many of these texts for their sisters or to enshrine the singularity of their convent’s history” (52). Lavrin notes that nuns were not to write for pleasure, but to write “as a means of refining the self and ultimately achieving its perfection,” and thus confessors often commanded nuns to write (75).

Nuns were often directed to write their lives (called *vidas*) by their confessors, who then controlled the texts through editing or other means (Kirk, Ludmer, Arenal and Powell). Lavrin’s study documents some of the many genres of composing by nuns such as “autobiographies, biographies, histories of convents, plays, poetry, and personal letters” (75).

The convents, ecclesiastic leaders, and the nuns together represented a site of converging and conflicting values and practices involving social and political power. Changes in ecclesiastic and viceregal authority occurred after the viceroy, the Marquis de la Laguna, and his wife, left Mexico to return to Spain. From 1686 to 1688, the new viceroy, Count de Monclova, was briefly in charge, followed by the viceregal couple, Countess and Count de Galve. The Archbishop Father Payo Enrique de Rivera was viceroy from 1674 to 1680 (just before the arrival of de la Laguna) followed by the archbishop of Mexico, Francisco Aguiar y Seijas. Seijas was known as a misogynist and demanded conformity (Arenal and Powell, 5). Additionally, there was political conflict in Mexico due to food shortages, natural disasters, and civic unrest. Schons documents that heavy rains and floods occurred in 1691, causing a loss of crops and creating famine (54). Riots began in 1692, interrupting the abilities of the Church to function and creating the need for the government to restore order (Schons, 54, 55). This instability in the government created more
pressure to eliminate any political disturbances such as the attention given to and the popularity of the writing of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

**Historic Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz**

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was born Juana Ramírez in Nepantla, Mexico. The precise date of Sor Juana’s birth is disputed. The birthdate documented by early biographies is November 12, 1651. Bergmann documents that a certificate of baptism (for December of 1648) was found that suggests Juana Ramírez was born in 1648 (170). Part of the reason for a dispute may have been that the fact that Juana Ramírez was conceived and born out of wedlock (Arenal and Powell, Paz, Bizzell and Herzberg). The illegitimacy of Juana is a subject of scholarly discussion as well (Paz, Arenal and Powell, Merrim, Ludmer). Juana lived with her mother, Isabel Ramírez, and her family on lands that her grandfather leased from the Church (Arenal & Powell, 2, 3). Her grandfather was known to have a considerable library, and so Juana had unlimited access to texts. Further, Juana Ramírez found ways to attend school, learn to read and write, and learned Latin.

Juana became known for her intelligence, and was examined by several educated men in 1668 in a public forum by the Viceroy the Marquis of Mancera. Schons documents that Juana “became lady-in-waiting to the Marchioness of Mancera, whose husband was the Viceroy of Mexico from 1664-1673” (38). Juana Ramírez served in Mexico’s viceroyal court, the court of Manceras, as a guest of viceroy and vicereine. Sor Juana first became a lady-in-waiting in the viceregal court in 1665, and took the veil at the convent of San Jeronimo in 1669. Juana reportedly took vows as a nun with the Carmelites in 1666, but was there only a few months before leaving (Arenal and Powell, Paz). After she took vows in 1669, Sor Juana was still involved with the courts, and was frequently asked to compose pieces for special events or
holidays. Sor Juana is known to have had deep personal ties to the two vicereines, Leonor Carreto and Maria Luisa Manrique de Lara y Gonzaga (Arenal and Powell, 9). Scholars have connected the two vicereines to many of Sor Juana’s poems.

Bergmann documents that the “courts of the viceroy of Mexico bestowed upon her at the age of thirteen a double-edged social role as prodigy,” acknowledging and valuing Sor Juana’s intellectual accomplishments, but also making her “marginalized as a freakish phenomenon and kept on display as another treasure in the viceroy’s collection” (152). Paz asserts an additional observation that “[D]uring the years in which she was a lady-in-waiting to the vicereine she distinguished herself not for her devotion but for her beauty, her talent, and her knowledge” (89).

One important element to note is that Sor Juana was devout in her worship and beliefs, and did not openly contradict the teachings of the Catholic Church; in fact, Sor Juana’s writing often carefully and intellectually argued on behalf of the Catholic teachings (Arenal and Powell). In this way, Sor Juana is not like Anne Askew; Askew who sided with the Protestants. Sor Juana was a prolific writer and composed in a wide variety of popular genres in poetry, drama, religious songs, and prose. She composed her first poem before she was 14, and, among her vast canon of works, was noted as having completed sixty-five sonnets, three one-act dramas, two comedies, and several songs (Arenal and Powell, 16).

Without the direct help of her previous sponsors who left Mexico in 1687, even though they tried to support her writing and study from their home in Spain, Sor Juana was without much support against the political and religious authorities who pressured her to live a life more befitting a nun. The last years of her life, following the composing of Respuesta de la poetisa a la muy ilustre sor Filotea de la Cruz / The Poet’s Answer to the Most Illustrious Sister Filotea de la Cruz, are still somewhat a mystery. Schons documents that, in 1692, Sor Juana was sending
manuscripts for the second edition of the second volume of her works; and “in 1692 or 1693 she also wrote a poem thanking her newly found friends in Spain for the laudatory poems and articles which appeared in her second volume”—though that poem was never finished (52). There is a signed document from 1693 representing Sor Juana’s general confession; and a document signed in blood from 1694 in which Sor Juana makes a declaration of faith—these two documents represent a giving up of intellectual pursuits (Arenal and Powell). These documents have been disputed with regard to authorship, though Sor Juana’s signature has been authenticated; some scholars argue that Sor Juana would never have given up her studies or writing. Sor Juana died in April of 1695 during an epidemic (Bizzell and Herzberg, Arenal and Powell).

**Textual Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz**

Some but not all of Sor Juana’s works were published while she was alive. In fact, some of her writing was only recently discovered as recently as 1980. Arenal and Powell document that “Maria Luisa, Marquise de la Laguna, was a frequent visitor at the convent during the seven years she spent in Mexico, and she was an avid supporter of Sor Juana” (11). The Marquise de la Laguna “took Sor Juana’s poems to Spain and arranged for her first book to be published” (11). There were three edited collections of the works of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz; the first edition of the first volume was published in 1689, the first edition of the second volume in 1692, and the first edition of the third volume in 1700 (Arenal and Powell, xxiv-xxvi). However, some scholars have questioned the credibility and authorship of some of the publications. Arenal and Powell note that Sor Juana’s biographer published some of Sor Juana’s writing as well as the biography under conditions that no word contradicted the Church (3). It is possible that some of the details of Juana’s life or the content of the writing may have been altered by editors.
Bergmann argues that feminist research about Sor Juana should not ask questions of recovery or restoration, but instead should consider “questions of the conditions of her prestige and the ways in which she may be read” (151). Attending to conflict, Lavrin notes “Sor Juana’s choice to live as a nun created a constant tension between the secular train of life which she still led within the convent and the prescribed discipline of the cloisters” (61). Schons believes that Sor Juana’s 1691 letter, the *Answer*, was evidence that Sor Juana was not yet ready to give up her studies, and was a claim to her own right to study, “a defense of the rights of women” (52).

Merrim raises several issues as she argues for a feminist reading of Sor Juana, including a concern that Sor Juana be read not just as a woman but also as a woman writer (20). The context of colonial Mexico, the political changes in the viceregal court and social conditions of Mexico, the religious pressures of the Inquisition and the religious influences on social conditions of Mexico, as well as the masculine literate and rhetorical traditions all created a tumultuous terrain for an educated woman-writer nun composing works as directed by ecclesiastical and viceregal authorities.

Further, Merrim argues in favor of considering Sor Juana’s crafting of both form and content; she suggests “[w]hether the encodings of a woman writer or of a colonial Mexican, it is something of a truism by now that Sor Juana’s Baroque, as manifested in the forbidden scientific explorations of the *Primero sueño*, surreptitiously filled the empty Spanish forms with audacious new content” (24). Merrim is referencing, in this quote, Sor Juana’s poem *Primero sueño / First Dream*, the work that Sor Juana claims, in the *Answer*, is the only work that she did “at [her] own pleasure” (Arenal and Powell, 97). While Merrim refers to the poem, she argues that Sor Juana’s ability to craft both form and content to achieve specific rhetorical goals was connected to her informed capacity to process “her models in order to achieve self-expression within another’s
language” (24). Further, Merrim perceives “the fascinating complexities of Sor Juana’s manipulation of the diction, topoi, and forms of Churchwomen’s writing, that is of the nun’s Vida written at the behest of confessors” (26). Despite working in a mostly masculine tradition, Sor Juana’s voice represents a dynamic play of masculine and feminine rhetorical methods and practices especially with regard to rhetorical silence. Yet, instead of portraying silence simply as a women’s practice, Sor Juana’s writing adds to the depth and breadth of possible uses for and interpretations of rhetorical silence.

**Limitations & The Focus of this Case Study**

Using an historical text as a case study presents unique limitations. Specifically, contextual information regarding biographical, political, social, and geographical aspects of the time period of Sor Juana’s life have been under scrutiny and are the concern of much of the scholarship. Within the historical documents that are available, four letters in particular are especially relevant to this chapter’s case study and this overall study of silence:

- the 1681/82 letter composed by Sor Juana to Antonio Núñez de Miranda
- the 1690 letter requested by Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla, composed by Sor Juana containing her analysis of a sermon delivered by Antonio Vieira (This is the letter later named *Carta Atenagórica / Letter Worthy of Athena* by Fernández-as-Sor Filotea.)
- the 1690 *Letter from Sor Filotea de la Cruz / Carta de Sor Filotea de la Cruz* (composed by Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla) that also contained the *Carta Atenagórica / Letter Worthy of Athena*
the 1691 letter composed by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *The Poet’s Answer to the Most Illustrious Sor Filotea de la Cruz / Respuesta de la poetisa a la muy ilustre Sor Filotea de la Cruz*

These four letters represent a specific set of rhetorical features and factors that directly reflect the context in which Sor Juana lived, studied, and wrote. The political, social, and religious contexts play an important role in the various references within the writing of all the letters, but are especially important to a richer understanding of the letter composed by Sor Filotea / Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla, and the response letter composed by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Complicating these matters, as recently as 1980, another letter was discovered—a letter from Sor Juana to her confessor, Antonio Núñez de Miranda, that was composed in 1681/82. This letter adds dimensions to the conversations in which Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz participated, to the convent community of which she was a part, and to the relationships between Sor Juana and the religious leadership.

Another important contextual factor is that the letter initially written by Sor Juana to the bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, the one presenting her argument and analysis of the sermon by Antonio Vieira, was published without her permission as *Letter from Sor Filotea de la Cruz / Carta de Sor Filotea de la Cruz* and *Carta Atenagórica / Letter Worthy of Athena*. Franco documents that Sor Juana critiqued a sermon from the city of Lisbon in 1650, a sermon delivered by Jesuit Father Vieira to a Portuguese court (40). Vieira’s sermon was later translated to Spanish (Franco, 40). Sor Juana’s private letter to Fernández containing the critique of Vieira’s sermon, published with the letter from Sor Filotea (Fernández), is the impetus of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz’s response. Sor Juana’s letter of 1691, *The Poet’s Answer to the Most*
Illustrious Sor Filotea de la Cruz / Respuesta de la poetisa a la muy ilustre Sor Filotea de la Cruz, contains the claim to silence.

Sor Juana composed a great body of work including plays, poetry, and prose. To examine the use of silence in all of these works—or even in the smaller corpus of letters described above—is a greater project beyond the scope of the current study. To direct and concentrate this complex case study of an historic woman writer-rhetor who composed and published a great body of work, this study of silence will focus on a specific text: Sor Juana’s letter Respuesta de la poetisa a la muy ilustre sor Filotea de la Cruz / The Poet’s Answer to the Most Illustrious Sister Filotea de la Cruz (referred to, in this study, as the Answer.). The Answer is the most important of the four letters, and is therefore the focus of the case study because it is within the text of this letter that Sor Juana theorizes the use of silence. Equally, it is Sor Juana’s use of genre and audience expectations and the inclusion of features from other genres that help to contribute to the study of silence. As part of the pilot study to test the heuristics, this case study will focus on the single work and refer to the connecting letters (as mentioned above) as necessary.

For the purposes of this exploration of silence, I have used Sor Juana’s writing as compiled, studied, edited, and published by Arenal and Powell in The Answer / La Respuesta Expanded Edition. This is the second edition of the text and includes critical and historic information as well as a translation of the letter from Sor Filotea. Additionally, the English translation of all texts is presented side-by-side with the Spanish and Latin versions. The editors, Arenal and Powell, have conducted thorough historical and critical research to compile contextual, biographical, and analytical annotations, and their work is the most current as it
draws from and synthesizes interdisciplinary scholarship focusing on the life and writing of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

At times it has been beneficial to reference the other translations or studies of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, her life, and her writing. Other well-known translations have been published by Alan S. Trueblood; other biographical and historic information has been collected and composed by Octavio Paz, Stephanie Merrim, Emilie Bergmann, Jean Franco, and Nina Scott. As I noted in Chapter 3, I have capitalized the word ‘Bible’ to acknowledge the value placed on the Christian Bible at the particular places and times of both Anne Askew and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Similarly, the word ‘church’ may be capitalized to acknowledge the Catholic Church. Thus, the capitalized word refers to the text or the specific entity valued by the individuals and in their specific rhetorical contexts. Other references to Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and the Answer, such as those cited from the scholarship conducting a literary or linguistic analysis, will be incorporated as necessary to provide a broad and inclusive understanding of Sor Juana’s authorship, agency, and rhetorical practices only as they directly relate to this study of silence.

**Invention**

As an educated woman living in colonial Mexico, Sor Juana called upon many rhetorical strategies as well as utilized forms of writing that were popularly composed and circulated. Sor Juana’s education and the available scholarship which shows Sor Juana’s intellectual ability connect to the use of invention, and an analysis using the heuristic questions for invention will add significantly to the consideration of how a rhetor may choose to use rhetorical silence. The rhetorical canon of invention invites a study of silence as a rhetorical tool by considering the full range of a rhetor’s understanding of and use of choices, the means from which a strategy might be selected, and the ways that invention itself is an ongoing and constant practice. This section of
heuristic analysis is meant to be interdependent with the other categories in the heuristic set, and is meant to contribute a rich consideration for the ways that invention can be a point at which a rhetor may wield effectively a rhetorical silence.

1) **How might writer-speakers choose elements (or wording) such as silence?**

   As noted in previous chapters, the concepts connecting to this question are the preparedness of the rhetor, the consideration of audience during invention, specific invention activities or heuristics, and the consideration of kairos—and if, when, and how these four concepts are present or indicated in the case studies. These four concepts represent aspects of how a rhetor may make rhetorical choices. The context of the *Answer*, the text which is the focus of this chapter and case study, is especially critical, as are the training and abilities of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. While this study of rhetorical silence posits that invention may be considered as a constant and ongoing process and that invention may be individual, internal, social or external, the focus on a specific text has allowed for a close reading of a specific rhetorical context and rhetor, and has provided an opportunity to create rich description.

   Scholars, biographers, and Sor Juana herself have documented the education and training of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. In the *Answer*, Sor Juana provides significant biographical information focusing on her love of learning over the course of her lifetime, beginning at a time that she was very young. She says “I declare I was not yet three years old when my mother sent off one of my sisters, older than I, to learn to read in one of those girls’ schools” (Arenal and Powell, 49). Sor Juana documents that she followed her sister to school, and tricked the teacher to teach Sor Juana how to read (49). Further, Sor Juana documents her ability to read and write before she was six or seven and the request she made to her mother to attend a university. Sor Juana shares that she read a “great variety of books that belonged to [her] grandfather” (49, 50).
Sor Juana learned to read and write, and invested her time in study—even when that meant she studied independently. Sor Juana knew Latin, and could speak in various dialects of her colonized country. Calling her a “self-taught scholar,” Perelmuter suggests that “Sor Juana most likely became well versed in rhetorical theory and practice through the study of Latin, since many of the lessons in the grammar books included long passages from the most famous practitioners of rhetoric” (187). Based on the available scholarship, it is fair to say that for the time period, Sor Juana became very well-read and educated.

Many scholars have commented on Sor Juana’s ability to wield rhetorical forms of writing as well as her ability to shape or deploy concepts. Arenal and Powell describe the *Answer* as an epistolary address that “follows strict patterns of presentation, well known in her time to those (men) with university training” (23). Further, Sor Juana uses a formal religious epistolary style reflecting the “standard modes of address among religious women and men, and courtly manners” which also included “metaphors of humility” as well as a “standard avoidance of fastidium (tedium), as required by manuals of epistolary and forensic rhetoric” (Arenal and Powell, 23). Similarly, many credit Sor Juana’s education and voracious appetite for reading and learning as one foundation for her incredible ability to craft her speaking and writing. For example, when, in the *Answer*, Sor Juana uses the transitional phrase “To go on with the narration of this inclination of mine, of which I wish to give a full account,” she is utilizing a known rhetorical move in the writing of the time and in the texts she studied. Arenal and Powell describe the phrase as key, “emphasizing connections with both the colloquial narrative tradition of nuns’ Lives and the classical rhetoric for legal defenses” (113). Throughout the writing in the *Answer*, Sor Juana utilizes rhetorical structures in specific ways demonstrating her ability to work with structures and meaning. Further, Arenal and Powell suggest that Sor Juana is creating
complex parody and “makes fun of herself, juridical formalities, and the popular adaptation of those formalities in spiritual writings by nuns” (113). Sor Juana’s understanding of the writerly context—the forms, the internal structures, and the meanings of features—also meant being able to use writing in specific ways to achieve rhetorical goals. Not only was she well-educated, but Sor Juana was also well-prepared. Her ability to use rhetorical forms provides the kind of insight to show she also understood how audience and kairos contributed to the rhetorical situation.

Sor Juana’s letter, the Answer, was a written response to Letter from Sor Filotea de la Cruz / Carta de Sor Filotea de la Cruz; a letter that included the Carta Atenagórica / Letter Worthy of Athena. The available scholarship acknowledges that Sor Juana knew the writer of the Letter from Sor Filotea was Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla, because he was the recipient of Sor Juana’s original letter, Carta Atenagórica / Letter Worthy of Athena. The bishop received that letter because he requested that Sor Juana put her oral argument in writing for him—and nuns were supposed to adhere to the commands of ecclesiastic authorities. Sor Juana was aware that her audience was most definitely not “Sor Filotea”; however, the Answer addresses Sor Filotea frequently with “my Lady” and various other rhetorical acknowledgements such as “we women” throughout the text of the letter. Sor Juana is careful to rhetorically recognize gender and position. Rather, Sor Juana acknowledged her gender and position as well as “Sor Filotea’s” gender and position. For example, at one point, Sor Juana says “But in truth, my Lady, what can we women know, save philosophies of the kitchen?” (Arenal and Powell, 75). Sor Juana speaks to her supposed audience of Sor Filotea with multi-layered meaning, acknowledging gender and expectations for women.

In the next sentence, Lupercio Leonardo, a Spanish poet and satirist, is referenced and then Sor Juana suggests that when she cooks she observes “Had Aristotle cooked, he would have
written a great deal more” (75). Sor Juana draws on well-known philosophers while addressing her sister-peer Sor Filotea: a unique juxtaposition which assumes knowing and understanding the references, thus assuming an educated audience. In addition, the section from which this quote is taken draws upon and expands the ideas of separate spheres of knowing, learning, and understanding between women and men—but also uses irony. Again, Sor Juana’s writing is complex, intentionally rich with layered and multiple meanings. Arenal and Powell suggest that this section demonstrates Sor Juana’s ability to explore injustice and expose incongruity as Sor Juana discovers “alternative routes to knowledge” (123). Additionally, Ludmer notes that “[e]verything addressed to the bishop implies full acceptance of her socially assigned subordinate role” (88). While the various potential audiences for the Answer will be discussed later in this chapter, these examples should demonstrate Sor Juana’s ability, in her writing, to acknowledge and address audience through rhetorical strategies such as genre features and rhetorical devices.

In the Answer, Sor Juana utilizes both Latin and Spanish and relies on multiple sources for evidence and example. In the previous chapter, we observed how Anne Askew’s writing relied on one source whereas her male contemporaries cited many sources. Sor Juana’s writing in the Answer calls upon Aristotle, Cicero, Quintillian, several reference texts of the time period such as the Concise Columbia Encyclopedia, and the Bible, as well as drew from historical and contextual references such as citing the priest Vieira and creating a list of historical learned women (Arenal and Powell, Paz, Merrim). The references and the sources would have been recognized by readers of the time period. These sources are eloquently and effectively used at particular points in the Answer to support or assert Sor Juana’s writing on behalf of her own desire to learn, the reasonableness of allowing women to receive education, and her right to
write, speak, read, study, or to be silent. Bergmann discusses Sor Juana as a “brilliant and self-aware female writer” possessing a “gendered literary consciousness” (151). Sor Juana’s Answer and the available scholarship show that Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was educated, prepared, and that she had considered *kairos* for both a specific audience (Sor Filotea / Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz; religious authorities) and a general audience (her sisters, her supporters in viceregal court and in Spain, and future readers). Further, the writing shows Sor Juana’s ability to draw from vast sources, from rhetorical strategies, and then wield her understanding with the right wording and arrangement for the time. The writing shows that Sor Juana intentionally uses silence as a rhetorical tool.

**2) How are forms of silence and choice or agency connected?**

Admittedly, agency is a modern concept. Jean Franco suggests of Sor Juana that “[f]rom a contemporary vantage point, she is thus easily cast in the role of the individual challenging social and literary conventions, although it is doubtful whether modern notions of individuality are applicable to her” (23). Considering historical context as a critical element, it may be equally relevant to consider Merrim’s question that attends to Sor Juana’s unique writing style and crafting of both form and content. Merrim asks “in general and to what end does Sor Juana modify, complete, or selectively reject the courses set by her strong precursors?” (author’s emphasis, 23). Sor Juana’s reading, philosophical stances, and writing were anchored in a historically male tradition, and she lived in a context controlled by men. Though women were limited in choices for professions, and choices in education and writing, there is scholarship that suggesting that women, and more specifically, nuns, were able to retain some resistance and power with their writing practices. Kirk observes a Foucauldian sense of power and resistance when she posits that “[N]uns could and did exercise resistance within a multiplicity of discursive
force relations, particularly those involving the control and distribution of ideas in texts and conversations” (51). Kirk discusses the way that religious authorities (men) controlled the nun’s writing (women) given that, during the time, men “decided which records were kept. If women did gain access to the written word, they were not often permitted to write their opinions or feelings openly” (51). Further, concerns for moral and religious standards shaped the view of women and women’s writing as needing to be controlled or limited. Franco documents that “The Bishop of Puebla published the Carta Atenagorica without seeking Sor Juana’s consent,” an action that represents the context of the timeframe in which “bishops and confessors believed they had the right to control the writing of nuns” (42). Both Kirk and Ludmer, among other feminist scholars, posit that nun’s writing was often a form of resistance. Thus, the context of Sor Juana’s letter to the bishop (critiquing Vieira), the letter from Sor Filotea (the bishop in disguise) critiquing Sor Juana’s writing and study, and Sor Juana’s subsequent letter of response represent an interesting set of rhetorical practices within the context of the convent and of colonial Mexico.

Looking more closely at Sor Juana’s actions and writing, Ludmer suggests that readers attend to the discord of a specific place, “the place occupied by a woman in the field of knowledge under particular historical and discursive circumstances” and that we consider “the relationship between the space this particular woman has chosen and occupies and that granted her by the institutions and word of the other” (86, 87). So, we might consider the ways that Sor Juana created a space through writing and her own rhetorical practices to achieve her own goals or rhetorical ends. Bokser indicates that, in writing the Answer to the bishop, Sor Juana’s “act of response is interruptive, since what she should be doing is heeding his advice and shunning letters” (14). Since the writing, reading, and education of women were controlled by men, we
know that Sor Juana’s choices were also limited by social and historical contextual factors. Sor Juana’s agency or power exists within and between those positions allowed to women, between those spaces and actions monitored and controlled by men, and between the expectations for nun’s abilities to read and write and those kinds of reading and writing permitted. Her agency and power exists in the ways that Sor Juana communicates her understanding and knowing and in the way that she carefully and intentionally shapes the form and content.

Sor Juana is known for making her choices, and communicating her choices in writing. One example is a letter she wrote to Nunez, her confessor. The personal letter of 1681/82, written nearly a decade prior to the Answer but discovered in 1980, asserts Sor Juana’s voice. Arenal and Powell document that the private 1681/82 letter to Nunez “relieves him of his responsibilities to her for absolution of sins and spiritual guidance” as well as “criticizes the narrow-mindedness and repressive authoritarianism, the un-Christian and unintelligent dogmatism of the whole imperial establishment, including that of the other nuns and laywomen, young and old” (26). While all nuns were alleged to have the right to ‘fire’ their confessors since the Council of Trent, doing so was not a popular practice. Sor Juana demonstrates her ability to craft the letter utilizing rhetorical devices such as irony, themes, statements, and questions; and these rhetorical forms and content are later echoed in the Answer (Arenal and Powell, 26). Sor Juana asserted her right to choose to dismiss her confessor, as well as exacted the act of choosing in the unpublished letter dated 1681/82. This example is one indication of the kinds of rhetorical choices Sor Juana made, and it indicates she used rhetorical practices such as letters (and other available genres for composing) to communicate her choices in life, her choices that could impact her existence.
The letter to Sor Filotea (the *Answer*), however, connects to agency, power, and resistance in different ways because of Sor Juana’s relationship to authorities in the Church and in the viceregal courts, because of the unique circumstance of authorship and audience in historical context, because of the public and published nature of the exchange with Sor Filotea, and because of the rhetorical elements and forms used by Sor Juana in the *Answer*. The letter to Sor Filotea represents a set of complex political and social concerns and expectations as well as multifaceted questions about the purpose and stance. Is Sor Juana obedient? Is Sor Juana a heretic? Is it wrong to study? Franco warns against creating narratives in which Sor Juana plays a heroine fighting a male institution, and suggests that “such narratives impose a false unity on a corpus of writing in which the ‘author’s’ ownership of writing is always in question and in which publication was beyond the control of the individual” (25). The constraints of convent life set specific limits on authoring and publishing. One such example is the notion of obedience. As noted earlier, Bokser pointed to the notion of responding at all (i.e., the *Answer*) as an act of interruption or resistance. Therefore, Sor Juana’s *Answer* is not silent obedience.

Or, is it? In contrast to the notion of the letter as resistance, the *Answer* adopts a tone of humility and obedience. Franco observes that, in the opening paragraphs, Sor Juana “asserts that she has undertaken this task only out of obedience, assuring the Bishop that to engage in polemic is alien to her nature” (41). Obedience is a theme throughout the text of the *Answer*, as are Sor Juana’s rhetorical claims to humility and obedience. Sor Juana suggests that she had “never written a single thing of [her] own volition, but rather only in response to the pleadings and commands of others” (97). Sor Juana makes this claim to demonstrate her own obedience, to show that she was writing poems or other works not for pleasure but because she was ordered to do so. This statement counters Sor Filotea’s claim that learning is acceptable “as long as it does
not take women from their position of obedience” (Arenal and Powell, 225). Sor Filotea’s letter acts as a warning to Sor Juana; and Sor Juana’s Answer uses the values of obedience and virtue, genre features and rhetorical strategies to address each of Sor Filotea’s arguments. Franco concludes that “Sor Juana was constantly forced to seek alternative forms of authorization” because a nun’s writing “was in the domain of religion” (29). Sor Juana wielded rhetorical strategies in such a way as to uphold expectations while also expressing her own views and visions—she worked rhetorically within constraints to examine and discuss those constraints. Even though Sor Juana is not wholly rejecting the teachings of the Church, or the constraints on the lives of nuns, her arguments are publicly asserted and represented in Sor Juana’s Answer.

Despite the political upheaval in colonial Mexico that included food shortages and riots and the danger that political and social expectations represented to Sor Juana’s pursuit of intellectual freedom, she composed her argument (the Answer) for publication. In spite of the significant political and social pressure, and the threat to not just her studies but potentially her life, Sor Juana contructed a rebuttal using familiar rhetorical features and containing a depth and breadth of contextual references and multiplicity of meanings. Sor Juana complicates her ability to control her own life and her profession through a rhetoric of humility, with a focus on gender, and by arguing for intellectual freedom. The humility that Sor Juana uses in the Answer is a common rhetorical feature of the genres used in convents in colonial Mexico such as the nun’s vidas and epistolary address such as letters. Between the rhetorical devices, strategies, and genre markers and the actual content of the Answer, there is a dynamic interplay of what can be said, what should not be said, what cannot be said, and what should be said; there is a dynamic tension between the strategies and substance of the Answer. Sor Juana’s Answer demonstrates that constant play of external and internal forces shaping the available means through genre features
and writerly structures, through the use of many outside sources and her own story, and through her crafted acknowledgment of audience.

3) **How are invention and silence connected?**

   It is important to recognize that silence is among the means available to a rhetor and that invention is one point at which a rhetor would choose to utilize a rhetorical strategy such as rhetorical silence. Several scholars attend to multiple possible meanings for Sor Juana’s various arguments in the *Answer*, and many give attention to Sor Juana’s uses and meanings of specific wording such as knowing, saying, not-saying, and not-knowing. For example, Ludmer’s study examines “the separation of the field of knowing from that of saying” and “the reorganization of the field of knowing in accordance with the field of not saying” in Sor Juana’s *Answer* (87). Franco calls upon Ludmer’s work to discuss “four highly charged terms” identified as “speaking,” “knowing,” “not speaking,” and “not knowing” (45). Similarly, several scholars have attended specifically to Sor Juana’s use of and possible meanings for silence. Within the play of word choices and genre features in the *Answer* is evidence of Sor Juana’s ability, intelligence, and power. Sor Juana is educated and well-read. Sor Juana utilizes several sources for support in her letter. From these ideas alone, it is evident that Sor Juana would understand that silence is one of many possible and available means to achieve a goal. However, it is the continual reference to silence, that demonstrated a link between rhetorical silence and rhetorical invention.

   Near the beginning of the *Answer*, Sor Juana draws attention to saying, not-saying, knowing, and not-knowing. These textual references near the beginning create a foundation upon which Sor Juana builds similar ideas and meanings. Sor Juana adds to the concepts mentioned at the beginning, and in doing so sets up potential other uses for silence and not-saying with
potentially multiple and layered meanings. Sor Juana uses her introduction to construct a complex understanding of those four concepts. In the opening paragraph of the *Answer*, Sor Juana tells Sor Filotea she thought she “should keep quiet” and that she is “unable to say anything worthy” of Sor Filotea (Arenal and Powell, 39). This is common practice for the context, for letter writing—to be extremely polite, humble. This is also indicative of the ‘word-play’ and ‘genre-play’ in which Sor Juana engages to draw attention to the concepts of saying, not-saying, and silence. Using standard genre features of letters and vidas, as well as expected topics and concepts, Sor Juana invents appropriate communication, but also constructs her point-for-point argumentative response to Sor Filotea.

Another topic that is used thematically is silence. Silence is referenced throughout the text, though often indirectly as part of not-saying; however, Sor Juana does not equate silence with not-saying. The most that Sor Juana speaks about silence comprises the content of the fourth paragraph of the *Answer*; this is the paragraph in which Sor Juana theorizes silence. Sor Juana first shares ideas about why she should keep quiet and not respond to Sor Filotea, and then Sor Juana discusses why she should respond. She says:

> And therefore I had nearly resolved to leave the matter in silence; yet although silence explains much by the emphasis of leaving all unexplained, because it is a negative thing one must name the silence, so that what it signifies may be understood. Failing that silence will say nothing, for that is its proper function: to say nothing. (Arenal and Powell, 42, 43)

Here Sor Juana posits a form and function for silence. Silence is and is not tied to sound; silence does have meaning. With several references prior to the fourth paragraph to concepts such as saying, not-saying, saying nothing, and being unable to speak, the content focused on silence in
that fourth paragraph is significantly heightened, that is, rhetorically amplified. The allusions to the concepts of saying, not-saying, and silence are also present throughout the *Answer*, consistently creating echoes of potential meaning.

Later, and near the end of the *Answer*, Sor Juana prompts Sor Filotea to understand the conditions of a silence from Sor Juana. Sor Juana first suggests “[U]nless your instructions intervene, I shall never in my own defense take up the pen again” (Arenal and Powell, 97). Then, approximately fifteen lines afterward, Sor Juana prompts Sor Filotea again by saying “[I]f by your wisdom and sense, my Lady, you should be pleased for me to do other than what I propose, then as is only right, to the slightest motion of your pleasure I shall cede my own decision, what was as I have told you to keep still” (99). These two quotes represent the only references to Sor Juana’s own silence, and the silence hangs on conditions which might be set by Sor Filotea. These statements are richly complex because of their depth and breadth—alluding to gender, power, and knowledge. Still, readers are not told what Sor Juana’s silence may *mean* other than the silence being connected to Sor Filotea, to knowing, and to meaning.

Silence is theorized as meaningful, and silence is promised. Sor Juana posits that she will not “take up the pen” and she will “keep still” (97, 99). However, even though Sor Juana tells us that silence should be named, she does not directly name the silence—she does not tell us what *her* silence *means*. She thus leaves this meaning for the reader to supply. Bokser sees in this paragraph, and in the whole of the letter, an enthymeme:

“silence is meaningful (the major premise, stated explicitly). I shall now be silent, “keep still” (minor premise, stated explicitly). Therefore, you should attribute meaning to my silence (inferred conclusion)” (17).
The complexity of Sor Juana’s writing—the form, the content—is evident of rhetorical thought and rhetorical practice connecting silence with invention. Sor Juana constructs multiple and layered meanings within the writing, some of which must be supplied by an audience. The rhetorical maneuvering is also evidence of an understanding of context and of the possible consequences for any kind of response other than one that reflects the values for convent life. Lavrin documents that the expectations for Sor Juana (and other nuns) were to “be humble, meek, and self-effacing” (70). (These values, too, would be reflected in standard epistolary address.) Lavrin notes that nuns would have professed “four vows: poverty, chastity, obedience, and enclosure” (68). Sor Juana’s Answer struck an interesting and dynamic balance of rhetorical strategies that reflected expectations and values for the context, and created a space for Sor Juana’s response in a context in which Sor Juana could have easily been in mortal danger.

Franco states that, historically, colonial Mexico and the Inquisition did not need the rhetorical force of examinations and burnings to create a climate of fear, and suggests that “Sor Juana’s writing shows that the Holy Office was a powerful deterrent whose procedures were so well known among the population that they induced a kind of self-censorship” (58). Sor Juana represented herself as obedient and used various concepts or structures to reflect the appropriate value set or behavior, as well as potentially deflect suspicion or accusation. Sor Juana’s unique references to saying and not-saying are also evidence of her acknowledgment of obedience and humility. Carefully weighing the context, Bergmann observes “there could be no adequate rebuttal to the implicit accusations in the letter by ‘Sor Filotea’; the nun’s obedience to the Church meant renunciation of the very intellectual work that had motivated her decision to renounce the ‘world’ and enter the convent” (156). The best possible choice in responding was silence; however, Sor Juana demonstrated a variety of possible silences in her writing and
demanded that a reader consider Sor Juana’s meaning for her own silence. Bokser suggests “her nuanced understanding of the rhetorical potentials of silence adds to more traditional rhetorical knowledge that focuses on speech only” (6). Sor Juana’s careful use of genre features, rhetorical moves, and concepts such as saying or not-saying demonstrate a richness and complexity of thought, as well as her ability to select from a range of possible tools or strategies to create an effect or achieve a rhetorical goal.

The relationship between silence and invention is dynamic, for Sor Juana wrote silence into her letter in several different ways. Her meaning is complex and requires a meticulous reading—evident also in the amount of scholarly attention given to Sor Juana’s writing. Sor Juana spoke of silence, described silence, demonstrated a knowing of silence, but did not fully deploy a silence. Her letter speaks. And, according to Sor Juana, the silence speaks, too. Silence is an idea, is theorized, and potentially represents conflicting ideologies. Her letter is symbolic of her voice and her self—the self she intends to still—and the letter is not a silence despite the claim to silence and the foreshadowing of a silence. Beyond the scope of the letter, in her life, Sor Juana continued to write and study and publish. Even though Sor Juana sold her library, Arenal and Powell document that she wrote her last set of carols during that time after the Answer was composed (14). The first edition of the second volume of Sor Juana’s works was published in 1692, and the first edition of the third volume of Sor Juana’s works was published five years after her death (Arenal and Powell, xxiv). No doubt Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz intended for readers and listeners to pause and consider meaning and possibly apply multiple meanings as she positioned silence and knowledge in unique ways in the Answer. Sor Juana sought the available means to respond to the actions and accusations of Sor Filotea / Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla.
4) What relationship exists between invention and rhetorical amplification?

It is evident that Sor Juana saw rhetorical silence as one of the available means. Not only does Sor Juana acknowledge the position of or application of silence as appropriate for a devout nun in the *Answer*, but she also shows silence to be necessary for study and education. Sor Juana theorizes a space for silence that envisions a connection between silence and meaning, connecting meaning and audience. Beyond its use for style or eloquence, and beyond simply repeating or restating a concept, rhetorical amplification may also be strategically used for different purposes, in different contexts (Laib). A connection between rhetorical amplification, invention, and silence is not only that rhetorical amplification may be selected during invention, but that when a rhetor such as Sor Juana considers particular rhetorical goals, specific audiences, and broader contexts, that rhetor is also considering the best means available for addressing multiple concerns and reaching complex objectives.

Because the *Answer* is a complex piece of writing, with multiple audiences, situated in a specific context. I could not possibly identify all of Sor Juana’s objectives in the space of this study. Indeed, Arenal and Powell suggest there may not be a way of knowing this specifically. However, I hope to posit some of the goals for the writing as they connect to rhetorical silence and rhetorical amplification. Based on earlier discussion of Sor Juana’s education and her strengths as a writer-rhetor, we can assume that she recognized rhetorical amplification (as well as other strategies) as one possible means for achieving a particular goal. Similarly, Baroque writing of the time period frequently relied on elaboration as a means of intensifying emotional connection for a reader-listener; and, elaboration is one function of amplification. Within the textual arrangement of the *Answer*, it is possible that Sor Juana crafted the writing in such a way that the *Answer* adds to the possible functions of rhetorical amplification—such as the function
of elaboration—while also contributing to those forms for amplification such as repetition and restatement.

This chapter discusses the restatement and repetition of the concept of saying and not-saying in the first paragraph, as well as the fact that those concepts echo throughout the text. Sor Juana’s strategy is to use a concept, and then to repeat the concept but with a different meaning—or possible different meanings. This strategy is also indicative of Sor Juana’s understanding of using rhetorical amplification for emphasis and effect. Sor Juana crafts meaning through the rhetorical features and the context, and continues to bring her reader back to specific concepts again and again. Most often Sor Juana points to potential meanings for and uses of silence. For example, just after Sor Juana’s suggestion that one should “name the silence, so that what it signifies may be understood,” she discusses a silence from St. Paul, also known as “The holy Chosen Vessel” (43). She describes St. Paul’s inability to depict his visit to the “third Heaven” and posits a reason for his silence:

He does not say what he saw, but he says that he cannot say it. In this way, of those things that cannot be spoken, it must be said that they cannot be spoken, so that it may be known that silence is kept not for lack of things to say, but because the many things there are to say cannot be contained in mere words (43).

This paragraph in which silence must be named is also a paragraph that shows that silence is sometimes necessary—but can still be identified. The possible relationship shown here is that Sor Juana used invention techniques with rhetorical strategies, was able to turn specific concepts over and over, and shift their meaning by altering the use of the concept. Sor Juana, in the rhetorical progression of the *Answer*, allowed the repetition and restatement to reveal multiple meanings and possibilities—elaborating (and amplifying) the concept in the process.
It is interesting that Sor Juana chooses St. Paul as an example at this early point in the rhetorical structure of the Answer, especially considering that Sor Juana addresses an important biblical quote from St. Paul later on and that challenges the ways the quote had been interpreted by religious authorities and social ideology. The quote to which I refer was also utilized by Anne Askew, though Askew used it differently. (The difference will be discussed later in this chapter as it connects with Audience.) In addressing a question about whether or not women should be permitted to pursue study and education, Sor Juana raises several arguments. One argument includes the quote from St. Paul, which Sor Juana cites as “Let women keep silence in the Churches: for it is not permitted them to speak” (81). This quote was used commonly to advance a religious and societal position that maintained a status for women as uneducated or under-educated. Sor Juana carefully and respectfully turns this concept of silence in Church over and over as she makes several points: she notes that whispered prayers may distract others in Church; that women are permitted to study privately but not lecture publicly; she posits a discussion of learning that shows both the benefits and drawbacks of study such as giving people a false sense of knowledge; she shows interpretation is not permitted for men or women; and, arriving at a well-rounded understanding for St. Paul’s silence in Church, Sor Juana concludes that “in truth the Apostle said this not to women but to men” (83). Sor Juana suggests that silence is meant for “all those who are not very competent” (83). The first set of paragraphs following her mention of St. Paul’s words elaborate the concepts connected to the silence before Sor Juana concludes that silence is not just for women.

This section of her larger argument may be representative of an elaborated common theme, showing the ideology of silence. During the Renaissance, women were not encouraged to be educated or, if women were educated, women’s education served a societal goal as a means of
teaching in the home, passing on societal and religious ideology and value sets. Even though religion permeated many communities and households, the beliefs about women’s public speaking or teaching and women’s education were also commonly held outside the Church. Women’s lack of education and silence were socially expected. Sor Juana’s carefully constructed debate about whether or not women should be permitted to study and pursue education drew on various tenets of social and religious expectations—attending to rhetorical invention and rhetorical strategies. The focus on St. Paul’s quote is part of that common set of beliefs.

When discussing possible relationships between rhetorical invention and rhetorical amplification, the text of Sor Juana’s Answer provides some examples of unique uses of rhetorical strategies that work toward complex goals. One such goal is that Sor Juana argues on behalf of women’s right to education. It is also possible that she implicitly argues for greater attention to and understanding of the concepts of saying, not-saying, and silence through various ways of bringing these concepts to the attention of a reader-listener. Thus, invention encompasses a particular set of abilities, as well as forms and patterns for which to compose an effective piece of writing. Sor Juana, through invention techniques, is able to select from a variety of tools, styles, and ways of knowing—using her understanding of audience, of the writing and genres of the time period, and using her education and understanding of rhetoric. Within this frame of invention techniques, Sor Juana has more opportunities to choose from as well as apply forms and functions of rhetorical amplification. The use of rhetorical silence is intentional, as Sor Juana shows us in the writing.

**Delivery**

As a rhetorical canon, delivery plays an important role in the analysis of silence. Delivery is vitally interwoven with both Invention and Audience, and complexly executed at different
times based on context, genre, gender, and other factors. While this set of guiding questions is not intended to be separate from the other heuristic categories, the examination of delivery should contribute to a richer analysis of how silence is produced and received.

1) **What kinds of silence are delivered: in what specific ways (i.e., bodily, textual, spatial) and for how long?**

There are complicated elements for delivering effective rhetorical messages which also rely on an audience, a context, and the perceived delivery of the message. The scholarship on delivery and on silence preview the challenges to a rhetor for creating an effective message: a message not only composed and delivered effectively, but one that reaches an audience as it was intended. Sor Juana’s suggestions about silence demonstrate that she very much intended for an audience to consider silence and its meaning (i.e., not just Sor Filotea / the bishop). The context here is similar to the silence of Anne Askew with regard to social expectations for women, and the beliefs and values about religious writing or speaking. Sor Juana is a woman writer asserting her arguments to a set of religious authorities under a unique set of social and political conditions that require a kind of silence-as-obedience. The context of the delivery here is different in that Sor Juana is not directly contradicting Catholic beliefs, nor is she under the duress of an interrogation or immediate bodily threat, and the text under analysis is not representative of an actual and immediate oral dialogue. Rather, the letter is part of an ongoing conversation that took place over months and years, and that was mediated by writing. (For example, Sor Juana’s response to Sor Filotea is dated three months after Sor Filotea’s letter.) These are not bodily silences, or silences within a setting in a given space. Sor Juana’s letter, the *Answer*, is textual; the silences delivered are textual.
However, the silences delivered are also conceptual and theoretical. Sor Juana suggests that silence needs to be named, that mere words may not communicate all things; Sor Juana theorizes silence in different ways throughout the entirety of the Answer. The text describes various kinds of silences, often through concepts such as saying and not-saying, often through outside references. For example, Sor Juana suggests “Moses, because he was a stutterer, thought himself unworthy to speak to Pharaoh” (Arenal and Powell, 43). Then, she says, later in Moses’ life “not only did he speak to God Himself, but he dared to ask of Him the impossible” (43). Sor Juana uses the Bible as a source and posits one kind of not-saying and saying; reasons for and versions of silence. At the very beginning of the Answer, Sor Juana references the reason that St. Thomas Aquinas was silent in front of his teacher: “he could say nothing worthy of Albertus” (39). This reference is used in the same paragraph to compare Sor Juana’s desire to “keep quiet” before Sor Filotea because Sor Juana was “unable to say anything worthy” (39). Sor Juana frequently used outside sources, and this instance represents another way of saying or not-saying—with multiple and layered meanings considering Sor Juana’s understanding of her audience and her genre.

In another example of silence, Sor Juana talks about her early education. Sor Juana describes attending school, deceiving the teacher to be permitted to attend school, and learning to read. Sor Juana also describes hiding her knowledge: “My teacher had kept it from my mother to give delight with a thing all done and to receive a prize for a thing done well. And I had kept still, thinking I would be whipped for having done this without permission” (49). Ludmer claims that this, Sor Juana’s first encounter with writing, “as narrated in the biography, thus comprises a not saying that she knows” (author’s emphasis, 89). This description shares a nuance of not-saying: both the teacher and young Sor Juana are silent; they are both not-saying, but for
different reasons. In this way, throughout the *Answer*, Sor Juana posits silence to her audience of readers, to the audience of the bishop; Sor Juana shows differing contexts for silence, reasons for silence, and ways of understanding silence. Sor Juana theorizes silence and silences—imposed and chosen; social, religious, and political; and as having meaning or knowing attached.

The many versions of silence presented make Sor Juana’s silence unique. The silences delivered are textual, but are also complex. The dynamic element of these textual silences is the theorizing that Sor Juana posits with regard to silence itself, the contexts that Sor Juana includes and connects, and the silence that does or does not occur following the delivery of the *Answer*. Sor Juana’s *Answer* delivers silence in multiple ways, but the writer herself does not ever fall silent; that is, the writer does not stop writing or studying after the delivery of the *Answer* even though the writer promises to “never … take up the pen again” (97). Bokser, Arenal and Powell, and other scholars note that Sor Juana *decreases* the amount of writing and publishing after the *Answer*, but her writing does not diminish entirely. While it isn’t possible to know in precise terms each layer of meaning or multiplicity of meaning for Sor Juana’s silence, Sor Juana’s structuring of the writing and her rhetorical practices suggest that she intended for audiences to consider the potential for silence as well as consider the meanings of her silence. Additionally, it is possible that Sor Juana relied on a complex set of women’s rhetorical practices and men’s rhetorical practices in both the public and private sphere, and utilized this set of practices uniquely to achieve a specific rhetorical delivery of silence.

2) **How does the rhetor create the silence?**

Scholars studying Sor Juana’s poetry and prose have discussed the ways that Sor Juana deliberately uses rhetorical structures of genre to achieve distinctive and layered meanings (Franco, Merrim, Ludmer, Arenal, Bergmann). The interplay of content, form, and meaning
indicate the work of an intellectual mind crafting the selection and arrangement of ideas. Sor Juana’s delivery of silence(s) in the *Answer* is no different. The concept of a created silence brings together ideas from the scholarship on Sor Juana’s philosophical writing and ideas from the scholarship about speaking, eloquence, and rhetoric. The surrounding words—as well as the contextual surroundings themselves, including the convent and audience—effectively shape the delivery. In the case of the *Answer*, Sor Juana writes a letter in response to a letter, and she composes within specific forms of writing for the time period to create a point-for-point response to Sor Filotea’s arguments. In doing so, the silence(s) are created by both rhetor and audience.

Admittedly, the assumption that Sor Juana uses rhetorical forms and strategies to shape content and meaning assumes, in part, some agency of the rhetor: the rhetor has the power or authority to choose to deliver a message, even a silence, based their understanding of a myriad of contextual factors (whether or not the context is supportive of individual expression or allows for unique voices to be heard). Second, the context and community shape a delivered message, including a delivered silence, through norms and expectations of that culture or community: colonial Mexico, the convent. The delivery of the *Answer*, and of the various silences within, matter for both the rhetor and the audience, for delivery shapes the intended meaning by complementing or by conflicting with expectation and familiar rhetorical practices.

Sor Juana’s own silence is delivered in the text of the *Answer*, and afterward in the ways that Sor Juana published less and became more secluded. The textual delivery is described, though, in several ways and through several sources as evidence: through outside sources, through her own experiences, through her theorizing that draws in the audience’s perceptions, experiences, and understanding. Sor Juana reveals silence in different contexts as well as demonstrates different reasons for being silent, different ways of being silent, and different
meanings for silence. As a whole, the Answer provides a conceptual and symbolic philosophy for rhetorical silence while simultaneously delivering Sor Juana’s own promise to be obedient and to “keep still”. One example of the rich philosophical staging for silence is Sor Juana’s examination of the popularly used Catholic instruction taken from the apostle Paul, and quoted by Sor Juana as “Let women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted them to speak” (Arenal and Powell, 81). Sor Juana carefully constructs a rhetorical argument refuting the meaning of the quote. By using other outside sources (such as Dr. Juan Diaz de Arce, a Mexican theologian and professor), Sor Juana shows that silence should be used during service (to avoid distracting the speaker or listeners), that women are meant to study but not to interpret, and that silence was meant for all—not only women but both men and women (Arenal and Powell, 81-91). She carefully uses citations from the text surrounding St. Paul’s famed quote and the philosophies of other men to argue her ideas effectively and to refute popular opinion. The point of using this example is to note that Sor Juana did not just talk about her silence-as-obedience or her acceptance of silence. Instead, she introduced theories and philosophies of silence that provided symbolic and conceptual visions of what silence is, what silences does, and how silence works in context. Her readers are given much more to consider than just an idea of Sor Juana keeping still.

Sor Juana does deliver her own silence, or a promise to be silent. It is important to note that Sor Juana was not completely “silent” in the sense that she stopped writing, studying, or publishing. It was Sor Juana’s claims, her assertions in the Answer, that created the silence through a means of theorizing saying / not-saying and knowing / not-knowing as ways of executing silences. Bruneau demonstrates silence can function to reify social structures and ideology (38). Merrim concurs that “the woman writer’s adherence to a rhetorical code can involve an awareness of its relation to an ideological code” (28). It is possible that Sor Juana was
pointing to the various social and political structures that use silence so that an audience might have a better understanding of silence, in addition to the idea that an audience might create some meaning for the impending silence of Sor Juana. Sor Juana called upon the social expectations for the silence of women anchored in a Christian tradition—silence in public speech, but also the silence of a non-educated (non-reading, non-writing) woman. Pointing to these social structures and expectations—a silent woman—was also a way for Sor Juana to demonstrate her ethos. Merrim, referring to nuns’ writing, observes that “the ‘female’ voice they adopt is also a public stance, adjusted to a patriarchal expectation” (28). So, to deliver a silence is ethical, and for Sor Juana, delivering a silence under the terms of recognizing the structures in place was also ethical.

Within the limitations of rhetorical structures and societal structures, Sor Juana demonstrated, too, that she is a good woman, one made better through study, reading, and writing. Sor Juana uses such expectations to her own purpose, and delivers a silence with depth and breadth, a philosophical and theoretical silence. Rhetorical delivery includes what surrounds the silence; the surrounding elements help the rhetor create the delivery of a rhetorical silence. Sor Juana creates conceptual and symbolic specificity and ambiguity by describing many silences, using outside sources as evidence and example, and by not telling her readers precisely what her silence means. Sor Juana creates conceptual and symbolic specificity and ambiguity by showing diverse silences, the ways that silence can mean, and by never delivering the meaning of her silence, instead only asking audiences to listen for meaning.

3) **What are connections between rhetorical delivery and rhetorical silence?**

There is more than one way to deliver a rhetorical silence and create meaning with the silence, and Sor Juana provides examples and evidence as well as theorizes for her audience that silences *mean*. Sor Juana theorizes we must “name the silence, so that what it signifies may be
understood” (43). Sor Juana’s writing in the *Answer* provides some connection between the canon of delivery and rhetorical silence, for she emphasizes not only silence but also that the audience can take its clues from the rhetorical delivery of a silence.

Sor Juana, through the use of repetition and restatement, creates a resonating structure for concepts such as saying and not-saying throughout the *Answer*. In doing so, the writing emphasizes ideas for a reader. In the first paragraph of the *Answer*, Sor Juana alludes to ideas of saying and not-saying through the use of wording such as “silence”, “kept quiet”, “say nothing worthy”, “bounded by the confines of speech”, and “struck dumb” (39). The subtle mention of concepts creates a rhythm of ideas, and Sor Juana effectively leaves a reader with the impression of silence, of saying and not-saying. For each part of the *Answer*, and throughout the differing arguments or claims, Sor Juana uses wording, arrangement, and structure to set off and emphasize specific ideas such as the example of saying, not-saying, and silence.

The use of the genre and rhetorical structures also connects silence and delivery through style. Sor Juana effectively takes up rhetorical practices in the feminine style that is permitted to nuns, but wields the content and function of the rhetorical form boldly, directly, and intellectually. Arenal and Powell document that Sor Juana’s use of the current genres in colonial Mexico combined with the structured logical argument shows “absorption and application of the Greek and Roman teachings of Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and Quintilian” (24). In fact, Sor Juana cites Quintilian, in Latin, in the opening of her *Answer* (Arenal and Powell 39). Franco observes that Sor Juana was resourceful in “finding ways to destabilize” genres and rhetorical practices through various tactics including “mimicry of what was accepted as feminine discourse (obeisance, self-denigration)” (25). Bergmann considered Sor Juana’s abilities as “a woman manipulating discourse in a setting where discourse could be effectively distorted or contradicted
by the men in power” (157). Sor Juana’s delivery in the Answer, including the genre features, rhetorical structures, and tone, echoes Buchanan’s notions of the feminine and masculine delivery styles and of the style that “simultaneously subverted social norms dictating women’s silence and invisibility and cloaked the public and persuasive nature of their discourse” (78, 79). Sor Juana’s delivery does as much to reveal silence as it does to use silence within the social and political expectations for nuns.

Connections between delivery and silence are also reliant on the surrounding aspects of the rhetorical situation such as space, context, and relationship to the audience. Sor Juana utilizes unique genres of the time period, the historic political and religious context, to deliver her rhetorical silence. The Answer theorizes silence and what being silent or choosing silence may mean. While she delivers a claim of silence, in the letter, the historic record shows that, after the Answer, Sor Juana only withheld some ‘noise’, ‘speaking’, or ‘publishing’: so, she was not completely silent during the last few years of her life. (Sor Juana uses the concepts of ‘noise’, ‘speaking’, and ‘publish’ or ‘press’ to contrast and complement concepts of silence.) Sor Juana’s delivery utilizes popular writing genres and voices of the time. Ludmer sees three zones or three texts within the content of the Answer: “(1) the text written directly to the bishop; (2) what has been read as her intellectual autobiography; and (3) the polemic regarding St. Paul’s maxim that women remain silent in Church. Three zones in constant contradiction” (88). Ludmer concludes that the space of the biography is where Sor Juana “writes that she remains silent, studies, and knows—thus creating another textual space, her own, stripped of rhetoric, in which she writes what is not said in the other zones” (88). Similarly, Bokser effectively argues that Sor Juana “works both within and against patriarchal norms” (13). The way we know a silence has occurred is through our socio-cultural experiences making meaning from sounds and from
silences, through our memory of other cultural, class, or political contexts, and our experience of time. While connections between delivery and silence might begin with Sor Juana’s potential intended emphasis and effect, it is also obvious that Sor Juana considered other complex factors such as time, memory, context, and audience reception and factored those along with style and delivery in connecting the two concepts of rhetorical delivery and rhetorical silence.

**Audience**

The category of audience is particularly complex in the case study of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz because of the pseudonym used by the letter-writer, because of the exchange of letters which resulted in the *Answer*, and because of the socio-political climate in colonial Mexico. Utilizing the guiding questions is a means of analyzing the dynamic ways that audience plays a part in the construction of rhetorical silence—including the potential for Sor Juana as audience, the readers of the letters in Spain, and the future readers of Sor Juana’s works. The concepts of audience, and concepts connected to audience, contribute a fuller examination of silence as a rhetorical tool.

1) **What are audience expectations for a given context with regard to the use of silence?**

2) **How might a rhetor use a strategy such as silence to elicit a specific audience response?**

The direct audience for the *Answer* is Sor Filotea; Sor Filotea is a pseudonym for Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla, and Sor Juana was aware of this fact. Additionally, there were other audiences for the *Answer*; scholarship suggests that Sor Juana considered her accusers (those among the religious authorities) and her supporters (those among the courts in Mexico and Spain) as audiences for the *Answer*. Even near the conclusion, Sor Juana gives a
further indication that she is aware of the potentially broad range of possible audiences. Sor Juana humbly apologizes when she says

But where am I bound, my Lady? For none of this is pertinent here; nor meant for your ears; instead, as I was speaking of my detractors, I recalled the phrases of one such who has recently appeared, and all unwittingly my pen strayed in a desire to reply to him specifically, although my intention is to speak generally (Arenal and Powell, 93).

Sor Juana’s writing reveals a multi-layered recognition and a possible disclaimer that demonstrates Sor Juana’s awareness of the complex nature of audience. The primary audience of Sor Filotea is also Fernández, a Church authority. These Church authorities demand Sor Juana’s silence, demand that she follow the example of other nuns who studied and wrote privately, devoutly, and under the control of a confessor. Sor Juana composed the letter with a broad set of readers in mind, but readers who would clearly recognize her outside sources and understand her vast references (Arenal and Powell, Bokser, and Merrim). Arenal and Powell document that the bishop’s letter “with its pretense of saintly guidance […] served as a public admonition and delivered a threat of persecution” (13). The expectations of the Church authorities-as-audience were for Sor Juana to follow the values of the time period and situation: nuns specifically, and women generally, should be obedient, submissive, silent. This example represents some humility and addresses the threat of those other potential readers.

Audience expectations would also include political and societal expectations for the nuns and the convent. In colonial Mexico, certain kinds of silence were expected of nuns. The rhetorical strategies and practices of nuns were monitored and restricted by Church authorities, though Kirk suggested that nuns found ways to use their rhetorical practices to meet their own needs and goals. While nuns were allowed to pursue some education, the purpose was solely to
be educated in a way that allowed a nun to follow God, to pray, to write as commanded by their confessor or as requested by an outside benefactor, and ultimately serve the convent and Church through contemplation, obedience, enclosure, and humility. Lavrin’s studies of the convent and nuns’ writing documents the behaviors of “model nuns”; and examines the ways that Sor Juana’s writing was and was not like the writing of other nuns (76, 77). However, Sor Juana’s writing drew much attention, her intellectual ability was widely recognized, and so Sor Juana was the target of Fernández, Seijas, and other ecclesiastical leaders. The public attention and praise seemed a direct conflict or contradiction to the expectations for the lives of nuns. Yet, Sor Juana’s writing in the *Answer* connects to the values and expectations for nuns, and Sor Juana used her writing strategically and rhetorically to connect with audience expectations.

The expectations for nuns, and therefore the expectations for Sor Juana, were to live and behave differently, and with less public attention and praise. The perception was that Sor Juana did not devote her life to God as much as she devoted her life to study and acquisition of knowledge; this perception is communicated by Sor Filotea. Sor Juana’s *Answer* argued that her best way to understand God and devote her life to God was through study. To meet the expectations as well as challenge some religious and political expectations, Sor Juana argued in favor of a right to education for women. One tenet of that argument explores Sor Juana’s interdisciplinary approach to study and to religious devotion; she carefully argued her way to “the summit of Holy Theology” by ascending “the ladder of the humane arts and sciences in order to reach it” (Arenal and Powell 53). She then carefully argues in favor of the study of various topics and disciplines such as logic, rhetoric, math, astrology, and geometry, as she connects each one to religious contemplation and the Bible. For example, Sor Juana asks “Without Logic, how should I know the general and specific methods by which the Holy Scripture is written?” (Arenal
and Powell 53). This is one strategic and rhetorical approach in which Sor Juana addressed expectations (religious and devotional contemplation) to elicit a specific response (she be allowed to study).

Another strategy Sor Juana used was that of obedience and humility. Sor Juana uses several tactics to address Sor Filotea’s request that Sor Juana’s writing focus on more religious content when Sor Filotea, speaking of other saints’ writing, says “I could wish that you would imitate them not only in meter but in your choice of subject matter as well” (Arenal and Powell, 225). Sor Juana addresses each of Sor Filotea’s points with her own point-for-point argument, and to the suggestion that the content of the writing be more religious, Sor Juana responds by including some of the pamphlets and devotional writings to Sor Filotea “so that [you] may distribute them (if you think it seemly) among our sisters” (101). Sor Juana indirectly shows that she has written in the forms and with the content Sor Filotea suggests. Bokser addresses this strategy in the Answer “as an act of obedience” but also as a “direct affront” to the bishop (10). Bokser suggests that in both letters (the bishop’s and Sor Juana’s) there is “excessive politeness and a guise of equality” to which Sor Juana is correspondingly humble, and the letters show “both figures simultaneously transcending and reinforcing distinctions in hierarchy” (10, 11).

This example is one of many instances in which Sor Juana addresses Sor Filotea as audience while also acknowledging the multiple layers of audience and context as well as potentially speaking to outside and future readers. Sor Juana shows her previous experience as a writer of religious and devotional texts, demonstrating her obedience. She used strategies to meet the appropriate expectations, but with layered and multiple possible meanings that also provided a rich rhetorically structured set of messages.
From the beginning of the *Answer* to the very conclusion, Sor Juana uses rhetorical strategies to address multiple audiences and demonstrate her ethos as a humble and obedient nun. Perelmuter notes that “it was understood that the speaker’s submissiveness and humility would put the audience in a favorable state of mind” so “Sor Juana begins by apologizing for her delay in answering Sor Filotea’s letter” (187). Even Sor Juana’s promised silence is also a response to Sor Filotea as well as a prompt to other audiences. The primary audience’s response to Sor Juana’s silence would be positive, and may even evoke praise. However, Sor Juana theorizes a different kind of silence in the *Answer*; Sor Juana suggests more than one kind of silence, and multiple meanings for silence. Arenal and Powell strongly assert that the *Answer* “not only responds to the bishop, it also alerts Sor Juana’s circle of friends to the dangers she faces” and the *Answer* “declares for posterity her own coming silence—implying in advance what that silence might mean” (30). The direct audience expects a particular kind of silence; Sor Juana uses different kinds of silence to create different meanings. Ultimately, the audience has to supply meaning for silence. Sor Juana is evidently aware of her audience; she is aware of the expectations for not only the genre features and rhetorical moves, but the expectations for a nun’s life; she is able to rhetorically and strategically craft the *Answer* to draw on the audience expectations for silence, but to strategically create a space for her own silence within those expectations.

3) **How does the rhetor create a role for the audience to receive, perceive, or interpret a rhetorical silence?**

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz utilizes several strategies to engage an audience, and to enact roles for both audience and rhetor. The writing in the *Answer* demonstrates a depth and breadth of tactics, and the potential to see Ede and Lundsford’s dynamic concepts for audience and rhetor
including, “A fully elaborated view of audience, then, must balance the creativity of the writer with the different, but equally important, creativity of the reader. It must account for a wide and shifting range of roles for both addressed and invoked audiences” (170). Scholars have noted Sor Juana’s unique ways of acknowledging her audience in the *Answer*. Sor Juana does more than just include wording such as “my Lady” to address her primary audience of Sor Filotea. She also utilizes the appropriate genre markers for religious epistolary address, which include what appears to “modern and secular eyes as self-deprecation, exaggerated humility, and convoluted politeness” as well as other rhetorical moves and conventions of the time period (Arenal and Powell, 23).

In the sequence of events which resulted in Sor Juana’s *Answer*, the originating instance was Sor Juana’s oral refutation of a sermon delivered by Jesuit Father Antonio Vieira. Franco notes that Sor Juana entertained “herself and others by refuting the sermon verbally in the convent *locutorio*, a room in which nuns received visitors (often clergy and members of the religious orders) and talked to them from behind the protection of a wooden bar” (41). This oral delivery to a localized audience elicited a request from Manual Fernández de Santa Cruz, the Bishop of Puebla, that Sor Juana compose the refutation in writing. Sor Juana did so “though she also took care to frame [her arguments] as a private communication to the Bishop, which she believed would remove any suspicion that she was trying to trespass on clerical terrain” (Franco, 41). The 1690 letter from Sor Juana to the Bishop which was later published as *Carta Atenagórica / Letter Worthy of Athena* (under the guise of the letter from Sor Filotea) was an act of obedience to a request for a composition, and it was not meant to be published. Thus, Sor Juana knew that the 1690 letter from Sor Filotea came from only one person because only one person had access to her 1690 letter: Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla. Sor
Juana knew her audience, and Sor Juana took great effort to address the multiplicity of that audience.

In the Answer, Sor Juana follows many writing conventions to address Sor Filotea as the audience. However, Sor Juana finds ways to carefully acknowledge Sor Filotea as Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla. At several points, Sor Juana thanks Sor Filotea for her kindness, and for the favor of publishing the Carta Atenagórica / Letter Worthy of Athena. In one of these instances of gratitude, Sor Juana says to Sor Filotea, “For one who had the letter printed, unbeknownst to me, who titled it and underwrote its cost, and who thus honored it (unworthy as it was of all this, on its own account and on account of its author), what will such a one not do?” (Arenal and Powell, 43). This statement represents one of many in which Sor Juana carefully attends to the possession and printing of the letter originally addressed to Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla, the only person who could have published the letter without Sor Juana’s permission.

Further, and very near the example cited above, Sor Juana says to Sor Filotea, “Thus, sheltered by the assumption that I speak with safe-conduct granted by your favors and with the warrant bestowed by your goodwill, […] you grant me kind license to speak and to plead my case in your venerable presence” (44, 45). Sor Juana consistently uses the identity of her audience in complex ways; to give permission, to denote Sor Juana’s status, to imply a status for Sor Filotea, and others. Franco posits, “Throughout the reply, therefore, Sor Juana addresses the Bishop as if he were Sor Filotea, while showing that his words are loaded with institutional authority that no woman could possibly have” (43). Sor Juana’s writing creates a role for Sor Filotea / the bishop as audience, but allows for multiple readings and potential future audiences as well.
With regard to silence, Sor Juana provides opportunities for multiple perceptions of rhetorical silence as well as allows readers to consider multiple meanings for and uses of silence. Two examples of the dynamic play of audience and rhetor occur with the bishop and the general audience. As in the quotes above, Sor Juana carefully addresses the bishop as Sor Filotea. In the closing of the Answer, Sor Juana also carefully adds a kind of a disclaimer. When directly addressing Sor Filotea again, Sor Juana says

“If the style of this letter, my venerable Lady, has been less than your due, I beg your pardon for its household familiarity or the lack of seemly respect. For in addressing you, my sister, as a nun of the veil, I have forgotten the distance between myself and your most distinguished person, which should not occur were I to see you unveiled” (Arenal and Powell 103).

This statement is rich with potential meaning and reference. Sor Juana suggests she may have been too familiar (or what we might understand as casual) with her sister; in this frame of “familiar”, Sor Juana suggests a duality of meaning in what might happen if she met her sister outside the convent (without her veil) or if she met “Sor Filotea” unveiled (the bishop without his disguise). The rhetorical move, on the surface, suggests humility, apology. Arenal and Powell document that, in this instance, Sor Juana fully acknowledges “the difference in status between the writer and the bishop” and unveils or reveals the bishop (143). In her treatment of Sor Filotea as audience, Sor Juana is acknowledging another kind of silence—that of the bishop who published her letter without permission, who writes under a pseudonym, who also enacts concepts of knowing and not-saying. Franco acknowledges a “careful distinction between silences” and that the significance, in this specific case, is that “for it places the Bishop’s silence not in the category of knowledge but in that of betrayal” (44). There is a dynamic play between
rhetor and the primary audience of the bishop in acknowledging what they might both know, that
the reader may be an informed reader. But, there is also the other set of readers for the letter and
Sor Juana provides opportunities for them to “read in” to her writing through the craft of the
rhetorical moves. In theorizing silence, Sor Juana speaks to future audiences doing what Bokser
believes is “enthymematically enlisting her readers in doing the work the theory itself espouses”
(17).

The careful analysis of Arenal and Powell, as they attend to historical conventions for
writing, is especially relevant to understanding the roles for audience and rhetor created by Sor
Juana. Through various genre-play and modes of discourse in the Answer, “Sor Juana expresses
pain, regret, and anger regarding her personal situation. She praises, begs, rejects, persuades,
ridicules, chides, defends, and teaches the bishop and the imaginary jury—her future readers”
(Arenal and Powell, 25). Demonstrating a dynamic play of roles between audience and rhetor,
Sor Juana “asks the bishop to put himself in her place, and then rhetorically puts herself in his,
thus challenging the hierarchical order” (Arenal and Powell, 25). Bokser comments on Sor
Juana’s role as both rhetor and rhetorician because she was “someone intimately adept at
maneuvering through the web’s political entanglements and profoundly concerned with the
acquisition, use, and effect of language in real-life contexts” (9). Franco adds to the complex
concepts Sor Juana provides to an audience of readers, suggesting that Sor Juana wants her
readers to see that “[e]ven in silence we must understand the difference between divine
knowledge and instrumental behavior” (44). Through all of the rhetorical moves, Sor Juana
“displays her intellectual peerlessness while mouthing the expected clichés of the rhetoric of
feminine ignorance and tendering the requisite offer of retraction, should anything be said that
might be condemned as heresy” (Arenal and Powell 25). The role for audience—whether the
bishop or future readers—is created by Sor Juana in unique and dynamic ways through the rhetorical strategies including silence.

4) **How can audience and context connect to or contribute to rhetorical amplification?**

   Rhetorical amplification functions between the rhetor and audience—the rhetor may have specific intentions for amplification, may attend to that intention through decisions during invention, and through the delivery of a message. However, for the rhetor’s intentions to be realized, the element needed to make that happen is the audience—there is a connection that must be made for meaning to be recognized and the rhetor’s goals achieved. The rhetorical forms and rhetorical moves within the text of the *Answer* potentially contribute to a connection between considerations for the multiple potential audiences, consideration for the complex specific and immediate audience (Sor Filotea / the Bishop), and considerations for the historic context and popular genres of the period.

   In colonial Mexico, Sor Juana’s outspokenness in the form of letters and other publications drew attention from Church and other political authorities (Arenal and Powell). Sor Juana effectively wrote in Baroque style, effectively relied on classic rhetorical forms and strategies, and called upon a long list of outside sources and historical figures (Franco, Merrim, Schons, Arenal and Powell). In fact, Sor Juana’s writing and publishing may have been perceived as creating an imbalance of power because Sor Juana treaded on ground that was socially intended only for men. The content of her writing, more than the forms, would have been part of a system of masculine rhetorical activity. For Sor Juana to assert opinions, advance philosophy, and posit rhetorical arguments was most definitely a demonstration of a masculine rhetorical practice and delivery in the context of colonial Mexico. Yet, the *Answer* contains genre features of a nun’s *vida*, a popular form of writing assigned to nuns, a feminine delivery that
contained values such as obedience and humility, representing a female ethos. The text of the
*Answer* is shaped by what surrounds Sor Juana—the Baroque period, the social issues of colonial
Mexico, the community and operations of a convent, the expectations of her audience for
women’s behavior and women’s silence, the scholarly texts with which Sor Juana became self-
educated. The context and audience would have been shaping factors in Sor Juana’s rhetorical
choices.

Referring to a previous discussion, it is important to re-consider, for a moment, the way
that Sor Juana addresses the sanction for women’s silence as issued by St. Paul and as taken up
by religious authorities (and, subsequently societal practices), and to re-consider Sor Juana’s use
of the example as part of a larger argument in favor of women’s right to education, with regard
to audience and context. Sor Juana challenges the ways that St. Paul’s utterance has been taken
up by religious authorities and social ideology. Anne Askew also used the same quote of St.
Paul, but in a different context and with a different audience. Askew, in the dialogic context of
interrogation, with a very specific and very present audience of authorities, used the quote as a
defense, showing her knowledge, showing her awareness that she should be silent, calling on the
values of the religious authorities, showing her obedience, and showing her inferiority. Askew
shaped the use of the example to the context and audience of the genres of examination and
interrogation with the imminent threat of bodily harm. By contrast, Sor Juana, with an audience
of readers, wrote to an authority in disguise as a peer, and uses the quote from St. Paul as an
argument, to discuss a theory about constructs for behavior about who should be silent and when
and why. Sor Juana brilliantly looks theoretically at silence but also at how people enact the
practice and ceremony of silence in a space and place, the context of worship and prayer. Sor
Juana relied on rhetorical features of argument and her own understanding of her audience (an
educated bishop) as well as the potential proximity of her audience (the alleged sister, Sor Filotea, would have been an equal); Sor Juana posits a strong argument in writing that addresses a point made by Sor Filotea that nuns must be obedient. Sor Juana argues in favor of women’s education but also creates a resonant set of themes by returning to the concepts of saying and not-saying. She theorizes that silence is for all, not just women, and silence is used for different reasons and at different times.

Returning also to the initial theory or philosophy that Sor Juana posits near the beginning of the Answer is important when considering the relationship of context and audience to rhetorical strategies. Sor Juana says to her reader “one must name a silence, so that what it signifies may be understood” (43). And, just a few lines later, she suggests “the many things there are to say cannot be contained in mere words” (43). Sor Juana provides a complex view of silence that is taken up again and again in the whole of the Answer. By creating a resonant set of concepts, Sor Juana involves her audience, engaging them as participants in the making of meaning. Not providing definitive boundaries for silence, and not providing a reason why she might be silent, Sor Juana draws the audience to the act of listening and supplying meaning. Bokser envisions Sor Juana’s theory of silence as enthymeme; other scholars attribute the Answer with similar rhetorical strategies. Similarly, two important tenets of the Baroque style were to elaborate and to heighten emotional connection to the material—also functions of rhetorical amplification.

Just as in the examples presented in Chapter Two of Mountford’s discussion of energia and of Hairston’s discussion of enthymeme, rhetorical amplification is completed by the reception and interpretation of the audience. The audience and rhetor co-create meaning (Enos and Lauer, Ede and Lunsford). Amplification is connected to the audience via word choices that
elicit an intensifying effect whether through an ethical ploy (what is good, what is right, what the audience should do or how the audience should act as in the Progymnastmata activity) or through an emotional ploy (such as those Laib suggests). The audience is a necessary part of a meaning-making process—as is suggested by the way Sor Juana constructs and theorizes silence. The audience makes the rhetorical amplification based on the role and cues provided by the rhetor—as in Sor Juana’s unique methods of repetition, restatement, enthymeme, and resonating use of concepts. Sor Juana’s use of what surrounds her—the forms of writing, the knowledge of other writers and historic figures, the understanding of her role as writer-rhetor and the interactions upon which she embarks as both rhetor and audience and her dynamic play with those roles—contributes to the effect of the Answer. Additionally, it is not just a silence but context, the environmental aspects or elements of setting, the mental activities and memory of both Sor Juana and her audience(s) which shape the meaning—all that surrounds the silence, as well as the memory of what came before the silence in the text, and the memory for context, genre, gender, audience expectation and so on. All of these shape meaning interactively.

Conclusion

In the text of The Answer, Sor Juana meticulously presents a theory of silence, draws on well-known instances of silence, and uses philosophical prose to provide her own stance on rhetorical silence. Sor Juana asks her reader to attend to silence in its many possible forms and functions. She points to different contexts for silence, different audiences for silence and deliveries of silence, and then Sor Juana asks that the reader consider what silence means—she is, in fact, asking us to listen. Application of this set of heuristics provides additional understanding about the complexity of the use of rhetorical silence. Like Anne Askew, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz deployed a rhetorical silence, but under a different set of contextual markers. Sor
Juana’s silence was deployed textually and conceptually, a different kind rhetorical silence, an incomplete silence but resonant nonetheless. Sor Juana’s rhetorical silence called upon elements of context and relied more wholly on her audience to comprehend concepts and supply meaning. Between the rhetorical devices, strategies, and genre markers and the actual content of the Answer, there is a dynamic engagement of context, of silence, of saying, and of knowing; there is a dynamic tension of the strategies and substance of the Answer. This examination and analysis of rhetorical silence revealed the complex factors included in the invention and delivery of a rhetorical silence as well as the reception and interpretation from an audience. This case study validates the suggestion that contextual elements have a critical relationship to the use of and understanding of a rhetorical silence.

From this work, we can also infer implications for further study of rhetorical silence as well as posit conclusions about the nature of silence as a rhetor’s tool. While our modern society seems to value speech and sound, it is evident that rhetorical silence holds a valuable position in rhetorical practices and rhetorical efforts. Rhetors can deploy silence for different reasons, at different times, and under unique contextual conditions. The heuristic model offers a unique form of analysis for studying rhetorical silence and considering silence as a rhetorical tool with many possible functions for an audience or rhetor. The next chapter will address more specifically the findings and implications of the heuristic model as well as potential theoretical uses for rhetorical silence in writing and speaking.
CHAPTER FIVE: APPLYING THEORY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

“When I look back over what I have written, I see that, just as I anticipated, I have more often criticized the authors for what they did not say than for what they did say” (177).
Edward P. J. Corbett, Rhetoric in Search of a Past, Present, and Future

“Throughout Western history, speech has been considered a gift from the gods, the distinguishing characteristic of humans, and, therefore, the authorized medium of culture and power. Little wonder, then, that the positive features of silence and listening have been only briefly mentioned or subtly implied—if not completely ignored” (1).
Cheryl Glenn and Krista Ratcliffe, Silence and Listening as Rhetorical Arts

This dissertation began with my questions about silence—about the nature of silence, about the use of silence, and about the meaning and interpretation of silence. I listened to Cheryl Glenn’s suggestion that “The push toward a more inclusive rhetorical tradition […] is paving the way for further investigations into silence and the unspoken” (Unspoken 151). My inquiry began with asking not only whether silence might mean something, but how a rhetor might wield silence as any other rhetorical strategy or device; with asking whether silence might be used strategically to yield a specific effect or result with an audience. Additionally, I hoped my questions might reveal a connection between the strategic use of silence and rhetorical amplification. Based on inspiration from my experiences as a secondary teacher, and inspiration taken from the work of Cheryl Glenn in both Rhetoric Retold and Unspoken, I began a study of the use of rhetorical silence. In a hyper-social culture which values communication—both sounds and silences—but which often wields communication blindly without consideration for context, audience, or delivery, a reliable methodology is needed for identifying rhetorical silences and analyzing their use in achieving a rhetorical purpose for rhetors and with audiences.

The set of heuristics I created and applied provides a necessary perspective and means for gaining insight to the use of and meaning of rhetorical silence. Existing scholarship on rhetorical silence is growing as recent studies aim to contribute to the contemporary interest, re-discovery, and understanding of rhetorical silence. Saville-Troike included culture, community, and social
and political action in her broad classification system, she called a “framework for the ethnography of communication” as she called for a “fuller apprehension of the complexities and universal characteristics of the whole human communication system, within which silence serves variously as prime, substitute, and surrogate, as well as frame, cue, and background” (16, 17).

Within the available scholarship on silence, there is indication of the value placed on speech and silence as well as the value for studying the ways that rhetorical silences find their place in public discourse and meaning-making. In the book *Silence and Listening as Rhetorical Arts*, Cheryl Glenn and Krista Ratcliffe observe:

> These arts have been conceptualized and employed in different times and places by many people—some with power, some without—for purposes as diverse as showing reverence, gathering knowledge, planning action, buying time, and attempting to survive. Yet despite these disparate uses, the rhetorical arts of silence and listening have rarely been articulated within traditional Western rhetorical studies” (2).

However, little scholarship has focused on silence as a specific rhetorical tool or strategy to be wielded by a rhetor, and I have found little or no scholarship within the field of rhetoric and composition that connects rhetorical silence with rhetorical amplification.

Thus, this project has been designed to contribute to the field’s current interest in rhetorical silence by addressing a gap in the scholarship and by supplying evidence of historical uses of rhetorical silence (with connections to rhetorical amplification) as well as applying a methodology to analyze a rhetoric of silence. The heuristics, drawn from scholarship from the fields of linguistics, communications, psychology, and literature, reveal a potential for relevant and practical applications for the study of silence in other fields. This final chapter begins with a summary of findings from Chapters 3 and 4 since these are the two case studies to which the set
of heuristics were applied; this discussion is organized by the categories of the heuristics Invention, Audience, and Delivery. The findings represent the results of testing the heuristics as well as demonstrate the heuristics-in-use and the consequential research. The findings will be followed by an explanation of conclusions that can be drawn about the heuristics as a systematic approach for analyzing rhetorical silence. The chapter will then conclude with a discussion of implications and potential applications of the heuristics and some suggestions for future scholarship.

**Invention**

Adopting a stance from more contemporary scholarship that views invention as a constant and ongoing part of a composing process, the heuristic set for invention reveals connections between a rhetor, a rhetor’s choices, and strategic use of rhetorical silence. The application of heuristics to case studies in Chapters 3 and 4 demonstrates the effectiveness of the heuristics as a means for analyzing the use of silence as a rhetorical tool as well as sheds light on the use of rhetorical silence in context. Each case study presents a unique historical context, and with it a female rhetor located in a rhetorical situation—allowing a complex view of rhetorical silence. In both case studies, each woman utilizes silence in a specific and strategic way. Perhaps more importantly, neither woman simply used silence because the context required that a woman be silent. Each case study therefore represents a unique opportunity to consider rhetorical invention and rhetorical choices. By applying the heuristic set for invention to the case studies, we can more closely understand how writer-speakers might choose elements such as silence, how forms of silence and choice or agency are connected, connections between invention and silence, as well as seek the relationship between invention and rhetorical amplification.

First, methods of invention and rhetorical practices are connected to the education and
preparation of the rhetor, audience awareness, the specific invention strategies or heuristics themselves, and kairos. Similarly connected are facets of rhetorical context such as culture, gender, and social and political expectations for the historic period. As a lady in Reformation England, Anne Askew had greater access to rhetorical materials and rhetorical practices than women of lower classes. However, the expectations for Askew still maintained that her education be used only for supporting specific social and cultural values of humility, chastity, and obedience. So, while she did receive some education, Askew used her education strategically. Equally, Sor Juana used her education deliberately and advantageously, crafting her layered responses with a depth and breadth of cultural references and argumentative tactics. Evidence of enthymeme or other rhetorical strategies appears in both case studies’ use of language and silence within their responses to their own unique rhetorical situation. Preparedness and practice come from training and study, allowing rhetors to possess multiple strategies and tactics and the ability to make decisions on how and when to deploy them. Each case study presents a unique situation for the preparedness of the rhetor, audience awareness, and consideration for the time and context.

Caution must be taken to consider how these women acted within a social and historical context that did not favor educated women nor women who were publicly or privately outspoken. Invention’s connection to agency and the idea of choice proves difficult in context of the case studies, especially considering that agency and power are modern concepts being applied to a historical context. With regard to Askew, her writing is available because of the editing and publishing of men, making it difficult to assume authorship or authenticity; equally important to note are the potential converging and diverging rhetorical goals of both Askew and the men who published Askew’s Examinations. With regard to Sor Juana, not all of her writing
was published, and not all of the details of her life are documented. Further, Sor Juana does not
directly point to a specific meaning for her silence, nor does she take up silence and stop
publishing altogether. In both cases, no clear evidence for the agency or choice of the rhetor
exists, and no clear evidence of their actual silences is available. Still, a close reading of both
texts demonstrates the ability of each rhetor to make some selections in their responses, use some
rhetorical forms and strategies, and place silence within their responses at specific moments with
potentially specific reasons—in short, to use silence rhetorically.

Women such as Anne Askew and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz may be considered as
examples of the kind of societal and political acting-agents, in the unique historical period,
within this set of socio-political expectations for women, as they found ways to maintain their
womanly roles while engaging in other societal and political spheres that would be considered
masculine. As the heuristic analysis shows, neither rhetor seemed to be silenced; rather each
makes the rhetorical choice to use silence. Each acted within a unique rhetorical situation in
which women, in general, were not privileged to participate in public or scholarly discourse; and
both used silence as part of a public discourse. Anne Askew, in the context of the interrogations
and examinations, proved resistant to the strategies typically used to gain submission. Further,
despite the intense pressure to speak and the rhetorical force exerted against her, Anne Askew
chose to remain silent during interrogation. Sor Juana, in the context of the convents and
expectations for nun’s writing, responded aggressively in opposition to the pressure to stop
writing and publishing. Further, Sor Juana theorized specific uses of silence and socially coined
references to silence (such as St. Paul’s tenet about silence) in spite of social and political
expectations against women philosophizing or interpreting.

Agency and power exist in the ways that Sor Juana communicates her understanding and
knowing through her rhetorical practices and in the way that she carefully and intentionally shapes the form and content. Similarly, Askew’s actions of resistance and argumentative rhetorical practices during masculine rhetorical processes such as interrogation, and during the writing of *Examinations*, are an example of Askew’s agency. Askew responds substantively and strategically, and thusly demonstrates her own sense of choice for those responses. Sor Juana’s *Answer* demonstrates a constant play of external and internal forces shaping the available means through genre features and writerly structures, through the use of many outside sources and her own story, and through her crafted acknowledgment of audience. Sor Juana’s meticulous use of rhetorical moves, and of concepts such as saying or not-saying, demonstrate not just the richness and complexity of her thought, but also her ability to select from a range of possible tools or strategies to create an effect or achieve a rhetorical goal. For each case study, for each woman, their agency or power exists within and between those positions allowed to women, between those spaces and actions monitored and controlled by men, and between the expectations for women’s abilities to read and write and those particular kinds of reading and writing permitted in the historical context. For each case study, silence is used as one choice among many in specific instances, alongside the choices of words and rhetorical structures.

Considering the preparedness of the rhetor and the connections to agency also provides an opportunity to see connections between rhetorical silence and invention. For Anne Askew, the connection between invention and silence would have been established in the juxtaposition between both Askew’s and the authorities’ use of speaking and not-speaking; for the context of interrogations presented Askew with the opportunity to utilize silence as one means among many to achieve a specific rhetorical goal. The complexity of Sor Juana’s writing—the form, the content—is evident of rhetorical thought and rhetorical practice connecting silence with
invention. Sor Juana’s careful use of genre features, rhetorical moves, and concepts such as saying or not-saying demonstrate a richness and complexity of thought, as well as her ability to select from a range of possible tools or strategies to create an effect or achieve a rhetorical goal. Each case study presents a specific context in which the audience expectations, the expectations for rhetorical forms, and the socio-political expectations would dictate a different set of rhetorical practices, but each woman utilizes rhetorical silence strategically with the rhetorical context.

Further, consideration of rhetorical invention allows scholars to see potentially stratified ways that rhetorical silence can be applied by a rhetor in a specific context with an audience, similar to Lauer’s suggestion that “invention was devoted to ways to impact the audience and the faculty being addressed” (61). The strategies of using rhetorical silence may rely on that context and audience to supply value and meaning for the silence. This idea creates an opportunity to see connections between rhetorical silence and other rhetorical strategies such as amplification. Drawing a parallel between other strategies which rely on audience reception and interpretation for meaning and effect, rhetorical silence works similarly in some ways to enthymeme and energia, just as an enthemematic argument can simultaneously enhance a rhetor’s ethos and appeal to an audience’s emotions. The educated, prepared, and practiced rhetor would understand the multiple functions of and potential combinations of various rhetorical strategies, including using rhetorical silence as a means of rhetorical amplification. The case study of Anne Askew situates the use of rhetorical silence within the context of interrogations in which authorities used repetition and restatement for emphasis and effect to strategically influence the subjects of inquiry during the heresy trials. The rhetorical force of coercion is evident and Askew’s Examinations documents that tactic. Still, Askew is able to develop a strength of
consistency and exemplary faith through her own use of particular repetition or restatement—a form and function of rhetorical amplification. The specific placement of silence within the context, that moment (or those moments) in which silence is used specifically, enhances the power of the rhetor’s message—yet another function of rhetorical amplification.

A more overt connection between rhetorical silence and rhetorical amplification is found in Sor Juana’s writing: Sor Juana used rhetorical strategies to turn specific concepts (such as silence) over and over for a reader, and to shift meaning of a concept by altering its use; Sor Juana allowed the repetition and restatement to reveal multiple meanings and possibilities—elaborating (and amplifying) the concept in the process, in the rhetorical progression of the Answer. The connection between silence and amplification is not only that rhetorical amplification may be selected during inventive acts of rhetorical practice and engagement; but that when a rhetor considers particular rhetorical goals, specific audiences, and broader contexts, the rhetor is also considering the best means available for addressing multiple concerns and reaching complex objectives.

Each woman in the case studies presents a complex and rich set of dynamics via the interplay of historical, political, and social forces with elements such as gender, class, and genre, and demonstrates how a rhetor—such as an exemplary woman—may choose to utilize silence to create meaning, serve a rhetorical purpose, and engage an audience. The application of the heuristics incorporates these dynamics, demonstrates a multifaceted analysis, demonstrates invention as an ongoing element in rhetorical practices of composing, and illuminates the interrelatedness of invention with other aspects of the rhetorical context such as delivery and audience. It is not just aspects of invention, however, that provide a successful, intentional rhetorical silence, but elements of delivery and audience as well.
Delivery

We have often heard the maxim: it is not just what is said, but how it is said. This idea connects invention and delivery on a very basic plane; and, for the purposes of this investigation and analysis of rhetorical silence, we might also consider the what and how of not-saying. Of course, over time the canon of delivery has begun to include aural and visual elements beyond the traditionally envisioned oral delivery of Ancient Greece. Prior et. al, suggest “Mediation and distribution are also phenomena that operate at each moment in the process, as the ‘text’ is always being mediated and distributed in some fashion, actually in multiple ways” (8). Further, scholarship has been developed to show that styles of delivery take elements of context into consideration—such as Buchanan’s masculine and feminine styles. Not only have our changing society and technologies of literacy contributed more methods of delivery, but study and scholarship have also contributed evolving concepts about the ways we consider and understand the canon of delivery. Thus, a delivery of rhetorical silence may be not just a pause between words but a way of creating understanding and meaning with an audience in a specific context—relying on elements of time, politics, class, gender, and so forth to contribute to both the rhetor’s and audience’s understanding of rhetorical silence. The heuristic set under the heading of rhetorical delivery allowed the analysis of rhetorical silence to weigh the kinds of silence used and the methods with which those silences were delivered by a rhetor, the ways that a rhetor creates a silence with an audience, and the relationship between rhetorical delivery and rhetorical silence.

Along with the caution of applying modern concepts such as agency to historical events, there are some limitations with considering methods of rhetorical delivery in a historical context. With Anne Askew, delivery comes in the form of the actual event during the course of
interrogation as well as the textual descriptions and publications that came later. The delivery of the silence is complicated by the documentation of that silence which occurred after the fact—involving the rhetor’s memory and choices with regard to sharing the silence with other audiences. Similarly, Sor Juana responded to a letter alleged to have been written by a peer but that was actually composed by a figure of authority. Sor Juana complicated her treatment of silence not only by addressing the alleged peer, but by including complex references that allowed other audiences to make assumptions about Sor Juana’s understanding of possible, multiple audiences. Thus, the delivery of textual and aural silences is complicated by the rhetor’s choices, the context, and the audience (or possible audiences).

Primarily, the rhetorical silences analyzed are delivered in textual form to an audience of readers. Askew delivers to readers a description of the interrogations and her experiences; Sor Juana composes a letter relying on particular genre features with which her audience would be familiar. So, readers take up the silence from Anne Askew and from Sor Juana through the references of saying, silence, or of not-saying. Additionally, Anne Askew adds elements of other kinds of silences through her descriptions of the wording or actions of others present, through descriptions of bodily, gestural, or non-verbal responses, and through her own non-speaking or non-answering responses. Further, Sor Juana’s delivered silences are also conceptual and theoretical; the text describes various kinds of silences, often through concepts such as saying and not-saying, often through outside references. Each woman also relies on a set of social and political expectations for their role, their ethos, as a rhetor—connecting to Conners’ suggestion that “writers are creating images of themselves for their readers,” observing the the link between delivery and ethos (66). Each case study provides understanding of the reliance upon a complex set of women’s rhetorical practices and men’s rhetorical practices in both the public and private
sphere, and the utilization of this set of practices uniquely to achieve a specific rhetorical delivery of silence.

To create the rhetorical silence for their audience, the rhetors called upon various rhetorical strategies and structures as well as their ethos, their adherence to the roles assigned to them in a specific context. For Anne Askew, what heightens the silence-as-response is the political context and rhetorical, coercive force of the interrogations. Silence is present throughout the interrogations since silence is \textit{not} an option in this setting. One key strategy Askew uses for creating rhetorical silences is to answer nearly every question with some use of words; use of answer in the form of refusal, deflection, and rhetorical skill creates experiences for her audience prior to the actual experience of silence. The demand for answers, the pressure to respond in the way the authorities assert, the insistence to speak, and the growing tension between the dissonant wills of both Askew and the authorities all help to heighten the experience of silence when it is delivered. Similarly, Anne Askew calls upon or openly acknowledges the expectations for her gender as well as the expectations for interrogations—making her ethos apparent to her interrogators and her audience.

Corresponding conclusions can be drawn about the rhetorical silences created by Sor Juana. Sor Juana’s letter, the \textit{Answer}, is textual; the silences delivered are textual; and, Sor Juana’s suggestions about silence demonstrate that she very much intended for an audience to consider silence and its meaning (i.e., not just Sor Filotea / the bishop). Because Sor Juana composes within specific forms of writing for the time period to create a point-for-point response to Sor Filotea’s arguments, the silence(s) are created by both rhetor and audience. As rhetor, Sor Juana creates conceptual and symbolic specificity and ambiguity by describing many silences, using outside sources as evidence and example, and by not telling her readers precisely what her
silence means; she also does so by showing diverse silences, the ways that silence can mean, and by never delivering the meaning of her silence. Sor Juana only asks audiences to listen for meaning. Sor Juana utilizes an ethos through her role as nun, as peer of the fictional Sor Filotea, and as woman writer to create a rhetorical silence for her multiple audiences.

Connections between rhetorical delivery and rhetorical silence become apparent in the examination of the inter-relatedness of the rhetor, the context, and the audience. Connections between delivery and silence are also reliant on the surrounding aspects of the rhetorical situation such as space, class, gender, and genre. The context and community shape a delivered message, including a delivered silence, through norms and expectations of that culture or community. The use of the genre and rhetorical structures also connects silence and delivery through style, as in Buchanan’s masculine and feminine delivery styles. Askew was writing in a genre of examinations which were typically delivered by men; Askew also drew on her ethos as well as features of other genres to create her own style of rhetorical delivery. Sor Juana also utilized genre, ethos, and context to manifest her style of delivery for rhetorical silences. The delivery of the various silences matters for both the rhetor and the audience, because the delivery shapes the intended meaning by complementing or by conflicting with expectations and familiar rhetorical practices. A rhetor uses specific understanding and practice when creating a delivery of rhetorical silence; an understanding of available means, and subsequent intentional use of rhetorical silence will best fit the context and the rhetor’s own goals. To communicate well using silences, a rhetor must practice but also consider the affect of the rhetorical delivery. Delivery itself will effect meaning for an audience.

Audience

The need for including audience as a part of analyzing and understanding rhetorical
silence is demonstrated in Chapters 3 and 4. The acts of invention, envisioned as a constant and ongoing process, and delivery, also envisioned as ongoing as delivery is mediated by invention and by distribution, are dependent on concepts of audience for the message (or the silence-as-message) to be received and interpreted—especially the Ede and Lunsford’s idea to “account for a wide and shifting range of roles for both addressed and invoked audiences” (170). The unique situation of historic events and texts that are recovered and revisited also presents an active and involved view of audience as evolving over time as new and different audiences take up the texts or messages under different circumstances. When selecting, creating, and intentionally delivering a rhetorical silence, the rhetor relies on particular aspects of context and audience awareness. The application of the heuristic set to the case studies reveals the interdependent nature of the heuristic categories through understanding the audience expectations for a given context with regard to the use of silence, the way a rhetor uses a strategy such as silence to elicit a specific audience response, the way a rhetor creates a role for the audience to receive, perceive, or interpret a rhetorical silence, and the ways that audience and context contribute to rhetorical amplification.

The dynamic play and often inter-changing of the roles of rhetor and audience reveal a unique set of expectations and circumstances within the context of the two case studies’ in Reformation England and in colonial Mexico. Beyond the expectations for a Christian woman to be obedient and silent, the expectations of the context of the heresy trials adds significant tension, pressure and rhetorical force in the form of questions and the way those questions were delivered. Askew’s text demonstrates her awareness of the context, and the rhetorical pressure to answer in specific ways through her references to gender and social expectations as she created her own ethos, and her adherence to the genre and contextual features by answering almost all of
the interrogators’ questions. Sor Juana’s writing in the Answer connects to the values and expectations for nuns in historic colonial Mexico, and Sor Juana used her writing strategically and rhetorically to connect with audience expectations. From the beginning of the Answer to the very conclusion, Sor Juana uses rhetorical strategies to address multiple audiences and demonstrate her ethos as a humble and obedient nun. Each case study demonstrates the strong connection between the rhetor’s understanding of the expectations for context and selection of potential strategies that might confirm, maintain, or disrupt those audience expectations to elicit a specific response or achieve a rhetorical purpose.

However, there may not be a way that a rhetor could control an audience’s response. The idea of audience reception, again a more contemporary term contrasted with traditional concepts of a binary between rhetor and audience, allows for an understanding that though a message may be delivered by a rhetor, the audience may receive, interpret, and use the message differently than the rhetor intended. Yet Askew shapes her rhetorical practices to achieve her own means, to defend herself against leading questions, to present herself in ethical terms (from the Reformist perspective). Askew used masculine rhetorical tactics, but often fell back on a feminine ethos. Askew was careful to draw her gender into the conversations, as well as the expectation that a woman be obedient, submissive, and silent. Similarly, Sor Juana uses different kinds of silence to create different meanings. Ultimately, the audience has to supply meaning for silence. Sor Juana is evidently aware of her audience; she is aware of the expectations for not only the genre features and rhetorical moves, but the expectations for a nun’s life; she is able to rhetorically and strategically craft the Answer to draw on the audience expectations for silence but to strategically create a space for her own silence within those expectations. Each case study demonstrates the ways that rhetors adapt their own messages and responses with audience awareness and with
audience responses in mind while also seeming to recognize that messages may not be concretely held to a specific or singular meaning or understanding.

Moving beyond the idea of simply using a rhetorical silence as a strategy to elicit a specific audience response, each case study demonstrates the ways that rhetors engage their audience and context and rely on the response to create meaning. Anne Askew asked audiences—later audiences beyond the immediate rhetorical situation—to engage in their own interpretation of faith and justice through her documentation of the examinations; this engagement of the audience is especially necessary to wield an effective silence. Sor Juana also asked audiences to supply their own interpretations, but more pointedly to consider the meaning of silence and the various situations in which silence is used by different people at different times. Sor Juana reached beyond her own silence into a philosophy and rhetoric of social and cultural silences. The audience’s reception of the texts is even more crucial to interpreting silences whether or not those rhetorical silences are technically absent of words or sounds.

Thus, by selecting specific strategies such as a rhetorical silence to achieve a specific rhetorical purpose, a rhetor creates a role for the audience to receive and interpret the intent of those strategies. Sor Juana creates the role for audience—whether the bishop or future readers—in unique and dynamic ways through her use and application of the rhetorical positions of rhetor and audience, and the rhetorical strategies including her ethos, specific genre features, and silence. The role of interrogators and other officiates who took part in Askew’s examination, as well as future readers, was established by Askew as she finds an approachable position and ethos for herself on the common ground of faith, and as Askew uses expectations for gender roles and socio-political conventions for the discourse of interrogation, and for the rhetorical possibilities of narrative and autobiography. Each of the exemplary women uses rhetorical strategies as well
as wording and silence to assert a role for herself and her audiences.

Askew’s various rhetorical strategies seem to be delivered effectively—she disrupts and resists the interrogation, and she ultimately resists the pressure of the interrogation and the coercive rhetorical force of the authorities. But to focus on rhetorical silence, Askew connects the audience to the context of her delivered silence: the audience is made aware of the immediate utterances, context, and silences, prior to Askew’s delivery of the rhetorical silence(s) which creates the emphasis and effect of a delivered silence. The emphasis of the examinations was on sound and speech, not silence. Askew’s audience of authorities would not expect silence, and their processes would be disrupted by silence—heightening their experience of and response to the actual silence. The repetitions of rhetorical force, Askew’s own repetitions and answers, and the value placed on speaking would have enhanced the silence as well as created an intensity for the audience(s)—to enhance and to intensify are functions of rhetorical amplification. The heuristics reveal the connection between rhetorical amplification and audience is that of audience reception and interpretation—for amplification to be effective, to serve a rhetorical purpose, then that purpose and meaning rely on the audience’s experience, the context, and the rhetor’s understanding of the best means to achieve that rhetorical amplification under those conditions.

This concept is further demonstrated in the application of the heuristics to the case study in Chapter 4. The audience is a necessary part of a meaning-making process—and the audience makes the rhetorical amplification based on the role and cues provided by the rhetor. The way Sor Juana constructs and theorizes silence is also directly tied to her unique methods of repetition, restatement, enthymeme, and resonating use of concepts. It is not just a silence, but context, the environmental aspects or elements of setting, the mental activities and memory of both Sor Juana and her audience(s) which shape the meaning—all that surrounds the silence, as
well as the memory of what came before the silence in the text, and the memory for context, genre, gender, audience expectation and so on—all of these shape meaning interactively. In both cases, for both historical women, the audience supplies an appropriate response, an emotional response, or their own persuasion; the audience contributes by imbuing the delivered silence with their own aspects of meaning from memory, expectation, cultural or social elements and more.

**Bound Together: Heuristics as Set**

As may be apparent thus far, the heuristics—while formatted as separate categories and unique questions—are interdependent. Each category and question draws on what we know about the other categories and questions despite the specific focus or target—the heuristics are not separate; the heuristics are mutually supporting and mutually dependent. As noted in the application of the heuristics in Chapters 3 and 4, the analysis of the case studies demonstrates the necessary and critical connections between Invention, Delivery, and Audience with regard to the use of rhetorical silence. The common ground between the three heuristics reveals a need for an adapting awareness during what Johnston and Eisenhart called “discovery procedures” (11). One example is Askew’s keen awareness of the rhetorical context of interrogation and the rhetorical purpose to gain submission and confession, and Askew’s use of gender and biblical references to establish an ethos while resisting the rhetorical force of the examinations through her choice of response—incorporating invention, delivery, and audience. Another example is Sor Juana’s use of context, audience expectations, and genre features to mediate ideas about rhetorical silence—relying on strategies for invention and delivery as well as concepts regarding the roles of rhetor and audience. The heuristics are bound together in unique correspondence and counter-balance. The methodology does not restrict a rhetor’s choice or use of rhetorical silence to specific contexts or require a specific meaning or expectation from an audience. Rather, the framework of
the heuristics allows for a kind of reflection that draws on multiple aspects of rhetorical practice and action.

**Implications and Application of the Heuristics**

In Chapter 2, I assert two hypotheses: first, that silence is productive; second, that silence can be produced by the audience, the rhetor, the context, or some combination of all. The application of the heuristics and resulting analysis of the case studies supports each hypothesis as it relates to the other; additionally, the analysis of the case studies shows that elements of invention, delivery, and audience are continuously part of a rhetor’s composing process. The use of heuristics has advanced my own study of rhetorical silence. However, the heuristics and the subsequent analysis of rhetorical silences serve also function to address another larger set of purposes for the field of rhetoric and composition. The heuristics achieve a systematic approach, and this approach improves the understanding of a rhetor’s choice to use a rhetorical silence as well as the import of the composing process including invention, delivery, and audience. The heuristics develop a greater understanding of rhetorical silences by bringing both traditional and contemporary scholarship to bear on the complex decisions of the rhetor, and the dynamic elements of a given rhetorical situation and providing a methodical and efficient means for analyzing rhetorical silences.

There are implications, too, for the role of ‘voice’ in this and in future studies of rhetorical silence. For instance, the review of scholarship is limited to a specific range of concepts and texts, and limited in the ways that these texts are connected to the heuristics given the scope of the overall study. Other areas which might contribute are contemporary theory and discussion of ethos, voice, self representation and subjectivity. With these potential additions, either individually or wholly, the heuristic categories might be expanded to add a separate
category for ethos or for subjectivity, for example. Similarly, the questions within the categories might be revised to include one or all of these concepts as each might deepen the study of rhetorical silence, its interpretation, its relevance as a rhetorical strategy, and its effect on audiences. As I note in my personal conclusion at the end of this chapter, silence may have an interactive component that has yet to be identified or discussed but that would connect to current scholarly discussions of concepts of self representation, subjectivity, agency, and voice. Though the study did not have the latitude to explore these concepts fully, inclusion of these ideas in future research would a richer description of rhetorical silences by considering a more complex view of the rhetor and the audience.

The application of the heuristics also allows for a broader sense of rhetorical silence without relying on the binaries of sound-silence. Further, the interdependent nature of the categories demonstrates the complexity of the use of, the reception and interpretation of, and the meanings for rhetorical silence. Rhetorical silence is situated in a context and has a meaning, and that meaning can be taken up and interpreted in unique ways. The heuristics establish a flexibility for rhetorical silence as potentially multi-modal in its delivery and reception since silences can be delivered with the body and with the text. The next phase in the development and future application of the heuristics should consider additional modes of delivery, reception, and message-mediation as well as multi-modal contexts. This application demonstrated only part of the potential of recognizing the complexity of a rhetorical silence in delivery and audience reception, with rhetorical silence depicted as a state of being, a state of doing, as philosophical and as symbolic. The heuristics show rhetorical silence as having multiple forms and functions within a context of message-composing and of meaning-making. Thus, one significant contribution of the heuristics is the importance of rhetorical silence. Yet it is also necessary to
attend to those aspects of rhetorical silence that have not always been addressed but that do exist in contemporary theory and digital scholarship.

Not only silence but bodily movement or stillness, environmental aspects or elements of setting, mental activities and memory shape the meaning of a given message—all that surrounds the rhetorical silence, as well as the memory of what came before and the memory for context, genre, gender, expectation and so on, shape meaning interactively. The study of rhetorical silence also highlights the importance of factors such as culture, gender, and class without relying on stereotypes for cultural or gendered silences. Different rhetorical contexts place value on speech and silence, and those values change as the context and participants change. The heuristics allow for a both-and approach to including and to considering the import of factors like culture or gender, but also for the ways that both rhetors and audiences utilize and mediate delivery, style, and context. Similarly, the heuristics include the contemporary perspective that identity and agency are complex and often fluid; thus the application of heuristics does not limit a case study or a rhetorical silence to the potential rigid restrictions of a specific factor such as a specific culture, gender, or class. Rather, the application of the heuristics demonstrates a dynamic play of roles and factors which contribute to a rhetorical context.

More can be said about feminist methods and feminist methodology. While this study engaged the ideals of feminist projects, there is still more to do with regard to understanding the dynamic position of a rhetorical silence in a range of environments and contexts as well as the use of rhetorical silence and listening as a woman rhetor’s practice. Beilin’s extensive study of Anne Askew contributed significant findings and helped to shape perceptions of Askew as a woman-rhetor. Woods and Hageman addressed the need for feminist research that highlights women writers who “maintained a clear eye to readers,” and who “experimented with an
interesting array of literary strategies for claiming their authorial voices” (ix, The Examinations of Anne Askew). This is the kind of research and study that contributes “concrete evidence of a rich and lively heritage of women writing” (ix). Similarly, research and study devoted to mining the depth and breadth of the works composed by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Arenal and Powell honor the contributions made by research in women’s and gender studies, rhetoric, literature, and other fields—especially that research focusing on the Answer “in which this important author defended her own and, by extension, other women’s learning” (vii). Further, Cheryl Glenn’s celebrated revisionist efforts in Rhetoric Retold “expands our understanding of the relationship between males and females in rhetorical histories, as well as of the various Western rhetorical traditions” (10). Through such research, revision, and recovery studies, we are able to recognize the challenges and contributions made by unique women writer-rhetors. It is with the spirit of these scholars that I have grappled with rhetorical silences, their use, and potential meanings. Thus, I have challenged the vision of women rhetors who wield silence intentionally and strategically.

As a feminist methodology, the heuristics contribute to widespread and ongoing work in the field of rhetoric to place feminist inquiry and practice at the heart of research methods and methodology. If silence is one of many possible available means for discourse and meaning-making, then a study of rhetorical silences may also help to shape our ongoing feminist and postmodernist conversations about the productive potential of discourse. For example, one feminist approach included a disruption to the traditional binary of rhetor-and-audience. The inclusion of contemporary considerations for the dynamic roles of rhetor and audience, as well as a consideration for the factors of agency and power, sought to broaden the understanding of rhetorical practices and rhetorical choices. Thus, rhetorical silence can be included as a strategy
or tool rather than a silence-as-cultural-stereotype or silence-as-oppression. Glenn and Ratcliffe’s claims suggest that “Individuals, as well as entire political parties, professions, communities and nations, can more productively discern and implement actions that are more ethical, efficient, and appropriate when all parties agree to engage in rhetorical situations that include not only respectful speaking, reading, and writing but also productive silence and rhetorical listening” (3). Silence as an available tool can contribute to field-wide discussions of agency, purpose, and advancement of discourse. Silence as a rhetorical tool involves further discussion of agency, intention, delivery, perception, meaning and interpretation.

**Conclusions for Future Applications**

In the introduction to *Unspoken*, Cheryl Glenn compels scholars to consider “Whatever its shape, the form of silence (its delivery) is always the same. But the function of silence—that is, its effect upon people—varies according to the social context in which it occurs” (xii). As I mentioned initially in Chapter 1, the review of available scholarship reveals some gaps in research as not merely blind spots or ‘quiet,’ but as opportunities for study. These opportunities may give much needed acknowledgment and recognition to silence—rather than a *voice*, silence may be given proper attention by the *eye* and *ear*. The heuristics’ use as a tool have improved the ways that we might *look at* and *listen to* rhetorical silences. However, the heuristics must also be critically examined to appropriately offer potential use in future work. For example, the heuristics have yet to be tested on a contemporary context. One important next step would be to apply the heuristics to a multi-modal context to analyze the potential use of and potential meanings for rhetorical silence as well as the ways that rhetorical silence is represented in digital contexts. The need to test the heuristics with a contemporary rhetorical situation is one weakness of the current study.
The heuristics, too, may need to be revised since its questions should not be considered as rigid or definitive. For example, the questions may need modification when applied with a digital or multi-modal context. Additionally, more questions may need to be added to further focus on the complexity of each of the categories as interwoven and as recursive. As each of the case studies was analyzed using the questions, I often noticed points that were not necessarily addressed by the heuristics but are worthy of future research. For example, under what conditions may rhetorical silence be created either by the rhetor or by the audience? Similarly, the categories of delivery and audience might be expanded with concepts taken from contemporary and digital scholarship to include further investigation of mediation and distribution. I could equally see opportunities to expand the three categories to include new ones for concepts such as ethos and memory. While the heuristics should not be considered static, and while there are certainly opportunities to revise and expand the heuristics, their arrangement and application has made a significant contribution to my own research and to the ongoing work focusing on rhetorical silence in the field of rhetoric and composition.

**A Conclusion of My Own**

“They missed the point. There’s no such thing as silence. What they thought was silence, because they didn’t know how to listen, was full of accidental sounds.”

—John Cage

My initial fascination for rhetorical silence began in my undergraduate work with my interest in public speaking, Mark Twain, and performance poetry. Though it continued as I worked as a certified secondary education teacher with students who performed slam poetry, I recognize that this interest in rhetorical silence has evolved and found new places for growth and application. In May of 2011, I attended my student Amanda’s senior presentation as part of a graduation ceremony completing her work in poetry at a mid-western private fine arts college.
As I sat with many others in the audience, I watched several young graduates perform the formulaic components of the senior presentations. Like many in the audience, I began to shift restlessly in my seat as each new speaker approached the podium to present. I observed several instances of non-attention among audience members such as whispering, turning heads, turning pages of the program or other documents, and even a cell phone text or two. When Amanda approached the podium, the audience responded as it had approximately twenty-five times before—with applause and restless attention. However, as Amanda spoke she commanded attention and I observed as, one by one, each audience member turned to gaze at and listen to Amanda. I watched in amazement as, once again, she commanded and wielded silence—except this time instead of only delivering silence, as she had so many years ago in a performance of poetry, she created it among audience members as they became rapt with attention to her performance. Not one person’s head tilted or shifted away from the direction of the speaker; not one paper or page shifted; not one person whispered. The audience was silent, but not passive, not un-communicative. As I watched this silent phenomenon of rhetor-wielded attention and listening, I began to think of my own research and the ways that rhetor and audience interact with, exchange, and create meaning through sounds and silences. My observations of that rhetorical situation—in which a rhetor created silence within a restless audience while delivering her own silences amidst her own presentation—validated my initial beliefs about silence as a rhetorical tool, and the resulting findings about context-rhetor-audience contributing significantly not just to the creation of silence but the use of silence. My observations of the rhetor, audience, and context also indicated to me that this inquiry and study is not finished, but has only just begun.
Works Cited


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