THE PASSION OF CHRIST AND THE ANTI-VIETNAM WAR MOVEMENT AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY: AN APPLICATION OF BURKE’S GUILT-REDEMPTION CYCLE

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by

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Introduction

Language is the tool by which we understand our realities, our cultures, others, and ourselves. The language used by people of different cultures allows for them to express themselves as their culture permits. Patterns of language, however, follow trends. In scenarios of tragedy and sacrifice, rhetorical patterns emerge and cultures may relate. Two very different times and locations in history can relate to each other. By analyzing the language of the people within these cultures through a rhetorical lens, there exist evident patterns and parallels.

Specifically looking at the time period during and surrounding the incident at Kent State University on May 4th, 1970, the Anti-Vietnam War culture in the United States may have produced a sort of “spiritual cleansing” of the United States. The pseudo-religiousness of this guilt, sacrifice, and purification of the United States follows the rhetorical and cultural pattern of the Passion of Christ.

According to Christian beliefs, Jesus Christ died to cleanse the world of its sin. A perfect sacrifice, without sin, was the only way to open the gates of heaven. In doing so, the entire world was forgiven of its sin. In a similar way, the sacrifice of the four students on May 4th, 1970 at Kent State University began the cleansing of the United States of its sins during the Vietnam War. Drawing upon these similarities, the two cultures fall into the pattern of Kenneth Burke’s Guilt Redemption Cycle.

In each time period, there was a very strict delegation of societal power. During the Vietnam War, the government had all of the power and expressed that power by constituting the draft and sending men to war. In the time of Jesus Christ, the Pharisees
controlled the law and the churches. What they said was what everyone was expected to respect and believe. In both cases, there was a shift in power and a call for change, thus altering the cultural hierarchy. The persecution of Kent State students, similar to the persecution of Christ and his followers, exhibited the ruthlessness of those in power. In both cases, the individuals in positions of power would not allow for dissent. In both cultures, the power hierarchy was challenged as the Christians and Anti-War activists grew in number. The powerful felt it necessary to take drastic action, such as the crucifixion of Christ and the sending of National Guardsmen to a college campus.

The rhetoric of any time period is reflected through the well-known speeches and writings of each time. The Apostles’ Creed and Port Huron Statement reflect the thoughts and rhetoric of the followers of each scapegoated group. Similarly, Pontius Pilate sentencing Christ to death and Governor Rhodes’ speech reflect the rhetoric of those in power during each time period. These rhetorical acts set the scene for the power struggle between each group in their respective societies and periods in history.

Music also possesses an integral role in reflecting the rhetoric of a society. Music creates a lasting affect of each. In this way, hymns based on scripture and Anti-War music both continue to reflect the rhetoric and culture of each time. Music is a lasting effect of both cultures. It serves as a memory device to what has been culturally. It connects to its listeners spiritually and allows for a deeper connection to that history.

Finally, the sacrifices of Christ and the four students at Kent State on May 4th, 1970 are reflected upon every year. Christians remember the death of Christ on Good Friday and the resurrection of Christ on Easter. Kent State University reflects on the
death of its students every year on the afternoon of May 4th and honors their memory during May 4th Commemoration ceremonies.

Kenneth Burke’s Guilt-Redemption Cycle provides the analysis of each culture as a rhetorical strategy of the culture. The rhetoric consequently becomes the culture itself. The cultural impact of language influences how that society reacts to specific actions. It gives each culture a personhood factor that analyzes more than just the rhetoric and language, but how people interact with that language. Language is culture and a culture is its people. Therefore, language reflects the people.

**Review of Literature**

Language and history coincide in an intricate way. Language tactics that were common to a specific time period provide much about the culture of that period. To compare two very different time periods in history is to also compare their language habits and rhetoric. From a historical standpoint, the time of Jesus Christ greatly differs from that of the Vietnam War. However, Kenneth Burke may disagree when it comes to language. The language of cultural movements, such as the Anti-War Movement and the Passion of Christ, possess similarities. Specifically, by following Kenneth Burke’s Guilt-Redemption Cycle while discussing the days surrounding the crucifixion of Christ and the days leading to the May 4th tragedy at Kent State University, the language and rhetoric of these events lead to an interesting analogy. Research done on the three topics of Kenneth Burke’s rhetoric, Christian rhetoric, and Kent State University history during April and May 1970 will be discussed to make this argument.
Works of Kenneth Burke

At the foundation of this discussion is Kenneth Burke’s works. An abundance of Burke’s writing about rhetoric, rhetorical analysis, and language can be researched. However, the following texts were found most useful for specifically looking at religious rhetoric and the Guilt-Redemption Cycle and the Dramatistic Pentad.

*The Rhetoric of Religion* by Kenneth Burke primarily discusses the language used in religious texts and why such language is used. For example, Burke dissects the origin of the words used to describe the Almighty. The words used for reverence to the highest power, such as *God*, *Elhohim*, and *Alah*, all have different but similar verbal meanings. This text demonstrates the importance of language in regards to religion. Specific chapters develop these ideas further. The importance of Chapter One, “On Words and The Word,” is specific in discussing religious language. For example, *The Bible* is written with very intricate and deliberate wording in order to deliver its message. Chapter Three, “The First Three Chapters of Genesis” analyzes the rhetoric and structure of the first book of *The Bible*. Part VII of this chapter is entitled “Dominion, Guilt, Sacrifice.” By using the methodology and logic of Burke, attention is drawn to the common theme within this section of *The Bible* to sacrifice and setting up for the purification of guilt as well as the idea of a powerful dominion over man (215-222).

In the section of *The Rhetoric of Motives* by Burke entitled “Rhetorical Names for God,” Burke explains God as a clash of opposites. “Christ as divine pontification, as god-man, allows for range whereby God can be identified both with victim and victor” (824-
Because of the “God-terms,” Burke analyzes religious and spiritual rhetoric as a means to create victims out of victors and victors out of victims. This portion of this text allows for the study of the language used in *The Bible*, specifically when speaking about Jesus Christ and his followers.

*Counterstatement* by Burke develops rhetorical analysis methodology further. By using Lexicon Rhetoric $\mathcal{A}$, an analysis of literature as art, that is, written or spoken word used to arouse emotion, may be done in order to further understand the “affects, both intended and unintended” of the literature (123). For these purposes, the primary analysis done will be the Patterns of Experience. By analyzing rhetoric as a universal experience, the types of effects that rhetoric had on the culture as a whole can be inferred. It provides insight to the impact of the rhetoric over time. Similarly, Burke provides a methodology for the analysis of symbols. The importance of symbols within society and rhetoric and the effects of important symbols vary. A useful tool, then, is to gauge the impact of rhetorical symbols, provided here.

Within *A Grammar of Motives*, Burke uses his Dramatistic Pentad of act, agent, scene, agency, and purpose to analyze why individuals speak the way they do about a specific topic. What motivates language can tell far more than the face value of the explicit language. The discussion of tragedy produces a method by which to analyze language regarding victims. The nature of victimizing in tragedy is intuitive. The language used is passive, rather than active. Active language implies a sense of ownership and power. Yet, the language used to describe tragedy is passive, allowing victimizing and sympathetic language, according to Burke. For example, in *A Grammar*
of Motives, Burke writes, “When [King Lear] complains that he is ‘more sinned against than sinning,’ we see the two integral aspects of tragedy, the action and the passion, being dissociated” (41). Although Lear himself has sinned, the language used suggested that he has received sin against him more often than he has committed sin, therefore making his language usage passive or the language of victimization.

The nature of the rhetoric and analogy of the research to be discussed contains multiple facets, including war, religion, sacrifice, and symbolic action. The Philosophy of Literary Form by Burke presents a part of the methodology by which to fully dissect and understand these facets. The rhetorical significance of religion and symbolic action for both the Passion of Christ and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement can both be analyzed using these methods. The discussion of sacrifice and the kill explicitly uses the discussion of the crucifixion and death of Christ (40-41).

The Philosophy of the Literary Form also explains the symbolic necessity of a scapegoat, or a representative for “unwanted evils.” Burke explains the concept of a scapegoat and its relationship to the necessary “ritualistic sacrifice” (35). A Rhetoric of Motives also introduces the development of the Guilt-Redemption Cycle within the section “The Range of Rhetoric: ‘Redemption’ in Post-Christian Science.” Burke explains the habitual nature of humans to seek out a scapegoat to delegate “the burdens of individual and collective guilt” (555). He goes on to explain the usage of such rhetorical actions by the Nazis, specifically of Adolf Hitler, during World War II. These works, as well as the discussion of purification in Burke’s Rhetoric of Religion provide the foundation for the Guilt-Redemption Cycle.
The entire framework for the Guilt-Redemption Cycle comes from Burke’s work *Permanence and Change*. It is throughout this work that Burke discusses the terms “guilt,” “redemption,” and “purification” at length, thus drawing together the rhetorical method of the Guilt-Redemption Cycle. Burke describes the shift in the society’s hierarchy, the fall into guilt, the need for purification through mortification in order to be ultimately redeemed.

The works of Kenneth Burke provide a theoretical framework in order to dissect and understand rhetorical events over time. In summation of his works, Burke understands language as a motivator. *Counterstatement, Grammar of Motives*, and *Philosophy of Literary Form* highlight the importance and power of language within social movements. When understood in conjunction with *Rhetoric of Motives* and *Rhetoric of Religion*, Burke recognizes the importance of language when discussing or even preaching on spirituality. The rhetorical strategies used when discussing religion as well as social movements can therefore be studied together in order to better understand rhetoric as a unifying motivator.

*Interpretations of Burke*

Burke’s writings and methods leave themselves open to interpretation. The following are different academic arguments that have used Burke’s work, most notably, the Guilt-Redemption Cycle.
The application of Burke’s Guilt-Redemption Cycle will parallel the methodology used by Ron R. Roach in “The Story of Bluegrass:’ Carlton Haney, Bill Monroe, and the Redemption Drama in the First Bluegrass Festivals.” This application of the Guilt-Redemption Cycle encompasses an entire culture and time period as a “text” to be critiqued, as more usual with the work of Burke. This type of application of Burke will be also be used in this study.

“Comparisons of Rhetorical Visions and Strategies of the Shah's White Revolution and the Ayatollah's Islamic Revolution” by D. Ray Heisey and J. David Trebing contains Kenneth Burke’s concept of identification used as a tool of analysis. Successful movement leaders use identification as a means to remain in control and in the trust of those following them. The two Iranian leaders in the revolutions analyzed used different identification tactics; however, the importance of identification was not lost during the study by Heisey and Trebing. The Guilt-Redemption Cycle was defined as a need to return to “Hierarchy (the structure of power), Guilt (the feeling of wrongdoing), Scapegoat (the person to be blamed), Sacrifice (suffering for the wrong and cleansing the culture), Redemption (being saved from), and Salvation (the ultimate new society)” (161). This application of the Guilt-Redemption Cycle is a methodological foundation that will be used in this study.

“Fighting Terror by Rite of Redemption and Reconciliation” by Robert L. Ivie discusses the rhetoric of evil during the War on Terror. It applied the Guilt-Redemption Cycle and the idea of rhetorical scapegoating. In this way, Ivie asserts that culture seeks out scapegoats out of fear of damnation. “Such an abiding fear of damnation (that is, of a
chosen people falling from grace) and incessant desire for redemption (that is, for reassurance of their exceptional status) is both a product of and motive for a tragic rhetoric of evil (in the logological sense of symbols cross-pollinating and mutually implicating one another). This potent mixture of fear and desire may very well evoke that elevated, menacing, and awesome aesthetic of the sublime, which Hillman refers to as a “terrible love of war” (228). It also, however, discusses the rehumanizing rituals as means of salvation during the Guilt-Redemption Cycle. The society does not rid itself of the damaging individuals; it instead rehabilitates it (237).

The Guilt-Redemption Cycle as used by Dean Sheibel, an analysis was done on the rhetoric of surfers in “Making Waves with Burke.” In his usage of the Guilt-Redemption Cycle, he defines the methodology of analysis as such: language creates hierarchies, hierarchies produce “covenants for the perfection of surfing,” the surfers cannot live up to such perfection and suffer from guilt, they seek purification for the guilt, purification is met through mortification and victimage, they reach catharsis and achieve redemption from their guilt (254).

Finally, “Kenneth Burke’s Punitive Priest and Redeeming” by Mike Milford uses the Guilt-Redemption Cycle as well as the rhetorical ideas of priesthood and prophets and creates an argument for the NCAA and University of Miami scandal. To overcome cultural lag brought on by priesthoods governing society, a prophet must cleanse the priesthood of its sins to make up for the cultural lag.

“Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric” contains an application of Burke by Foss, Foss, and Trapp. As defined by Foss, et al., rhetoric broadly defined is “the
The uniquely human ability to use symbols to communicate with one another” (11). Although broad, this definition allows for a multitude of uses for rhetorical analysis. Later, the definition by Kenneth Burke is presented, stating, “The use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to introduce action in other human agents…rooted in an essential function of language itself… the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in being that by nature respond to symbols” (157). By applying the works of Burke, Chapter 7, simply entitled “Kenneth Burke,” provides the insight and interpretation to the rhetorical work of Burke. Using and applying this work’s interpretations establish a foundation for analysis established for this study. The section entitled “Pollution-Purification-Redemption: The Rhetoric of Rebirth” demands particular attention. The given definition of this rhetorical device provides the baseline methodology of this study.

Chapter 9 of *Persuasion and Social Movements* by Stuart, Smith, and Denton, entitled “Symbolism in Social Movements: The Theories of Kenneth Burke,” provides insight to Burke’s philosophy and his tools of analysis including identification, the pentad, his philosophies on social movements, and sociodramas. Stuart, Smith, and Denton explain, “In Burkean terms, then, a social movement is a study of drama composed of many acts. They are acts of hierarchy, transformation, transcendence, guilt, victimage, redemption, and salvation” (176). In order to fully understand a social movement, the entire pentad must be analyzed at length. It is later explained, “The Guilt-Purification-Redemption Cycle may be used as a template… Specifically, the cycle is used to interpret relationships among myth, culture, and ideology” (254). The ideology in
the case of this research will revolve around that of the Passion of Christ as well as the Anti-War Movement, specifically at Kent State during the Vietnam War.

In order to understand the connections between Burke, religion, and language, “Logology and Religion: Kenneth Burke on the Metalinguistic Dimension of Language” by C. Allen Carter was studied. This article thoroughly details the works of Kenneth Burke and their relationship with religious rhetoric. The works of Burke and religion, specifically Christianity, possess an interesting relationship. Although Burke does not focus his rhetorical criticism on Christianity in particular, the methodology he uses suggests a relationship with Christianity. Burke’s study of logology and his work *The Rhetoric of Religion* focuses heavily on Christianity. The concept of the Guilt-Redemption Cycle falls directly in line with the teachings of Christianity and the life and death of Jesus Christ.

A synthesis of the applications of Burke’s Guilt-Redemption Cycle, such as the applications as discussed in “The Story of Bluegrass:’ Carlton Haney, Bill Monroe, and the Redemption Drama in the First Bluegrass Festivals,” “Comparisons of Rhetorical Visions and Strategies of the Shah's White Revolution and the Ayatollah's Islamic Revolution,” “Fighting Terror by Rite of Redemption and Reconciliation,” “Making Waves with Burke,” and “Kenneth Burke’s Punitive Priest and Redeeming,” will be used as the foundation of the applied Guilt-Redemption Cycle. Each exhibits interpretations of the Guilt-Redemption Cycle, highlighting the ability to apply Burke’s works, specifically the Guilt-Redemption Cycle in several different ways.
The works “Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric,” *Persuasion and Social Movements*, and “Logology and Religion: Kenneth Burke on the Metalinguistic Dimension of Language” provide a basis for the usage of terminology. Because the works of Burke are often subjected to interpretation, these works will be used to provide a basis to which all terminology can be traced back.

*Passion of Christ*

The rhetoric of this period contains a number of rhetorical strategies. “The Rhetoric of Luke’s Passion” by Peter Rice *The Rhetoric of Luke’s Passion* explains the rhetorical usage of “*progymnasmata* (ancient exercises in elementary rhetoric and prose composition)” within the Passion Narrative of Luke. A major theme within this retelling of the passion is the use of guilt applied to the Jewish leaders who condemned Jesus to death. It is also pointed out that the progymnasmata rhetorical style is used to arouse emotion within a legal setting, also suggesting the emphasis of a guilty party. Further analyzed within the rhetoric of Luke is the use of the commonplace, the opposite, and comparison, way of thinking, pity appeal, the just, the expedient, and *Ekphrasis*. The rhetorical strategies of Luke are compared to the rhetoric of Mark.

*New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* by George A. Kennedy provides an explanation and historical context to the rhetorical strategies common to the time the New Testament was originally written. Their use of “internal” and “external” rhetorical strategies is explained. Chapter 5, “The Rhetoric of the Gospels,” is of primary importance to this study. The specific writing styles of Matthew,
Mark, Luke, and John are examined. The differences in the Gospels in relation to the writers are explained. Specific passages relating to the Passion of Christ are analyzed, information which will greatly add to this study as part of the analogy. The importance of the rhetoric of the New Testament explains the personal differences in the authors as well as what type of audience each author was directing his message.

As written by Amos N. Wilder, *Early Christian Rhetoric: The Language of the Gospel* discusses the necessity of language in the birth of the “new religion,” Christianity. “We cite these analogies only to suggest, arguing from the lesser to the greater, that the new speech-modes of Jesus and his followers had deep conditioning-factors in the rhetoric of their time, but also in the cultural crisis that demanded new styles. Therefore any study of the rhetorical forms of the New Testament is not a superficial matter. Form and content cannot long be held apart” (12). Each chapter deconstructs the rhetoric and language that shaped the Christian faith in its earliest form. From the mere utterances of language to the usage of imagery, symbolism, and myth in the New Testament, Wilder breaks down the importance of language and popular rhetoric of the time period during the writing of the New Testament and the expansion of the early Christian faith. Wilder here emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness during the creation of a mass movement, such as the growth of the Christian faith. For example, Jesus used the telling of parables because parables were “a current and meaningful genre” (12). As relating to both the Passion of Christ’s resulting movement as well as the other movement to be discussed, the Anti-War movement at Kent State University during the Vietnam War, Wilder makes the powerful assertion, “The language of a people is its fate” (13).
Because of the academic application of the text, a NASB, *New American Standard Bible*, translation of *The Bible* will be used to assist in this critique. NASB is the translation of *The Bible* most closely translated into English from the original Hebrew and will provide the closest translation to the original rhetoric used during this time period. All biblical accounts discussed in this analysis will therefore come from this translation of *The Bible* to ensure accuracy of language.

In order to best understand the language of biblical text, “The Rhetoric of Luke’s Passion,” *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*, and *Early Christian Rhetoric: The Language of the Gospel* assists in providing a better understanding of what the text actually means. By pairing this understanding with the NASB translation of the *Bible*, there is the opportunity for the clearest understanding of the original text in its original translation.

*Anti-Vietnam War and Kent State University*

In “The Tragic Weekend of May 1-4, 1970” James J. Best provides a retelling of the weekend leading up to the shooting at Kent State on May 4, 1970. The article provides a day-by-day account of the events leading up to the tragedy as well as the events immediately following the event. A social context of the time period is also included. Such a retelling provides an academic type Gospel of the incident, which will be used in this study.

Stanford W. Gregory and Jerry M. Lewis analyze the symbols recognized as memorializing May 4, 1970 in their work “Symbols of Collective Memory”. The authors
divide the elements into three groups: people, locations, and issues. The people category is divided between the 13 slain and wounded students and the Ohio National Guard. The location analyzed is the Commons, where the confrontation originally took place. Finally, the issues include a number of questions surrounding the incident at Kent State University. Also analyzed in this section is the role of the media. The understanding of creating a public memorial is therefore discussed.

“A Study of the Kent State Incident Using Smelser’s Theory of Collective Behavior” by Jerry M. Lewis provides a sociological understanding. Smelser defines collective behavior as “mobilization on the basis of a belief which redefines social action” (104). By using Smelser’s theory of collective behavior, Lewis explains that the events leading up to the incident at Kent State on May 4, 1970 were highly conducive to a hostile outburst. According to Smelser’s theory, there are five determinates of collective behaviors, which are the following: structural conduciveness, structural strain, growth of a generalized hostile belief, mobilization of participants for action, and operation of social control. The application of this theory to the events of May 4th, 1970 at Kent State University may further apply to the analogy of the Passion of Christ.

Lewis also wrote a work entitled “The Anti War Pieta.” The cultural importance and significance of the photo of Mary Vecchio over the body of Jeffrey Miller taken by John Filo is indisputable. The comparison made by Lewis is between this “Anti-Vietnam War Pieta” and the famous Pieta by Michelangelo. As both evoke an emotional response, contain similar themes, and are widely recognizable images, the comparison creates a connection between two very influential images. The spiritual experience of both images,
the photo of Vecchio and the Pieta, evokes a theme to be expanded upon within this argument.

“The Tragic Weekend of May 1-4, 1970” and “Symbols of Collective Memory” provides a foundation of historical context to the events surrounding the Vietnam War era, specifically at Kent State University. By using those historical events with “A Study of the Kent State Incident Using Smelser’s Theory of Collective Behavior” and “The Anti War Pieta,” it becomes easier to create a cultural understanding and connection to that time period.

In order to fully grasp the importance of historical events, it is vital to understand how people spoke about these events when they took place as well as what was common to language during that period. The common language patterns during the 1970s differed from the language patterns during the time of Jesus Christ, and yet there still exists a strong rhetorical connection between the rhetoric of these two social movements. Language habits tell us far more about history than the words themselves actually state. In order to grasp this analogy between the Anti-War Movement at Kent State University and the Passion of Christ time period while applying Burke’s Guilt-Redemption Cycle, the research above provides a foundation for such an argument.

Discussion of theory

In a strict application, the works and methods of Kenneth Burke are often applied to a specific, rhetorical speech act. This analysis, however, will be constructed by applying the methods of Kenneth Burke to the rhetoric of cultures. Through this more
liberal approach to Burke, an argument for the rhetorical analogy between the Anti-Vietnam War Movement and the Passion of Christ will be made.

The Dramatistic Pentad will be used as a structure that will set up the application of the Guilt-Redemption Cycle. In order to properly use the Guilt-Redemption Cycle for both the Anti-Vietnam War Movement to formulate an analogy to the Passion of Christ, it is important to first be familiar with each aspect of the specific Dramatistic Pentad of that time period. It is of the utmost importance to fully understand the rhetorical culture of each time period in order to draw these conclusions.

For the purposes of this study, an analogy will be constructed by applying the Guilt-Redemption Cycle formulated by Kenneth Burke. The application of Burke’s Guilt-Redemption Cycle will be onto a culture and not a specific text. “The Story of Blue Grass:” Carlton Haney, Bill Monroe, and Redemption Drama in the First Blue Grass Festivals” by Ron R. Roach provides an example of such an application of Burke. As applied in Roach’s argument, Burke’s Guilt-Redemption Cycle is not limited to one specific text. Rather, it views the entire culture and movement as one large text to be analyzed. The Guilt-Redemption Cycle will be applied to the events and culture on and immediately surrounding May 4, 1970 at Kent State University.

By definition, the Guilt-Redemption Cycle is applied after the destruction of what Burke calls the Hierarchy. Hierarchy here means the structure of power in a society (Heisey and Trebing 161). Because of the power structure needs to be, in some way, altered and in need of repair, there is a guilt established within the culture. In order to overcome this guilt, a scapegoat is used to have blame cast upon for the alteration of the
power structure. This step can also be defined as *victimimage* or *mortification*. The scapegoat is then sacrificed for the good of the society’s culture. Through this *sacrifice*, the society is redeemed and finds *salvation* (Burke 215-222). This application of the Guilt-Redemption Cycle is a methodological foundation that will be used in this study.

While applying the Guilt-Redemption Cycle as a form of rhetorical analysis, an argument will be made analogously connecting the events and culture on and surrounding May 4th, 1970 to the events and culture on and surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, according to the Christian faith and the NASB (*New American Standard Bible*) translation of *The Bible*.

The Guilt-Redemption Cycle will construct the argument for social and rhetorical similarities between these two time periods. Conclusions will be drawn based on analogous actors, language, and social behaviors between the two time periods being discussed.

The purpose of this study is to bridge the gap between rhetoric, culture, and social movements while constructing an argument for the analogy between two arguably influential periods in history. The interconnectedness of rhetoric, culture, and social movements cannot be denied. In order to fully understand a culture, its language must first be understood. Taking two incidents where innocent parties were sacrificed by society and comparing them can lead to numerous cultural and linguistic similarities and habits. The goal is to exhibit these similarities between the Anti-Vietnam War movement at Kent State University in 1970 and thebiblically documented social movement just before the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
The theories previously discussed will be applied to the events and culture surrounding May 4th, 1970 and the Passion of Christ. Artifacts used to draw these conclusions will include rhetorical actors, the cultural hierarchy, influential texts, language of the time, and rituals then and now regarding those time periods.

**Application of Theory: Dramatistic Pentad**

Burke’s Dramatistic Pentad offers a method by which to analyze rhetorical events. By dissecting the scene, actor, act, agency, and purpose of a rhetorical act to be analyzed, the act itself can be best understood in its unique context. Because of the parallel nature between the Anti-Vietnam War movement at Kent State University and the time period surrounding the Passion of Christ, the Dramatistic Pentad offers yet another avenue for their similarity to be displayed. The Dramatistic Pentad offers an accessible explanation of the different factors that contribute to a rhetorical event.

The Dramatistic Pentad allows for the discussion of who, what, and why regarding the language and language habits of a culture. Although each culture possessed very different language habits, applying the Dramatistic Pentad to these cultures exhibits the primary rhetorical artifacts of each culture and their relative importance to that culture. The scene is defined as “the ground, location, or situation in which the act takes place” (Foss et al. 169). According to Burke, the scene of the rhetorical act is the time, date, location, and period in history in which a rhetorical act takes place. The relevant history to the rhetorical scene for the Anti-Vietnam War Movement would have been the late 1960s-1970. The specific scene would have been the weekend leading up to May 4th,
1970. The scene was the Vietnam War Era and cultural divide, in general. The May 4th Visitors’ Center at Kent State University depicts several images in which the two major ideologies of the time are juxtaposed, the pro-war and the hippies. The rhetorical scene exhibited a great deal of cultural struggle, not just war struggle itself.

In the Bible, there is explicit reference to the location and period in history in which this act takes place. Although the exact time and date of the weekend of Jesus’ death is debated, the overall history of the rhetorical act is agreed upon. Christ was crucified at Mount Calvary during the first century AD. During this period in history, the Romans as well as the Pharisees saw Jesus and his followers as a threat. Therefore, the rhetorical scene of the lifetime of Jesus Christ was early first century A.D. The culture and language in the Bible therefore reflects the cultural norms practiced during that time period.

Burke defines the agent as the “group or individual who performs the act… An agent also may be a collective term…” (Foss et al. 169). Many groups can be considered agents to this time in history. From a global standpoint, the world could easily be divided into pro-war and anti-war believers. Although not all of the population declared themselves as activists, many in this time in history all over the world had an opinion about the war in Vietnam. Most of these opinions were very strongly in favor or in opposition to the war. More specific than the pervious group, the other two groups in constant struggle would have been the government and military having conflict with anti-war activists and college students. The most apparent case would have been the Ohio
National Guard and the students at Kent State University during the weekend of May 4\textsuperscript{th}, 1970. These agents caused the climax of rhetorical action to take place.

The two major ideologies of the time period of Jesus Christ would have been the followers of Jesus against those who wanted Jesus arrested, the Romans and Jews, similar to the war conflict during the Vietnam War Era. In this time period, this part of the world, in particular, had many conflicts dealing with how to react to Jesus and his followers. Anyone who claimed to be a follower or Jesus was threatened with arrest and death just as Jesus was. In this way, Pontius Pilate and the Pharisees are analogous to the government while the Disciples are analogous to the hippies and students. Each are carrying out what they feel is correct to their own ideology regarding the conflict.

Agency is “the means used to perform that act or the instruments used to accomplish it” (Foss et al. 169). Protest as a means of social rhetoric during this time period was extremely prevalent, specifically among college students. The unpopular war in Vietnam lead many students to exercise their First Amendment rights. Using this as their rhetorical agency, or the method by which they expressed their rhetoric, played a pivotal role in how their rhetorical act took place. Had it not been for the agency of protest, the students would not have made the societal and social impact that they had, nor would the National Guard have been called in because the students and their ideology would not have been seen as a threat, even though the protest on May 4\textsuperscript{th}, 1970 was, in fact, peaceful. The power of their rhetorical agency in this case is undeniable.

The agency of Jesus Christ’s rhetoric would be the telling of parables. The parables Jesus used to explain his ideology can therefore be seen as the peaceful
rhetorical agency. Parables were used during this time in history in order to teach. Just as protests were common during the Vietnam War Era, so were parables common during the lifetime of Jesus Christ. By explaining his ideology through this common method, Jesus was making his rhetoric more accessible to his audience. This persuasive method was therefore genius and effective. It can even be noted that while Jesus used parables to teach who he was and explain his mission on Earth without misunderstanding or attack, the parables he used were realistic and human. Amos N. Wilder observes, “One can even speak of their secularity” (81).

Burke refers to the act as any “conscious or purposive action” (Foss et al. 169). May 4th, 1970 is known as the day the Vietnam War came home. As the students at Kent State University were fired upon, so was their ideology of peace fired upon. Their rhetorical act was consequently the sacrifice they suffered on that afternoon. The biblical sacrifice made on that day due to the sins of the country is therefore a powerful analogy to what occurred. The lives lost on that day were the unknowing martyrs for a peaceful cause. This rhetorical act of sacrifice embodies the power hierarchy forcing itself back into balance. The government felt threatened by the peaceful protest of Kent State University students and acted upon those feelings by arming National Guardsmen with live ammunition and sending them onto a college campus after having dealt with protesting teamsters. The impact of this decision by Ohio Governor Rhodes cannot be fully stressed.

Christians refer to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ as the “perfect sacrifice.” The Bible reads, “Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends”
(John 15:13 NASB). The Bible also says, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16 NASB). This rhetorical act embodies what the Bible explains was Jesus’ purpose on Earth. Because Christians believe Jesus led his life peacefully and without sin, he was the perfect sacrifice to take on the sins of the world. For the era of the Passion of Christ, this rhetorical act allowed for Christ to fulfill his purpose and allowed his followers to spread the Gospel about the life of Jesus. This message became a powerful tool of persuasion while expanding the beliefs around the Passion of Christ story because of the first hand accounts and messages being spread from people who knew Jesus.

The purpose is “the agent’s private purpose for performing the act” (Foss et al. 169). “Substantial consensus exists that participants in the rally [on May 4th, 1970] were primarily protesting the presence of the Guard on campus, although a strong anti-war sentiment was also present” (Hensley and Lewis 56). The previous protests and rallies were in response to the expansion of the war in Vietnam as was the protest Kent State University. After the shooting on May 4th, 1970, the call for peace by the Kent State University community was far more demanding. The rhetorical purpose of the Kent State University students and protesters continues to live on in the Kent State University community due in part to the May 4th Task Force as well as the May 4th Visitors Center on Kent State University’s campus.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always even to the end of age” (Matthew 28: 19-
According to the Bible, Jesus was crucified and was then resurrected and returned to his disciples to finish his work with them by having them spread his word. The death and resurrection of Jesus, Christians believe, was necessary in order to save the world from sin. The Bible emphasizes that all sinners who believe in the word of Jesus and accept his death as paying for their sins will have eternal life (John 5:24 NASB). The gospel is still shared and spread as such today in Christian churches.

While applying Burke’s Dramatistic Pentad, the application of ratio is necessary. Foss, Foss, and Trapp explain, “An examination of all the ratios aids the critic in discovering which term in the pentad receives the greatest attention by the rhetor and therefore suggests in what term to look for the motivation of the act” (171). Because this suggests a specific rhetor and a specific rhetorical speech act, the application for these purposes looks at the idea of the ratio in a much larger scale. Consequently, the entire society would be analyzed as a rhetor and the events previously discussed replace the need for a specific speech act. Furthermore, the ratio for these rhetorical acts would be scene to purpose. The rhetorical scene brings meaning to the remainder of the pentad in both rhetorical acts. Had the United States not been in the Vietnam War during a time of major cultural change, the likelihood of National Guardsmen being brought onto a college campus would decrease significantly. The late 1960s were saturated with cultural movement, therefore providing a launching pad for further cultural movements. The Anti-War movement arose out of this conducive climate of social awareness. The rhetorical purpose arose from this scene. The entire purpose of the Anti-War movement
was to promote peace and social change. Had the Anti-War/Peace movement not been so prevalent and powerful during the late 1960s, the rhetorical act would have never taken place.

The scene to purpose ratio is also applicable to the time of Jesus Christ. During his lifetime, the *Bible* explains that Jesus was born in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Christians believe that the world was corrupt and in need of the First Coming of its savior. From a cultural context, the teachings of Jesus Christ challenged the corrupt Pharisees during a time of harsh oppression. In that way, the teachings of Jesus Christ would not have been as impactful had it not been for the culture in which they were originally experienced recorded. The rhetorical purpose of the Passion of Christ was to free people from corruption. To Christians, it was also to set people free from sin. Ultimately, the teachings of Jesus Christ and their rhetorical purpose were to allow his teachings to flourish.

**Application of Theories: Guilt Redemption Cycle**

By analyzing language in its relationship to culture, social movement, and social struggle, Burke argues that Lexicon Rhetoric $Æ$ is to be used when the rhetoric being analyzed is used to arouse emotion (Burke 123). Given the nature of each event to be analyzed, the arousal of emotion from each is unquestionable. However, this is a more liberal application of Burke. The cultures of the Anti-Vietnam War Movement and the Passion of Christ provide the basis of analysis, rather than a specific text. By analyzing an entire language rather than a specific text, the culture and norms of the time are better
understood. As explained by Ron R. Roach in his application of Burke’s Guilt-Redemption Cycle, “an archetypical progression from guilt to redemption underlies much of human communication” (Roach 12). Therefore, by applying this Guilt-Redemption cycle to a culture rather than to just one singular text, the communication of these cultures can be fully understood. It is only then the same type of “sense-making” can be done on the effects of language of that culture (Schiebel 254).

In order for a culture to rhetorically experience the need for redemption, it must first fall into a cultural lag. This lag can be experienced through the desire for a shift in the power structure of the society (Milford 46). A shift in the Hierarchy must be felt by the culture. The less powerful group culturally must therefore challenge the power elite. In the case of the Passion of Christ time period, the followers of Jesus Christ displayed rebellion against the Pharisees. The protesters and students at Kent State University participated in protest against the government.

The first step in Burke’s Guilt-Redemption Cycle is a culture falling into guilt. The United States faced its guilt as it continued on in its unpopular war. The sins committed by the United States included its continuation and expansion of war. It was as though the United States was separating itself from purity. The separation from purity continued as the soldiers that returned home from war came home to rejection and poor treatment. The culture of the time was unhealthy and wrong. Culturally, the time before the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was rhetorically parallel. The guilt stemmed from the acts of the Pharisees. Like the United States government, they led their people into damnation. They robbed cultural purity by tarnishing religion and faith with hate and greed. Jesus
referred to the Pharisees as hypocrites, according to the Gospel of Mark. “You hypocrites! Rightly did Isaiah he prophesize of you: ‘these people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men” (Mark 15:7-9 NASB). Throughout Matthew 23, Jesus explains all of the greed and hypocrisy of the Pharisees. He shames them for “shutting off the kingdom of heaven from people” (Matthew 12:1-39 NASB). “The Guilt-Purification-Redemption Cycle may be used as a template… Specifically, the cycle is used to interpret relationships among myth, culture, and ideology” (Stewart, Smith, and Denton 254). These relationships among myth, culture, and ideology eventually form identity, which will ultimately influence the culture and the society’s power hierarchy.

Within the Vietnam War era, American’s cultural hierarchy also fell into guilt when the war in Vietnam expanded to Cambodia. However, the expansion of the war after President Nixon had seemingly promised an end to the war incited unrest among American citizens (Best 10). With that unrest came the presence of Ohio National Guard on Kent State University’s campus.

As the desire to seek purification after experiencing guilt intensifies, so does the search for a scapegoat, or the ones on which the sins of the society will be cast (Heisey and Trebing 161). Because of the guilt faced by each culture, a scapegoat is used to culturally cast blame. The scapegoats of the Vietnam War were those who protested, burned draft cards, and demanded peace. In the case of Kent State University, the scapegoats were seen as all the students and protesters present on May 4th, 1970. They challenged the cultural hierarchy of power established by the government its use of the
draft and the presence of the National Guard on campus. In the time of Jesus Christ, Christ and His followers were the scapegoats of the Pharisees. The Pharisees continually questioned Jesus’ acts and blamed him for people turning away from their teachings. It is because Jesus condemns the actions of the Pharisees that they eventually plot against him (Luke 11:53-54 NASB).

During the Vietnam War era, the scapegoats were declared by Governor Rhodes of Ohio who called the war protesters “the worst kind of people that we harbor in America” after comparing them to the brown shirts and communists (Best 16). The cultural hierarchy in the Kent State University community was being turned against the students and protesters due to the Ohio governor. Protests that had broken out over the invasion of Cambodia led to riots in downtown Kent and the burning of the ROTC building. In a similar way, United States President at the time, Richard Nixon, was quoted saying, “You know, you see these bums, you know, blowing up the campuses. Listen, the boys on the college campuses today are the luckiest people in the world- going to the greatest universities- and here they are burning up the books. I mean, storming around about this issue, I mean you name it get rid of the war, there'll be another one.” (Nixon in Hollander). Just days before the National Guard fired on students at Kent State University, the President is quoted calling protesting college students “bums.” These actions made the protesters and Kent State University students key scapegoat targets for Governor Rhodes and those who agreed with President Nixon’s name calling in order to turn the public against the protesters and students, just as the Pharisees turned their society against Jesus and his followers.
Victimage and mortification are then experienced by the scapegoat in order to present the society as worthy of purification and salvation (Schiebel 254). The victimage of the Vietnam War era occurred when government officials began to exercise force over the protesters. At Kent State University the students were victimized and four ultimately experiences mortification as a result of the presence of the National Guard pointing guns at them, throwing tear gas canisters at them, and simply their general presence while students were attempting to peacefully protest. Because Christ claimed to be the Son of God and spread his word, the Pharisees demanded he is arrested and put on trial. Judas Iscariot then publically betrayed him (Luke 22:47-53 NASB). Here he faced his victimage. He was beaten and taken prisoner as the public chose a criminal over him (Luke 23:18-25 NASB). He faced his mortification publically when he was beaten, given a crown of thorns, and forced to carry his cross all the way to the site of his crucifixion (John 19:2; 16-30 NASB).

The students and protesters at Kent State University faced their victimage and mortification when the National Guardsmen began to try to disperse their peaceful protest through a display of power and force. The Guardsmen marched themselves around the students with rifles and bayonets drawn. Tear gas canisters were thrown in order to force the students to disperse. The students and protesters at Kent State University on May 4th, 1970 were practicing their First Amendment right to peacefully assemble (Best 19-21).

Obviously, in this rhetorical situation, the students at Kent State are growing in hostility towards the National Guard, as is the National Guard growing in hostility towards the Kent State students. This growth of hostility is what brings the two groups
into a confrontation situation. In the same way, the desire to arrest and crucify Jesus Christ grew to such a demand by the Pharisees that members of society actually lined the street to watch him be taken to his death and people stood at his feet while he died. Soldiers even stabbed him as he hung from the cross with spears simply because of the tales told to the people by the Pharisees about Christ and his followers.

Tragedy came when the culture of the Vietnam War turned four Kent State University students into American sacrifices. When the war came home, the United States was forced to deal with its sin. The loss of young lives provided a cultural sacrifice that permanently changed the outlook of the war. According to Christian beliefs, the death of Jesus Christ on the cross provided the perfect sacrifice for the world. By dying on the cross, Christ took the sins of the world upon himself (Luke 23: 44-49 NASB).

These rhetorical events fulfilled the sacrifice of each respective culture.

At Kent State University, the students refused to leave their protest. General Canterbury of the Ohio National Guard decided to have his men retrace their steps after having forced the protesters into the Prentice Hall parking lot. While marching back up the hill near the pagoda on the side of Taylor Hall, a group of guardsmen turned and fired on the protesters. Nine were injured and four were killed, including Jeffery Miller, Allison Krause, William Schroeder, and Sandra Lee Sheuer (Best 22). The sacrifice of the four Kent State University students metaphorically purified the United States for their sins in the Vietnam War. The innocent sacrifice brought to light the wrongful actions of those who scapegoated the war protesters and ultimately exposed cultural hierarchy imbalance.
Finally, the cultural sacrifice of the four students at Kent State University on May 4th, 1970 provided purification. Purification and ultimately reaching salvation are experienced when the cultural hierarchy is back to a state of relative peace (Heisey and Trebing 161). Life in the United States entered a new beginning as the outlook of the Vietnam War drastically changed. According to The Bible, the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ provides salvation for the world and all who believe in the Gospel. (John 6:40 NASB).

The National Guard forcibly pushed the cultural hierarchy back into their favor via violent outburst. The salvation and purification of the American culture during the Vietnam War was thus achieved. Similarly, the crucifixion of Christ forced the culture of that time period into a state of purification. By sacrificing Christ, the perfect sacrifice without sin, Christians believe that the world was saved and purified. Although a violent outburst caused such an effect, it was nonetheless the answer to the sins of the world in both situations. The societies were free of their sins by sacrificing the innocent and therefore becoming aware as a society of the sins they had committed. The cultures were purified.

The application of Burke’s Guilt-Redemption Cycle indicates rhetorical similarities between the Anti-Vietnam War Movement and the Passion of Christ’s era. The Anti-Vietnam War Movement faced persecution, as did the followers of Jesus Christ and Jesus, himself. In both cases, those who opposed authority became the scapegoats and sacrifices for their respective cultures. The shift of power in the cultural hierarchy was restored after each culture received salvation and purification for its sins. The
rhetoric of each time period also deeply contributed to the cultures’ responses to the shift in power in the cultural hierarchy.

**Rhetorical Artifacts**

Assisting the rhetorical significance of the parts of the Dramatistic Pentad previously discussed, the following rhetorical artifacts should also be considered. The first and most important would be the power structure within in each culture. Understanding the power structure in each society and how the power is distributed allows for a better understanding of the rhetorical acts during that time period. In the case of the Anti-Vietnam War Movement, there was a clear power distance between the United States Government and the protesters of the Vietnam War. Similarly, the Pharisees were at a significantly higher power position in society than Jesus and his followers.

“It is not only in the modern arts that we wrestle with the problem of meaning. It is not surprising that philosophy is today occupied above all with language, or that social science interests itself in the rhetoric of propaganda, or the Church with the task of communication” (Wilder 9). In both the era of the Passion of Christ and the Anti-Vietnam war movement, the most influential artifacts were language and the cultural hierarchy. Burke claims that human beings are symbolic creatures. We manipulate symbols with meanings we assign them. These symbols create our societies and our realities. Everything in our society that creates its culture is symbolic of its language (Stuart, Smith, and Denton 162). Because of this, the two movements discussed create a
cultural parallel. The realities of the time surrounding the Passion of Christ and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement use the symbolism discussed in order to create their realities and return balance to their cultural hierarchies.

Emerging social movements during these two distinctive moments in history ultimately challenged these power hierarchies. These social movements were the Anti-Vietnam War movement and the followers of Jesus Christ. As rhetorical artifacts, these social movements provide a lens through which history can be recalled. For example, analyzing the Vietnam War from the perspective of a government official would rhetorically tell the story extremely differently than if history were told from the perspective of a student protesting at Kent State University on May 4th, 1970. These social movements challenged their respective authorities and attained legitimacy, solidifying their significance as important rhetorical artifacts. Because each social movement garnered momentum from other social movements occurring at the time, such as civil rights and the disenfranchisement from the teachings of the Pharisees, as well as the growth of institutions, these social movements earned their societal legitimacy (Stuart, Smith, and Denton 140).

These patterns within history reflect the nature of social movement language. Social order depends on language and symbolism while social disorder stems from disorder of communication (Stuart, Smith, and Denton 172). The protesters at Kent State University on May 4th, 1970 were not being heard. Their communication and First Amendment Rights were being stifled as they challenged their government. In an analogous way, Jesus Christ and his followers were attacked and ultimately punished for
their beliefs because they challenged the authority of the Pharisees. Their symbolic challenge of authority shifted their cultural hierarchies.

Another important rhetorical artifact would be the recorded history of each. The history of Jesus Christ is recorded within the Gospels of the Bible. The Gospels are the first hand accounts of the life of Jesus written by men who personally knew him and interacted with him. Just as journalists have differing views and ideas, so too do the writers of the Gospels. The first hand account writings in the Gospels can hence be equated to the Kent Stater newspapers during the spring of 1970. These first hand accounts and writings provide a history taken of the events surrounding May 4th, 1970 from the perspective of the victims’ peers. The use of Gospels and newspaper writing differs greatly from usual historical pieces of writing because of the nearness the author had to the acts. First hand accounts from peers, therefore, add in a factor of truly raw and honest rhetoric. This makes the historical account emotionally charged and relatable as opposed to distanced and impersonal.

There are remembrance ceremonies in which people remember those sacrificed that have also become significant rhetorical artifacts. These remembrance ceremonies became their own rhetorical artifact. Every spring, Christians attend their respective churches and remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. At Kent State University, every May 4th people come to campus and ceremonially remember the events that changed lives that day in 1970. Just as Christians remember the resurrection, the memories of those who knew the students killed on May 4th symbolically resurrect them.
Although the ceremonies themselves are extremely different, the sentiment is very much the same. Stories are read, songs are sung, and people come together to remember.

In both situations, music plays a major role in remembering and reflecting as a rhetorical artifact. Just as there are countless songs about the death of Jesus Christ there are also many songs protesting the Vietnam War. Most notably, Christians sing hymns about the death and resurrection of Jesus. Those who protested the war have their own songs that allow them to recall the anti-war movement and the lives lost. Music allows people to reflect, although protest music serves a many purposes (Stuart, Smith, and Denton 220). For example, notable songs came into popularity after the National Guard shooting at Kent State University, such as “Ohio” by Neil Young of Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young. The song discusses the impact of the government’s action during the war and emphasizes the “four dead in Ohio.” Similarly, many Christians sing excerpts from the book of Psalms from the Bible. The word “psalms” translates from its Greek root meaning “words accompanying music.” Although Psalms, as it is sometimes called, is a book within the Old Testament of the Bible, and therefore not written during and after the life of Jesus Christ, many Christians use this part of the Bible to find scriptures to meditate on when going through life. Because Psalms is a book in the Bible that is meant to accompany music, it can be seen as a source for both the followers of Jesus during his lifetime and modern day Christians that is like music.

Songs like “Ohio” and Psalms share a similarity in that people during the time they were written refer to them, with music, to help to them understand what is happening in their life. However, another analogous connection could also be made to
Easter hymns, such as “Rugged Old Cross,” “Amazing Grace,” and “Ave Maria.” Music can be seen as a rhetorical artifact from every time period and from every ideology because it is used to reflect its society.

Many symbols come to mind when thinking of the death of Jesus. These iconic images have become lasting rhetorical artifacts. A cross, a crown of thorns, a boulder rolled away from an empty tomb, and so on are just some of the symbols that may come to mind. Similarly, the events at Kent State University on May 4\textsuperscript{th}, 1970 also bring to mind certain images such as the victory bell, the pagoda, the bullet hole through the sculpture in front of Taylor Hall, and a protest flag. The power of symbols cannot be stressed enough. Due to the power of symbols during the time of the social movement, symbols create a lasting impact and influence on society. The symbol of the cross for Christians grew from the image of Christ on the cross the first followers of Jesus Christ had and has grown to what it is today, a unifying symbol for Christians all over the world. Similarly, a peace sign grew into popularity due to its emergence during the Vietnam War. Since then, it has been used a symbol for peace and pacifism during all wars.

The power of symbols has also flowed over into art. Jerry M. Lewis pieced together a powerful comparison. Although it is never directly stated in the Bible that Mary, the mother of Jesus, holds the dead body of her son after he is taken down from the cross, the powerful image is depicted in Michelangelo’s work, \textit{Pieta}. This image captures the sacrifice of Jesus impacting those who knew and loved him. Lewis draws a connection to what he refers to as the “Anti-Vietnam War Pieta.” This version of the
Pieta is the photograph taken by John Filo, a Kent State University photojournalism student present at the protest and shooting on May 4th, 1970. This photo shows Mary Vecchio standing over the body of Jeffery Miller. Miller was one of four students whom perished that day. Vecchio was a fourteen-year-old runaway and self-described antiwar activist at the time (Lewis 130). In both Michelangelo’s Pieta as well as the “Anti-Vietnam War Pieta,” the image depicts a sense of loss and pain. Michelangelo’s Pieta has been a memorable piece of art since its creation. In his discussion of the “Anti-Vietnam War Pieta,” Lewis lays out four factors described by Hariman and Luciates that makes the image of Mary Vecchio iconic. These include “1. The photograph must be widely recognized and remembered. 2. The photograph must be a representation of a historically important event. 3. The photograph must activate strong emotional responses. 4. The photograph is produced across a range of media, genres, and topics” (Lewis 134). By this definition, Lewis believes this image to be iconic. In both cases of each image calls the viewer back to the respective time period. The image evokes emotions, demands reflection, and ultimately serves as an iconic image for the time each represents.

Institutions can also be rhetorical artifacts. Sacrifice of this scale demands to be reflected upon. In the case of the sacrifice of Jesus, Christians attend churches. Although there are many types of Christian churches all over the world, each still remembers the death and sacrifice of Jesus. Just as the death of Jesus can be remembered at a church, the sacrifice of the four students at Kent State University can be reflected upon at the May 4th Visitors Center and its walking tour. Located on Kent State University’s campus in
Taylor Hall, the May 4th Visitors Center allows for people to come and hear about the history and the events that took place surrounding and during May 4th, 1970.

Just as the Christian faith now has missionaries and those who spread the word of the Gospel today, the Anti-Vietnam War Movement at Kent State University now has the May 4th Task Force. Both work to spread their message and histories. The Bible tells Christians, “Go into the world and preach the gospel to all creation” (Mark 16:15 NASB). The symbolic followers of the Anti-Vietnam War movement, The May 4th Task Force at Kent State University, shares its similar message within its mission statement:

“Our basic goals remain the same as in 1975:

1. M4TF seeks to support the families of the 1970 KSU victims in an ongoing quest for truth and justice and to attain proper memorial tribute to our fallen fellow-students Allison Krause, Jeffrey Miller, Sandra Scheuer and William Schroeder.

2. M4TF is an educational/activist student organization seeking to raise awareness regarding misunderstood truths about the Kent State tragedy of May 4, 1970.

3. M4TF seeks to link our educational efforts at KSU to promote understanding of similar American campus tragedies, which occurred at Jackson State University and elsewhere between 1968 and 1972.

4. M4TF encourages non-violent conflict resolution as a meaningful legacy of our Kent State tragedy of 1970;
5. M4TF promotes understanding about the importance of recognizing and maintaining the tradition of KSU student activism promoting positive social change.”

(May 4th Task Force, Kent State University).

It is very apparent in culture today the lasting effects of both cultures. Modern day Christians carry on their beliefs in a multitude of ways just as many protesters today remember the sacrifices made by the students at Kent State University on May 4th, 1970. Ultimately, the sacrifices made during both time periods carry on quite similarly. This, in itself, can be considered a significant rhetorical artifact. In relation to the events themselves, the cultural impact of each rhetorical movement is obviously vast in not only American culture, but also world culture.

**Conclusion**

Rhetoric is the use of symbolic action that persuades and motivates individuals. Individuals make up society. Ultimately, rhetorical actions therefore influence society and culture. The analogy made between the Passion of Christ and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement at Kent State University depicted connections between social movements and rhetoric as well as the work of Kenneth Burke. The concept of the Guilt-Redemption Cycle can be seen throughout history, here depicted by two major events in history. Burke’s Dramatistic Pentad allows for a clearer understanding of the entire rhetorical act to be analyzed. Simply applying the Guilt-Redemption Cycle only analyzes the flow of
events and not the surrounding, relevant factors. Adding the analogous rhetorical artifacts further exhibits the connection between the two social movements.

Rhetorical artifacts are also key to understanding how social movements have changed over time. Every social movement is recalled through the use of symbols, both tangible and intangible. Utilizing rhetorical events in order to understand relationships in history allows for a different and perhaps more emotional connection to present day and those specific time periods.

**Future Research**

Future research has the opportunity to continue to depict the relationship between sociology and language, as the bond between the two is unquestionable. Modern day social movements could potentially fall into this same rhetorical and sociological pattern. Analyzing current social movements in this way may possibly allow for a better understanding of how society can grow and change due to this cycle.

Future research may also focus on the relationship between rhetoric and sociology, specifically the apparent similarities between the Guilt-Redemption Cycle and Neil Smelser’s Theory of Collective Behavior. The necessity for rhetoric in order to promote change during a social movement is obvious. However, the two theories may lead to even more analogous study and continue to emphasize this relationship between rhetoric and social change.

Social movements that included martyrs such as that of Malala Yousafaszi, Martin Luther King Jr., and others may also be used as research foundations for the study
of social movements over time. These studies may focus on how rhetorical events, social movements, and the concept of societal guilt has manifested itself throughout history.
Works Cited


Appendix

Figure 1

**Burke’s Hierarchy**

![Burke’s Hierarchy Diagram](image)

Image created by Dr. J. David Trebin

Figure 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guilt-Redemption Cycle</th>
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<th>Passion of Christ</th>
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<td>Anti-War movement challenges government</td>
<td>Followers of Jesus challenge Pharisees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td>Expansion of Vietnam War</td>
<td>Corruption of Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scapegoating</td>
<td>Governor Rhodes’ speech</td>
<td>Pharisees teachings and challenge of Jesus</td>
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<td>Redemption</td>
<td>Presence of National Guard</td>
<td>Betrayal and arrest of Jesus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purification/Salvation</td>
<td>Four killed and nine wounded</td>
<td>Crucifixion of Jesus</td>
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Chart created by Rachel Morrell