ANXIOUS RHETORICS: 
(TRANS)NATIONAL POLICY-MAKING IN LATE TWENTIETH-CENTURY US CULTURE

DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

In 2003, a group of prominent humanities scholars answered an urgent call by the US State Department to issue a formal, academic response to Homeland Security policies. The resulting document makes clear the benefits of bringing humanities criticism, methods, and knowledge to (trans)national policy making. My dissertation is one of the first in the field of rhetorical studies to explicate this benefit. In my dissertation, “Anxious Rhetorics,” I examine the rhetorical dynamics of the policy-making process. Policy-making is not simply figurative; policy-makers hold the rhetorical power to structure—through public, legal, political, and administrative institutions—audiences’ collective and individual identities, value systems, senses of place, and material circumstances. To demonstrate this intricate relationship, I analyze the rhetorical strategies that frame late twentieth century policy hearings, testimonies, supportive pamphlets, hearings, and reports. I trace the shared rhetorical appeals among contemporary national welfare policies (Chapter Two), international World Bank promotional materials (Chapter Three) and reports (Chapter Four), and local university student rights initiatives (Chapter Five), to highlight the common representational strategies that resonate with US audiences. Each site demonstrates the late twentieth-century shift in policy-making whereby the state is no longer responsible to its citizens because of their intrinsic value as citizens. Rather, the market supersedes the state as the central governing body and places value on its citizens only as economic actors. My cross-textual investigation illustrates not only that
policy-making is a rich genre of persuasion, but also that contemporary policy-making is a
discursive practice that often produces and reifies gender, race, ability, and transnational
inequalities.

As a feminist rhetorical project, my study necessitates an interdisciplinary
methodology. I blend classical (Aristotelian) and contemporary (Burkian) rhetorical studies of
audience with feminist transnational cultural and post-colonial studies to produce a unique
analytic strategy. My fusion of these disciplines enables a critical investigation of how
policymakers craft their arguments both to appeal to a diverse US audience and to obscure the
inequalities produced by globalization. I document how contemporary public initiatives appeal
to US citizens’ deeply held values of personal responsibility, empowerment, and individualism.
I argue that these appeals, however, reify what audiences already know and expect and thereby
prevent audiences from recognizing the personal, material, ideological, and socioeconomic
consequences produced by the late twentieth-century transnational economy.

As a whole, my project is valuable to rhetorical studies on at least three levels: 1) my
analysis expands the field of rhetoric by demonstrating how theories of audience can advance
current understandings of transnational policy studies; 2) my project furthers the field of
transnational cultural studies by articulating a grounded rhetorical methodology that effectively
defines the significant roles of audience, text, material circumstance, and context in the analysis
of public discourse; and, 3) my work highlights the important links between the study of
(trans)national policy and the pedagogical theory and praxis of the rhetoric and composition
classroom.
To Anne, Jason, and (especially) Zac
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CHAPTER 1

ANXIOUS RHETORICS

What we need are critical practices that link our understanding of postmodernity, global economic structures, problematics of nationalism, issues of race and imperialism, critiques of global feminism, and emergent patriarchies. (Kaplan and Grewal 358)

Public policy is both an instrument and an effect of power. It encompasses a range of texts and social practices that may be imposed from above but work more seamlessly by influencing how people govern themselves. (Campbell 35)

Introduction: The Anxious Rhetorics of Policy-Making

In 1997 I entered the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago to study social policy-making. During my first quarter at Chicago, and after a long and hotly debated “Contact for America,” the text of the 1996 welfare bill, the “Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act” (PRA) was released to the public. The day that the bill was made public, my social policy professor eagerly made copies of the first ten pages for all her students; however, I could not get past the first lines:

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Marriage is the foundation for a successful society.

(2) Marriage is an essential institution of a successful society which promotes the interests of children.
Promotion of responsible fatherhood and motherhood is integral to successful child rearing and the well-being of children. (PRA Title 1 Section 101).

Given that I had just spent the last several weeks of my social policy class studying the shifts in welfare policy throughout the 20th century, I was taken back first by the common, value-laden, and emotionally packed language of the bill which evoked that which is most familiar to us—the family. As a discussion about the bill ensued, I became equally dumbfounded, however, by my fellow colleagues’ complacency with the bill’s overt focus on how traditional heteronormative institutions, such as marriage and family values, will bring women—in particular—out of poverty and out of the welfare system. Unlike welfare policy throughout the 20th century, which is full of technocratic jargon and boring prose, this policy seemed to be written for an audience of policy-makers. What is more, the bill’s simplistic language, evocation of contemporary family values, and (as the rest of the policy demonstrates) an anxious rhetorical-centered appeal over the relationship between the family, the state, and the market suggested to me that the general US public was a central audience for this bill.

The PRA is noteworthy in other ways as well (in fact, former President Bill Clinton suggested that the PRA was the bill that would “end welfare as we know it”). The PRA significantly re-negotiated how social services were funded in the US. Unlike previous welfare legislation, which was centrally run by the federal government, the PRA provided block grants to states to carryout social services. The federal government allocates a certain amount of money (based on populations, locations, economies, and so on) to states for social services. It has become individual states’ responsibility, not the federal government’s, to make use of the money and drop recipients off the dole. In turn,
and as I recount in the first paragraph of this chapter and in first lines of the PRA, states have turned to individual’s behaviors (over structural-economic restraints in a shifting US economy) as a means to reduce welfare rolls along with inexpensive contract labor to carryout the PRA’s services. The new way of funding the welfare system has led to a rise in low-cost labor that does not provide benefits or a living wage— and this of course, has created more low-income workers.¹

This extreme shift in funding, the focus on the role of the individual and her/his ability to “behave” like a proper US citizen (and compete and survive in a market economy), the free trade of goods and services, and the significant deregulation of markets, all occur in late twentieth-century policy transnationally. Economist Susan George characterizes these notable changes as “neoliberal” and observes that in a neoliberal economy “the market […] make[s] major social and political decisions; […] the State […] reduce[s] its role in the economy, […] corporations […] [are] given total freedom; […] trade unions [are] curbed[,] and citizens [are] given much less rather than much more social protection” (27). Yet, as the first lines of the PRA I begin the chapter with also make evident, neoliberalism also further rewrites citizen’s relationship to the State. As the PRA demonstrates, individuals are responsible for attaining normative productive citizenship (through marriage, for example) without the State’s help² and as George notes, this extreme version of “personal responsibility” is specific to the late twentieth century (27).³

The rhetorical shift that blatantly places the individual and the family at the center of cultural and market changes is significant. The shift is symptomatic of trends in late twentieth-century US policy-making (and throughout the world⁴) toward privileging the
individual and his/her family, autonomy, personal experience and responsibility, traditional gender roles, and the mechanisms of the market over—despite an increasingly transnational market place—recognizing the material realities of the new world order and the interdependence of nation states. In the US specifically, for example, the PRA does not account for a rising service sector economy that does not support basic needs like health care. Policies like the PRA that excessively privilege the individual and the individual’s personal relationship to their families, choices, responsibilities, jobs, and material possibilities have, at once, altered the role of the state, its relationship to citizens, and the core belief systems of many individuals.

In part, this trend follows the logic of late twentieth-century capitalism, which places the mechanisms of the market as the intermediary between individuals. Saskia Sassen observes this exact trend happening across the globe. She notes that “Global markets in finance and advanced services partly operate through a ‘regulatory’ umbrella that is not state centered but market centered” (xxvii). Although the state still plays a role in planning, for example, social services, the actual services are carried out by independent agencies that compete with each other for the most “cost-effective” means to implement and provide the state required outcomes.⁵ Thus, as Sassen observes, the state is still one of the “central places where the work of globalization gets done” (xxii); however, because the state competes in the market place, there is a discernible loss of power for agencies associated with social change since they must adapt their services to fit with state plans to survive.
My dissertation project, concerned with the material and rhetorical effects produced by neoliberalism, considers the following questions: How has this shift toward neoliberalism affected citizens across the globe? What has become the role of the state as we arrive in the twenty-first century? Why in late-twentieth-century policy-making is there such a strong focus on the relationship between the individual, the family, and the market? In addition, why should we be concerned about this relationship? And, most importantly for my project, what sorts of arguments, justifications, and rhetorical appeals have persuaded US citizens, specifically, to view the link between the market and the individual citizen (and the individual family) as the central relationship that produces normative (global) citizenship?

I begin to address these questions in this dissertation by tracing the shared rhetorical appeals among three sites: 1) recent *national* welfare policies (Chapter Two); 2) *international* World Bank promotional materials (Chapter Three) and reports (Chapter Four); 3) and *local* universities’ contemporary student’s rights movements (Chapter Five). I highlight the common representational strategies that resonate specifically with a broad US audience. While I attempt to look at these policies (trans)nationally, I suggest that US citizens are the core audience for these texts because the texts and their authors I examine here are all located within the borders of the US although their material ramifications are felt globally. Each site, within my chapters, exhibits the late twentieth-century shift in policy-making whereby the state is no longer responsible to its citizens because of their intrinsic value as citizens. Rather, the market supersedes the state as the central governing body and places value on its citizens only as normative economic actors.
I will demonstrate how in the late twentieth-century, policy-makers employ an “anxious rhetoric” of enthymemetic values that evoke what is most familiar to their audience—static definitions of the family, individual agency, productivity, empowerment, and normalcy despite changing cultural and economic times. US citizens’ turn to these static definitions, I suggest, can be described as a form of “fundamentalism” because the basis for social and cultural change is articulated within policy texts as both a return to a forgotten tradition and an indicative response to what is perceived to be a time of anxiety and crisis (Marty and Appleby 23). These common enthymemetic modes of persuasion that recur throughout each case study, act as what Kenneth Burke calls “terministic screens” that function to reify what audiences already know and expect. More specifically, these terministic screens prevent audiences from recognizing the personal, material, ideological, and socioeconomic consequences produced by the late twentieth-century transnational economy. The persuasiveness of these enthymemes, thus, are reliant upon an audience’s ability to identify parts of their own lives within each policy text while simultaneously seeing how they are different from the people the policies address.

I argue that the policies that I examine here tell us less about the people and problems that the policies presume to manage and more about the anxieties and desires of the silent audience who watches policy being made. Anxious rhetorics that articulate the individual and the market as the quintessential social and cultural actors are persuasive in contemporary US culture for several reasons: they provide a scapegoat for a changing global economy; they set up a set of assured steps to attain normative citizenship; they celebrate the familiar; and they provide a sense of individual control and agency to
change one’s personal, economic, and social position. Ultimately, these familiar appeals obscure the transnational context of US capitalism and elide the socioeconomic roles of power and ideology.

My cross-textual investigation illustrates not only that policy-making is a rich genre of persuasion, but also that contemporary policy-making is a discursive practice that often produces and reifies gender, race, ability, and transnational inequalities. I consider how policy-makers hold the rhetorical power to structure—through public, legal, political, and administrative institutions—audiences’ collective and individual identities, value systems, senses of place, and material circumstances (Campbell 7). To demonstrate this intricate relationship, I analyze the rhetorical strategies that frame late twentieth-century policy hearings, testimonies, supportive pamphlets, and reports. While policy-making tends to be viewed as a social practice imposed from above, I suggest that policy-making works more seamlessly because it both constructs and is constructed by how citizens think and govern themselves.

Making a Rhetorical Analysis of the (Trans)National Policy-Making Matter

The policy-making process is inherently rhetorical. The actual testimonies and public hearings, where individual speakers present to an audience of Congress members, for example, their arguments for policy change hearken back to Quintilian’s vir bonus definition of rhetoric as enacted/embodied by the “good man [sic] speaking well.” Further, contemporary rhetorical scholar Kenneth Burke explains that a rhetorical act encompasses “the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols” (Language 43). Following Burke’s definition of a
rhetorical act, in my dissertation, I consider that persuasion appears not only in argumentation but also in any exchange of symbols. All the processes of policy-making—the traditional public hearing, radio and television announcements, policy-reports sent in the mail or preserved in libraries, and visual pamphlets that support or oppose a policy, for example—are a part of a larger dynamic symbolic exchange that includes the audience of policy, the writers of policy, and the cultural climate that produced that policy. I draw upon Burke’s definition of rhetoric and therefore, I broadly define the rhetoric of policy-making as the persuasive use of language within or about a particular policy initiative whether it appears in alphabetic-texts, verbal exchanges, or visual imagery.

Despite policy-making’s intrinsic rhetoricity, rhetoricians have only recently begun to pay attention to the working relationship between policy, policy-makers, and their audience(s). For example, in 2000, Technical Communication Quarterly dedicated an entire issue to the study of public policy writing; however, most authors focus on how technical communication scholars should write, teach, or intervene in public policy making. More recently, rhetorical scholars such as Elizabeth C. Britt, Cynthia Selfe, Robert Asen, and J. Blake Scott have produced books examining specific US policy practices—in Britt’s case, a Massachusetts infertility law; in Selfe’s, national technology and literacy education initiatives; in Scott’s, mandated HIV/AIDS testing practices; and in Asen’s, how images of “the welfare queen” are visually and rhetorically constructed through the practices and texts of welfare policy.

Overall, these studies are important for my project specifically, and the field of rhetorical studies generally, for two key reasons: they both demonstrate how the rhetoric
of public policy is a normalizing force that frames individual’s corporeal experiences and epistemologies and they show the very material effects of the arguments that structure public policy. In particular, Britt’s study considers how the rhetoric of legal definitions function to frame the way people describe, and even feel, about their experiences with infertility. Her observations resonate with my interest in how policy-making affects and is effected by audience members’ prior conditioning. Likewise, and similar to my project, Scott examines the way health policy discourses work as a disciplinary force that categorize individuals as “normal” (healthy) and “deviant” (sick). The categories that Scott considers, I demonstrate, can also be seen in several contemporary policy initiatives at the local, national, and global levels.

Scott’s project engages in the process of critical policy analysis—what Campbell (drawing on Foucault’s notion of governmentality) describes as reading policy not only for what it tells us about how people are governed but also how we learn to govern ourselves—by intersecting rhetorical studies with cultural studies (33-54). Scott develops a rhetorical-cultural methodology to studying HIV-AIDS that calls for a “hybrid [approach] that focuses on different dimensions of rhetoric [as a cultural practice]” (emphasis mine) (34). Like Scott, I employ a hybrid rhetorical methodology that puts into practice what Caren Kaplan and Inderpal Grewal name as a transnational feminist cultural studies methodology. I analyze across a series of policy texts originating from a variety of locations the “asymmetries of power and complex constructions of agency” and I pay “attention to the linkages and travels of forms of representation as they intersect with movements of labor and capital in a multinational world” (Kaplan and Grewal 357).
This concept of “linkages” is particularly key to my methodology. As Kaplan and Grewal further explain,

Linkages suggest networks of economic and social relations that occur within postmodernity[11] vis-à-vis capital and its effects. Linkage does not require a reciprocity or sameness or commonality. It can and must acknowledge differentials of power and participation in cultural production, but it can and must also trace the connections among seemingly disparate elements such as various [...] fundamentalisms, patriarchies, and nationalisms. (354) (emphasis mine)

Unlike the other rhetorical studies of US-based public policies I describe above, I am interested in furthering a transnational feminist cultural rhetorical methodology. To do so, I specifically account for how common rhetorical structures frame policy discourses about citizenship and sovereignty and how those common modes of persuasion thread throughout several documents within a specific time period: the turn of the twentieth century. In addition, my transnational feminist cultural-rhetorical approach foregrounds queries about how labor conditions, class divisions, geopolitical locations, capital, commodification, and forms of production in a transnational economy are interdependent and present “in existing disciplinary and institutional formations” (357).

The policy initiatives I examine here, Kaplan and Grewal might suggest, represent a “nexus of practices” that work to define a citizen’s relationship to the state, the market, and the larger global community (359). While the above rhetorical scholars look at one type of policy making in a US framework, I demonstrate here, that given the cultural location of the late twentieth century, policy-making has both material and cultural effects beyond the borders of the US. Thus, to understand the logic of policy in
transnational context, we must look across a series of texts to isolate not only the
discursive structures that frame the policies, but also their dominant ideologies and
supporting rhetorics.\textsuperscript{12}

My adoption of a transnational feminist cultural studies method to critically
analyze artifacts – testimonies, pamphlets, reports, legislation, etc.— from the policy-
making process isolates the governing mentalities that give a speaker or writer authority,
defines the patterns of rhetorical strategies that are resonant to a specifically US audience,
and reveals the commonplace belief-systems that are assumed in policy-making. By
analyzing artifacts from the policy-making process, I provide clues for understanding the
values and linguistic utterances that US audience members deem most important and
persuasive.

My examination of how policy-makers account for their audiences is central to
this dissertation as well. I consider how the audience that a policy-maker seeks to
persuade can inform us about whom that audience is, how they define themselves, or how
they have come to privilege one mode of persuasion over another. In essence, by
knowing the audience, we can begin to better understand a policy-maker’s rhetorical
choices. Within welfare policy (Chapter 2), for example, there are a number of
rhetorical tropes that work to establish and maintain authority over the controlling
narrative about the welfare recipient; this narrative becomes connected to certain events
and practices and then translated into a language of popular appeal. The first lines of the
PRA above demonstrates how the “normative” audience is asked to differentiate
themselves from the welfare recipient by linking welfare parenthood to irresponsibility
and single parenthood. The policy’s presumption that two parent families are best for
children is dependent upon audience members seeing single parenthood as deviant and dangerous to children’s well being. This emotional anxious appeal about the “dangerousness” of welfare recipients in fact, produces a discourse of normalcy that names the characteristics of idealized citizenship.

Looking at policy-making as both a rhetorical practice and cultural practice, then, is important because the process of policy construction and the actual enrolled policy bills produced, provide insights into the ways in which policy makers construct particular realities about some citizens. Yet, examining policy-making rhetorically and culturally also reveals the discourses that are ultimately persuasive not only to Congress members, for example, but also to the generic US public.

My methodological approach, ultimately foregrounds what I call a transnational rhetorical-cultural policy analysis to consider how the historicity of institutionally embedded modes of persuasion account for the timeliness (kairos), location, and material circumstances that make some rhetorical appeals persuasive to US audiences and others not. In this way, the ideal audience for testimonies, hearings, and policy documents is somewhat unclear and thereby begs the question: for whom do the narratives that are produced by the policy-making process resonate?

**The Audience Addressed and the Audience Evoked: Naming An Audience**

US Policy hearings and policy documents have at least two audiences: members of governing bodies and the (idealized) US public. Although most US residents do not tend to read actual policy texts or attend public hearings, the documents produced and the testimonies given must be persuasive to the general US public because ultimately it is this public who decides whether a particular member of Congress or Senate continues in that
role or whether they should support one policy (and its values) versus another. Likewise, as I demonstrate in Chapter Five, one of the primary arguments that the organization Students for Academic Freedom (SAF) make to justify their claim that they should have a say in the way the university educates its students is because they are tax-payers and thus they are a purchasing and voting audience for a particular education policy. Policy-makers also claim to represent the desires and needs of their citizenry. Thus, when analyzing the rhetorical appeals of public policy one must take into account this dual audience.

Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede’s landmark essay “Audience Addressed/Audience Invoked: The Role of Composition Theory and Pedagogy” provides insight on the complex role that an audience holds in policy-making’s rhetorical situation. Although Lunsford and Ede focus solely on the composition classroom, their core ideas about the “audience addressed” and the “audience invoked” are helpful for considering the dual audience of artifacts from the policy-making process. Moreover, when rhetoricians recognize these two separate audiences they are able to articulate more clearly the dense relationship between the language of policy-making and the cultural climate that makes particular political ideologies persuasive.

Lunsford and Ede suggest that a rhetorical situation often contains multiple audiences and thereby includes both an “addressed audience” and an “invoked audience.” They explain that the writer must consider her/his “invoked audience.” In doing so, the writer “uses the semantic and syntactic resources of language to define the role or roles the writer wishes the reader to adopt in responding to the text” (161). It is the “invoked audience” who in the end must be moved to immediate action to reject or support a
particular policy initiative. Conversely, the “audience addressed” or who the writer wishes to persuade, always “exists outside the text” (167); in this case, the writer does not so much wish to define the role that the audience plays as she/he wishes to draw upon an audience’s preconceived attitudes, beliefs, or expectations (Lunsford and Ede fn. 157).

Consider, for example, Douglas Park’s observation that writers’ constructions of audience tend to diverge in two general directions: one toward actual people external to the text, the audience whom the writer must accommodate; the other toward the text itself and the audience implied there: a set of suggested or evoked attitudes, interests, reactions, conditions of knowledge which may or may not fit with the qualities of actual readers or listeners (Lunsford and Ede 168). Park’s statement aptly describes the rhetorical situation that policy makers face; they must make their arguments persuasive to an audience who will directly listen to or read the writer’s text (and agree or disagree with it) and also to a larger absent audience whom the speaker at once represents and influences. In the case of policy-making, the “audience invoked” contains the people who make up the central governing body (relevant for this project, e.g. Congress members, members of the World Bank, or university board members, for example) because the writer/speaker of a specific policy/ testimony works to accommodate the needs of this audience. The writer persuades the audience to support and believe the writer’s/speaker’s claims. However, the imagined American public is the “audience addressed” because the writer constructs the idealized image of the American public implied within the text and in turn influences the way Americans see themselves and others.

I am less concerned about the “audience invoked” as I am the “audience addressed” in the policy-making process. Most relevant for my study is the relationship
between the idealized images of citizenship evoked in policy and the way the discourses of policy construct, through rhetorical processes, US American’s commonsense belief-systems. Analyzing the “audience addressed,” thus, allows us to articulate hegemonic rhetorics that form powerful and persuasive representations of reality and make clear the rhetorical structures that support belief-systems. Isolating the audience addressed, is also key to what Campbell names as critical policy analysis or reading public policy not only for what it tells about policy-maker’s belief-systems but also for what it can tell us about present-day US political culture and the audiences of public policy (7).

Using What We Know: The Persuasiveness of the Enthymeme

If policy-makers are working to persuade this dual audience, we might ask what are the consequences of employing rhetorics with which an audience can immediately identify or assume to be true? And, we might also consider what information audiences miss when they grasp on to only what is most familiar to them. While Burke claims that a rhetorical act is successful when audiences can recognize and identify with it (*Rhetoric of Motives* 20-29), he also suggests that this act of identification “is the perceptual filter through which an individual receives and interprets external events” (Simpson 147). Burke’s term for this “perceptual filter” is “terministic screen;” he claims that “[e]ven if 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 as a deflection of reality” (Burke qtd by Simpson 147). I am less interested in Burke’s claims about “reality” as I am in his insight on how specific terms have representational resonance for particular audiences because the terms trigger audience members’ memory or feelings. For
example, in the first lines of the PRA I begin this chapter with, the terms marriage, family, and children are pathetic enthymemes that remind audiences of their own personal lives.

An enthymeme as Aristotle defines it, is “a sort of syllogism […] [that] belongs to the same capacity to see the true and [to see] what resembles the true […] [H]umans have a natural disposition for the true and to a large extent hit on the truth; this is an ability to aim at commonly held opinions” (emphasis mine) (33). Thus, as Aristotle explains, the structure of the enthymeme is persuasive to audiences because enthymemes rely on maxims that often articulate opinions that audience members themselves already find familiar (186). When enthymemes are employed along with statements about moral good—or in the case of the PRA personal and familial good—the speaker is considered to have “good character” and therefore authority.

So, for example, when policy makers draw on enthymematic terms such as success, responsibility, individualism, autonomy, and so on, along with discourses of normalcy, their arguments seem to be commonsense. When a speaker/author’s appeal makes commonsense, the audience is able to assume that the speaker/author’s ethos is secure; thus, the audience can trust and respect that author/speaker. Classic rhetoricians such as Descartes, Erasmus, and Quintilian remind their students that a rhetorical appeal to commonsense should always be treated with suspicion because these appeals cover weak arguments and unfounded claims to truth.13 In this way, neoliberal values are appealing to many Americans because the terms/values of individualism and freedom are enthymemetic and are thereby easy to identify with. At the same time though, because enthymemes are assumed to be static and taken-for-granted, they are also persuasive
because they indicate a division between those who believe in the stability of a word and its value and those who question its very connotation. Burke might suggest then that it is the terministic screens created by these enthymemes that persuade audiences.

Terministic screens’ unquestionable nature give audiences a commonplace—or “nexus of practices” (Kaplan and Grewal)—of values or ideals with which to identify in themselves and others; at the same time, though, this sense of identification makes necessary a division between those who do not share the same enthymematic values. Aristotle, in *On Rhetoric*, names a variety of commonplaces shared among differing audiences; most notably, definition, division, comparison, circumstance, and testimony, for example. These topic (*topoi*), thread throughout most forms of communication. Commonplaces are the knowledges shared by members of a collective naturalized into commonsense. To challenge commonplaces means querying the authority of the enthymeme, the shared assumptions of culture (for example behaviors and practices), and appeals to truth. Commonplaces, according to Britt in *Conceiving Normalcy*, become commonsense through the rhetorical process of normalization. She explains, that a norm is an argument about what is desirable; and that normalization operates through persuasion and negotiation and takes place through the creation of a common language. This process of normalization, I add, is dependent upon the audience addressed being able to differentiate themselves from those who are not represented by these commonplace enthymemes.

To fully understand the power of a commonsense appeal, Burke suggests we must we take into account the historical and economic contexts of persuasion as well as the cultural location of the audience. He notes that an individual’s interpretation of a concept
cannot be separated from the rhetorical situation within which an individual acts. Accordingly, any rhetorical act must be put into its larger historical and cultural context in order to understand more fully the power of the linguistic expression.

**Kairos and the Anxious Appeal of (Trans)National Policy-Making**

To understand the rhetorical appeal of contemporary neoliberal policies, it is necessary to situate the policies within their historical and cultural climate. Neoliberalism is born out of the same economic and cultural history in the US, although its material and cultural ramifications are felt globally. It can be traced to the 1970’s and 1980’s during considerable economic shifts that changed individual Americans’ economic lives and reshaped US national culture. Cultural Studies theorist, Stuart Hall, names this cultural-political-economic shift, “New Times.” As a period of posts, the “New Times” in the US is characterized by three distinct national changes: 1) corporations moving factories into second and third world countries to seek cheaper labor (post-industrialization); 2) new labor demanding flexible education, abilities, and production (post-fordism); and 3) the blurring of image and reality, the questioning of history and tradition, the slippage of stable meanings, and the creation of greater market place choice (post-modernism). In addition, during the late 1980’s, the US economy shifted dramatically from a manufacturing sector to a service sector economy that provided jobs with little to no worker benefits. Neoliberal policies are products of “New Times,” I suggest, and are direct responses to these new times since they employ a narrow definition of history, use familiar and realist narratives to support their belief systems, and construct an individuals as always in charge of their own destinies.
Aihwa Ong characterizes neoliberalism as “excessively privileging individual rights [and] underm[ing] democratic principles of social equality” (212). In a time of neoliberalism, Ong claims, the middle class is in crisis, the ethics of personhood outweigh that of the social good, the self is more accountable, and individual social problems are managed by the private sector (196). Situating the rise of neoliberalism within its historical trajectory, scholars such as Ong, Hall, J.K. Gibson-Graham, and David Harvey note that the economic shift away from a liberal-democratic tradition and toward neoliberal practices is related to corporate downsizing, the movement of manufacturing divisions of corporations into second and third world countries for cheaper and less-restrictive labor, and the shift from a predominantly manufacturing sector economy to a service sector economy. These changes began to take place in the 1980s.  

Anthony Gidden likewise, considers the cultural consequences of neoliberalism and demonstrates the strong influence that neoliberal tenets have on US culture. He notes that “Neoliberals link unfettered market forces to a defense of traditional institutions, particularly the family and nation” (12). Gidden goes on to explain that for neoliberals the welfare state or any state dependence is seen as “the source of evils” because it exposes the inherent contradiction of the notion of self-reliance for citizens (13).  

According to Gidden, the cultural consequences of neoliberalism are as follows: minimal government regulation, strong economic individualism, acceptance of inequality and traditional nationalism, and global markets that have free reign because they are considered problem solving devices that tend toward equilibrium. The direct cultural and rhetorical consequences of neoliberalism are demonstrated, for example, in the PRA’s first lines. Like in the opening lines of the PRA, policies that turn to an
individual’s ability and behavior and not the state to solve gross inequalities are reflective of an economic and cultural shift toward neoliberalism. Moreover, policies that favor the individual along with the belief systems that purport that the personal good outweighs the social good and that social good, should be managed by individuals or market forces (more specifically the private sector), is part of a commonsense discourse George Soros names as market fundamentalism.

“Market fundamentalism,” as Soros defines it is, “the belief that the allocation of resources is best left to the market mechanism, and any interference with that mechanism reduces the efficiency of the economy;” in other words, “markets tend toward equilibrium and produce the optimum allocation of resources” (4; 6). He goes on to explain that market fundamentalists believe “the social good is best served by allowing people to pursue their self-interest without any thought for social good” because “self-interest serves the common interest” (164). To abate cultural anxieties, market fundamentalist philosophies suggest supporting the market and the autonomous individual will provide the fundamentals of a just nation. This belief, Soros suggests, holds that if the market is left to its “natural” devices, then it will provide the US, and the rest of the globe, with cultural, national, and economic security. And yet, paradoxically, an individual’s “normative” values and abilities play a decisive role in maintaining the sanctity of the market. This neoliberal argument contains a rhetoric of anxiety and collapses the values of the market, individualism, and the nation and establishes a discourse of normalcy that works to naturalize, or make commonsense, the inerrancy of the capitalist market to fix the deterioration of US American culture.
This discourse of normalcy is common in, and timely to, the late twentieth-century and these intersections might be seen as symptomatic of anxieties about the economy and a perceived loss of tradition and social power within a global economy. The cultural and economic changes that occurred after the 1980’s have created a climate where anxious rhetorics are both appealing and persuasive to a variety of US Americans. These anxious rhetorics are symptomatic of significant shifts in the US national economy, in individuals’ agency in this new economy, and in their perceived loss of traditions as the US becomes a major actor in an increasingly transnational economy.

(Trans)National Policy-making’s Anxious Linkages

As Grewal and Kaplan suggest, in order to de-center US hegemony and place its existence and national practices within its larger global trajectory, scholars must trace “networks of economic and social relations that occur within postmodernity vis-à-vis global capital and its effects […] [and] the connections among seemingly disparate elements such as various religious fundamentalisms, patriarchies, and nationalisms” (359). My chapters draw from Kaplan and Grewal transnational heuristic and I trace the networks of practices among national, global, and local sites. However, as mentioned above, because of the physical location and the writers of the policies I examine, I see the generic US citizen as the central audience addressed. So, for example, despite the fact that the World Bank, for example wields its power across the globe, its location and most members reside in the US; this suggests that the US is one of the Bank’s main audiences.17
As I demonstrate throughout each chapter, there are several common rhetorical linkages in late twentieth century policy-making that differ from policies created before post-industrialism in the US. First, neoliberal public policy language is easy for the general US public (who are not policy-makers) to identify with and understand. This shift to make arguments clear, suggests that in the late twentieth-century the audience for public policies has changed. Second, in neoliberal policies the state no longer oversees how social policies are carried out; rather private organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) become policy enforcers. The state auctions off its social services and has little control over how its policy outcomes are achieved. Lastly, neoliberal policies also emphasize that a citizen’s normativity and agency is both bound to her/his roles as an economic actor/consumer. Citizens must have the ability to procure a stable family and job without the help of the state. Neoliberal policies persuade because they reify identifiable and emotional ways of being and knowing and spell out the path to normal citizenship.

Within each of my chapters and sites, anxious rhetorics of individualism and nationalism, for example, along with discourses of normalcy, form part of an ideological belief systems that cannot be separated from the late-twentieth-century global networks of power. The dominant rhetorical forms of these policies include appeals to an audience’s emotions by addressing their sense of political, economic, and cultural insecurity. What the contemporary neoliberal policies that I examine offer their audience is a seamless, decontextualized, and naturalized solution that provides a blueprint for gendered and familial citizenship, cultural consistency, and economic prosperity that promise personal security through adherence to “traditional” American
values. The linkages between institutional practices supported by the state and non-institutionalized belief systems made commonsense help us to better understand why, in an increasingly global economy and culture, the individual and her or his ability to survive in the market, is the focus of policy initiatives in the late twentieth century.\(^{18}\)

To account for these linkages I begin, in Chapter Two, “Reinvented Rhetorics”, to explore the ideological shifts in welfare policies throughout the 1980s and early 2000s. In this chapter, I argue that welfare policy initiatives in the late twentieth century are persuasive because they emphasize the co-determinant relationship between the US family and the market while providing a blueprint for “normal” economic behavior. The mental images of welfare recipients that circulate in the minds of US residents at the end of the twentieth century are created though a discourse of normalcy which, is contradictorily framed by rhetorics of reinvention (the welfare recipient is one who fails to reinvent herself in a changing economy) and family values (welfare recipients need to be self-sufficient and family-oriented so that they do not damage national integrity, security, and values in an increasingly uncertain economy). This chapter also works to further Burke’s concept of the terministic screen by considering how the central enthymemes that circulate in the late twentieth century US policy frame a discourse of normalcy. In doing so, I turn to disability studies scholar, Lennard Davis, and feminist psychoanalytic theorist, Renata Salecl, to demonstrate how policy-makers who use unquestioned enthymemes appeal to their addressed audience’s ability to differentiate themselves from those who are deemed in policy texts as non-normative. The definitions of the terministic screen and the “normalcy” that I set up in this chapter serves to ground the discussions that continue in each chapter.
Chapter Three, “Ambivalent Rhetorics,” examines the visual strategies and rhetorical appeals of a post-Washington Consensus World Bank promotional pamphlet. I use this pamphlet as an emblem to argue that while contemporary Bank materials might resonate with the “Washington Consensus,” the severity of this neoliberal policy design is quietly covered by emotional human-interest stories and images that depict how “social capital” and “inclusion” are the missing links in development policies and the missing link toward making “colonial others” responsible, productive, and normative global citizens. The value-laden emotional appeals of human-interest stories in this pamphlet operate to disguise the Bank’s neoliberal and market oriented practices by accentuating what the audience already recognizes and anticipates: static definitions of “normalcy,” success, freedom, and “the other.” Within the pamphlet, images have more rhetorical prominence than words because the pathetic appeals of the photos—and indeed the fact that they take up much of the pamphlet’s space—invite audiences to identify, in the words of Homi Bhabha, “ambivalently” with the pamphlet’s embedded colonial narrative told through the camera’s gaze.19 In other words, audiences identify with and are persuaded by the images the Bank employs because the images reiterate what the audience expects and desires. The authority of the images serve as what Kenneth Burke calls a terministic screen that shifts the audience’s attention away from the power relationships of development – i.e. entry into the capitalist global market via a strong relationship between individual citizens and the private sector -- and toward a visual rhetoric of care that secures the Bank’s ethos. This visual rhetoric of care is persuasive because it is bound up with ambivalent images of the colonial “other” that resonate with the audience’s cultural memory of the other as both dangerous and in need of
acculturation. As these images show, the process of development is at once teleological and fixed, exotic and ordinary, and experienced and innocent. I demonstrate how it is the audience’s own expectations about “the other” that act as terministic screens and thus permits them to dismiss the neo-colonial imagery as part of the narrative of development.

Chapter Four, “Disabling Rhetorics,” continues to look at World Bank policy-making. However, this chapter considers what is persuasive to the Bank’s audience invoked and audience addressed. Specifically, I examine how Bank speeches and reports at once reinforce ability metaphors and appropriate feminist discourse to secure private sector funding for indigenous women’s economic projects. I begin with a rhetorical analysis of President James Wolfensohn’s speech “The Challenge of Inclusion,” where Wolfensohn implores his audience to include gender in their international policies. In particular, I examine two key rhetorical inclusionary devices employed by Wolfensohn in his speech: the powerfully pathetic appeal of personal interest stories and the reification of ability/disability discourse. Each of these rhetorical devices is used in Wolfensohn’s speech to communicate how “inclusion” is the missing link of development policy and to draw on his audience’s prior knowledge about gender and third-world identity.

I then examine the Bank report *Engendering Development: Rights, Resources, and Voice*—a follow up report published seven years later on Wolfensohn’s call for gender inclusion. In this section I argue that the developmental plans present in the report’s persuasive appeals initially appear to enable women to become free agents in the global marketplace. I document, however, that such appeals effectively erase women’s cultural, social, labor, and historical realities by veiling neo-colonialism as a form of universal cross-national feminism.
Chapter Five, “Responsible Rhetoricians” turns to the local—the university and the classroom. In this chapter, I explore how neoliberalism has affected student’s identities in the rhetoric and composition classroom. Specifically, I show how students have come to identify themselves as market oriented consumers of education. I examine the recent student rights movement for “Academic Freedom.” These examples serve as an invitation to consider what we, as feminist rhetoric and composition scholars, need to do to address the educational needs of our students.

In doing so, in my Postscript, I turn to Ohio State University’s humanities scholars’ response to homeland security policies. I argue that this policy response provides a heuristic that addresses and re-negotiates the academic-citizen and student-citizen’s relationship to the state. As teachers we are in a pivotal place to intervene in the policy-making process, to create critical policy initiatives, and to consciously engage with policy in the feminist rhetoric and composition classroom.

As a whole, my dissertation contributes to the fields to feminist rhetorical and composition studies on at least three levels: 1) my analysis expands the field of rhetoric by demonstrating how theories of audience can advance current understandings of transnational policy studies; 2) my project furthers the field of transnational cultural studies by articulating a grounded rhetorical methodology that effectively defines the significant roles of audience, text, material circumstance, and context in the analysis of public discourse; and, 3) my work highlights the important links between the study of (trans)national policy and the pedagogical theory and praxis of the rhetoric and composition classroom.
Works Cited


Notes for Chapter 1

1 Prior to 1996, the federal government oversaw the entire program, employed the social workers and practitioners, and ran programs such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Headstart, and Women Infants and Children (WIC).

2 In fact, in the 2000’s in the US, we have seen increasing amounts of government funding dropped for traditionally state supported institutions such as education. Despite, for example, the “No Child Left Behind” mandate for schools, public schools actually lost state monies to carryout this program. If individual schools are unable to meet the requirements of “No Child Left Behind,” then that school will either be shut down or taken over by a supra-state organization (such as a corporation) to get that school back on track.

3 George further points out that this notion of the State was “utterly foreign” in the 1940’s, 1950’s, and 1960’s. Likewise, historian Donna Guy suggests that although US policy always privileged the relationship between the individual and the market, it has never been as strident or normalizing as it is today (personal conversation October 2004).

4 While I demonstrate in Chapters Three and Four the way that Third-world countries have become tethered these neoliberal practices, similar practices have emerged throughout Europe. For example, in several Scandinavian countries, which have been long known for their progressive social services and low unemployment rates, there has been a significant movement by foreign governments to privatize these services and thus make them less state-centered. In fact, in a public address to Europe, President George W. Bush (2002) begged government officials to make lowering taxes in their countries, privatization of services, and less state involvement one of the core focuses for the new Europe (NPR, April 16, 2005).

5 Significantly, this economic shift makes it possible for churches to be funded by the state to carry out social service; this connection will be explored further in Chapter Three.

6 Somewhat contradictorily, despite the move of national and international social policy initiatives to turn to the market as the mechanism to bring people out of poverty, of late, in the US we have seen a national movement to turn to the state to ban abortion and gay marriage. As I examine in Chapter Five, in many ways, when we turn to the state and the ways that we turn to the state has changed too. While the state once assumed the role of the protector (e.g. civil rights, welfare, public education, labor rights, environmental protection, to name a few—and arguably now the market continues to play a central role in these “protections”) the state is now being used to enforce regulation of behavior and values.

7 The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) notes that the words fundamentalism and have their roots in early twentieth-century America. During the latter part of the century, fundamentalism described an active “religious movement” that believed in “strict adherence to certain tenets (e.g. the literal inerrancy of Scripture) held to be fundamental to the Christian faith.” The OED’s etymology explains that fundamentalism’s opposites are liberalism and modernism. However, in more contemporary use, the term “fundamentalist,” as the OED describes can be “an economic or political doctrinaire.” Martin E. Marty and Scott Appleby, two scholars who study the worldwide rise of fundamentalist religions, characterize fundamentalisms as transpiring during times of perceived national crisis. According to Marty and Appleby, fundamentalist tenets are driven by totalitarian desires and tend to separate groups into categories of “good and evil,” mythologize their enemies, and appeal to a perceived foundational tradition.

8 As I will explain further below, the trust in the mechanism of the market by many policy-makers has become somewhat of a fundamentalism as George Soros suggests; he calls this “market fundamentalism.”

9 Some of the ideas articulated in this paragraph came out of a breakfast conversation with Cyndi Katz at the Futures of American Studies Institute, June 2003. I thank her for her suggestions about explaining the significance of my project.

10 Both Rhetorical Studies and Cultural Studies are interested in the relationship between forms of communication and social order, the construction and maintenance of discursive practices, and the ways ideas are consumed. Their convergence, as Britt, Scott, and Asen demonstrate, present methods for interrogating how social formations and practices always reflect wider cultural cosmologies (Rosteck 2).

11 Although Kaplan and Grewal use the term “postmodernity” to describe the current time period I might characterize this period as neocolonial, neoliberal, or transnational.
Indeed, as James Aune suggests, critical rhetorical inquiry of public texts also must consider the persuasiveness of ideology: “[T]he purpose of rhetorical criticism is to identify the contradictions in an ideology and thus show opponents of that ideology effective ways to target arguments. In a more conventional scholarly sense, rhetorical criticism of ideology develops an account of how ideologies grow and decay in the presence of internal and external problems” (121-122).

See The Rhetorical Tradition selections Quintilian “from Institutes of Oratory” and Erasmus, “From Copia: Foundations of the Abundant,” and Descartes Port-Royal Logic (as noted in The Rhetorical Tradition vol. 1, 640).

See Aihwa Ong, Flexible Citizenship; Stuart Hall, “New Times;” J.k. Gibson-Graham, The End of Capitalism as We Knew It; and David Harvey, Spaces of Hope.

Also see Wendy Brown “Finding the Man in the State.”

See Soros, Ong, and Harvey

See Chapter Three for a more detailed explanation of this relationship. Also I would like to site two conversations I had about this relationship. Kate Bedford, feminist scholar on gender and development issues also agrees that we must look at how Bank policies reflect US desires and represent the US as a central audience to persuade. Likewise, Tola Peirce suggested to me that scholars rarely examine how Bank policies are more about the US and its definitions of “normal” economic behavior.

While just as the state’s role to carry out social services begins to disappear in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century, the state is turned to only to protect perceived “traditional” institutions such as heterosexual marriage. For example, in 2004 elections in Ohio, majority voters voted for a ban on gay marriage.

Students are often very savvy readers of images. In fact, my examination of the cultural narrative that the images in “The World Bank Group” pamphlet comes from a discussion I had in a second level writing class. We were examining images in a recent issue of National Geographic when one student noted that images in the magazine did not in any way really reflect the textual narrative that accompanied the images. As a class we considered why this was the case. My student seemed to assume that images are much easier to read quickly then text. Thus, they concluded that National Geographic’s audience probably gleans most of their information from a quick “reading” of images. These students important observation demonstrates the importance of reading images such as those produced by the Bank critically because they carry the important weight of communicating information and arguments in a quick and seemingly simple way.
CHAPTER 2

REINVENTED RHETORICS

New Kinds of public institutions are emerging, they are lean, decentralized, and innovative. They are flexible, adaptable, quick to learn new ways when conditions change. They use competition, consumer choice, and other nonbureaucratic mechanisms to get things done as creative and effectively as possible. And they are our future.

( Osborne and Gaebler in Reinventing Government 2, 1992)

Therefore in light of this demonstration of crisis in our Nation, it is the sense of this Congress that prevention of out-of-wedlock pregnancy and reduction in out-of-wedlock birth are very important to Government interests and the [welfare] policy […] [It] is intended to address this crisis.

(Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Act, Title I Section 101, 1996)

The field of marriage policy is in its infancy, very little is known about what works and many remain unsure about the appropriate role of government.

(Theodora Ooma, Testimony in front of the House Ways and Means committee, May 22, 2001)

Introduction

The above epigrams, which come from ten years of policy hearings, are placed in chronological order to show the significant ideological developments in US social welfare policy-making throughout the late twentieth- and early twenty-first- centuries. The key ideas promoted by Congress that emerge during this ten-year period begin with whittling down, decentralizing, and making flexible government practices and end with the government’s role being passed on to individual citizens. In other words, this sequential set of quotations uncovers the following progression: the shift from Congress creating governmental policies through flexibility and private sector programming to policy making where the government asks individual citizens to administer themselves
and become “normal” by participating in “morality” training programs such as marriage and parenting classes.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how within contemporary welfare debates and policies, the functioning heteronormative family emerges as the quintessential social and economic actor who, through its involvement in the market and embracement of “traditional” values, can gain access to participatory US citizenship.¹ Unlike welfare policies from the 1940s-1970s where the state functioned to secure and carryout social programming in the name of progressive ideals, private sector and individual behaviors increasingly control late twentieth-century welfare policy (George 27-28). These changes elicit the following questions: What has happened to the role of the state in late twentieth-century US welfare policy-making? How have the values of flexibility and innovation common to welfare debates in the 1990s been translated into social programs that administer what is considered private and personal matters—marriage, family formation, job choice, and personal monetary spending in the 2000s? What rhetorics support these ideals and what makes them both persuasive and commonplace in the realm of social policy making at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries?

To answer these questions, I explore the rhetorical frameworks that structure the creation of welfare policies from the 1980s and to the early 2000s. I place these policies within their cultural-historical moment in order to demonstrate how they have been shaped by the US’s cultural-economic climate and dominant ideologies about the US American family’s relationships to the market and the US government. I show how the changes in welfare policy’s rhetoric that began in the 1980s with the Reagan
administration and that continue to be renegotiated today, are structured both by a convergence of market and family values and the economic shift toward neoliberalism.

I argue that this rhetorical convergence is persuasive because the rhetoric of familial and market values frame a discourse of normalcy—what Lennard Davis describes as a fantastic construction of what should be common to all. Audience members are able to embrace a discourse of normalcy because normalcy promises a safe return to tradition that appears familiar. As discourse, normalcy appeals to US residents’ sense of security because it is framed by a rhetoric of tradition, responsibility, economic independence, family and national values, and morality. This discourse of normalcy depends upon audiences’ ability to identify with what policy makers and polices in general deem as “normal” and productive citizenship; at the same time, however, this same audience is able to differentiate themselves from those who are “deviant” and thus appear not to support participatory US American citizenship. Yet this appeal to identification and difference does more than name who is “deviant;” it also specifies the particular steps in “disciplining” “un-American” behaviors. This seemingly simple appeal to identification and difference that is present in welfare policy provides a functional realist narrative that offers a simple and clear heuristic to avoid deviancy. Thus, in the late twentieth century, a family’s ability to sustain its social-economic position without the help of the state defines its normal citizenship.

This discourse of normalcy acts as what Kenneth Burke describes as a terministic screen which merely deflects some realities and promotes others in order to induce identification in some audiences and move them to action (A Rhetoric of Motives, 103). In the case of welfare policy, the general US public—the audience addressed—
identifies with the familiar values that the policy espouses and ignores other factors in
that put an individual on welfare. Welfare policy’s discourse of normalcy, Robert Asen
notes, depends upon collective imaginings where US citizens and policy-makers alike
collectively share an image of “the welfare recipient” (11-13). As he explains, imagining
means creating mental images or impressions. These imaginings, he argues, are how
non-welfare using US residents come to know and differentiate themselves from welfare
recipients because, both tend to physically reside in economically segregated
neighborhoods, workplaces, and social spaces (13). In fact, this image of the welfare
recipient relies on both the physical and mental segregation of those who use and those
who do not use welfare.

Thus, the image of the welfare recipient is merely that— an image that has
endured systematic reformulation based upon economic, value, and cultural shifts
throughout the history of welfare policy administration. Asen notes, for example, that
welfare policy in the early 1900s was set up as a way to keep widows and poorer women
at home with their children. Welfare policy, however, has shifted so significantly over a
span of less than one hundred years to a new ideology that characterizes welfare
recipients who want to stay at home with their children as lazy, selfish, and conniving—
as ultimately un-American and deviant.5 As I demonstrate in this chapter, even more
recently, a discourse of normalcy that has been further supported by rhetorics of re-
invention, revolution, anxiety, and traditional family values supports the image of the
welfare recipient that circulates in the minds of US residents at the end of the twentieth
century. As the policies from 1996 to the present suggest, the welfare recipient is one
who: 1) fails to reinvent herself6 in a changing economy; 2) who needs revolutionary
tactics to transform her behavior, who is unwilling to be self-sufficient; 3) who damages national integrity, security, and values in an increasingly uncertain economy; and 4) who must be taught the importance of family values and self-sufficiency.7

I argue that these imaginings function as a terministic screen for greater social and economic shifts in the US. In addition, the images have deep material-rhetorical effects when they are premised in the minds of policy-makers and voting citizens. They inform the rhetorical framework Congress used in welfare policy to reconstitute the US’s national ethos to its residents. The rhetorical appeals used within late-twentieth-century welfare policy-making reflect the growing anxiety about the US’s economic state and also make the cultural and economic shift toward neoliberalism appear necessary. In particular, welfare policy (re)presents “normal” US citizens and governmental practices as adaptable, cutting edge, rational, and individualistic—yet market, tradition, and family oriented. This re-imagining of the nation and the quintessential US citizen is significant because it provides a blueprint for national (policy) values and thereby proscribes the terms upon which some individuals and process are deemed “deviant” (difference) and other “normal” (identification).

In order to demonstrate the persuasive shifts in welfare policy, the chapter starts in the 1980s and articulates the cultural-historical location and rhetorics of welfare policy that made a discourse of normalcy persuasive. In the section, “Neoliberalism’s Normalizing Appeal,” I look to former President Ronald Reagan’s State of the Union Addresses to demonstrate the rhetorical function of the “fantastic real” and to show how Reagan’s adept rhetoric helped to create the definitions of normalcy we find in welfare policy from 1996-present. Considering the economic and cultural climate of the US and
Reagan’s responses to it, I show how fantastic realist rhetorics that promise audiences a simple and clear answer to the crisis of poverty frame discourses of normalcy. The chapter then moves to examine how the fantastic real continued to appeal to Congress and the US public in the policy debates and hearings that took place in the mid-1990s. In the section, “The Rise of the Neoliberal Policy Imaginary: Re-inventing Tradition,” I analyze key Congressional debates on changing welfare legislation to show how the cultural location of the mid-1990s sustained the contradictory rhetorics of reinvention/revolution and tradition and made possible the focus on the family and the market as solutions to end welfare dependency. For instance, Congress emphasized the common links between appeals to logic and appeals to emotions. By formulating the reinvention of welfare as a revolutionary return to tradition, Congress persuaded its audience of US citizens to look to their own behaviors and not the state to secure their social needs.

In the section “Culture, not Politics: The Rhetoric of the PRA” I argue that the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRA) persuades Congress and the general American public by naming the “deviant” and welfare recipient as “un-American” and amoral and thereby slowing the progress of the nation. Congress’ blame of a particular class of citizens demonstrates an important dual audience for welfare policy: taxpayers and welfare users. Continuing my discussion from Chapter One on the audience of policy-making, I show how everyday tax-paying citizens are the central audience of the PRA. Welfare policy represents these tax-paying citizens as having no responsibility for social well being because they already embody the desirable traits of the quintessential US citizen. In the final section of the chapter I turn to contemporary
welfare policy and examine the rhetorical appeal to anxiety about the health of the family and nation.

Neoliberalism’s Normalizing Appeal

As I describe in Chapter One, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the US’s economy shifted to a service sector economy with little benefit-support from an industrial economy that supplied living wage pay and benefits. According to the National Bureau of Labor Statistics in the US there was a steady decline in managerial jobs and industrial laborers, for example, and a rise in service work between 1987 and 2000 (http://www.bls.gov/opub/rtaw/pdf/table10.pdf). The manufacturing jobs that supported the middle class in the US moved to third-world countries with less labor and trade restrictions. And yet, just as living-wage work declined and manufacturing jobs moved elsewhere, there was in influx of immigration throughout the 1980s and 1990s. This steady decline in job stability, along with an increase in immigrants, might have made Reagan’s arguments for the triumph of the free-market and individual responsibility persuasive to US citizens. Reagan’s arguments, as I will demonstrate below, helped to assure well-established US citizens that their economic well-being would be protected because of their own adherence to moral and “normative” cultural and economic practices. This section examines how Reagan, in his key speeches throughout his presidency, reified a discourse a normalcy framed by rhetorical appeals to fantastic realism; these very rhetorical conventions became commonplace and taken for granted in the decades that followed his presidency.
Early in the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan began the process to forefront the idea that the unwieldiness of the federal governments got in the way of the accomplishments of individual citizens. Thus, in Reagan’s speeches he articulated how the government’s creation of lean central governments and individual agency were two forms of nationalism that would assuage cultural anxieties about the changing economy. For example, in his 1981 inaugural speech, he begins to focus on the individual’s relationship with the US government:

> The economic ills we suffer have come upon us over several decades. They will not go away in days, weeks, or months, but they will go away. They will go away because we, as Americans, have the capacity now, as we have had in the past, to do whatever needs to be done to preserve this last and greatest bastion of freedom.

> In this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problem. (“First inaugural address” January 20, 1981)

Reagan’s concentration on the nation’s “economic ills” and Americans as a unified entity in his first public speech as president is notable because it demonstrates the first of his arguments for changing governmental practices and the importance of citizens becoming part of the solution to the US’s difficult economic times. Reagan’s naming and appeal to the every-day normative citizen builds throughout his presidency and thus sets the tone for similar frameworks in the PRA. In fact, later in his 1981 inaugural speech, Reagan reminds his audience that

> From time to time, we have been tempted to believe that society has become too complex to be managed by self-rule, that government by an elite group is superior to government for, by, and of the people. But if no one among us is capable of
governing himself, then who among us has the capacity to govern someone else? All of us together, in and out of government, must bear the burden. The solutions we seek must be equitable, with no one group singled out to pay a higher price. The crisis we are facing today [...] require[s], our best effort, and our willingness to believe in ourselves and to believe in our capacity to perform great deeds; to believe that together, with God's help, we can and will resolve the problems which now confront us. (“First inaugural address,” January 20, 1981)

In this portion of his speech Reagan appeals to citizen’s anxiety about the state of the nation. While “crisis” is a key word throughout this speech, Reagan offers a clear answer to impending doom. Instead of assuring the public that the government will take care of them, however, he adeptly turns the audience’s attention to focus on what they know best and trust most—themselves.

By suggesting that the citizenry must share the burden of the economy, Reagan identifies a strong and cohesive “us” (the broad American public) to work together to save the country. In essence, this is one of the first moves of identification Reagan makes as President. Just as this “us” forms a part of the community, as the rest of his speech demonstrates, this collective is made of individual people. For example, later in the speech, he invites audience members to identify with a larger normative American citizenry by first describing the everyday worker and then reminding his audience that they too are made up of this heroic group:

You can see heroes every day going in and out of factory gates. Others, a handful in number, produce enough food to feed all of us and then the world beyond. You meet heroes across a counter—and they are on both sides of that counter. There are
entrepreneurs with faith in themselves and faith in an idea who create new jobs, new wealth and opportunity. They are individuals and families whose taxes support the Government and whose voluntary gifts support church, charity, culture, art, and education. Their patriotism is quiet but deep. Their values sustain our national life.

I have used the words "they" and "their" in speaking of these heroes. I could say "you" and "your" because I am addressing the heroes of whom I speak--you, the citizens of this blessed land. Your dreams, your hopes, your goals are going to be the dreams, the hopes, and the goals of this administration, so help me God.

(“First inaugural address”)

I quote Reagan at length to demonstrate how he rhetorically moves his audience to identify with each other and as being part of the productive US citizenry. Specifically, in the middle of the quotation, Reagan even re-articulates whom he is talking about and makes clear that he is part of the productive group. This movement of identification (Reagan self consciously changes his description of the audience from “they” and “their” to “you” and “me”) along with the theme of the everyday US hero continues to be persuasive throughout the 1990s and 2000s because identification with the everyday hero is a pathetic appeal simultaneously to anxiety and safety. Reagan constructed the US audience as everyday heroes who make possible economic progress and freedom in a nation chosen by “God.” While in this first speech, Reagan did not directly speak of the free market per se he brought attention to its absence by consistently referring to the evils of big government, the conscientiousness of the everyday worker, and the importance of
freedom for all American citizens (against the anti-freedom enforced by communist and socialist governments) (Aune 126).

Consider another example from Reagan’s Republican nomination acceptance speech:

[The US economy] for more than 200 years has helped us master a continent, create previously undreamed-of-prosperity for our people and has fed millions of others around the globe and that [economic] system will continue to serve us in the future if our government will stop ignoring the basic values on which it was built. (Reagan qtd. by Asen 74)

Reagan adeptly contrasts the values of family and work to government intervention; a successful nation is dependent upon its citizens not the government (Asen 74). (The anti-government rhetoric Reagan espouses became a reality in the neoliberal policies of the 1990s.) Reagan appeals to the every day citizen by asking his audience to differentiate themselves from the federal government’s current administrative practices and then to identify with what is considered commonsense and unquestioned: the morality of the family, the ethics of work, and the principles of independence. In doing so, Reagan enables his “normative” audience to feel secure and to identify themselves as productive citizens and to associate welfare recipients as “un-American” or “deviant.” He continues this theme in his 1986 State of the Union Address:

Government growing beyond our consent had become a lumbering giant, slamming shut the gates of opportunity, threatening to crush the very roots of our freedom. What brought America back? The American people brought us back
with quiet courage and common sense, with undying faith that in this nation under God the future will be ours; for the future belongs to the free.

Tonight the American people deserve our thanks for 37 straight months of economic growth […] [and] for sunrise firms and modernized industries […] And despite the pressures of our modern world, family and community remain the moral core of our society, guardians of our values and hopes for the future. Family and community are the costars of this great American comeback. They are why we say tonight: Private values must be at the heart of public policies.

(Reagan “State of the Union Address”)

In this example, Reagan focuses on how individual American citizens are the reason that the US’s is functioning well. This form of encouragement led audiences to connect how the family and their ties to the community should be the main focus of public policies instead of the US’s economic system. In other words, Reagan begins to re-define his early description of the “normative” citizen to include one who keeps the family intact, is independent of the state, engages in work, and keeps private moral values. In this instance, Reagan assuages his audience’s anxiety by reminding US citizens who, in the audience, are “normal” and “productive.” When Reagan suggests that his audience, as productive “normal” citizens, have the power, through their personal decisions, to “reinvent” the US government and culture, he adeptly screens out their material realities in favor of reifying extremely traditional US national values.
Reagan continues by articulating specifically who and what are the core problems in the US: He claims that it is time that citizens redefine government’s role… revise or replace programs in the name of compassion that degrade the moral worth of work, encourage family breakups [.]

As we work to make the American dream real for all, we must also look to the condition of America's families. In the welfare culture, the breakdown of the family, the most basic support system, has reached crisis proportions—in female and child poverty, child abandonment, horrible crimes, and deteriorating schools. After hundreds of billions of dollars in poverty programs, the plight of the poor grows more painful. But the waste in dollars and cents pales before the most tragic loss: the sinful waste of human spirit and potential. And we must now escape the spider's web of dependency. (“State of the Union Address” 1986)

In the above example, Reagan uses timely anxious rhetorics that draw upon contradictory values of tradition and reinvention. Reagan describes the then current welfare climate as amoral but he frames his depiction with rhetorics of reinvention. This narrative of reinvention, which re-emerges in the 1990s in hearings and testimonies about welfare reform, provides hope and possibility despite the seemingly grim economic conditions because the notion of reinvention is bound up with “normalizing” citizens and their behaviors.

Reagan further sets up a dichotomy between the normal and productive when he characterizes the deserving poor and undeserving poor: “those who through no fault of their own, must depend on the rest of us—the poverty stricken, the disabled, the elderly, and all those with true need—can now be rest assured that the social safety-net they
depend on are on exempt from any [social service] cuts” (Reagan qtd. in Asen 86).

Notice how Reagan specifically names his audience as “us” or those who are not in need of direct social services. However, Reagan invites the audience of “us,” through an appeal to *pathos*, to differentiate themselves from those who are deservingly in need as well as from the undeserving poor. Shortly after this characterization, Reagan named social security, Medicare, veteran and disability income supplements, and nutrition programs (to name a few), as deserving “safety-net programs;” yet, he did not endorse Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), because he claimed the “real need” of the individuals using these programs could not be demonstrated (Asen 86-87).

Reagan’s rhetorical appeals to identification and difference above are premised upon definitions and values of “normativity” and “deviance.” The idea of the “norm” (identification), or the way one should be, is dependent upon the conception of deviance (difference). As Lennard J. Davis points out, “The concept of a norm, unlike that of an ideal, implies that the majority of the population must or should somehow be part of the norm” (*Enforcing* 29). The very idea of a “norm” or “normal” divides citizens into categories of standard and substandard populations—moral and amoral. Yet, rhetorical appeals to anxiety frame the very discourses “normal” and “deviant” because both discourses have their roots in early twentieth-century eugenics research. As critics of eugenics research suggest, the act of identifying and then differentiating is a reactive response whereby one positions oneself against another based on a fear of contagion. For example, quite literally, in early twentieth century, anti-abortion laws and sterilization laws, used eugenics research to legislate who could and should be (re)productive.
Reagan’s rhetorical strategies and his linguistic framework demonstrates one of the prominent modes of rhetorical persuasion that continues to hold authority in early twenty-first century US policy culture: a syllogistic appeal that promises audiences a simple and clear answer to crisis. A syllogism is premised on the logic that if one portion of a claim is true then by default, the second and third parts are also true. A syllogism, thus, functions in the Burkian sense as a terministic screen, which deflects some realities and promotes others in order to move certain audiences to action (A Rhetoric of Motives, Burke 103). The terministic screen persuades because it employs taken-for-granted terminologies, concepts, and ideologies that draws audience’s attention to what they assume is true and real. Kenneth Burke’s “terministic screen” helps expose the cultural assumptions that the policy-making process privileges and also identifies the arguments US citizens already deemed persuasive, despite some citizens lived realities.

Here I contend that contemporary welfare policy-making contains a terministic screen of fantastic realism. I use the term fantastic real to highlight how appeals to realism are actually built upon appeals to fantasy. An appeal to realism persuades because it separates power from their words or texts while professing to represent the world clearly and truthfully (Aune 40). As Burke explicates, an appeal to realism relies on the fabricated notion that universal principles (such as the principles of family and economic independency, as Reagan suggests) are more real than unfamiliar or obscure evidence because they are easily understood; acts that contain abstract concepts are only general terms or genres that are “merely conveniences of language” (Grammar of Motives 248). Therefore, appeals to realism persuade because they seem as though they
represent the seamless “truth” or what actually is; they do not allow for interpretations because they are unquestionable.

Yet, fantasy, Renata Sacecl explains “gives consistency to what we call ‘reality’” and “functions as a scenario that conceals the ultimate inconsistenc[ies] of society” (15). An audience is consubstantiated by an appeal to the fantastic real or by a speaker’s/text’s apparently logical attempt to tie up loose ends by ‘telling it like it is.’ In other words, the speaker hides any ambiguities in the argument. The fantastic real, thus, persuades because it simplifies the intricacies of an argument into commonsense action.

Rhetorical appeals to anxiety and the commonplaces of identification and difference frame the fantastic realist narrative (this will be further explained below). In contemporary welfare policy, the fantastic real often appears as a normalizing narrative that draws upon taken-for-granted definitions of marriage, health, production, and prosperity. It is syllogistic in the sense that it relies upon the audience’s acceptance of universal assumptions for its power. This fantastic realist narrative functions to affirm audience members’ own identities and separate those who do not fit in this fantastic construction. It also, however, deflects the audience’s attention away from the political and economic changes taking place in the US due to increasing globalization.

*Kairos* is a central characteristic of the appeal to the fantastic real because such appeals are more persuasive within certain climates and contexts. In other words, there must be an occasion or opportunity for the terministic screen of the fantastic real to make logical sense to an audience. For example, as I demonstrate above (and in Chapter One), the material circumstances of the 1980s occasioned Reagan’s appeal to the fantastic real and set the tone for this rhetorical appeal to hold authority in the later twentieth century.
Despite these gross structural and economic changes, Reagan employed a fantastic realist narrative when he spoke of the need for individuals to be responsible for their own family’s welfare, the importance of traditional institutions like the church to care for the needy, and the necessity for smaller governmental institutions and a greater reign of the free market (Giddens 112, 5). As demonstrated in the above examples, Reagan took advantage of the cultural-economic climate and described the changing economy as an occasion to encourage US residents to reinvent their relationship to their job, family, community, and the free market.

The development of the fantastic real can be further traced, for example, by looking at the anxious rhetorics that framed the creation and enrollment of the Personal Responsibility Act of 1996 (PRA). Throughout the 1990s, welfare policy-makers, as Schram explains, blame and make responsible individual families for their own problems and thus, hide the nation’s inability to respond to an increasingly deterritorialized global political economy (163). As emblems of the cultural shift to neoliberalism, welfare policy exhibits how the narratives in welfare policy changed from ones of “support” to one of “personal responsibility.” This shift demonstrates welfare policy’s movement toward incorporating neoliberal values consumed within a rhetoric of normalcy—this anxious rhetoric of normalcy continues to gain more power and is reified in portions of the 2003/2004 welfare bills: The Healthy Marriage Promotion Initiative (PHMC) and the introduction of Healthy Marriages and Responsible Fatherhood Act 2003. All of these policies represent the ways in which individual citizen’s relationships to the state continue to be re-negotiated in light of a changing economy and globalization.
I map the trend toward neoliberalism in the following way: 1) a shift in the 1960’s and throughout the 1970’s to focus on the nation’s responsibility to its citizens; 2) a movement in the 1980’s (with the Reagan administration) for citizens to be responsible to the state; 3) an association in the late 1990s between individual citizens responsible (to themselves and their families), and unfettered market forces; and, 4) a linguistic imposition of enthymematic or unquestioned and unfounded prescriptions of health and marriage in 2003 and 2004. But before I address these four points, I first consider how did the US arrive at a policy that legislates marriage and what rhetorical appeals make this idea persuasive?

The Rise of the Neoliberal Policy Imaginary: Re-inventing Tradition

The election of 1994 marked a crucial change for US policy makers and ultimately the rhetorical and cultural appeals of public policy. Despite the victory of a Democratic president (Bill Clinton), Congress was lead by a Republican majority. The discourses Congress drew from throughout 1995 reflected the rhetorical secularization of market fundamentalism and the growing appeal of neoliberalism. In this section I demonstrate Congress’s pervasive rhetorical conventions and I consider how Congress used these conventions to reinvent government and welfare. I illustrate how the central terms Congress used to frame their arguments began to appear as “natural” links and not fabrications.

In the new Congress’s early testimonies in 1995, they vowed to “reinvent government,” and in doing so, they began to dismantle what they deemed an old bureaucratic model of running the national government. Congress noted, in particular,
that although the US was headed into the twenty-first century, its governmental policies and practices were built upon earlier managerial philosophies and procedures from the 1940’s that tended to be slow moving, tedious, and unable to keep up with newer information technologies and an expanding global economy.

Congress captured its audience of US citizens by suggesting that reinventing government would whittle down unnecessary and costly steps in the way government carries out its services. In these hearings, Congress first blamed itself for the inefficiency of welfare and then shrewdly passed that blame down to individual citizens. Among the programs that Congress vowed to re-invent was the way the government spent welfare monies. A rhetoric of “reinvention,” to some extent, made logical sense not only for other members of Congress, but also the US public because it evoked the decade before when the Reagan administration described excessive “big government” was one of America’s core problems. Yet, this rhetoric of reinvention related to the political and cultural climate in the US during 1995— a period when the skilled job sector grew for a limited amount of individuals, immigration peaked, and the manufacturing jobs that supported the middleclass continued to move overseas. During these cultural and economic times of the mid-1990s, contradictory rhetorics of tradition and reinvention persuaded the US public. Consider, for example, how Congress employed a contradictory rhetoric of revolution and tradition to persuade their audience of the dire need to “reinvent” government:

I think we are at one of those great moments where society has spoke with such great clarity that they want much less government, that they want a reformed Congress, that they what a return to the basic values that built the country, values
of work, values of family, a recognition of a higher moral authority. (Scarborough “Changing the Direction of Government”) 17

As Congress honed their arguments in public hearings and in policy drafts, they shifted their logical appeal of reinvention toward one that evoked emotions. By intimating that social problems in the US related to a disintegration of traditional values, Congress captured the general US audience’s attention. Not only did government need to be reinvented, they argued, but also American values needed to reflect this reinvention through a revolutionary return to basic morals. The term revolution was placed right next to reinvention and tradition—making the proposed changes in government seem uncommon, significant, and, ultimately, propitious for the nation and its citizens.

For example, on January 19, 1995, Florida House Speaker, Mr. Scarborough in his opening remarks to Congress, stated, “Though we may use the rhetoric of revolution, and indeed, after 40 years of maintaining an old order, it may seem revolutionary, […], what we advocate here is really not radical. Instead, it is reasonable” (“Changing the Direction of Government” US Senate 1995, 13). He framed his argument for a new form of government with the terms “revolution,” “empowerment,” “change,” “reasonable,” and fundamentalism (i.e. “going back to the basics”) (Public Hearing “Changing the Direction of Government” January 19, 1995). This language appears in a number of Congressional hearings that proposed the “reinvention” of government.18 Generally, revolution is an active response to gross injustice or chaos where transformation is enacted through a regime change that benefits the masses. In the case of 1995, there certainly was somewhat of a “regime” change (democratic president and congressional republican majority); however, the revolution in 1995 was not so much revolutionary.
Policy-makers used the term revolution to describe the government’s need (as facilitated by citizens) to heal the nation and bring it back to an earlier “safer” state. By calling “reinvention” a revolutionary move toward tradition, Congress was able to provide the anxious American public a sense of hope, safety, and transformation all at once. This rhetoric of revolution and tradition set the tone for the major restructuring of government and public policy that took place after 1995.19

Despite using terms that evoke an emotional attachment to social change, Scarborough described a revolution that is not radical but rather rational, sensible, safe, and ultimately a return to a state of order. In another example, during this same hearing, Mr. Christensen20 stated, “The country was founded on free enterprise, on the principles of capitalism, and we need to return that power back to the people” (7). The rhetorical appeals of the terms/ideals revolution, change, rationality, empowerment, and the return to the basics present in the above examples contain notable contradictions that reveal a dual argument. This anxious rhetoric of revolution persuades because it positions individual US citizens and their families as activists working to better their country. Yet, Congress’s turn to free enterprise and market capitalism gives power to citizens so that citizens might enact this revolution.

Similarly, Mr. Scarborough claimed, the US is “about individualism. It [is] about the power of communities and families working together, not looking to Washington to try and figure out every single problem, but to band together as a community and as a family and as a state” (1). Scarborough’s rhetorical move to connect revolution to one’s personal relationship with his/her own family and then that family’s relationship to the nation, reflects the changing discourse throughout the latter part of the twentieth century
and into the early part of the twenty-first century. In other words, throughout these hearings Congress begins to spell-out how personal and national ideologies relate to each other. Namely, the rhetorical appeal of family values, framed by rhetorics of anxiety, revolution, and reinvention created a discourse of normalcy.

As demonstrated in these hearings, the connections between the family, nation, market, tradition, and revolution made sense to US citizens. The rhetorical connection between the individual family, market, and nation provided US citizens a seemingly material and tangible means for assuaging national anxiety as the economy shifted (from a manufacturing economy to a service sector economy) and well-paid jobs were available only for those who had a high skill levels in a variety technology related fields. As these hearings suggest, US citizens held the power for change (they are in charge of their own destinies) and if they take charge the state would be in support of them but not overbearing. However, as I will demonstrate below in welfare policy, the government, instead of supporting *all* its citizens, grows to be a surveyor of those who are not disciplined citizens by legislating personal matters like marriage and family formation.

**Post-Industrialism’s Neoliberal Revolution**

As I describe in Chapter One, the central arguments in many Congressional hearings during the mid-1990s invoked an imagined national audience; that is, the hearings characterized the public citizenry as hard working, family focused, entrepreneuring, market driven, nation-centered, and community-oriented. Congress deemed these qualities as “traditional” or “fundamental” in Congressional hearings. Although some of the aforementioned values have historically circulated as primary
narratives of progress and success in the US, the post-industrial economic and cultural climate “reinvented” these values as “revolutionary.”

Yet, to some extent, they were, indeed, quietly radical. In this new tradition of American values, the market is one of the central “actors” along with the individual family on the US’s policy stage. Despite Congress’s attempt to contradictorily construct “traditional” US American values as new, they did in fact significantly re-write the relationships that citizens have to the government, the market, and their families and communities. Congress’s contradictory language of revolution and tradition was an example of the anxious rhetorical appeal to the fantastic real because the arguments that Congress employed attempted to present a seamless truth whereby the narrative of American values is articulated in a way that concealed its inconsistency. Scientific discourse frequently employed the term revolution and thus, the term harkens back to US involvement in the Cold War—a time when the nation’s ability to advance technologically was of utmost importance for national security and pride. The term *revolution*, in this hearing, suggests that individual people through their family, lifestyle, commitments, and choices have the ability to advance the nation and to be a part of cutting-edge (yet safe and simple) changes to government. However, the terms *tradition* and *revolution*, and their principles, function, as Burke notes, as mere conveniences of language; they are terministic screens that hide how the changing national economy has effected the US government and its citizens.

In the hearing, “Reinventing Welfare,” Judith M. Gueron from Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, for example, argued that flexible services along with programmatic and recipient incentives would help reduce spending on welfare
programs (US Senate 1995). She claimed that, “with new flexibility, states increasingly become the laboratories for innovation and [the] locus of control for work strategies” (18). Ultimately, Gueron’s testimony suggested that Congress shift the power to oversee welfare programs away from the federal government and into the hands of individual states. This re-articulation of the state’s role only marks one stage of the larger process to whittle down and make more efficient welfare programs. Yet, like the term “revolution” the reference to laboratories that Gueron makes reminds the audience of the importance and safety of scientifically supported mechanisms (i.e. well-researched, tested, tried, and “true”); thus a revolution makes the turn to the private sector merely a science.

Gueron explains “private sector connections” would help to promote “the value of work” and “link participants to real jobs” while promoting an “up-front investment in creating enough work-directed activities” so that the “payoff can be substantial” (18). Gueron draws from scientific and corporatization discourses that are framed by rhetorics of flexibility, investment, and privatization. Consider, earlier moments in Gueron’s testimony: “The easiest way to get more job placements is to change whom you serve, not how you serve people” (17). Throughout Gueron’s testimony, she employs the commonplace identification and difference. Her statement implies that individual’s irrational behaviors need to be changed, managed, and made adaptable to contemporary economic needs. For example, Gueron, by suggesting the government changes who they serve, sets up a dichotomy of “us” versus “them.” This split is significant because Gueron provides her audiences with a way to calm their anxiety. She suggests that the government does not need to change the way they function; they merely need to change
the people who rely on welfare. Thus, the audience is allowed a sense of security, as
they, as productive citizens, will not be affected by these changes.

Gueron and Scarborough’s Congressional testimonies are merely emblems of the
critical debates about the efficiency of government and the responsibility of citizens that
occurred in the mid-1990s. As demonstrated above, these debates, although argued as a
revolutionary return to traditional values, in fact re-imagined this classical US American
narrative in light of post-industrial America. The argument that supports this root
narrative relies so closely on individual agency and the failure of big government that it
screens out their relationship to the historical-economic climate in the late twentieth
century. However, the actual outcome of the “reinvention” of government is just as
significant as the larger rhetorical framework upon which Congress made their
arguments. In addition, the cultural climate in the US during these momentous changes
occasioned Congress’s persuasive arguments. The rhetorical appeal of the “reinvention”
narrative generates questions about why these re-imagined values worked for the
American public, and how they also structure many American’s current cultural belief
systems. To address these questions, I turn to the PRA and some of its subsequent
supporting documents.

Culture, not Politics: The Rhetoric of the PRA

The extensive pamphlet Working Toward Independence, a summary published for
welfare providers and the general public, states that there are three “major pillars” of the
1996 PRA: promoting work, strengthening families, and promoting healthy marriages.23
The PRA proposes to realize these pillars by creating incentives for the state, via the
welfare recipient, to reduce the use of welfare programs. Crucially, the PRA claims to give the state greater “control” and “flexibility” in implementing its programs. Yet, states merely achieve greater control by contracting out services to non-governmental organizations, religious communities, and the private sector. The language and values written into the PRA demonstrate the rhetorical appeals that frame free-market ideology, as it has become part of the fantastic realist appeal within US welfare policy. In particular, the first few pages of the PRA exhibit this narrative and rearticulate most clearly what Gueron stated above: welfare policies must “change whom [the policy] serve[s], not how [the policy] serve[s] people” (“Reinventing Welfare”). And as Daniel Patrick Moynihan suggested in 1986, “The central conservative truth is that it is culture, not politics, that determines the success of a society. The central liberal truth is that politics can change a culture and save it from itself” (qtd. by Deprez 37). The PRA appeals to the larger US public through its apparent move to tie up loose ends of an already established “problem” in US culture—namely an assumed lack of national, market, marital, and family values. Likewise, the PRA demonstrates the shift to neoliberal and market fundamentalist values because it draws on upon previously established rhetorics of reinvention/ revolution and tradition which, connected with a promise to whittle down big-government in 1995, persuades and mandates states to auction off welfare services to private secular and religious organization.

In 1995, one of the first federal problems Congress tackled in its vow to “reinvent government” was the welfare system. Up until 1996, when Congress enrolled the finalized welfare bill, welfare was a federally funded and run safety-net program. The 1996 welfare bill (PRA) is a tangible example of the turn toward neoliberalism and
market fundamentalism. The bill itself was considered quite radical since it reorganized the way the federal government funded welfare. Prior to 1996, the federal government oversaw the entire program, employed the social workers and practitioners, and ran programs such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Headstart, and Women Infants and Children (WIC). The PRA changed this organization by making block grants to individual states based on populations, economies, and so on. Moreover, it mandated states to accomplish very specific goals and tied their subsequent funding to their ability to do so. For example, states had to reduce their welfare rolls by a certain percentage within three years, decrease the number of out-of-wedlock births without abortion, and identify children’s paternity. As part of the shift to a neoliberal market economy, each state was also responsible for contracting out social services based on an individual company’s/agency’s promised results and costs. This turn to the private sector made agencies compete for clients and services. Thus, social services became less about social good than about individual agency’s philosophies, state government’s best allocation of money, the ability of the agency to find welfare recipients private sector jobs, and the possibility to meet strict time constraints. In fact, states were promised additional federal money if their individual goals were met each year and also penalized by having their funds cut if they did not meet their stated goals.

The 1996 welfare policy is novel not just because it reinvented the way welfare services were carried out, but also because it is the first time in welfare history that the policy purported to provide a simple and clear answer to what the larger culture assumed to be a national crisis: the loss of shared “American” and familial values. Whereas the trend in earlier welfare policies tended to blame the federal or state governments for
growing welfare rolls, the PRA focused solely on individual’s behaviors and placed the policy’s success on each state’s ability to change welfare families. The ultimate goal of the PRA was to encourage marriage as the quintessential institution that paves the way out of poverty. Consider again, for example, the first lines of Title 1 (Block Grants for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) of the PRA, which do not speak directly to other members of Congress, but rather to a general public:

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Marriage is the foundation for a successful society.

(2) Marriage is an essential institution of a successful society which promotes the interests of children.

Promotion of responsible fatherhood and motherhood is integral to successful child rearing and the well-being of children. (Title 1 Section 101).

Here, the bill begins with a report from Congress to an unspecified audience. Thus, we might imagine that this report is not simply addressing other policy-makers but rather the larger US public (the audience addressed) and those who contract out welfare services. (In contrast, and as mentioned above, the audiences for earlier policies were other policy-makers.) This dually addressed audience is further demonstrated in the policy’s tone, which makes the first few pages of the PRA a didactic conversation between Congress and an enlightened and like-minded American public.27 The pedantic tendency of the PRA, where Congress invites the public to follow along with their “findings,” coupled with constructing the audience as consumers, raises questions about who is associated with this larger US audience addressed and why Congress used anxious rhetorics in the policy to appeal to a general audience instead of a specific group of policy makers.
Even the first lines of the PRA quite clearly name the “deviant” citizen as the single mother dependent on the state for her and her family’s sustenance by centering on marriage and successful child rearing. Although the focus on the mother is not specifically articulated in the first-lines, Asen’s observation that we imagine the person who is the welfare recipient through the policy’s larger ideologies, helps the PRA’s audience imagine that the promiscuous unmarried “welfare queen” with too many children is the deviant citizen the policy describes. This, together with the policy’s peripatetic tone (where Congress walks the audience addressed through the moral problems welfare recipients presents), reverberates most clearly with US citizens who already follow, aspire to have, or identify with these familial norms. The accessible language used in the PRA, thus, demonstrates the separation between the “audience addressed” and the “audience invoked” because its simplicity and its appeal to values such as marriage, family, and success suggests that the writers are not speaking to an audience of expert policy makers but rather to the general public for whom such terms are taken-for-granted. The language of the PRA, through these aforementioned values, seems to “hail” its audience—or ask its audience to identify with it—by drawing upon values that the majority of US citizens believe to be true. The “audience addressed” can be characterized as “normal” and “productive” US citizens.\(^\text{28}\) This recognition is significant because the PRA names the values that make a citizen no longer a dependent of the state but instead an autonomous individual and self-contained familial unit—values are that considered unquestionably “American.”\(^\text{29}\) This requisite “American-ness” relates to the PRA’s neoliberal imaginary because in order to embody the exemplary American one must not only uphold familial and marital values, one must ensure free
market and capitalist values through responsible investments, work participation, and contributions to the US’s economy. The rhetoric of blame that surrounds the PRA’s quiet description of the welfare recipient suggests that in order for one to count as a “normal” citizen, she must be able to participate autonomously in the market. Like other neoliberal policies (and their policy-making processes I examine in the following chapters), the PRA constructs the welfare recipient’s best interest as one tied both directly and indirectly to market forces, personal choices, and individual behaviors.

Likewise, the PRA’s first lines contain the terms “promotion” and “success.” These terms make the policy read as plausible steps toward economic independence. Coupled with ideas about marriage, work, and responsible motherhood and fatherhood the above terms “promotion” and “success,” create a formula that makes the transition off welfare appear quite simple. In fact, it is this formula that many Americans deem as “normal.” The language of welfare constructs the steps to transition off of welfare reachable. Also, the accessible language directly appeals to every-day US tax payers because the simple steps promise quick results; in essence, it is as though policy-makers are selling the new welfare program to consumer tax-payers as a product that will achieve quick results. In addition, this formula allows an audience of “normal” US citizens to distinguish themselves from welfare recipients by constructing them as immature students that need to be taught how to be good citizens.

In this respect, welfare is marketed to the US public as though they are consumers (via taxes) of the policy’s larger ideology and ultimately its programs. Consider, for example, Part A of Title I (Block Grant to States for Temporary Assistance for Needy
Families) Sec. 401: “The purpose of this part [of the PRA] is to increase the flexibility of States in operating a program designed to

(1) provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or homes of relatives;

(2) end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage[.]

Part A continues to describe the importance of reducing of out-of-wedlock births while also producing and maintaining two-parent (heterosexual) families. The proposal to allow the states to be “flexible” reiterates what Reagan suggested in the 1980s and Congress articulated in early 1995: that government needs to be less involved with individuals’ lives and instead, it must adapt to changing times, reinvent itself to be innovative and responsive to economic and cultural demands, allow states choice in how they carry out their services, and be less involved in productive citizen’s lives.

Congress’s employment of the term “flexibility” thus appeals to the “audience addressed” because it assuages their anxieties about how the government spends their tax dollars and it promises more control of funds by the general public. Indeed, if states are able to be flexible and allocate money to the private sector, then potentially, the market for these services will respond by creating jobs that will support taxpayers. In this instance we also see how the role of the state is re-invented. While in the 1980s Reagan articulated the state, for example, as working with citizens, here the state is a “flexible” albeit hands-off figure that passes responsibility onto individuals. In fact, the welfare state re-invents itself as a surveyor as opposed to a protector that supplies a safety net.
Part A of Title I of the PRA is also significant because, along with the unspecific term “flexibility,” with regards to carrying out social programs, the PRA very specifically proscribes marriage and the formation of families as another key component to help people transition off welfare. In some ways then, the PRA is indeed “revolutionary” because it legislates very personal and private institutions: marriage and the family. As the above statement from the PRA makes evident, marriage is the final piece in the equation toward the normalcy that the bill attempts to legislate. In fact, the repetition of the terms marriage, paternity, and two-parent families throughout the PRA suggests that Congress and both the “audience addressed” and “audience invoked” might believe that marriage is in danger or that the welfare recipient does not know how the institution works.

This anxious appeal to marriage and family formation serves as a terministic screen. In essence, Congress makes the persuasiveness of family values reachable; finding welfare recipients jobs and promoting marriages allows the “audience addressed” to identify with those enthymematic values. Because the PRA also functions pedagogically (Congress is reporting their findings), the audience identifies with the PRA’s embedded success narrative and sees themselves as having learned and enacted the steps that the bill lays out for the “deviant” welfare recipient.

For example, with the first pages of the PRA, the term “marriage” clusters around values such as well-being, fatherhood, motherhood, and success. These core values—along with the key words responsibility, dependence, and work—thread throughout the PRA and are a part of its appeal to anxiety. The justification to reinvent welfare that Congress articulates in its “findings” and that are reported in the first pages
of the bill construct a narrative of peril and danger. Consider, for example, the dual appeal to logic and emotions that the PRA employs in the following statement: “The total of all out-of-wedlock births between 1970 and 1991 has risen from 10.7 percent to 29.5 percent and if the current trend continues, 50 percent of all births by year 2015 will be out-of-wedlock” (Sec. 101 B). Indeed, much of the PRA is written as a defense of its policy changes; the PRA uses direct logical facts to make its arguments appealing to a very general audience. Likewise, Title 1 Sec. 101(5)A is another emblem: “The number of individuals receiving aid to families with dependent children has more than tripled since 1965. More than two-thirds of these recipients are children. Eighty-nine percent now live in houses in which no father is present.”

Although both of these statements use facts and statistics to demonstrate the crisis of single parenting and the decline in the value of marriage, they also are emotionally appealing since they reinforce already present anxieties about the current state of the institution of marriage. In this way, the PRA recollects early twentieth-century welfare policy which aimed to acculturate recent immigrants through state sponsored didactic health, culture, and parenting programs (see Gordon, Mink, and Fraser); yet, the PRA centers on two key ideals: responsible fatherhood and motherhood.

In addition, the morals espoused through the PRA re-invent domesticity for late-twentieth-century US citizens by collapsing personal values with national and market values. Indeed, as the federally administered pamphlet Working Toward Independence, explains welfare policy must […] support single-parent families [but] must do a better job promoting healthy marriages[,] […] [indeed] states have established a strong track
record of innovation in helping dependent adults move to work; there is every reason to believe that states will find new and effective ways to encourage healthy marriages (2).

The appeals of marriage, work, and family values function as terministic screens because the pamphlet uses commonsense (note the if…then statement) so that legislating marriage seems practical, necessary, and ultimately the job of Congress. Significantly, the above quotation is merely representative of the trend toward what has been called in Congressional hearings, “marriage policy.” The move to legislate marriage is also persuasive because it employs the same appeals Congress used in its vow to “reinvent government.”

For example, marriage has been deemed by the Christian Right—which is known to espouse strong “traditional values”— as a core traditional value. Yet, by Congress legislating marriage as an institution that will end welfare dependency, Congress has in effect, made a revolutionary move to impose this limiting value-system. The modification of the PRA in 2003 is a prime example of how the anxious appeal to marriage and family values continues to be persuasive in the early twenty-first century. Marriage, being a fairly tangible practice, provides a realist narrative with which an audience of consumer/tax-payers can identify. This narrative, coupled with family values, purports to bring the nation back to an earlier state of safety and order. The family, then, is the quintessential social actor that can change the national ethos through responsible parenting and work.

In addition to proscribing a particular ontology and through strict surveillance of recipients at the state-level, the PRA turns to “contracts with charitable, religious, or
private organizations” and funds them with “certificates, vouchers, or other forms of
disbursement which are redeemable with such organizations” to carry out its programs
(Sec. 104 A-B). In other words, this portion of the PRA “permits [states] contracts with
organizations” that traditionally are considered separate from the state (ibid.). Thus, the
state, by contracting out services, simply passes the services to the private sector with a
“hands off” approach. Consider, for example, the PRA’s Sec. 104d, titled, “Religious
Character and Freedom:” “A religious organization with a contract [with the state][…]
shall retain its independence from Federal, State and local governments, including such
organization’s control over the definition, development, practice, and expression of its
religious beliefs.” Section 104 further states that religious organizations may contract
with the state, “on the same basis as any other nongovernmental provider without
impairing the religious character of such organizations, and without diminishing the
religious freedom of beneficiaries of assistance funded under such program.” The PRA
thus assures that “neither the Federal Government nor a State receiving funds under such
programs shall discriminate against an organization which is or applies to be a contractor
to provide assistance, or which accepts certificates, vouchers, or other forms of
disbursements, on the basis that the organization has a religious character” (Sec. 104c).
The turn to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector demonstrates
one of the key tenets of the shift to neoliberal policies.

According to Sangeeta Kamat, one of the central doctrines of neoliberalism is the
shift toward NGOs becoming the de facto agents of enforcing democracy (“The
Privatization of Public Interest,” public lecture).31 As Kamat points out, this shift to
make private organizations responsible for social services is tied to a transformation in
economic culture that relates to a growing relationship between the public good and private interests. NGOs can neither be managed nor made responsible for the success or failure of social programs. She argues that private organizations such as labor unions and churches function as guardians of civil interests. Kamat explains, that in a neoliberal economy, private organizations take over the role of the nation-state to assist workers (as defined by the nation-state) to learn to help themselves. The observations made by Kamat raise a key and important question for this chapter: what makes this shift to contracting out social services persuasive to the general US public?

The PRA’s movement to auction off social services to the private sector and religious organizations persuades many US residents because it relies on their anxiety over the state’s role in continuing welfare dependency; this concern echoes former president Reagan’s concerns about big government. In the minds of many US residents, the government is seen as a central power that only carries out its own agenda at the expense of its citizens; thus, decentralized NGOs are flexible and able to provide a broader range of services. In particular, the private sector seems better positioned to carry out services that deal with issues of morality. Likewise, the community seems to have more power to take action while being in control of their tax dollars. As Kamat points out, the individual becomes “the problem and solution of poverty,” thereby making the state not responsible for poor. The belief that through the private sector—and its connections to the market economy—an individual can attain empowerment by gaining access to the market conceals the reality of economic shifts; namely the predominance of service sector. Welfare recipients become clients of private organizations and thereby at the disposal of the market. However, because the welfare recipient’s connection to
decentralized private organizations, they are allowed access to the market. Thus, welfare recipients are more responsible for their poverty through their personal choices. This same belief-system is carried out in 2003 through policies that not only turn to the private sector, but that also used these NGOs to “change” who it is that welfare serves.

**Anxious Rhetorics, Health, and Fatherhood**

Generally, when a policy is revised, its language is often tedious, directing specific words and phrases to be cut from the document and others to be replaced. The changes to the PRA are no different but are quite striking. In this last section I examine briefly the revised (including “The Promotion of Healthy Marriages and Children Act” (PHMC) 2003) welfare policy by making note of the significant, albeit subtle, changes to the language and values that frame this contemporary piece of legislation. Although the policy proposal reinforces many of the services and directives written in the PRA of 1996, there are slight changes that demonstrate the continued persuasiveness of anxious rhetorics and the appeal to the *fantastic real*. For example, like the PRA, the PHMC mandates states to plan how they will encourage

- the formation and maintenance of married, two parent families and describe any strategies [for] […] projects and activities by public entities and non-profit community entities to test approaches for:
  1) promoting responsible, caring, and effective parenting and encouraging positive father involvement,
  2) enhancing the abilities and commitment of unemployed or low-income fathers to provide material support for their families and to avoid or leave welfare,
3) improving fathers’ ability to manage family business affairs effectively; and 
4) encouraging and supporting healthy marriages and married fatherhood. (Sec. 111 and 119)

Although the “audience addressed” and “audience invoked” remain the same in the PRA and the revised 2003 welfare bill—the tone is peripatetic and the audience is treated as consumers—the core cultural actor has changed. In 2003, the father becomes the central link in the chain of “normalcy.” Here, it is the father who is the vital connection who, through his responsible involvement in with the family, secures the physical and mental health of his children, his marriage, and ultimately the nation.

Four recurrent terms frame the 2003 welfare initiative: health, marriage, work, and fatherhood. Crucially, these values are not articulated as separate from each other, rather in the 2003 initiative, they function together as a tangible equation that articulates the steps toward normalcy in the twenty-first century. Like the PRA, the market and the decentralized private sector, in the sense that NGOs and the private sector also carry out these mandates, are still the entities that make this equation possible. For example, in a testimony in front of the House Ways and Means Committee, Theodora Ooms makes clear how turning to NGOs is one of the core ways that states can move welfare recipients off the dole and into marriages: we must encourage “the states’ most prominent religious leaders across denominations and faiths to sign a covenant to agree to offer serious marriage preparation courses and marriage mentors to couples during their first year of marriage” (5). The interconnectedness of these anxious themes is further demonstrated, for example, in the PHMC Sec. 101. Here, the 2003 welfare initiative directly rewrites a portion of the PRA: “in paragraph (4), by striking ‘two-parent
families’ and inserting ‘healthy, 2-parent married families, and encourage responsible fatherhood’” (part 4) (emphasis mine). As Davis explains, within rhetorical appeals to health there is always a parallel drawn between the human body and the body politic; following eugenicist’s theories physically healthy bodies form a healthy nation (Bending over Backwards 113). Indeed, the ideologies that shape poverty/welfare and “health” inform the perception not only of each other but also of the nation and its citizenry. The 2003 welfare bill positions the state as a practitioner of physical, mental, and economic well being by proscribing a script for behaviors and relationships that are “healthy.” Importantly, these changes occur while there is a rise in prescriptions and general health care costs.

The discourse of health, healthiness, and earlier discourses of normalcy rests upon appeals to anxiety. As Michel Foucault points out, the notion of health is always entrenched in the body. In this way, the new welfare initiative’s appeal to health functions as a form of bio-power that works to subjugate bodies and control the population (Foucault 141). Likewise, Ann Stoler points out that bio-power is centered on the bourgeois identity that is rooted in the sexual politics of the home. In her analysis of 19th century colonial practices, she claims:

identifying marginal members of the body politic [helps to map] the moral parameters of […the] nation[. [. .] Deeply sedimented discourses on sexual morality […] redraw the ‘interior frontiers’ of national communities[. .] […] [Such] nationalist discourses [are] predicated on exclusionary cultural principles that [do] more than divide the middle class from the poor. They make out those whose claims to […] public relief [are] worthy or recognition and whose [are] not. (8)
Although Stoler recounts how the mechanisms of bio-power worked in the 19th century, her observations aptly describe present-day welfare policy in several ways. First, Stoler employs the rhetorical commonplace identification and difference to describe the relationship between the “deviant” and the “normal” citizens and their dual place in the nation. Stoler also draws attention to the slippage between the politics of the nation and those that take place in the home such as child-rearing and family life. As Stoler points out, national values are always reflected in our private familial values. In addition, as Davis explains, “The emphasis on nation and national fitness obviously plays into the metaphor of the body. If individual citizens are not fit, if they do not fit the nation, then the national body will not be fit” (Enforcing 36).

In the 2003 welfare initiative, health at first emerges as an empty and undefined term. Yet, the anxious rhetoric of health materializes in the PHMC’s how-to narrative. For example, according to the PHMC, having a two-parent married family is healthy for children because it decreases the “likelihood of welfare dependency, increased risks of low birth weight, poor cognitive development, child abuse and neglect, and teen parenthood, and […] the likelihood of having an intact marriage during adulthood” (Sec. 4 (D)). However, the parameters of a “healthy” marriage are unclear. Yet, the PHMC does make clear that this health rests upon the presence of a father in the familial unit. For example a seamless narrative that emerges in the policy’s call for paternal involvement describes that

Children who live apart from their biological fathers, on average, are more likely to be poor, experience educational, health, emotional, and psychological problems, be victims of child abuse, engage in criminal behavior, and become
involved in the juvenile justice system than their peers who live with their
married, biological mother and father” (Sec. 4 (F)).

As this portion of the policy demonstrates, fathers—and more specifically biological fathers—are the crucial link to familial and national health. Implied here is the idea that, if biological fathers are present in the family, the US will experience less crime, better-educated youth, and improved physical and emotional health. As the above quotation demonstrates, there is not only anxiety about the state of marriage, but also the role of a husband to secure not only the health of the family but also the health of the nation. The appeal to health, as it rests on the shoulders of the father, serves as a screen that makes a larger economic and structural analysis impossible. Importantly, just as individual fathers are being asked to secure the health of the family and the nation, the US economy has suffered immense job loss in addition to a recession. Like the PRA, the PHMC’s rhetorical appeal to health actually separates the behaviors that are deviant and normal. (This is particularly significant when considering the current debate about gay marriages.)

As the following example makes clear, in the PMHC there is collapse of family and neoliberal values:

States are experimenting with programs to promote marriage and father involvement. Over half the States have eliminated restrictions on 2-parent families. Many States use TANF [Temporary Assistance to Needy Families—a section of the PRA], child support, or State funds to support community based activities to help fathers become more involved in their children’s lives or strengthen relationships between mothers and fathers (Sec. 4 (c iii)).
Here marriage is reified as normal in two central ways: by suggesting it secures healthy behaviors and by legislating programs that promote the institution of marriage and the nuclear family.

Just as welfare policy reinforces “marriage awareness,” a recent front page New York Times headline reads, “Bush Plans $1.5 Billion Drive for Promotion of Marriage.” The article makes an important connection between the marriage promotion programs (for heterosexuals) funded by the recent Personal Responsibility, Work, and Family Promotion Act of 2003 (which revised the 1996 PRA) and the current debate about gay and lesbian marriages—while the US government is seeking to legislate marriage for some, it is also attempting to ban it for others. Early in 2004, right-wing conservative Christians re-launched the campaign to reify marriage as being solely between a man and a woman by passing the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in Ohio. Less than a month later, President George W. Bush stated his intent to amend the US Constitution so that it includes a clause that strictly defines marriage as a union between one man and one woman. There is clearly anxiety about marriage and the potential loss of its “tradition” and the need for “healthy” two-parent heterosexual married families.

Indeed, as is legislated in the PHMC: “great flexibility […] [assured the development of] innovative programs to help families leave welfare and begin employment and to encourage the formation of 2-parent families” (Sec. 4 (3)). This flexibility did create new programs that “extol the virtue of marriage” (State Policies to Promote Marriage 3). In a report to Congress, during the revision of the PRA in 2003, State Policies to Promote Marriage provides a succinct analysis of the sorts of marriage promotion programs that have developed since the PRA. According to this report,
programs range in some states to home visits, education programs in school, and even media campaigns that demonstrate the importance and necessity of marriage. The government does not directly carry out most of these campaigns; rather, churches and other private sector organizations support them.

**Conclusion**

Throughout this chapter, I have demonstrated the significant shifts in welfare policy from 1980-2003. Most notably, welfare policy in the late twentieth century moved away from logical appeals that placed the government as the practitioner of social welfare toward emotional appeals that positions the individual family and its relationship to the market as the key ways to address social inequalities. In doing so, welfare policy became a heuristic to organize US citizen’s beliefs about who is deemed “American” and “un-American” just as the policy constructs the non-welfare using public as consumers of policy. Welfare policy during the dawn of post-industrialism in the US shifted its tone and focus dramatically. For example, welfare policies enrolled after 1995 employ a peripatetic tone that invited every day US residents to enact American familial values by choosing to maintain or form marriages (Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act 1996) and then have “healthy” families through two-parent marital union (Promotion of Health Marriages and Children Act 2003). This tone also constructs the audience of “normal” citizens as consumers of policy—people who have “paid-in” through tax dollars, and thus purchased the authority to name the steps “deviant” welfare recipients must take to become active participants. In both these contemporary welfare policies, the state’s role
is to endorse marriage promotion programs by auctioning off social services to the smaller privatized firms.

This same redefinition of state power is seen in post-Washington Consensus pamphlets, testimonies, and arguments—the focus of the following chapter. Welfare policy reforms in the US parallel the poverty-reducing initiatives of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), The World Bank, and International Monetary Fund (Scram 165). International studies scholars consider the ideas promoted in “The Washington Consensus” to structure what globalization is today. In essence, “The Washington Consensus,” reformulated trade agreements in light of the changing global economy; this momentous decision illustrates how rhetorics of personal responsibility and the union of neoliberal market fundamentalist belief-systems has been made commonsense in US-led global policy initiatives. The IMF and World Bank promote that neoliberal policies based on the philosophy that privatization of resources, or auctioning them off to the market, will allow the economy to grow and produce wealth. As in welfare policies I examine in this chapter, there is a turn to the market and individual-family actor to assuage anxiety about social and cultural needs of a nation. I will demonstrate these appeals by examining the rhetorical appeals of post-Washington Consensus World Bank policy making (Chapter Three) and some of its resulting international programs (Chapter Four). In particular, I will show how post-Washington Consensus policies depend upon audience members’ prior knowledge and emotional attachments to be persuasive.
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Notes for Chapter 2

1 The focus on the family as the quintessential social actor has not gone unnoticed by scholars such as Wendy Kozol, who argue that the heterosexual family is frequently represented in popular culture as the epitome of normality and safety during times of economic and political change. Kozol, in particular, emphasizes that these representations were appealing to the post World War II US audience because they invoked what Benedict Anderson calls “imagined communities.” Such representations provided the audience a way to identify with the American dream of progress as the US tried to rebuild its economy through consumer and familial culture. To this extent, historically, social welfare policy has also emphasized the family as the core social actor. Welfare historian Linda Gordon, in The Wages of Motherhood, notes that welfare policy, as it was first conceived in the early twentieth century, was premised upon women’s pensions and insurance that kept women at home in the private sphere to care for children. Thus, historically, welfare policy has focused on women’s important domestic role in assuring the US family values; for example, welfare policy set up pensions, social insurance, and in-kind assistance to help keep women at home with children where they were assumed to be best able to secure the family and break the cultural cycle of poverty. During World War II the New Deal policy, Aid to Dependent Children (later Aid to Families with Dependent Children), shifted women’s economic dependence from men to the state by providing financial assistance for women who stayed home fulltime to care for children. In the late 1980s and early 1990s the role of welfare policy was reinvented in several ways. First, the 1988 Family Support Act (FSA) made workfare (or education) mandatory for men and women who were dependent on welfare; for the first time since its conception as a policy, welfare sent women into the workforce alongside men thereby re-inventing the role of welfare. Next, The Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (PRA), through its direct attack on single-parenthood, mandatory paternity establishments, and value-laden language legislatates the welfare recipient’s personal relationships. Lastly, in 2003, the PRA is rewritten to include appeals to health and security by establishing marriage promotion programs that serve to create two-parent working families who are completely independent of the state.

2 Kenneth Burke explains that rhetoric is the persuasive means by which an audience identifies with an argument and is then moved to action or think in a particular way (Rhetoric of Motives 49-52). Discourse, however, as Foucault defines it is a system of relationships linked to a body of rules that are deeply rooted in a social nexus (see Power/Knowledge). The difference between these two terms—rhetoric and discourse—then is that discourses are supported by rhetorical conventions. There are rhetorical elements to discourses; for example: language patterns that utilize persuasive and unquestioned terms; repetitive symbols and values with which people identify; arguments that utilize appeals to emotions, logic, and authority of the speaker/writer; and claims that draw upon “absolute” principals. However, it is in the dynamic interstices of rhetorical practices that a discourse is created and supported. I suggest that when the rhetorical appeals of a discourse are unmasked, they provide a glimpse of how particular values become a part of a culture’s cosmology—including notions of identity, the power of institutions, and material consequences.

3 In fact, as I describe below, President Reagan, through his State of the Union Addresses, was able to convince the US public to look to themselves, and not the government, to survive in a changing national economy. Ultimately Reagan’s rhetoric effects contemporary welfare policy. US values are articulated first through a rhetoric of responsible family and market values (in 1996) and then through a rhetoric of “health” and marriage promotion (in 2003).

4 For more on the audience addressed and audience invoked see Chapter One: Anxious Rhetorics.

5 Stanford Schram, who examines the changing discourses of welfare policy, characterizes welfare policies developed in the 1990s as “postindustrial social policies” (164) which draw upon neoliberal values and reinforce traditional institutions like work and family. Welfare recipients are frequently represented as lazy, unmotivated, and greedy not only in welfare policy but also in popular culture and news media. Because contemporary welfare policy emphasizes the morality of the family, it is perhaps the most public venue where a citizen’s values are called into question.

6 I use the pronoun “her” here because for the most part, the welfare bills from 1996-2003 focus on changing the irresponsible behavior of women. In other words, the collective image shared by policy-
makers as they constructed the arguments in these bills is that of the “welfare queen”—the lazy poor black woman who has more children so that she can earn more welfare money without actually “working” a job.  

7 Importantly, a significant number of welfare recipients are people with disabilities (PWD). Like the African American women that welfare purports to address, PWD also get caught in the double bind of needing assistance and yet having few choices of work places that are not just accommodating but accessible.

8 Although the way welfare policy was restructured had an immense impact on women’s lives and also reflected and constructed a dominant narrative about women’s relationship to the state, her family, and nation, my focus in this chapter is less on welfare’s impact on women; rather, I am more interested in the doxic belief-systems made commonsense not only in welfare policy but also in American culture at large between the late 1980’s and early twenty-first century.

9 According to the US Census Bureau, in 1975 there were only 386,000,000 immigrants, in 1985 that number rose slightly to 570,000,000, and then in 1991 it increased sharply to 1.8 billion.

10 For more on norm and normalcy see Davis, Enforcing Normalcy. He provides a nice history of the concepts of deviant and normal.

11 For more on the history of US eugenics see Terry and Urla, Deviant Bodies and Terry An American Obsession.

12 See Cynthia Daniels At Women’s Expense.

13 As Schram points out, postindustrialism “has intensified economic inequality” through working more while getting by on less. Since the 1970s, Schram notes that the wage rate has declined for the average worker: in 1992 there was over 30 million working poor people and 7 million poor people working full time all year-round, and as the economy restructures itself there is a higher demand for highly skilled jobs (164).

14 I do not wish to suggest that the Family Support Act is not without economic and social problems. Rather, I am interested in the general shift away from federal support and a promised safety-net toward policies that outwardly describe how to be proper and productive citizen actors.

15 The term “neoliberal imaginary” is described by Nancy Fraser; it reflects how neoliberalism maintains class stratification, aligns government more directly with capital and the free market, values investment over spending, promotes direct relationships between government and business, advances the logic of contract and obligations, stresses individual behavior over economic analysis, incorporates a quid pro quo (if the poor help themselves, the government will help the poor), and uses pseudo feminist and anti-racist language (14-20). Fraser’s concept of the neoliberal imaginary is helpful here because as she characterizes it, the assumptions that structure the PRA are merely taken-for-granted and not necessarily based on truth claims. Rhetorically, then, the PRA contains less of an appeal to logos as it does an appeal to ethos or pathos since the individual and their relationship to their family (one of our most basic relationships) is highlighted in each relationship. Such realist neoliberal narratives that are based on doxa or naturalized commonsense belief-systems are the dominant means of persuasion in the PRA. In order to understand better the neoliberal appeals of the PRA and its subsequent changes in 2003, it is helpful to trace the cultural-historical emergence of these values. Scholars such as Gwendolyn Mink, Sanford Schram, Nancy Naples, and Nancy Fraser, provide very explicit historical analyses of the rise of contemporary welfare policy and make mention of PRA’s tie to neoliberalism. For example, in Welfare’s End Mink examines how welfare reform in the 1990s allocates women to a separate system of law that disregards the work women do raising children in favor of finding economic security in the public sphere. Schram traces the way that the keywords of welfare policy are discursively linked to economic and global changes. Fraser and Naples explore how the discourses of liberalism and contract that thread throughout welfare policy make structural analyses of poverty virtually impossible. Likewise, Aune analyzes the rhetorical climate that made free-market ideology persuasive and that makes connections between political and policy conservatism and globalization. My analysis builds upon their observations, but I also emphasize how the rhetorical appeals are made commonsense by welfare policies beginning in the 1980s. Through the following analysis, I articulate the rhetorical triumph of free-market ideology as it has become part of the fundamental realist US welfare policy narrative.

16 As Ritter and Henry note in Ronald Reagan: The Great Communicator, Reagan himself was quite adept at reading his audience and crafting an appeal to the emotions for both secular and fundamentalist
audiences. Ritter and Henry claim, for example, that Reagan used the actions of individual humans as cause for the apocalypse of culture while simultaneously couching the secular in terms of the supernatural. The timely (*kairos*), rhetorical, and cultural appeal of this apocalyptic narrative will be further explored throughout this chapter.

There are actually several contradictory rhetorics that circulated in policy hearings and bills throughout 1995. For example, the whole of this chapter is focused on the rhetoric of welfare particularly in the late 1990s and early twenty-first century. Just as this bill, passed by a conservative Congress, constructs the women who use welfare funds as lazy, irresponsible, and unwilling to hold a job, the dominant discourse promoted by conservative think tanks, spokespeople, and media was one of “family values.” Family values rhetoric promoted two parent-married families along with strict traditional gender roles (mothers stay at home with their children, fathers should provide financially for the family). This contradiction brings up some interesting questions: how does sexuality, race, and class intersect with these contradictory ideologies? How does the imagining of what the welfare recipient is capable of achieving individually parallel the real economic constraints of most families? And, who is considered the deserving and undeserving poor?

17 See for example, Senate Hearings that took place January 19, 1995 through March 23, 1995.
19 The changes in governmental practices go beyond the US’s national boarders. In 1995, “The Washington Consensus” (as it often called) – the set of historical conversations about restructuring international development loans that ultimately created the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization—used similar rhetorical appeals by couching their arguments in the language of revolution, free-market ideology, and community and family development. This fundamental and global change will be examined in the next chapter.
21 See Thomas Kuhn *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.*
22 Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation was one of the companies that the federal government hired to research the effects of welfare policy changes. It is a common practice for the US government to contract out research initiatives and then use their findings in policy hearings.
23 *Working Toward Independence* is a report that came out around 2002. Its purpose was to report the achievements of the PRA and to support its revisions in 2003. I turn to this report throughout my analysis of the PRA due to the plain language it employs and its clear explanation of the PRA’s mandates.
24 Significantly, during the mid-1990s, there was a push to codify marriage through the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). Although this act was passed federally, in the past ten years it continues to circulate at the state level. The significance of this proposed act will be discussed further below.
25 The “Overview of Entitlement Program, 1994 Green Book” claims that some welfare programs are centrally (i.e. Federally administered) and others “decentrally” administered (i.e. administration is shared between states and federal government). The PRA shifted to block grants, which made the administration of welfare centrally located at the state level.
26 States then auction off services—often to churches who provide services at a reduced cost.
27 The way the PRA addresses its audience demonstrates one of the key rhetorical shifts that occurred between the time the FSA was created in 1988 and the PRA in 1996. Crucially, the language that is used within each bill suggests that both had very different audiences in mind when the policies were composed.
28 As I mention in Chapter One, policy hearings and policy documents have two audiences: members of Congress and the idealized invoked American public. Thus, when I analyze the rhetorical appeals of public policy I take into account this dual audience. Most relevant for my analysis is the relationship between the idealized image of the American public invoked in policy and the way the discourses of policy construct, through rhetorical processes, Americans’ dominant belief-systems. Through analyzing what Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede call the “audience addressed,” I am able to articulate how hegemonic rhetorics form powerful representations of reality and to identify the rhetorical structures that underscore belief-systems. The audience invoked is actual Congressional members. For more on the “audience addressed” and “audience invoked,” see Chapter One.
Scholars such as Nancy Fraser, Gwendolyn Mink, and Wendy Brown examine the inherent contradictions in ideas of “independence” and “autonomy” in the US by showing the way US policies and ideologies legislate dependence that acceptable.

Importantly, conservative right-wing Christians launched their campaign for support of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) for the first time in 1994. This movement to “defend” marriage suggests that there is anxiety over the institution’s place in US culture and its future.

Kamat’s lecture focused on the shift toward neoliberalism for international organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. She is particularly interested in how what she deems “a new economic regime” creates a new form and understanding of civil society. She argues that labor unions, churches, and other private organizations have become the guardians of civil interests.

Ooms also points her audience to www.GGRCmarriagepolicy.org to learn how to administer the PRAs mandates.

In addition, African American men are disproportionately imprisoned throughout the US making “responsible” fatherhood difficult.

One of the marriage promotion programs instituted by the PRA is “Marriage Awareness Day,” as though US residences are unaware of its presence.

Although I do not have room to go into specific detail here, the marriage promotion programs supported by state and federal programs even go as far as having two sorts of marriages—regular marriages and covenant marriage whereby couples sign a contract to seek counseling if they have marital strife instead of seeking divorce.
CHAPTER 3

AMBIVALENT RHETORICS

Occasionally, [...] our private actions, or “stories,” will appeal to the larger society’s vested interest in producing commercially appealing stories for mass consumption. Out of such raw stuff, factually based human drama can be created in many different narrative structures and genres. These diverse stories can encode any number of ideological messages that, as Burke would say, deflect attention from other possible selections of reality. In particular, private events [...] provide endless grist for the public storytelling mills of mass culture, much to the consternation of critics who lament our increasingly desensitized culture of spectacle. But again, in a culture driven by capitalistic market forces, how does the story-teller decide what is important or profitable to feel? (Simpson 147-148).

Introduction

In 1989 at the Institute for International Economics, John Williamson presented what has come to be known among global development specialists as “The Washington Consensus.”¹ This “consensus” lays out ten crucial areas of Third-world development: financial liberalization, public priorities, tax reform, fiscal development, competitive exchange rates, trade liberalization, foreign direct investment, privatization, deregulation, and property rights (Broad and Cavanagh 94 n. 1). Williamson believed that if international lending agencies such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization enacted the “Washington Consensus,” then developing third-world countries would be able to achieve “export-led growth” by opening trade barriers and by privatizing “parastatal” services (84).
As part of the growing popularity of rational choice economics, “The “Washington Consensus” changed international development theory significantly. The Washington Consensus is the prominent example of a neoliberal and market fundamentalist driven policy design because it guides countries through the steps of “development” by making private firms vis-à-vis individual citizens—and not necessarily strong national governments— the keys to a country’s successful development.\(^2\) Importantly, this neoliberal structure, whereby firms share the responsibility with citizens to maintain a country’s development, calls into question the role of the state and the sovereignty of a nation. The values that the consensus promotes reflect a trend in late-twentieth-century international policy-making toward creating neoliberal policies and encouraging market fundamentalism. Unlike other international development plans, which emphasized the role of the state in generating productive economies, the “Washington Consensus” is premised upon the belief-system that individual responsibility and rational choice coupled with “unfettered free markets[,] [provide] the formula to make rich countries out of poor” (Broad and Cavanagh 83).\(^3\)

By the 1990s most developing countries working with the World Bank were converted to Williamson’s free-market philosophy and thus, they began to follow the ten steps of the consensus (85). The Bank encouraged developing countries to work with them to attract privatized firms and foreign investments in order to bring economically impoverished areas into the mainstream of global market capitalism.

I began my research for this chapter contemplating how international neoliberal policies such as the “Washington Consensus”—which privilege hyper-individual rational choice, market fundamentalism, and privatization—are persuasive institutions that claim
to promote Third-World citizens’ well being. The initial research question I started to formulate when I examined the highly technocratic language of several contemporary World Bank policy initiatives, quickly changed when I came across the promotional pamphlet “The World Bank Group: Working for a World Free of Poverty.” I knew that throughout the 1990s and early 2000s the Bank’s policies continued to follow Williamson’s neoliberal “Washington Consensus.” Unlike the Bank’s policies, which focus on bringing developing countries into the mainstream of global capitalism through partnerships with private corporate firms, the pamphlet’s artistic form centers on the compassionate human-side of development—a theme that carries through several Bank documents. This pamphlet with its colorful cover displaying “primitive” art exhibits a very different and contradictory story of the Bank’s role in global development (see figure 3.1).
The compositional structure of this front-page image represents a teleological movement away from “primitive” forms of communication (i.e. the drawings) to a more nuanced and “developed” mode (i.e. writing with words). The top portion of the cover is black and white and contains the jumble of fragmented figures but the bottom portion appears orderly, colorful, and intelligible. The words “World Bank Group: Working for a World Free of Poverty” mediates between the line drawings and texts below it. There are hues of salmon pink, yellow, and blue below, which provide a stark contrast to the black and white background image of a series of line drawings that evoke “primitive” art above. From the simple images at the top, one can detect what might represent an arm and hand, a fractured body with two solid feet, bent arrow ends, and layered concentric
half-circles. Below the drawing, in color and in childish handwriting is the following phrase:

The World Bank is one of the world’s largest sources of funding for the developing world. Its primary focus is on helping the poorest people and the poorest countries. It uses its financial resources, its staff, and extensive experience to help developing countries reduce poverty, increase economic growth, and improve their quality of life. (“World Bank Group” 1)

The pamphlet invites its audience into the process of development by guiding our eyes down the page to the colorful, logical, and concise development of something that makes sense, out of what is first represented as archaic, disjointed, and chaotic. The juxtaposition of the fragmented and “primitive” figures with the methodical words suggests a movement toward a goal—a specific teleology. The cover illustrates the act of attaining a written and comprehensible language and connotes that this form of communication is non-existent and must be taught by a more knowledgeable group of people. Thus, the pamphlet implies that making the step toward development is like beginning to educate children.

We might imagine that the above quotation was not only hand-written by a child, but a young person might also have conceived the very ideas communicated here about the Bank. For instance, the repetition of the words “poorest” and “help”/”helping,” coupled with a simple subject-verb structure, where the Bank is the central actor/subject, evokes a simplistic book report-like iteration of the organization’s importance. The pamphlet’s last sentence, however, contains a notable change in language that encourages the audience to safely distinguish themselves from “the other” developing nations and
citizens while being empathetic without becoming directly implicated. This movement of rhetorical differentiation is facilitated by the parallel shift in the last sentence where there is an implicit discourse of development hidden within the sentence’s progression. When the pamphlet states that the Bank “uses its financial resources […] to help developing countries” (“World Bank Group 1), it depicts the Bank as a global hero by “developing” (i.e. “primitive” as the visual rhetoric suggests) countries through the Bank’s rich experience promoting development, economic, and skill viability. Development and growth are two of the key means that countries—like children—might use to enhance their quality of life. At the end of the sentence, however, the objects to be saved are not individual countries. Rather, as the following phrase suggests, countries become personified actors who can “improve their quality of life” (“World Bank Group” 1). I suggest that this attempt to personify place is rhetorically significant because the audience need not imagine that a developing country is too exotic to understand; but rather, just like the audience, the Bank’s clients are working to improve their “quality of life.” The pamphlet’s text facilitates a rhetorical shift that allows audience-members to differentiate themselves and yet see themselves within the Bank’s primary institutional goal by paradoxically representing the people the Bank serves as both “exotic other” and yet, “ordinary person.”

This form of rhetorical identification and differentiation within the Bank’s stated objectives reaches a wide audience. The cover page’s compositional structure (i.e. the visual movement from “primitive” to “developed”), coupled with the verbal description of the objectives, depends upon the audience’s “ambivalent”—unsettled and yet, shared and expected—knowledge of colonial discourses (Bhabha 66). Audiences might expect
that “primitive” countries or regions are not only lacking resources for “development” but also the ability (physically, socially, and culturally) to do so. The book-report-like cadence of the cover’s text reifies what the audience anticipates; yet, somewhat contradictorily, the whole representation simultaneously provides a tangible and visual example of “development.” The persuasiveness of this cover page depends upon the audience’s estimation that Bank “clients” are primitive and thus fixed in an exotic epistemology. At the same time, however, the combination of the line drawings and words also demonstrates how the Bank facilitates the teleological movement toward becoming a productive country that is organized, controlled, and comprehensible. In this way, the audience can identify with the visual rhetoric of progression that exhibits how “developing” countries and their citizens might one day be just like the cover’s audience who gazes upon them. The pamphlet’s audience is invited literally to see and imagine the Bank’s creation of a new global citizen who matches with the audience’s own ontology. Because the validity of the Bank and its general ethos is premised upon an audience’s shared cultural memories, the cover image is easily taken-for-granted and unquestioned.

“The World Bank Group” pamphlet cover demonstrates the persuasiveness of ambivalent rhetorics in Bank promotional materials, speeches, and reports. Ambivalent rhetorics are made up of familiar cultural narratives and evoke dominant discourses; they are persuasive precisely because they reiterate what the audience expects and desires. This chapter examines how a palimpsest of ambivalent rhetorics function as terministic screens in contemporary Bank materials.
Unlike contemporary Bank policies, which contain appeals to *logos*, the Bank’s reports, speeches, and promotional materials (specifically analyzed here) dominantly employ layered appeals to *pathos* in order to resonate with several audiences. In this chapter, I analyze the World Bank promotional pamphlet “The World Bank Group Working for a World Free of Poverty.” This pamphlet serves as an introduction to the Bank and the sort of work its does; thus, my analysis also provides an audience who might not be familiar with the Bank’s practices an introduction. In my research of several Bank promotional materials, this pamphlet resembles the dominant mode of persuasion employed by the Bank materials in the early twenty-first century. I argue that in this pamphlet the severity of the “Washington Consensus’s” neoliberal policy design is quietly covered by persuasive human-interest stories and images emphasizing individualism, work, tenacity, and the embracement of global capitalism as the characteristics of a productive global citizen. The rhetorical power of these human-interest stories suggests that the Bank’s *audience* and their desires (i.e. what is persuasive to Bank members) have changed considerably. Facts and figures, jargon, and technocratic reporting are no longer as persuasive as what is the human-side of development.

As I demonstrate below in my analyses of this Bank document, the value-laden pathetic appeals of human-interest stories operate as terministic screens (Burke) that disguise the Bank’s neoliberal and market fundamentalist practices by accentuating what the audience already knows and anticipates. Emotional capital operates in the pamphlet’s images to disguise the underlying neoliberal and market fundamentalist tenets of the Bank which call into question the legitimacy and power of the state because successful
development (i.e. entry into the capitalist global market) rests upon a strong relationship between individual citizens and the private sector. In this economic equation, individuals must have unfaltering personal agency to succeed in this new transnational economy.

**Rhetorical Ambivalence: Motives, Audience Perception, and Terministic Screens**

The World Bank is the largest and most power development agency in the world. In his collection of essays, *World Bank Literature*, Amitava Kumar reminds us that the World Bank’s power extends beyond economic and political realms. The World Bank, through its practices, membership, ideology, and locale has restructured our local and global culture. Organizations such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organization, Kumar suggests, demonstrate new forms of colonial rule—or neocolonial rule—and reflect what Michael Hardt and Antoinio Negeri describe as “biopolitical production” (qtd. by Kumar xviii), where economies, culture, politics, and the production of social life layer upon and intersect with one another. While colonial discourses have their roots in later nineteenth-century colonialism and are part of a history of colonial rule and hegemonic cultural power (Spurr 5-7), the neocolonial discourses of The World Bank can be mapped back both to the Bretton Woods conference in the late 1940s and still further into the 19th century. In other words, the Bank’s modes of persuasian are inextricably linked to the larger history of globalization.8

However, the neocolonial context and rule of The World Bank produces new and complex relations of power that extend beyond the Bank’s institutional practices into larger discursive structures that are premised upon ambivalent neocolonial rhetorics. As the Bank materials I analyze here demonstrate, the changing transnational economy, the
more recent movement of culture and people globally, and the new economic
dependencies all require both a reified historic discourse and new rhetorical interventions
in order to be persuasive to a contemporary audience.

The Bank draws upon historic discourses when telling the story of economic
development via human-interest stories both visually and textually. Such stories elide the
cultural and economic climate of the late twentieth century and early twentieth-first
century. Unlike nineteenth and early twentieth-century colonialism, late twentieth-
century neocolonialism is not based on relationships between countries per se; rather,
neocolonial relationships necessitate that economic, political, and cultural power be
negotiated vis-à-vis corporate entities and their “clients” (i.e. individual citizens). In this
way, state sovereignty is called into question as supra-national organizations are invited
by countries to develop their economies.

These relationships produced by neocolonialism, coupled with the emotional
appeals of human-interest stories, should be of crucial concern for rhetoricians because
the relationships renegotiate the rhetorical relationships between ethos, audience,
motives, and persuasion. Classical rhetorical theory (especially Aristotelian) reminds us
that a successful rhetorician should know his or her audience, appeal to this audience’s
likes and dislikes, and be able to draw upon the audience’s shared values or belief
systems. Yet, supra-national organizations such as The World Bank need to make their
promotional materials, policies, and development plans appeal to a wide range of
international government officials, investors, corporations, and the general public. For
example, one of the core audiences for The World Bank’s materials includes employees
of transnational companies who seek to expand their corporate networks to “developing”
countries. Employees of these companies, then, must be persuaded of the importance, the security, and the mutual economic impact of taking part in developing a “client” nation. Thus, the Bank, to build its ethos, employs words, ideas, images, and stories that have resonance and meaning for the Bank’s wide audience including the client members from the countries they serve. As I demonstrate further in the next section of this chapter (“The World Bank Group: An Introduction”), the Bank exploits its audience’s cultural memories and, in doing so, reifies a grand mythic colonial narrative so that it has continued resonance with a contemporary diverse audience.

Homi Bhabha’s calls this sort of cultural memory a “force of ambivalence.” In his examination of the proliferation of colonial texts he explains that it is the force of ambivalence that give[s] the colonial stereotype its currency—engenders its repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjunctures, informs its strategies of individuation and marginalization, and produces that effect of probalistic truth and predictability which, for the stereotype, must always be in excess of what can be empirically proved or logically construed. (66)

Bhabha explains that colonial discourse is dependent upon fixity in its ideological construction of otherness. There is, he suggests, a paradoxical mode of representation whereby rigidity and unchanging order function along with the repetition of disorder, chaos, and degeneracy (66). The job of the cultural critic is to destabilize and expose the ideological fixity of colonial representations. However, Bhabha goes on to explain that the interventions cultural theorists must make cannot simply be a categorization of discourses and representations as positive or negative; rather there must be a greater understanding of the overarching “process of subjectification” initiated by pre-existing
stereotypical discourses (67-68). For Bhabha an “analytic of ambivalence,” which, questions the dichotomous construction of the colonial subject, is necessary to understand the cultural work that neocolonial representations, like Bank materials, do. Following Bhabha, I suggest that a rhetorical lens can advance this analytic by providing a grounded methodology which highlights the role that authorial production, audience reception, cultural climate, and critical readership play in the proliferation of ambivalent rhetorics within texts such those produced by the Bank.

Rhetorical inquiry, to be more specific, foregrounds questions about the persuasive elements of a representation and considers how historical and cultural locations warrant some modes of persuasion and not others. Bhabha’s conception of “ambivalence” suggests that audiences become so attuned to dominant forms of colonial representations that the power of such representations goes unnoticed or seems obviously truthful. Kenneth Burke’s rhetorical concept of the terministic screen provides a way for cultural critics to further Bhabha’s “analytic of ambivalence” because Burke’s theory is not dependent upon examining a representation as merely “good” or “bad.” Rather, a critical use of the Burkian terministic screen highlights the complex relationship between an author’s rhetorical choices and the audience’s perception by considering, for example, how cultural memory and historic location each operate to recreate, reify, and circulate neocolonial ideologies in late twentieth-century and early twenty-first centuries. By noting a pattern of a rhetor’s (or a series of rhetors’ common) means of persuasion, the rhetorical critic can illuminate how an audience’s desire informs the rhetorical choices of a speaker. Rhetorical patterns surface, in the materials I analyze, as a method to direct the audience’s attention toward what they already know as “true;” in other words, a
pattern of ambivalent and taken-for-granted moment of rhetorical persuasion function as “terministic screens.”

Burke explains that each audience member’s perception of a text can be imagined to be layered and “subjected to a different color filter with corresponding differences in the nature of the event as perceived, recorded, and interpreted” (“Terministic Screens” 1341). Terministic screens work as a mode of persuasion because, when they are employed successfully by a rhetor, they are able to attract a varied audience and direct that same audience’s attention away from some aspect or value of a text that the author believes the audience might find suspect. Yet at the same time, an audience must be able to deduce the author’s credibility and judge the validity of a text based on an author’s ethos. Burke recognizes this and claims, “if one begins with ‘faith,’ which must be taken on authority [i.e. ethos], one can work out a rationale based on this faith. But the faith must precede this rationale” (“Terministic Screens” 1342). In other words, the audience must recognize the rhetorical arrangement that an author employs, they must identify with it and trust its truthfulness. A successful rhetorician will know this of his/her audience. Thus, to move an audience to action, the rhetor must employ all the means of persuasion in order to intentionally “direct attention,” as Burke suggests, to what the rhetor wants the audience to see while articulating the argument to fit with the audience’s desires. In this way, Burke’s concept of motives furthers a methodology that unpacks Bhabha’s “force of ambivalence.”

While intent and motives have similar definitions, in Burke’s estimation, intention suggests a purposeful process of persuasion (“Terministic Screens” 1340) that is bound up with a will to power/persuade to bring about a certain form of action/inaction.
Motives, however, are crucially related to social and cultural factors and draw upon ideological power relationships. As Burke points out in *A Grammar of Motives*, motives tend to “transcend the limits of their distinctiveness” and should be “treat[ed] […] as in some way derivative, accidental, or unsubstantial, a tactic that would seem less plausible if the spectacular were required to show that the corresponding situations are similarly derivative from the situation corresponding with the [author’s] motive […].” (102).

Burke describes motives as passive, appearing in an author’s text accidentally because the rhetor is embedded in the same discourse he/she employs. In other words, the audience’s desired motive necessitates that the rhetor employs all methods of persuasion that are already determined by the audience’s prior conditioning (as Wayne Booth might suggest). In this way, in a rhetorical act, motives and authorial purpose are inextricably linked. While an author/speaker’s purpose varies through each speech/textual event, motives describe her/his broad rhetorical action. Although terministic screens might be intentionally applied by a rhetor, social and cultural factors still inform a rhetor’s motives for applying such a screen. Thus, in Bank materials, persuasion and motives work together to create an ambivalent rhetoric by providing the speaker with a proven impetus to appeal to what an audience knows, expects, or assumes.

For example, Burke reminds us that experience and language are interdependent (“Terministic Screens” 1340) and to understand an utterance and be persuaded by it, audiences must have a way to identify with it, to connect personally with the speaker’s motive (*Rhetoric of Motives* 20-29). As Burke further points out, “[…] if an object is closely associated with some person whom we know intimately, it can readily become infused with the identity of that person” (“Terministic Screens” 1346). Thus, we might
assume that for Burke, human-interest stories and images—particularly representations of people engaged in familiar activities or represented in familiar ways—provide a motive for identification.

Motives, thus, have a dually persuasive function. For the author/speaker, they provide tested language and ideologies to mirror and for the audience this motive translates into words, images, and ideas that have prior resonance. Yet, turning again to Burke’s aforementioned definition of motives, we see also that the rhetor himself/herself has a specific motive—or one could say, an objective—to appeal to his or her audience by using all the available means of persuasion. The audience has a direct role in the rhetor’s choice of persuasion because the mode of persuasion must have resonance with the intended audience. Within a rhetorical act, motives and audience desire, thus, work in tandem with authorial purpose and are key factors of the terministic screen. Both the motive for persuasion and the audience’s desire are born out of the same cultural memory. The rhetor’s underlying message is hidden or subdued when he or she is able to articulate his/her argument in meaningful ways to the audience while deflecting the significance of the argument onto something familiar and unquestioned.

When a rhetorical critic considers this complex relationship between audience and motives, then that critic can begin to unpack rhetorical persuasion of an audience’s ambivalent identifications because an examination of these relationships generates a deeper understanding of why it is that a particular pattern of rhetorical persuasion continuously circulates throughout several texts. By noticing these patterns we gain a better awareness of the contextual rhetorical choices that the rhetor makes, the audience who he/she imagines, and the desires of that audience. If we pay “attention” (as Burke
suggests) to purpose and motives then we can understand why it is that a rhetor’s rhetorical choices have resonance for their audience. This very act of paying “attention” addresses Bhabha’s concern that analysis merely names good and bad representations. By employing a critical examination of how ambivalent rhetorics function as terministic screens, the rhetorical critical can gain a better understanding of the “process of subjection”—or what prior conditioning continues to resonate for audiences—and ultimately how to interrupt this process.

In the case of The World Bank pamphlet I examine in this chapter, investigating intertextual and layered purpose and motive can query the supposed “objective” stance presented by the Bank’s ethos by examining the larger discursive cultural terrain of the Bank’s materials. A rhetorical analytic of ambivalence in Bank materials shows how the repetition of colonial images continue to hold authority (in a neo-colonial age) and act as a terministic screen that purports to be about people but are actually about the business of development and global finance. Essentially, such a rhetorical analytic of ambivalence demonstrates how these human-interest narratives draw on the audience’s desire to comprehend “the other” while inspiring an audience to be moved to action. The Bank’s ideologies (communicated visually and textually) are persuasive not only because they function as terministic screens but also because their motive accentuates the varied audience’s shared, historical, and contextual memory. Within the Bank materials I analyze here and in Chapter Four, there is an unspoken history of colonialism, power, exploitation, and a memory of the “other” as untamed and immobilized.
As I exhibit below, throughout several Bank materials is a dual mode of persuasion at work: audiences are able to identify “ambivalently” with the Bank’s representations because the Bank reiterates a larger legacy of colonial representations and yet, the audience also identifies with the human-interest stories and images precisely because they remind the audience of their own humanity and their relationship to those “in need.” Rhetorical critics move Bhabha’s analytic of ambivalence beyond the dichotomy of good/bad when they consider how terministic screens employ the process of subjectification through strong personal and historical identifications of a text. The rhetorical critic, by noting and examining a pattern of ambivalent rhetorics, has agency to speak back and create new arguments that push to the side the (terministic) screens of the argument.

The World Bank Group: Reinventing an Ethos

At the turn of the twentieth century the World Bank appeared to reinvent its ethos and audience in its policies and promotional materials. Perhaps due to the Bank’s growing reputation as a profit wielding organization in the 1990’s and the well-televised protests of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organization in 2000, the Bank’s promotional materials address their institutional reputation by advertising and reporting on their activities quite publicly. Unlike earlier Bank documents that were full of charts, graphs, calculated findings, and bulleted points, more recently there has been a remarkable shift in the way the World Bank markets itself to US citizens, transnational corporations, investors, educators, and not-for-profit organizations. Bank materials since the 1990s and since Wolfensohn was elected
President of the Bank, are full of photographs, human-interest stories, and familiar language. The rhetorical strategies present in the aforementioned Bank materials are appealing to a wide audience because they give the work that the Bank does a human face and they surface as “truthful” depictions of the struggles and successes of third-world countries.

These rhetorical strategies are present in the 2003 World Bank pamphlet entitled, “The World Bank Group: Working for a World Free of Poverty” — a layperson’s guide to the Bank’s organizational structure, projects, and philosophy. As I demonstrated briefly in my opening analysis of the pamphlet cover, the pamphlet does not just use facts and figures to educate its audience about the Bank; rather, the pamphlet is full of eye-catching color photographs that take up a significant amount of space on each page and are reminiscent of travel guides, charity/aid images, and magazines such as National Geographic. In this section, I unpack the rhetorical appeals of this guide in order to shed light on how the terministic screens that are employed by the Bank correlate with their audience’s desires.

In this pamphlet, the audience’s personal and cultural memory helps to shape the dominant mode of persuasion that recurs in the Bank’s materials. I argue that within this pamphlet, images have more rhetorical prominence than words because the pathetic appeals of the photos—and indeed the fact that they take up much of the pamphlet’s space—invite audiences to identify, in the words of Homi Bhabha, “ambivalently” with the pamphlet’s embedded colonial narrative told through the gaze of the camera. As these images show, the process of development is at once teleological and fixed, exotic and ordinary, and experienced and innocent. The authority of the images serve as
terministic screens that shift the audience’s attention away from the power relationships of development and toward a visual rhetoric of care that secures the Bank’s ethos. This visual rhetoric of care is persuasive because it is bound up with ambivalent images of the colonial “other” that resonate with the audience’s cultural memory.

However, the text of the pamphlet tells a different yet intersecting story of development. While the images function as their own narrative and allow the audience to identify emotionally with their visual effects and ignore the pamphlet’s more logical description of the Bank’s history, organization, and projects written alongside each photo, the very text employs a corporate managerial discursive structure that is dependent upon the dichotomous appeal of that which is both absent and present simultaneously. This very managerial discourse is bound up with hyper-professionalism and (Western) surveillance. 17

Through a rhetorical analysis of the pamphlet’s text and images, I demonstrate how the World Bank Group’s less obvious underpinning arguments and modes of persuasion relate to late twentieth-century globalization by focusing on two recurring elements of the pamphlet: first, the rhetorical use of corporate-speak coupled with the language of empowerment; and second, the use of human-interest style photographs and drawings. These two repetitive themes draw on the audience’s curiosity about “the other” and their ability to be distanced from the material realities of the people in the images and those projects described within the pamphlet. My analysis of this pamphlet’s rhetoric is the first of several examples that bring to the surface a pattern of intention that threads throughout contemporary Bank materials and invites audiences identify—albeit ambivalently—with the Bank’s stated aims. Through this analysis, I also seek to describe
the basic functions of the Bank for those who are less familiar with its organization and goals.

**Empowerment, Agency, and Corporate-Managerial Discourses**

The World Bank was established in 1944 during the post-WW II Brentton Woods conference in New Hampshire, USA. The Bank is the largest development organization in the world, although its headquarters are in Washington DC where 7,000 of their 10,000 employees work. The World Bank has 184 member countries and outside of the US there are only 100 other Bank offices throughout the world. All Bank presidents have been US citizens. In this way, when we consider who is the audience for Bank policy and promotion, we might identify the US as one of the central audiences. Five separate agencies make up the World Bank Group including two who make loans and grants to build low-income and medium income countries. The Bank’s mission is to “help developing countries reduce poverty, increase economic growth, and improve […] [the] quality of life.” Importantly in 1995, James D. Wolfensohn became the president of the World Bank. He took this position in the midst of a period when the Bank embraced strict rational choice and neoliberal policies. Wolfensohn’s demeanor and willingness to “walk with the people the bank serves,” demonstrated a remarkable shift in the public face of the Bank. As president, Wolfensohn embraced the language of rights, inclusion, and gender equality to secure the Bank’s ethos.

The Bank has historically employed a rhetoric of development (undeveloped, underdeveloped, developed, industrialized) to categorize the countries and regions that are in the most need of funding and assistance. On its surface, the Bank’s simply stated
goal to alleviate poverty, by “helping countries help themselves” (“The World Bank Group” 15) is an altruistic one. Yet, the Bank’s institutional structure and (inter)national presence, its stated goals and arguments, and its implicit values demonstrates its complacency with the inherent class structure produced by capitalism and Western imperialism. The Word Bank Group’s institutional practices as described in their promotional pamphlet reflect Georges Balandier’s definition of a colonial situation: “the domination imposed by a foreign minority, ‘racially’ and culturally different, over a materially weaker indigenous majority in the name of a racial (or ethnic) and cultural superiority” (qtd. by Spurr 5-6). The Bank certainly does not see themselves as colonizers; yet, as I demonstrated below, the informational pamphlet produced by them imposes an fixed narrative of development led by particular endowed and foreign countries in the name of economic and organizational productivity. Although The Bank’s promotional materials make clear that the countries they serve are “members” of their organization, there is an embedded set of power relationships present between the “colonizer” (here, The Bank) and the colonized or colonizing (here, under-developed and developing countries) 18 whereby the former tends to be technologically advanced and economically strong and the latter tends to have little technological advancement and a simple and vulnerable economy (Spurr 6). The Bank’s relationship to developing countries can be seen as a form of neocolonialism which is reified not only in the power structure present between Bank members from developed and developing countries, but also through the rhetorical strategies the Bank employs in materials such as the pamphlet “The World Bank Group.”
For example, the Bank’s neocolonial discourse and reliance on Western imperialism is, at the very least, demonstrated by its geographic location. Although the Bank has offices and institutions throughout the world, its “headquarters” and majority of employees are centralized within the US, specifically, Washington DC. The Bank has a “membership” of 184 countries all of whom “own” “shares” in the Bank (“World Bank Group” 11). In addition to the geographic location of the Bank, it is also funded and aided by wealthy western countries. As the “World Bank Group” further explains, “The number of shares a country has is based roughly on the size of its economy. The United States is the largest single shareholder[..]” (11). The pamphlet continues, “The Bank’s president is, by tradition, a national of the largest shareholder, the United States” (11). Shareholders are part of the voting contingency of the Bank and as such, the higher number of shares a country has the larger percentage of votes they acquire.  

Embedded within this neocolonial relationship and as documented above, is a corporate managerial discourse that functions to show how the success of a country (defined by the Bank as entering the global market) is dependent upon the country’s inherent lack and excess: countries lack proper skills and education but possess an excess of traditional epistemologies. The Bank, made up of leaders from developed, westernized, and wealthy countries, has the skills to maintain and balance out this inherent unevenness. Thus, the Bank works as a manager to oversee the development of countries and regions.

I suggest that this act of managing and surveying is persuasive because it draws from a corporate managerial discourse that communicates a motive to control a set of unruly people and to create an enterprise out of their “local” knowledge. The OED
defines a corporation as “a body […] legally authorized to act as a single person” and corporate as “unit[ing] into one body.” Likewise, the *OED*, characterizes a manager as “one who organizes, directs, or plots something; a person who regulates or deploys resources.” Thus, a managerial discourse functions to regulate and organize a particular set of goals.

I place these terms—managing and corporation—together because they aptly describe the power relationships between “client-member” countries (this is how the Bank describes the countries it serves) and those who oversee and carry out the Bank’s functions. For example, the text of the pamphlet describes the Bank as “a cooperative, where its members are shareholders. Through their representatives on the Bank’s Board of Executive Directors, these countries determine Bank policy, oversee its operations, and benefit from its work” (3). One Executive Director represents the five largest shareholding countries and an Executive Director represents each of the other nineteen member countries. This Board meets consistently to oversee projects, but the Bank’s representative shareholders are “the ultimate policy makers in the World Bank” (11).

I recount local and global the structure of the Bank both to show its institutional configuration to a lay audience and to demonstrate the rhetorical function of their corporate-managerial discourse. The Bank’s use of words such as “membership,” “headquarters,” “shareholders,” and “cooperative” are rhetorically appealing for a variety of audiences. The words describe the attractiveness of an exclusive and organized club whereby members are enabled to have agency and choice, to be active part in the global community, and to possess the ability to empower other participating nations and citizens. The term “cooperative” implies that there is a leveling off of power and thus
persuades audiences to believe that economic opportunities are made possible and material inequalities become erased through this exclusive membership. Through the rhetorical use of words that evoke a joining together of nations into one (corporate) body, the Bank implies that members become a unified personified actor who, through their very membership in the Bank, are able secure a global presence. The term “membership,” likewise, suggests that countries make a unanimous choice to join those who are dedicated to development. The very presence of this assumed agency is premised upon the absence of agency or absence of the will to be a part of this exclusive group. The pamphlet implies that those countries that decide not to become members of the World Bank Group, who do not desire to take part in their method of development, are deviant.20

A similar use of the absence/present follows under the section of the pamphlet entitled, “Roadmap for Development:” “Most of the world’s nations committed themselves to working together to dramatically reduce poverty by half by the year 2015[…] The World Bank Group has committed to helping its member countries achieve these goals” (4). Here, the pamphlet implies that countries not served by the Bank (in the Bank’s words, “underdeveloped”) are lacking the desire to alleviate poverty for citizens and, ultimately, the world. In this way, the pamphlet quietly presents such countries as “deviant.” This “deviancy” is also demonstrated in the above visual analysis of the pamphlet’s cover. The cover represents “undeveloped” countries also full of excess: they are out of control, have no forward-looking plans, and only contain local knowledge that does not further their entrance into a market economy. The pamphlet further reinforces the Bank’s “[commitment] to help its member countries achieve [its] goals” (5) and thus,
the unspoken sentiment that the Bank is not interested in those regions that do not seek its help, only those countries that have agreed to become members. As a managerial force, the Bank’s job is to control, make “normal,” and ultimately create global market-focused members. The Bank, as a manager, acts as a surveyor of country-citizen-workers.

Implicit within the definition of a managerial discourse is the act of watching. Surveillance is one of the central practices of the Bank:

Monitoring helps project managers know if programs are reaching the intended beneficiaries or if these programs are ineffective or wasteful. The emphasis on monitoring and evaluation is part of the World Bank’s focus on actual results for poor people and on continuous learning about what does and does not work for future advice and support. (3)

Spurr notes that surveillance is one of the dominant rhetorical modes present within colonial discourses. He claims, that the surveillance gaze maintains the privilege of inspecting and examining and is premised upon isolating the surveyor’s exclusion from “the human reality constituted as the object of observation” (13). Although Spurr is describing the colonizing gaze of the journalist, his description is apt for the act of scrutinizing that takes place through the Bank’s power relationship with “developing” countries. These relations of power recall Foucault’s analysis of the Panopticon because, as Spurr suggests, the relationship between the overseer and the one observed reinforces authority. The Bank, like the journalist that Spurr describes, is placed “either above or at the center of things” and yet distinctly outside of material circumstances of the country (16). As a managerial force, the Bank highlights a global domination of power.
Yet, just as the Bank presents itself as a “monitor” of activities, it claims to “empower” poor people (1) and women (2) “to take advantage of [employment] opportunities” (1). As I describe in Chapter Two, “Reinvented Rhetorics,” empowerment in a neoliberal economy becomes rhetorically tethered to personal agency. In other words, the Bank employs rhetorical conventions that are particularly persuasive to a US audience who believes in the sanctity of hyper-individualism and personal responsibility. Consider for example, the pamphlet’s description of “Sononya Zhanazarova, or Sonya” (9) from the Kyrgyz Republic:

Unable to afford a stall in the produce hall, [Zhanazarova] sold pistachios from a small table outside the building—even during freezing months— until she banded together with 11 other women to form a village banking group. Hoping to find the capital to help grow her business, Sonya [sic] turned to the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA), a provider of tiny loans to poor entrepreneurs, which is supported by the World Bank’s private-sector arm, the International Finance Corporation. A $40 loan allowed Sonya [sic] to buy more pistachios and begin expanding her own business. (9-10)

Zhanazarova’s story serves an emblematic example of economic empowerment.

However, in the Bank’s pamphlet, clients are represented as disenfranchised not by their material conditions or locale, but by their own lack of will. Interestingly, “empower” does not simply mean to enable, it also is defined as investing a person “legally or formally with power or authority; to authorize, license” (OED). I turn to this dual use of the term because it is the latter definition that the Bank appears to employ. The story recounted above is a story of empowerment— the act of enabling— and yet
also of empowerment—the act of formal licensing or recognition (this same trend recurs in the speech given by Wolfensohn I examine in Chapter Four). I do not doubt that the loan provided to Zhanazarova was enabling. She and her co-workers were able to expand their business. However, just as Zhanazarova is enabled by the Bank to obtain more financial security, her subjectivity is limited by the pamphlet use of a diminutive of her name. Sononya Zhanazarova becomes a Westernized “Sonya.” While the pamphlet’s shortening of her name invites audiences to identify more easily with her, the act erases the material circumstances Zhanazarova faces. “Sonya” is further accessible as the good “Westernized” neocolonial “other” by the pamphlet’s representation of her as empowered to make the right choices. In the story above, she willingly enters into a loan contract to better her own conditions. The power relationship that is created through this sort of “development” story mirrors those of the colonial era because a “developing” country’s success will always be tethered to and in service of the countries with the most shares in the Bank. The pamphlet’s representation of Zhanazarova’s choices makes her seem empowered by western standards; the simple human-interest story has distinct resonance for a western audience that privileges particular forms of individualism outside of a greater consideration of material constraints. In the pamphlet, because Zhanazarova is empowered not so much by her choices, but by her connection to a parastatal organization—one that is not tied to a specific nation-state but to a global organization—Zhanazarova’s country does not directly benefit from her loan. These similar constraints and identifications function in the pamphlet’s visual story of development as well.
Imagining the Narrative of Development

Empowerment—the act of enabling and the act of licensing—is visualized throughout the entire pamphlet. For example, the image that is situated just below Zhanazarova’s story, pictures a middle-aged Black man engaging in work. He appears to concentrate intently on turning a lever of a large machine while the camera captures his profile. The photographer behind the camera acts as an unobtrusive on-looker and frames the man’s upper torso, head, and hands alongside the large machine. The audience is invited to share the photographer’s gaze and simply, passively, watch the man. Significantly, the man is dressed in a blue shirt with a rumpled collar. He is actively turning the lever of the machine and does not pay attention to the camera. The image suggests tenacity, industrial labor, middle-class aspirations, and productivity. In short, the audience can imagine that this man, like the other people featured in the pamphlet, is empowered by work. The visual rhetorical arguments that are produced by images like this one draws from US associations with empowerment, independence, work, individualism, and progress and resonate with the welfare policies I examine in Chapter Two. At the same time, however, the images cannot be separated from the pamphlet’s larger textual and visual context. The images, like the pamphlet’s text, depend upon the audience’s contradictory stereotypes about Third-world people.

Yet, throughout the pamphlet, the textual references do not directly correspond to the visual imagery; that is, the text does not refer to the images nor is it obvious why the image was used in that particular place.\textsuperscript{21} While the words in the pamphlet describe chaos and disorder alleviated by technocratic institutions that empower individuals, the visual representations depict controlled, stable, and productive people participating in
limited work-related or school-related activities. The camera’s gaze plays an important role in communicating familiar and identifiable values to the audience because the photographer draws on two specific modes of image-making: the subject’s gaze back at the camera and the camera as an unobtrusive on-looker. Put together as an evolving narrative, all the images in the pamphlet operate at once as a forward-looking narrative and a colonial narrative. These images create knowledge about “other” “developing” client/nations; yet, just as they produce new knowledge, the images examined together create a reified colonial discourse that positions citizens of the underdeveloped or developing worlds as, “exotic,” “idealized,” and “naturalized” (Lutz and Collins 90).

Bhabha, in his description of colonial discourses, likewise suggests that such discourses are dependent upon representations of fixity in the construction of otherness. This paradoxical mode of representation—whereby rigidity and unchanging order function along with the repetition of disorder, chaos, and degeneracy—makes the Bank’s visual representations familiar and persuasive to a wide audience (66). Along with this pattern of representation, the subjects in the pictures are shown wearing uniforms, sitting in rows, or in their “traditional” clothing coupled with hints of western attire. These visual details rhetorically depict the creation of or movement toward order (as demonstrated, for example, in the introduction to this chapter) and complied together, the images tell their own story.

Turning to the first page of the pamphlet, the audience is confronted with a very tangible result of an improved quality of life: children playing what appears to be some version of “London Bridge.” The photo demonstrates children with their hands clasped together over their heads and one child moving her/his way through the human-made
tunnel. The image illustrates concepts and feelings such as rebirth, free time, growth, freedom, innocence, and strength—which imply for the audience what the Bank means by a high quality of life. In this way, the photo functions metonymically; the children (appearing slightly older than the child passing through the tunnel), with their collapsed hands sheltering another child, are a part of the whole result of development. The Bank’s activities assure the children’s survival, their ability to stand strong, have fun, and work together with their peers. The children’s western style clothing represents progress away from the “traditional” or “primitive” ontology offered on the pamphlet’s cover and illustrates the embracement of progress and “development” (Lutz and Collins 93). To some extent, this image of children at play works against popular representations of children from Third-world nations as victims of material and cultural circumstances because the children are shown playing and not suffering. Yet, this image has strong emotional power because it reminds the audience of children’s innocence and need to engage in play.

The pamphlet’s visual story begins with these children’s recreational activities. Flipping through the pages of the pamphlet, the audience is confronted with a series of images that exemplify productivity. In every photo thereafter, the subject is doing something that is labor or education related. Each photo focuses on one person, although in several of the photographs there is more than one person blurred within the camera’s frame. The photos include a mixture of men, women, and children throughout the pamphlet but, significantly, all subjects are people of color.
Paging through the images, the audience is visually told the story of development. After the image of the children at play, we are confronted with a man performing fairly traditional labor: creating and folding colorful and “exotic” rugs. In this photo, the man looks only at his work and ignores the camera’s gaze. The pamphlet patterns this gaze throughout; most subjects concentrate on their work and do not seem to notice the camera. For example, turning the next several pages of the pamphlet, the audience encounters a series of images that are reminiscent photos of the colonized “the other.” First we see a woman wearing a traditional straw hat. Standing in a field, she looks down at her fist full of wheat or grain. In the blurred background there are other people working to harvest the crops (see Figure 3.2).

(Figure 3.2 “The World Bank Group Working for a World Free of Poverty”)
The camera appears to simply document the woman working. Nobody acknowledges the photographer. The next page shows a close up on another person present in the background of the former photo—a man with western-style clothing, also picking and gathering up handful of the plant they are harvesting. Flipping forward a couple of pages, the images, although different, continue the same pattern of representation: a man turning the lever of a machine; a female teenager, dressed in a school uniform, gathering water; girls sitting in rows studying; a woman, smiling down as she pours out a sack of chilies; a female factory-worker weaving material on a loom. The camera’s presence is unnoticed because each subjects’ attention is focused on his/her work.

However, this pattern is interrupted on the fourth page, which shows a young boy facing the camera holding up a slate with the number five written on it (see Figure 3.3). The child has a smile on his face that illustrates pride and mastery in his work. With one eye partially covered by the slate, he looks out and directly at the camera. This act of looking, coupled with the child’s expression, is significant and suggests that education gives the power to look.
Likewise, on the following page a woman, dressed in a mask and scrubs, similarly confronts the camera. These are the only photographs in the pamphlet where the subjects directly confront the camera. In this image the woman is fully clothed in western medical attire, which suggests that the woman is highly educated. She looks over her mask directly and purposely at the camera; the audience can stare straight into her eyes. This woman’s and the young boy’s confrontational and direct look is powerful and significant when put into the context of the overall pamphlet and the other photographs that are included. No other subjects meet or acknowledge the camera; rather, the camera appears as an on-looker merely surveying the scene. The photographer behind the lens of the
camera is not a participant in the activity shown by the image—the camera acts as reporter that oversees and demonstrates the success of development visually.

(Figure 3.4 “The World Bank Group Working for a World Free of Poverty”)

Lutz and Collins highlight the “photographer’s gaze” in images such as these. Although they are examining patterns of photographs in *National Geographic*, their observations apply here: photographers, despite an expressed fundamental sympathy with the third world people they meet, confront them across distances of class, race, and sometimes gender. Whether from fear of differences or the more primordial (per Lacan) insecurity of the gaze itself, the photographer can often make the choice to insert technique between self and his or her subjects. (193)

The photographer, based on her or his inclinations, can encourage the viewer to take interest, identify, or differentiate from the subject caught in the frame of the camera. In
the observational mode, the photographer records his/her subjects unobtrusively and is detached from the photographic event. In this way, the photographer, and thus the viewer, is invited to ambivalently watch the scene and can reify the same power relationships that the image-maker might seek to dispel. This form of picture taking produces a surveillance power relationship. The economy of power created through images such as these is also further complicated by the material differences between eastern and western countries and the position the Bank has in the “development” of a region.

The photograph of the female surgeon, who confronts the camera directly, interrupts this pattern of representation. Although one could read her act of looking as defiant, the greater context of the image suggests that the subject has entered into and embraced the colonizing gaze of the camera. The pamphlet’s placement of her image in the midst of the others has significant rhetorical weight. As a surgeon she wears the suitable uniform and is thus represented as controlled; yet, her education and job position reflects her “development” into a productive and intelligible global-citizen. She is thus able to gaze directly into the camera and acknowledge its presence. Unlike the other subjects of the photos in the pamphlet, who have yet to attain the status of “developed,” this image portrays full development (see for example Figure 3.2). Not only is the subject working in the medical field—a field that tends to be highly respected in industrialized and post-industrialized countries—but the subject is a female. Significantly, the woman the photograph highlights is completely covered, the audience only sees her eyes—her surgical clothing covers her face, body, and hair. The audience of the pamphlet, who might assume that “underdeveloped” regions tend to have unequal
gender relationships, could be moved by such an image. The woman in this image represents an evolution from a fixed ontology where women are assumed to be unequal toward gender equality. Now educated and developed, the subject has attained the power to look back. This image, along with the schoolboy, stands in stark contrast to the other images.

The two recurring themes present in the series of images can be considered terministic screens and their successive patterns intimates the Bank’s rhetorical intention and the larger discourse from which the Bank draws its persuasion. The Bank depends upon an audience’s ability to ambivalently identify with the repetitive colonial “othering” that thread throughout all the images. Here, the Bank’s communicated goals of development are reliant upon the audience’s assumption that “underdeveloped” nations are exotic, innocent, and fixed. The audience, however, is able to differentiate itself from these images because the images tell a story of development that is dependent upon such separating. Thus, the Bank smartly tweaks this anticipated image pattern with photographs where subjects directly confront the camera. In the two representations of the doctor and the schoolboy, the audience is invited to identify, not only with the subjects, but also with the possibility of all the people presented in the pamphlet, because these subjects are shown as experienced (or becoming experienced), forward-moving, and not unlike the audience who observes them.

In this way, these photos play an important role in this simple informative pamphlet. On their own they exhibit the Bank’s ability to create a sense of order out of chaos, promote productivity over indolence, and maintain the steps toward development. This is further demonstrated in one of the final images in the pamphlet, a man fishing
illustrates a key intended goal of the Bank. Again, the camera’s presence is unnoticed by the subject/fisherman. The subject appears to have either just caught a fish or is in the process of catching the fish. The image is powerful because it evokes the biblical parable that if one gives a man a fish he eats for a day, but if one teaches him to fish, he will eat for a lifetime.

Conclusion

The above examples from the World Bank pamphlet exhibit two prominent rhetorical structures: metonymic stories that reflect the teleology of development and an appeal to chaos/control and the absence/presence in development narratives. James Wolfenson’s speech, “The Challenge of Inclusion,” analyzed in Chapter Four, demonstrates these same rhetorical patterns. The rhetorical use of human-interest stories and images quite effectively demonstrates the core goals of The World Bank group. These images, together with the recurring words empower/encourage, membership, selling/market/capital, investing/investors/investment, and products/production/and producing (to merely name a few key clusters of terms), lay out a teleological narrative that suggests that social problems might be solved by national partnerships with the private sector and macro-financing companies that are initiated by the Bank; this narrative of development is shown further below. As this pamphlet demonstrates, ties to work and the private sector/market gives third-world citizens the ability to look back and confront the Bank’s audience (US citizens) across a line of sight that seems to erase the power relationships between first and third world countries. The people the pamphlet displays ultimately appear as empowered global citizens because they reflect what US
citizens already know about themselves and think about “other” “exotic” people and places.

I suggest that by noting and examining this sort of rhetorical ambivalence, we as feminist rhetorical scholars have the agency to speak back and create new arguments that push to the side the (terministic) screens of the argument. How can we educate US citizens about the inherent class discrepancies of globalization? What means of persuasion should we employ?

These questions are further complicated in the next chapter. In addition to examining how the Bank begins to address issues of global gender and disability inequalities, I demonstrate how the Bank takes up language established in the field of Women’s and Gender Studies to make their policies appealing to an educated feminist audience. In my examination of the speech “Engendering Inclusion” where Bank President Wolfensohn called for Bank members to address gender inequities and the result of his call the report Engendering Development, I consider how feminist concerns become terministic screens for the Bank’s larger neo-colonial and neo-liberal project.
Works Cited


Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1994


Notes for Chapter 3

1 Williamson did not name his points “The Washington Consensus”— other development experts called it this.

2 See for example, Susan George and Fabrizio Sabelli *Faith and Credit: The World Bank’s Secular Empire*, J.K. Gibson Graham *The End of Capitalism (as we knew it)*, and Suzanne Bergeron “Challenging the World Bank’s narrative of inclusion.”

3 Historically, before the 1980s, developing countries favored the state’s role in development policies and planning. In fact, leaders of developing countries had an implicit fear that unfettered markets in an already unequal world would only push poorer nations into further disadvantage. Importantly, in the post-World War II years (1950s-1970s) development debates focused on empowering governments to extend social services to its citizens. Until the 1970s it was taken for granted that policy-makers should be concerned not just with the level and growth of per capita incomes, but also with income distribution and social services. Thus, mid-twentieth-century development policy favored trade restrictions, national investments, and the regulation of capital in and out of the countries. Policy makers rejected this development philosophy during the Thatcher and Reagan years. Throughout the 1980s the US government and other wealthy nations began to push developing countries to accept the free-market paradigm by employing quid pro quo demands; in other words, unless developing countries agreed to allow their economies to be infiltrated by the free market, their development loans would be cut.

4 This pamphlet is available both virtually and physically. Here I offer the cover of the virtual pamphlet.

5 Although there is an obvious text present in this first page, I have chosen to analyze it as it reads as a whole image since the literal words work so clearly against the primitive drawing that they must be read together.

6 While I came across this pamphlet first online, I found a hardcopy of it at the Disability and Inclusion World Bank conference in December 2004. The pamphlet was nestled among other promotional materials laid out at the conference’s resource fair.

7 One could also argue that the Bank is working to redefine their *ethos* as more obviously humanitarian.

8 I suggest that the manner in which The Bank constructs its promotional materials, website, and public speeches cannot be divorced from some of the historical rhetorical modes that Spurr, for example, points out. In his book *The Rhetoric of Empire*, Spurr notes eleven dominant rhetorical categories of persuasion that thread through a variety of colonial texts (newspapers, novels, public documents): surveillance, appropriation, aestheticization, classification, debasement, negation, affirmation, idealization, insubstantilization, naturalization, and eroticisation. Some of these modes might also be traced in World Bank documents; however, I am more interested in the way that The Bank’s rhetorical modes of persuasion respond to the global climate of the 1980s-2000s.

9 In Burke’s essay, “Terministic Screens,” he begins his discussion of the terministic screen by recounting an act of “directing intention” – or creating a situation whereby the intention of an act seems to be unintended. Burke recounts a story where Jesuits, who were forbidden by the church to duel, might be able to engage in a duel if they were to happen upon it. In other words, the young Jesuits learn it is the intention to duel that is prohibited. The satire of the story lies in the fact that although the young Jesuits appear to happen upon a fight, they had the intention to fight in the first place. Through this brief story Burke demonstrates that in any rhetorical act there is always purpose. Burke explains:

   I bring up this satirically excessive account of directing the intention, in the hopes that I can thereby settle for less when discussing the ways in which terministic screens direct the attention. Here the kind of deflection I have in mind concerns simply the fact that any nomenclature necessarily directs the attention into some channels rather than others. (1341) (Emphasis in the original)

Burke’s albeit brief discussion of intention—and his careful directing our attention away from it—suggests that intentionality factors strongly into his theory of the terministic screen.

10 Here it seems as though Burke is furthering Aristotle’s three modes of persuasion—an appeal to *ethos*, *pathos*, or *logos*.

11 I thank Susan Hartman for this important observation she made during the Denman Research Forum luncheon.
See for example, the Bank publication *Financing Education in Developing Counties* as opposed to *Engendering Development*. The former spends less time making the policies persuasive to a wide audience and employs technocratic tables and graphs.

Bergeron notes that Wolfensohn developed the reputation as being one with the people, a man who was willing to walk among the people (see her essay in *World Bank Literature*).

From this point forward I will refer to the pamphlet as “The World Bank Group.”

Students are often very savvy readers of images. In fact, my examination of the cultural narrative that the images in “The World Bank Group” pamphlet comes from a discussion I had in a second level writing class. We were examining images in a recent issue of *National Geographic* when one student noted that images in the magazine did not in any way really reflect the textual narrative that accompanied the images. As a class we considered why this was the case. My student seemed to assume that images are much easier to read quickly then text. Thus, they concluded that *National Geographic’s* audience probably gleans most of their information from a quick “reading” of images. These students important observation demonstrates the importance of reading images such as those produced by the Bank critically because they carry the important weight of communicating information and arguments in a quick and seemingly simple way.

Part of my description of the Bank’s photos comes from Bhabha’s description of colonial discourses whereby he lays out the discourses paradoxical modes of representations and stereotypes (66). However, as I describe further and later in this chapter, colonial narratives function to persuade audiences due to their enthymematic mode of representation. Yet, due to the timeframe and global economics of the later twentieth century colonial discourse cannot be seen as merely static rather it dynamically employs that which is familiar and unquestioned and that which appears to move certain people in the twenty-first century.

In her thesis *Rationalizing Welfare Reform: Citizenship, Knowledge, and the Politics of Transparency*, Jenrose Fitzgerald defines the keywords that make up managerial discourses: accountability, quality improvement, empowerment/teamwork, excellence, restructuring/reengineering (179-194). According to Fitzgerald, such words have “weak” and “strong” meanings. The weak meanings that she describes function as taken-for-granted and unspecific. In this section, I will add to the managerial discourse that Fitzgerald describes.

While I use the terms developed/underdeveloped here to demonstrate the primary language the Bank employs, in Chapter Four I address the eugenic and colonial ties to this dominant characterization.

The World Bank reports the following percentages of voting shareholders: US with 16.41 percent of votes, Japan with 7.87 percent of votes, Germany with 4.49 percent of votes, the UK with 4.31 percent of votes, and France with 4.31 percent of votes (“World Bank Group” 11). The remaining votes are divided among shareholders of other countries that are not mentioned. Knowing who the voters/shareholders are is important when considering the audiences of international policy.

In fact, the Bank makes clear in its pamphlet that countries ask for the Bank’s services. In other words, they “willingly” enter into a contract with the Bank to address social issues, infrastructure problems, education funding, etc.

Visual imagery seems an important part of the Bank’s materials. In fact, the website alone has a photo archive worthy of further analysis because they images appear random and non-specifically organized under topics ranging from private sector, education, and family. Unfortunately, I do not have the space to further explore this here.
CHAPTER 4

DISABLING RHETORICS

The aim [...] is the conquest of the entire world through the market. The arsenals are financial; there are nevertheless millions of people being maimed or killed every moment. The aim of those waging war is to rule the world from new, abstract power centers—megapoles of the market, which will be subject to no control except that of the logic of investment. Meanwhile, nine-tenths of the women and men on the planet live within the jagged pieces that do not fit. (Berger xiv)

Throughout history, those who live with disabilities have been defined by the gaze and the needs of the nondisabled world. (Fries qtd. by Davis 34)

Introduction

In November 2004 I attended the World Bank conference, “Disability and Inclusive Development: Sharing Learning and Building Alliances.” The weeklong conference brought together Bank members, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) leaders, development practitioners, activists, and academic scholars to consider how globalization and development policies might affect people with disabilities. In particular, the conference addressed issues concerning inclusive education, access to health services, employment, urban infrastructure and transport, and the legal definitions of disability. What I found most interesting about each of the conference sessions I attended, was that most speakers focused on how people with disabilities were “just like you and me” and that as such, if they were to be provided an opportunity to work—to
enter the marketplace and be self-sufficient—they too could be part of global
development, be included in the economic mainstream.

On the first day of the conference, I observed then Bank President James
Wolfensohn address a crowd of about six hundred. Typical of Wolfensohn’s style of
speaking, he began with a story of his own experiences meeting people with disabilities
across the world. He spoke eloquently with passion, and without notes. As he told this
story, he stood causally with one hand resting on the podium. However, when he got to
the apex of his argument, he leaned forward on the podium, made a fist and said,

We need to unlock the opportunities for 600 million people or more who have one
form of disability or another, but who have with these disabilities tremendous
competencies […][.] The World Bank considers it crucial that countries adopt
development policies that include the concerns and needs of disabled people so
that they can contribute to the societies in which they live. (“Disability and
Development”)

Wolfensohn soon after self-consciously suggested that the Bank’s need to include people
with disabilities in development plans is not unlike the Bank’s need to include women in
its development plans. In fact, Wolfensohn in his speech suggested that it was less than
ten years ago that the Bank undertook the radical challenge to bringing women into the
mainstream of global development.

I begin with Wolfensohn’s speech at the recent “Disability and Inclusive
Development” conference for two reasons: to demonstrate the power of the Bank’s
rhetoric of “inclusive” development and to show how that rhetoric continues to be
persuasive today. Yet, the rhetoric of inclusion that Wolfensohn employs, here, and that
the World Bank uses in general, supports a historic discourse of eugenics and ability just as the Bank tries to disengage itself from the discourses’ abelist and normalizing rhetorical frames.

In this chapter, I explore the notable rhetorical appeal to inclusion within Bank materials. First, I examine three key rhetorical inclusionary devices employed by Wolfensohn in an earlier speech that focused on including gender in Bank policies: 1) the personification of markets, nations, and communities; 2) the powerfully pathetic appeals of personal interest stories; and, 3) the mythic ableist metaphors of teleological development. The Bank uses each of these rhetorical devices to demonstrate how “inclusion” is the missing link of development policy. The Bank’s focus on the emotionally sensitive issue of inclusion is significant because it exhibits how the Bank uses popular and pseudo-feminist multicultural language and ideals to appeal to a broader audience other than Bank employees.\(^1\) One of the key audiences that the Bank must persuade, I suggest, is an audience made up broadly of US citizens. Because of its location in the US and because most Bank members reside in the US, it is important to consider what it takes for the Bank to persuade this diverse audience.\(^2\) I argue that this rhetoric of inclusion serves to distract the audience\(^3\) from the Bank’s larger neocolonial and neoliberal project by rhetorically constructing nations, citizens, and the global community as having universal goals and fundamental similarities that aid entry into normative economic processes.

This rhetoric of inclusion is bound up with a historic discourse of normalization and is present throughout Wolfensohn’s speech on September 23, 1997 “The Challenge of Inclusion.” In this speech, Wolfensohn uses terms such as “mainstream,”
“developed,” “inclusion,” and “impaired” to describe a country’s successful entry into the global market. Ten years later these same rhetorical devices problematically characterize why the Bank must help people with disabilities. Rhetorics of ability/disability, despite their eugenic history, have strong resonance with the audience and function as terministic screens; in other words, the Bank persuades its audience by employing terms that the audience can easily and uncritically identify. Likewise, Wolfensohn’s use of personification in the 1997 speech directs the audience’s attention away from the Bank’s neoliberal aims as it draws upon an audience’s familiarity with colonial discourses. As I point out below, Wolfensohn’s discourse of inclusion, coupled with his fantastic ableist metaphor of development, operates as a normalizing prescription of success. Ultimately, he places a country’s successful development on the shoulders of individual female citizen’s ability to enter into the market.

I also illustrate the results for Wolfensohn’s call for gender inclusion. I focus specifically on the Bank report Engendering Development: Rights, Resources, and Voice—a follow up report published seven years later on Wolfensohn’s call for gender inclusion. In this second part of the chapter I argue that the developmental plans present in the report’s persuasive appeals initially appear to enable women to become free agents in the global marketplace; I document, however, that such appeals effectively erase women’s cultural, social, labor, and historical realities by veiling neo-colonialism as a form of universal cross-national feminism. Like Wolfensohn’s speech that I begin with, this Bank report emphasizes the roles gender, ethnicity, tradition, and nationality play in creating “social capital” for Third-World countries in a transnational economy. I demonstrate that while these contemporary Bank materials have resonance with the
“Washington Consensus,” the severity of this neoliberal policy design is quietly covered by persuasive human-interest stories and images that illustrate how “social capital” and “inclusion” are the missing links in development policies.

**Personifying the Development of Inclusion**

At the World Bank’s annual meeting in 1997 President James D. Wolfensohn presented the compelling speech, “The Challenge of Inclusion,” to an audience of investors, Bank members, and scholars.⁶ Wolfensohn’s compassionate speech, which employs emotional appeals to make the Bank seem altruistic and fair, is an important document that demonstrates the core shift in the arguments the Bank made for “new” policies and programs that utilized the idea of social capital. As feminist scholar Suzanne Bergeron notes, before and during the Washington Consensus policies, gender and other issues of inclusion were not part of the Bank’s general protocol (“Challenging the World Bank”). Thus, as she points out, Wolfensohn’s speech, which begins with an emotionally packed notable story whereby women are given entry into the market and therefore access to economic normativity through their purchasing power (a closer look at this story and its rhetorical impact is further examined below), is quite remarkable. This human-interest story demonstrates the Bank’s interest in extending partnerships with women as “agents of development.”⁷ Although in the past the Bank had given attention to women via programs such as Women in Development (WID), traditionally WID has been a marginalized group and issues of gender tended to be tied to development issues such as population control (Bergeron “The Post-Washington Consensus” 405).⁸ Wolfensohn’s focus on the “inclusion” of women (and other marginalized groups), and
his use of personal stories, marks a significant turn in the rhetoric of the Bank’s policies and goals.

After general introductions and thank-yous, Wolfensohn began his annual speech with the following story:

I have learned that people are the same wherever they are—here in this room and across the world. We all want the best for our children and our families. We all want peace and economic and physical security. We all want to live in a supportive community. We all want personal dignity.

This was vividly brought home to me six months ago when I visited a large water and sanitation project[…][I] went from one makeshift home to the next, talking with the women who live there and who used to carry water on their shoulders from the bottom of the hillside to their dwelling at the top. […] And as I walked around, more and more of the women came up to me displaying pieces of paper showing charges and receipts for a few reals a month. I watched and listened to this until the vice governor said, “What they are showing you Jim, is that this is the first time in their lives that their name and address have appeared on an official notice. This is the first time their existence has been officially recognized. This is the first time they have been included in society. With that receipt they can get a credit to purchase goods, with that receipt they have recognition and hope. (“The Challenge of Inclusion” 1-2)

In the beginning of this short anecdotal story, Wolfensohn successfully consubstantiates his audience and levels the global playing field by asking his audience to imagine that their deepest concerns— those about their family, their physical and economic well-
being—are the same as anybody else’s. Here, Wolfensohn implies that “inclusion” means the erasure of difference—not only physical, racial, or economic difference, but also the difference produced by location, mind-set, desires, circumstance, etc. If indeed, in the words of Wolfensohn, “people are the same,” then he also implies that people, who fall outside the realms of “development,” have the capability to fit in with the rest of the “developed” world if they are able to become part of the global market. Wolfensohn uses an emotional appeal to individualism—part of the US discourse of sovereignty—that reminds the audience of the larger project of the Bank to make citizens individual actors who can secure their own economic viability by becoming similar to, or the same as, “successful” developed countries. Although the word “difference” is not used in this short vignette, sameness only has meaning when there is an implied difference.

I quote Wolfensohn at length above to demonstrate the emotional power of his story, which concludes with a group of women finally being recognized—and gaining subjectivity—through a receipt for a necessity like water. This physical receipt marks their entrance into the market economy and it demonstrates their acceptance of the invitation to be a part of the mainstream. The simple slip of paper provides official recognition and emphasizes these women’s existence and inclusion while symbolizing a narrative of hope. In his story, we encounter women, who, “for the first time […] [with] their name and address […] appear[ing] on an official notice,” are included in the global economy (2). Thus, “inclusion,” for Wolfensohn, means bringing normal economic activities to empty and identity-less regions of the world. It is this entry into the market that gives these women an identity; and as metonymic representations of their country, they bring their home countries into the normative economy.
Yet, just as Wolfensohn is touched by these women’s recognition, he takes away that very subjectivity by not providing his audience with the names of these women; rather, they become, in his story, mere objects that need to be developed.\(^9\) Just as the market gives the women recognition, Wolfensohn exploits their story to argue for his larger goal of third world development. The women that Wolfensohn describes have a dual metonymic function in this brief speech. Of course, the women are real and are experiencing the material realities of their country’s developing market economy—the localized availability of clean drinking and cooking water along with sanitary toilet and bathing facilities cuts down on the time the women must spend fetching necessities like water. First, they are a part of the larger story of globalization and are an identifiable example of “success” in the global economy. Yet, there is also a slippage between the women’s agency and the agency of the country in which they reside. Importantly, while we do not know the names of the women or the region or town in which they reside, Wolfensohn does mention that they are from the “*favelas*” of Brazil.\(^{10}\) Wolfensohn’s mention of the women’s country and geographical location is significant because women become metonymic representations of their whole country. Implicit within the human-interest story that Wolfensohn tells is the following prescribed development narrative: if a country, and its citizens, follows the mainstream development narrative by entering the dominant market economy then that country will gain an identity and be part of the larger global community. The women, both in Wolfensohn’s story and in the Bank’s policies, become things that need to be fulfilled by the market as facilitated by the World Bank.\(^{11}\)
I find the rhetorical weight of Wolfensohn’s story unsettling. Like the pamphlet analyzed in Chapter Three, Wolfensohn’s story depends upon his audience’s ambivalent identification of colonial texts. This reminder, in the form of a story where a group of formerly excluded women become active citizens of the globe, evokes the common representation of the colonized woman as either dangerous or a passive victim (Briggs 191). The repetitive representation of these women as victims of their country’s circumstances and practices along-side the Bank’s role as savior, functions as a terministic screen. The audience’s attention is directed away from the material-economic confines of the women’s situation and from Wolfensohn’s ultimate erasure of their subjectivity, local identifications, and history. Wolfensohn’s description of his experience in the Brazilian *favelas* is reminiscent of colonial narratives that describe non-Western countries as lacking, without history, devoid of a place or presence. Just as in the Bank’s pamphlet, we see the rhetorical use of the absence and presence.

Wolfensohn’s speech is persuasive to his audience because it implies that the audience, made up of Bank members, is working to fill a void, making an impact, and creating an identity for a place that, before, the Bank’s intervention was nameless or unviable—without an identity.

David Spurr calls this rhetorical mode of persuasion, negation: a discourse that “denies history as well as place, constituting the past as absence, but also designating that absence as a negative presence” (98). Although Spurr is speaking of the embedded and reified colonial and contemporary narratives about the African continent, his observations shed light on binary logic that the whole of Wolfensohn’s speech employs. The simple
piece of paper with the women’s names, that Wolfensohn mentions, is a physical marker of existence.

For example, Wolfensohn exclaims at the end of his story “this is what the challenge of development is all about—inclusion. Bringing people into society who have never been part of it before. This is why the World Bank Group exists” (2). Wolfensohn’s statement reveals an important belief-system of the Bank: when a country or region is not developed economically, they have no identity, history, or part in a global society. This void impacts the present circumstances of the country. Implied in Wolfensohn’s speech is that the women of the favelas exist in a negative and incomprehensible place without history. The women are depicted as passive and incapable of creating their own history—or subjectivity. The written slip of paper that the women in the story receive is a physical marker that provides a tangible historic reference. In the Hegelian sense, writing not only offers evidence of existence and history but it also implies that there is “the possibility of history in a teleological sense” (Spurr 98). Writing implies the entrance into a language that has meaning for people beyond local boarders; this is reminiscent of the pamphlet cover I analyze in Chapter Three where we visually see the movement from chaos to orderly writing. An ordinary receipt brings the citizens and their country into a recognizable historic trajectory and symbolizes the creation of an infrastructure—order, law, institutions, economic practices, and customs. To this extent, the charge for water service these women receive is, for Wolfensohn, the first step in creating a chronicled global presence.
Wolfensohn’s description of the women of the *favelas* and their entry into the market is part of the primary discourse of inclusion that informs several of the Bank’s texts. This discourse contains a distinct teleological narrative of development that is similar to the discourses of normalization and ability that are mirrored in the welfare policies I examine in Chapter Two. If a country follows the Bank’s mainstream development model it will gain an identity—as we see in Wolfensohn’s description of the women of the *favelas*—and through this identity it can be “included” in the global community. Here, countries are classified as under-developed, developing, or developed. When countries are not developed, they are described by Wolfensohn as “impaired” and therefore in need of rehabilitation, support, or care-taking in order to bring them to a state of “normalcy”/development. Women, and other citizens, through their entry into the legitimised market, become the central individual actors in the drive toward development.¹² No longer “impaired” or identity-less citizens, they demonstrate how the market is enabling.

Within Wolfensohn’s speech, enabling and development means “inclusion” or entry into the “normalizing”/”normative” cultural of global capitalism. He defines “the challenge of inclusion” (i.e. the name of his speech) as bringing “more and more people into the economic mainstream, to promote equitable access to the benefits of development regardless of nationality, race, or gender” (3). The terms *inclusion*, *mainstream*, *equity*, *access*, and *development*, along with evoking the nation-state, have significant rhetorical weight. At the very least, the cluster of these terms that recurs throughout Wolfensohn’s speech implies that “inclusion” into the “mainstream” is based upon a country’s successful entry into the market and economic progress.
However, Wolfensohn’s speech depends upon an audience’s prior indoctrination into a discourse of eugenics, abelism, and normative citizenship. Normalcy implies that there are particular standard and substandard populations (or in this case countries). A discourse of normalcy is reified when the state—or another governing body—attempts to make “normal” those who are deemed as unfit or non-standard (Davis Enforcing 30). Wolfensohn employs in his speech the very ideology that if an individual country or citizen is not “fit,” then they do not factor into the global community.

Thus, the rhetorical appeal of this inclusionary discourse rests upon the audience’s desire to comprehend or make “normal” a country’s economic, social, and governmental practices. A country’s ability to become “fit”—or to fit into the economic “mainstream”—rests upon a bourgeois democratic ideology that situates the universal and interchangeable citizen-worker or nation-worker as the producers of a uniform product (here, other “global” citizens, low-wage labor, “safe” investment zones, and so on) (Davis Enforcing 36 and Bending 110). Wolfensohn’s notion of fitness evokes the ideologies of early twentieth century eugenicists who sought to create the industrialized normal citizen-worker. Not only were these workers, through invariable physical fitness and productivity, to maintain their nation’s fitness, their “fit” and standardized bodies would maintain their country’s economic “fitness.” The fit body would be able to perform the tasks necessary for factory work and good production. As Davis further points out, the “unfit abnormal body,” during industrialization, was relegated to the welfare system because it could not be mainstreamed (Bending 40). The recent welfare bills I describe in Chapter Two evoke the same appeal to “mainstream” and seek to make “fit” those US citizens who have been categorized as economically unviable financial
burdens. The words “unfit” and “fit” (further demonstrated below) evoke the discourse of eugenics (and Darwin’s theory of the survival of the fittest) and remind audiences of height and weight charts, psychological testing, and the classification of ability. In other words, Wolfensohn’s rhetoric of mainstreaming implies an erasure of difference as it discounts non-western or other forms of economic viability.

This very idea operates in two ways throughout Wolfensohn’s speech. First, by making “developing” nations “fit” into what Wolfensohn describes as the “mainstream,” countries are given the task of maintaining the “normative” function of the global economy and ultimately, the stratification between nations that are “fit” and “unfit.” Second, individual citizens of these “developing” nations must support their nation’s globalized economy by entering into the mainstream market and producing products that will demarcate their acquiescence of “normal” economic activity.

Wolfensohn employs this historically packed discourse just as he attempts to disengage it from its eugenic connections: “I want to be very clear on this point: I am not espousing some Darwinian theory of development whereby we discard the unfit by the wayside. Quite the contrary. Our goal is support the fit and to help make the unfit fit. This is all about inclusion” (5). Despite Wolfensohn’s attempt at uncoupling his references of becoming “fit” from the very discourse that informs them, he reifies the power structures present in the movement to rehabilitate something “abnormal” into something that makes sense to those in power. Policies that seek to homogenize or mainstream a country’s economic existence, make controlling a county’s culture and economy easier because the parameters for development are laid out, tested, and assured.
The Bank, by creating a “fit” and comprehensible “mainstreamed” economy, ensures that a nation will remain passive and predictable.

The rhetoric of mainstreaming that Wolfensohn employs resonates with modern conceptualizations of “normality” whereby individuals practice moderation, discretion, diligence, and moral self-improvement (Terry 11). Without such self-regulation, the “abnormal” or non-mainstreamed is a threat to the security of those who have embraced normality. Indeed, as Wolfensohn continues, “[w]ithout inclusion, too many of us will be condemned to live separate, armed, and frightened lives” (3). His statement here, employs pathos and plays on the audience’s fear of the uncontrolled and underdeveloped regions of the world. His shift from speaking about inclusion to separating “us” from “them” functions to demonstrate the corporeal consequences for those who already inhibit the mainstream. Wolfensohn implies that countries outside the mainstream are in need of rehabilitation, support, or care-taking in order to bring them to a state of “normalcy”/development so that they no longer pose a threat. In this way, Wolfensohn represents nation-states as individual citizens.

Wolfensohn focuses on strong individual agency alongside his rhetoric of mainstream development. Although he moves away from the sort of emotional human-interest stories that he begins with, he does employ personification as a means to have audiences identify with his aims. Consider, for example, Wolfensohn’s shift back and forth from speaking about personified countries to individual people:

The message for countries is clear: Educate your people; ensure their health; give them voice and justice; financial systems that work; and sound economic policies, and they will respond, they will save, and they will attract investment, both
domestic and foreign, that is needed to rise living standards and fuel development.

(4)

Here, Wolfensohn represents nation-states and markets as individual citizens; they are like agents who can watch each other and who have collective yet individualized identities. In other words, he describes nations as having agency and the ability to make changes and decisions. The above statement implies that an individual country, and not their governments, leaders, or citizens, has the responsibility to secure the process of development. How, or through what means, a country might be enabled to act is unclear. Regardless, Wolfensohn rhetorically shifts the actor from country to citizen. He begins by suggesting what countries need to do to be empowered but then uses an unclear, “they” to describe how the country will benefit. “They” could be actual people, the economy, or the market. Significantly, he persists in employing rhetorical personification in his description of markets: “financial markets are demanding [...] and are making swift judgments about the quality and sustainability of government policies” (4). Wolfensohn continues to say countries should not simply “please the markets but to build the broad social consensus without which even the best-conceived economic strategies will ultimately fail” (4).

This pattern of personification is significant, as Quintilian suggests, because contradictorily, it draws upon an audience’s emotions and taken-for-granted rational liberal ideology. Personification is one of the sententia that arouses emotion and attributes the qualities of a person to something that is not human. Quintilian reminds us that personification is a “figure best adapted for intensifying emotions” (qtd by Crowley and Hawhee 252), and its persuasive value is dependent upon a rhetor’s ability to create a
fictional connection between inanimate objects and humanistic tendencies. According to Quintilian, the advantage of personification is that the rhetor is able to “display inner thoughts of others as though they were present” (Crowley and Hawhee 252). While personification can certainly appeal to an audience’s emotions, I suggest that the larger discourse of liberal ideology through which the Bank’s audience is hailed further informs the persuasiveness of personification in Wolfensohn’s speech.

At the very least, personification enables audiences to identify emotionally with the human qualities of a thing. The rhetor creates this illusion of human qualities and makes them appear to be self-evident and natural rather than manufactured by the rhetor. Similar to the Bank’s use of a corporate managerial discourse, whereby countries are depicted as uniting as one body (see Chapter Three), personification employs a similar legal fiction by endowing countries with collective agency. Yet, an audience’s assumption of this very agency helps that audience recognize that their role of maintaining a country’s healthy development will be brief. Part of the Bank’s goal is to give a country an identity—as is demonstrated in Wolfensohn’s visit to the favelas.

The persuasiveness of rhetorical personification lies in the rhetor’s ability to provide an identity for the country. By shifting from thing to person, Wolfensohn equates the country with the rational individual. As endowed individual agents, countries are imagined to secure their own well-being; once aid is administered, an audience might presume that a country is empowered to act on its own behalf. Wolfensohn’s use of rhetorical personification is therefore significant because it guides the audience’s attention toward their own value of independence within a free-market. In fact, Wolfensohn switches back to focusing on individual citizens, “But helping countries help
themselves; by building their own capacity to design and implement their own development” (5).

Because rhetorical personification presents the organic illusion of agency, we might consider the validity of the rhetor’s ideological ground and thus consider how rhetorical personification functions as a terministic screen. Wolfensohn’s unclearly stated actor allows audiences to see how the personified agency of an institution can bring structure, control, and sense out of regions that are represented as disorganized, underdeveloped, and identity-less (as demonstrated in, for example, the pamphlet’s cover in Chapter Three and Wolfenson’s description of the women of the favelas). Such personification gives the audience a sense of security that the identity created by the Bank will reflect that of an individual rational citizen and the audience is thus assured that development will occur and help secure the global economy.

Wolfensohn ends his speech by returning to the story he began with, the recognition of the women from Brazil:

The look in people’s eyes is not a look of hopelessness. It’s a look of pride, of self-esteem, of inclusion. These people who have a sense of themselves, who have a sense of tradition, who have a sense of family. All they need is a chance. Each one in this room must take personal responsibility for making sure they get a chance. We can do it for the sake of our children, we must do it. (9)

What is remarkable about this ending is that Wolfensohn does not carry through the same rhetorical devices that he employs in the rest of his speech. The ending is reminiscent of the welfare policies I examine in Chapter Two where there is a turn to the family. The keywords that Wolfensohn employs are no longer development, mainstream, and fit.
Rather, Wolfensohn turns to the audience’s most personal relationships—“our” children and families. Wolfensohn implies, yet again, that development means not only attaining an identity and history but also establishing the traditions of family. By turning to personal responsibility, he reassures the audience that they have obtained entry into the developed world and thus the responsibility to make sure everyone enters into this economy.

**Engendering Equality: Transnationalism’s Terministic Screen**

The 2003 Bank report, *Engendering Development: Rights, Resources, and Voice*, is an account of the results of Wolfensohn’s plans for “inclusion.” Addressing Wolfensohn’s call for gender “inclusion,” this report concentrates on women and their traditional gendered activities as important forms of “social capital” that will enable women’s entrance into the global market place via microlending that, ultimately, facilitates the growth of their country’s economy. Yet, contradictorily, the report articulates these same traditional ties as a hindrance to macrolevel development. In this report, we see the results of Wolfensohn’s call for Bank members “to bring more and more people into the economic mainstream, to promote equitable access to the benefits of development regardless of nationality, race, or gender” (3). *Engendering Development* frames its arguments for gender inclusion around the terms “rights,” “resources,” and “voice.” The report’s functional definitions of these terms are dependent upon the audience’s ambivalent and colonial identification with the women that the report discusses. *Engendering Development* guides the audience toward believing that bringing women into the capitalist market mainstream, without accounting for the gendered nature
of that system, is the best way to “include” Third-world women. This report targets
women as agents of development because, as Bergeron points out, the World Bank
envisions women’s subordination as due to their constricted ties to traditional work and
lack of contact with modern institutions and markets (“The Post-Washington Consensus”
408). One of the Bank’s development goals is to emancipate women from these
restraints and aid their entry into global marketplace.

Yet somewhat contradictorily, these traditional gendered ties create something
that can be marketed— “social capital.” A woman’s “social capital” is demonstrated, for
example, in “The World Bank” pamphlet I analyze in Chapter Three; here, a woman like
Zhanazarova is able to secure her own economic well being based on her connections
with other women and her ability to obtain a microlevel loan. While, as we saw in
Wolfensohn’s speech, market industry did enable some women to have running water
available to them, we have to consider what forms of labor underlie these women’s
ability to purchase a precious commodity such as water and who ultimately owns those
water rights. In other words, how does the idea of emancipating women and employing
their “social capital” function to screen out the material and gendered realities of such
women?

I argue that simply adding gender and “social capital” into the equation of
successful development is persuasive to the Bank’s intended audience because the Bank
appears to address women’s structural gender inequality. However, the Bank’s
representation of women’s inequality reinforces the audience’s ambivalent identification
with the report’s targeted women by privileging traditional liberal ideals such as
individualism, choice, rights, and voice. The report’s focus on gender subordination and

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“social capital” legitimizes the Bank’s ethos and activities because both are carefully framed within an apoliticized discourse of liberal transnational feminism. The ideals of “social capital” and gender—although they surface in the report as the keys into the mainstream of development—actually keep in place the neoliberal ideal that individuals are free and function as rational agents who can secure their own economic well being. Yet, at the same time, the Bank reifies former colonial representations of the non-westernized woman as a marginalized vulnerable victim who is dependent upon the Bank’s programs in order to be moved out of their “underdeveloped” position. The Bank, through its market-centered development plans, suggests that it enables women to become free, rational, productive, and enterprising individuals. Although Engendering Development is a report, it has an embedded argument about women and their relationship to the market. The overarching assumption that is restated throughout the report is that if women are able to enter into the market, then they can be emancipated by it. This assumption is quite persuasive when considering the audience of the report.

Engendering Development (see figure 1) has the physical appearance of a textbook; it has a hardback red cover with its title appearing in gray and yellow, and the report shares a textbook’s bulk and size (about eight inches by ten inches). The textbook-like appearance of the report suggests that the audience is not just Bank members, but students studying economic development as well. The cover contains a simplistic image of a head (with presumably a woman’s face) and shoulders; half of the face looks out and the other, in darker red, looks to the side. This image is not centered but lies on the left side of the cover.
The physical appearance as textbook is reinforced by the following statement in the preface: “This report was written for a broad audience of students and practitioners of development, and especially for those who want to know why gender-related issues matter to development policy and practice” (xiii). The report further defines its audience through its sophisticated definition of gender:

Gender refers to socially constructed roles and socially learned behaviors and expectations associated with men and women. Women and men are different biologically—but all cultures interpret and elaborate these innate biological differences into a set of social expectations about what behaviors and activities are appropriate, and what rights, resources, and power they possess. (Engendering 2)
In this description of gender, the Bank mirrors how scholars in the fields of Women’s Studies and Feminist Studies consider gender differences—namely that difference tends to be based on cultural expectations, not innate biology. The report’s use of the terms “rights,” “resources,” and “power” also reflects the language that academic feminists and activists employ when describing discrimination against women. The report’s complex definition of gender might make the Bank’s proposals in the report persuasive to feminists because the Bank’s ethos is secured by its turn to basic feminist theory.

Importantly, Engendering Development is not merely a report; rather, it is a heuristic for bringing “equality” to Third-world women. Thus, the Bank’s attention to issues that concern other feminists makes their argument to bring women into the mainstream of development persuasive because it lays out three enthymematic development needs for women: rights, resources, and voice.

The women whom the Bank targets in this report come from the following regions: East Asia and the Pacific Islands, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East and Northern Africa, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa (4). While certainly many residents of these countries are disenfranchised economically, the Bank focuses on how these regions (like all regions) experience gender inequality. The report breaks down this inequality in terms of rights, resources, and voice. For example, the report defines women’s rights as the ability to “own land, manage property, conduct business, or […] travel without their husband’s consent” (4). Implicit within the report’s definition of rights, is a corporate managerial discourse that is similar to the one employed by the Bank in its promotional pamphlet. The terms “own,” “manage,” and “business” echo each other and thus, have stronger resonance with the
audience than the definition’s final right to travel with a husband’s consent. As this
definition implies, women are empowered when they can enter the capitalist market
because they enter into an alliance with others—they join the mainstream. These basic
rights that the report defines are indeed important, but they also resonate strongly with
the Bank’s intended audience because they draw on westernized notions of sovereignty
and individualism.

Likewise, the report continues, “Gender disparities in rights constrain the sets of
choices available to women in many aspects of life—often profoundly limiting their
ability to participate in or benefit from development” (4). Again, the Bank eloquently
states how a lack of rights further limits women’s ability to secure for herself and her
family the necessities of survival. Just as this recognition appeals to liberal feminists, it
also plays on the audience’s emotions by demonstrating how the lack of “choice,” so
often used in the US as a marker of disenfranchisement, can be dehumanizing. By
articulating the strong relationship between rights and choice, the report not only employs
the audience’s deeply embedded liberal ideology, it also conveys a rhetoric of choice that
places the individual Third-world citizen at the center of her destiny. The report’s use of
this form of rhetorical identification reifies for the audience what they already expect and
in doing so it elides the larger structural constraints that a woman in a Third-world nation
faces. The Bank’s nuanced and sophisticated understanding of how women’s gendered
subordination restrains women’s agency, their ability to accrue resources, and to have an
influence both inside the home and within the public sphere captures the Bank’s audience
of researchers, feminists, and educators by establishing the Bank’s ethos and altruistic
aims.
Despite the report’s obvious use of feminist language and ideologies, the report has overlooked a significant body of feminist research that suggests bringing women in pre-industrialized, industrialized, and post-industrialized countries into the economic “mainstream” often times can hinder their material security or reinforce already present culturally derived inequalities. Moreover, capitalism is a classed system; while one group of women might significantly benefit from their entry into the global market economy, their success is dependent upon another’s adversity. A section called, “Fostering Economic Development to Strengthen Incentives for More Equal Resources and Participation,” in Engendering promotes this very limiting structure:

Economic development leads to the emergence of labor markets where none has existed. In so doing, it not only creates or strengthens market signals about the returns to labor but also eliminates economic inefficiencies. For example, where active labor markets exist, hired labor provides a substitute for female family labor, whether on farms or in household maintenance or care activities. This allows households to use time more efficiently, perhaps reducing women’s workload. Where labor markets are absent or do not function well, such substitution is not possible. (19)

The statements represent an important contradiction in the Bank’s rhetoric. While we have seen several examples of the Bank’s stated concerns about gender, race, ethnicity, and class, these particular concerns are terministic screens to their overarching intentions. As the above example demonstrates, equality is tied to opportunity. When markets are present, they provide the opportunity for women, but such opportunities may only benefit
some women—to the extent that they can hire other women—and thus maintain a classed capitalist system.

In other words, the report’s savvy feminist discourse on rights and equality is a terministic screen for the Bank’s larger focus on the importance of transnational capitalism. The market, as the report implicitly states, can level gendered inequalities: “gender disparities are inefficient, imposing costs on societies and on development” (35).

Here, we see a remarkable shift in the Bank’s categorization of gender inequality. While the above definitions of gender, rights, resources, and voice suggest that economic development would benefit women directly, this portion of the report articulates women’s inequality as a hindrance to such development. Thus, the report turns to the power of the market, and not local governments, to abolish inequalities: “Societal institutions […] as well as economic institutions, such as markets, shape roles and relationships between men and women[.] They encourage or discourage prejudice” (13). Likewise, the report claims, “That gender inequalities exact high human costs and constrain countries development prospects provides a compelling case for public and private action to promote gender equality” (14). The report’s mention of private institution and market intervention as being on par with the governing institutions is significant because it reinforces the neoliberal tenets of the Bank whereby state governments’ power and influence is called into question by the innovation and flexibility of the market. Thus, women’s structural inequality serves as an excuse and an impetus for the Bank to extend private business contracts to women (Engendering 12) because women’s “social capital” provides the private sector an investment safety net.
According to the World Bank, “social capital” refers to the intuitions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society’s social interactions. […] Social capital is not just the sum of the institutions that underpin a society—it is the glue that holds them together” (“What is Social Capital” 1). The World Bank Group promotes “social capital” to encourage social cohesion by creating “associations between people, consisting of social networks and associated norms. [Such] social networks can increase productivity by reducing the costs of doing business [because it] facilitates coordination and cooperation” (“What is Social Capital” 1). The report valorizes women’s “social capital” in the form of traditional networks in one of its central justifications for bringing women’s labor into the market: “Women in business are less likely to pay bribes to government officials, perhaps because women have higher standards of ethical behavior or greater risk aversion” (Engendering 13).

Indeed, as Bergeron explains, “the Bank is increasingly viewing women’s lack of access to formal networks (e.g. via the paid labor market) as an impetus for them to tap into their cooperative nature to create the sorts of informal social networks that increase their social capital” (413). She continues to explain that these “traditional” social networks—present, for example, in Sub-Saharan African and Trinidadian women’s farming practices (Engendering 175)—create a safe place for microlending institutions. Engendering furthers this notion: “group-based lending contract[s], […] uses peer pressure as means to promote loan repayment” (174).

However, these same traditional ties can reinforce ethnic and class differences among women (Bergeron 174). The Bank, by employing these sorts of simplifications of women’s relationships with each other, reinforces the stereotype that third-world women
are passive, docile, backward, and in need of being saved (Narayan 19). The report’s stereotyping demonstrates another form of rhetorical ambivalence for the audience. While it is clear that the Bank intends to promote their institution as progressive and attentive to contemporary issues of gender subordination, racism, and classism, by representing Third-world women in this way the report shows how the Bank’s policies depend upon maintaining the power relationships between developed and developing countries. Ultimately, the Bank’s simplification of Third-world women’s relationships to each other reifies the audience’s colonial and ambivalent expectations while simplifying the economic dependencies created by the Bank’s plans for “inclusion.”

Despite the Bank’s stated sensitivity to women’s global inequality, its arguments for interventions are still framed through an economic lens that does not address the inherent structural inequalities of global capitalism. Although *Engendering* does mention in its definition of gender (and throughout the overall report) that women’s gendered inequalities can also stem from cultural constraints, the remedy it offers lies in developing the market-ready industry that is easily exportable to the west. The report’s definitions of gender and its overarching method to bring women into the economic “mainstream” does not challenge the neoliberal tenets of the Bank, rather it merely adds gender onto a system that reinforces pre-existing economic systems. In this way, *Engendering*’s recommendations are disabling.

**Conclusion**

A disability studies perspective is important for rhetorical policy analysis. Disability scholars such as Lennard J. Davis, Michael Berube, and Rosemary Garland-
Thompson make clear “that there is no neat division between the world of the body and the world of the body politic” thus we must consider the ways that ableism functions at the discursive, rhetorical, and material levels (Davis Bending 111). As I have demonstrated above, normalizing and ableist rhetorics are present throughout Bank materials and the Bank employs them to persuade audiences that the transnational market economy can be enabling for minorities such as women and people with disabilities. Wolfensohn’s and the Bank’s discourse of inclusion, coupled with a fantastic ableist metaphor of development, operates as a normalizing prescription of success.

However, as Engendering Development’s contradictory development plans for women make clear—and it will be interesting to see a similar Bank report in the future on people with disabilities—often the Bank’s rhetoric is not enabling, rather it is disabling. The Bank proscribes that women (in the 1990’s) and people with disabilities (in the 2000s) must become part of the economic mainstream and thus a normative global citizen without considering how the material consequences of their development plans. For example, Engendering suggests that the market economy will help some women find jobs outside the home and they will then be able to hire other women to do their housework at low cost. For whom, will this classed system be enabling? Likewise, Wolfensohn, at the recent “Disability and Inclusive Development: Sharing Learning and Building Alliances” suggests that people with disabilities must be brought into the economic mainstream without accounting for how that system is made for those who are currently able-bodied. How for example, does the Bank’s mainstreaming process and rhetoric function to reify the fine line between normal citizen and “deviant” disenfranchised and/or disabled citizen? How do we, and why should we (as rhetoricians) intervene in the international
policy-making process? How do we make the rhetoric and practice of public policy enabling not disabling?

I think that the *Engendering Development*’s articulation of academics and students as their audience is significant. Ultimately, for me, this naming begs the question: what is the role of the humanities—and more specifically rhetoric and composition studies—in policy-making and analysis? In fact, I think that the Bank would like those of us from the academic community to respond critically, analytically, and productively. During the Bank conference I attended last fall, for example, the Bank invited Harvard economist and philosopher Amartya Sen to present his views on ethical development. What Sen made clear, was that he did not agree with the Bank’s approach to development. For him, and other disability scholars, it made more sense to consider how development practices merely are reactive and do not address the broader social and economic constraints that effect *all* people and create situations where anyone can become disenfranchised. He also pointed out that we must consider the very representational practices that promote some modes of “development” over others. Given the rhetorics that audiences are most familiar with are indeed, most persuasive to them, how do we break the representational pattern that veils the power relationships created by the late-twentieth century global economy? What is our role as rhetoricians?

Chapter Five begins to answer these questions. In the next chapter I consider how the late twentieth-century global economic system shapes student identity. In particular, I look at how the rhetoric of neoliberalism has produced students who see their roles in the university as consumers first and students second. In other words, they have internalized the ideologies promoted by late twentieth-century policies. I suggest that looking
critically at public policy in the classroom complicates student’s role only as economic actors. In the rhetoric and composition classroom, we can employ a heuristic that teaches students to engage with policies in the ways I have here in this chapter and in the chapters that precede it. We can teach students to read and write public policy critically by putting public policy in its local and historic contexts; examining how the people policy effects might understand themselves and their predicaments; considering how policy-makers own history, culture, and conceptual framework informs the creation of policy; and looking at the relationship between language and culture.
Works Cited


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Notes for Chapter 4

1 As Bergeron further points out, given the history of the Bank and its propensity to employ the language of its critics in order to assuage them, scholars must pay attention to how the Bank’s new focus on inclusion might simply stifle the possibility of structural and ideological change within the Bank (404).
2 I thank Tola Pierce and Kate Bedford for helping me to formulate this point. Both these scholars of the World Bank suggested to me that it was important for me as a rhetorician to consider that the US is the audience of Bank materials and that few scholars recognize this and the broader power dynamic produced by the fact that most Bank members reside in the US.
3 Attention to audience is always of key importance for a rhetorician. However, the audience of this speech is unclear. While indeed Wolfensohn presented this speech at the annual convention, the speech as publicized on the Bank’s website and is now currently archived there. The Bank’s website, as I mention an above endnote, caters to a diverse audience of researchers, investors, Bank employees, and concerned citizens. Thus, my earlier the discussion about the audience addressed and the audience evoked resurfaces. We might imagine then that the audience addressed is the group present during Wolfensohn’s delivery. The audience evoked encompasses a broad range of (inter)national policy-makers, investors, and citizens.
4 For a more extensive examination of the terministic screen see the Introduction and Chapter Three.
5 Briefly, according to the World Bank, social capital “refers to the intuitions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society’s social interactions. […] Social capital is not just the sum of the institutions that underpin a society—it is the glue that holds them together” (World Bank “What is Social Capital” 1). The World Bank Group promotes social capital to encourage social cohesion by creating “associations between people, consisting of social networks and associated norms. [Such] [s]ocial networks an increase productivity by reducing the costs of doing business [because it] facilitates coordination and cooperation” (World Bank, “What is Social Capital” 1). I will better define and analyze the ideologies of social capital later in this chapter.
6 All the members of the World Bank Group meet once a year at an annual conference. This conference’s location usually differs from year to year.
7 Bergeron also claims that one of Wolfensohn’s central rhetorical appeals evokes walking with the people whom the Bank serves. Wolfensohn’s ethos is secured by his presented willingness to speak with, be with, and make a connection with the “developing” world’s people.
8 Also, see for example, Johanna Brenner, “Transnational Feminism and the Struggle for Global Justice” in New Politics Winter 2003. She points out that organizations such as WID have been concerned with the relationship between gender and development for over thirty years. It is important to recognize the proliferation of such organizing when examining the changing rhetoric of gender within Bank materials.
9 This rhetorical move to de-legitimate these women’s existence was mirrored in “The World Bank” pamphlet I analyze in Chapter Three. Sonony Zhanazarova is given the Anglicized name “Sonya” which at once begs identification from the audience and erases her familial and cultural origins.
10 Favelas are shanty towns in the hill areas of Brazil.
11 Just the women become objects in Wolfensohn’s speech, later we see that countries become personified.
12 It is also significant that Wolfensohn looks to women as the missing link in his narrative of development. This sentiment will be explored in the following section.
13 These discourses of exclusion are maintained by governing bodies, language systems, and bodily practices (Davis Enforcing 107).
14 I thank Nan Johnson for her input on naming this figure.
15 More recently, feminists have been concerned with how development of countries or invasion of a region is based on the idea that the women need to be liberated; we saw this, for example in the arguments for the US’s invasion of Afghanistan shortly after 9-11. Such movements to “liberate” women recall earlier patterns of colonialism. See, for example, Spurr’s Rhetoric of Empire.
16 The focus on issues related to globalization and transnationalism has recently become of crucial concern for feminists working in a variety of fields. In fact, literary scholars Caren Kaplan and Inderpal Grewal set out to define an analytic that is based on transnational feminist cultural studies in order to account for the way that the power, material differences, representations, and the movement of people, goods, and capital are interrelated in and specific to our current transnational economy. They claim, “Transnational feminist
practices, [...] involve forms of alliance, subversion, and complicity within which asymmetries and inequalities can be critiqued” (http://social.chass.ncsu.edu/jouvert/v5i1/grewal.htm). While the analytic proposed by Kaplan and Grewal is of core importance in the field of humanities—and indeed for this project (see, for example, the project’s introduction)—women working outside the borders of the west/north have been paying attention to these forms of power for a long time. Regardless, Kaplan and Grewal’s analytic provide a heuristic for academic scholars to bring together concerns about how representative acts relate to contemporary globalization and unequal material conditions. There are notable similarities, however, between Kaplan and Grewal’s definition of transnational feminism and the Bank’s more recent concerns with women’s gendered subordination and their potential to achieve “social capital.” Both in the definition of social capital and transnational feminism, there is an inherent concern about the links between power, norms, institutions, and alliances. While transnational feminists are certainly concerned with the material realities produced by global relationships of power, the discourse of social capital and gender that is created by the Bank appears to share and address some of these same concerns such as the way that people are linked to social institutions and norms. However, looking closely at the materiality of the Bank’s discourses, women’s economic security is tethered to one institution, the market, which is presented as the way to level power inequalities between men and women and the countries that lie in the north/west and south/east.

17 See, for example, Barbara Roberts, Sakia Sassen, Cynthia Enloe, Isabela Baaker, and Aihwa Ong

18 Bergeron makes a compelling argument, “This s not to say that the World Bank does not appropriate feminist languages and concerns for its own purposes, but only that its claim to recognize ‘enterprising women’ in the capitalist sense may include the sorts of politically enterprising women whose interpretation of ‘inclusion’ may be at serious odds with the Bank’s agenda” (411).

19 Pierre Bourdieu speaks of “social capital.” He claims social capital is the basis of all the pertinent differences between the modes of domination: that is, very schematically, between on the one hand, social universes in which relations of domination are made, unmade, and remade in and by the interactions between persons, and the other hand social formations in which, mediated by objective, institutionalized mechanisms, such as those producing and guaranteeing the distribution of ‘titles’ [...] relations of domination have the opacity and permanence of things and escape the grasp of individual consciousness and power. (“Structures, Habitus, and Power” 184)

Unlike the Bank, Bourdieu speaks of the inherent power relationships between people and institutions. The Bank, however, uses social capital as a way to level the playing field to make individuals equal.
CHAPTER 5

RESPONSIBLE RHETORICIANS

A prominent feature of the corporate university is students' alienation and powerlessness; universities often treat them as anonymous consumers, rather than as members of a community who deserve a say in its policies. *When administrators do that, they can expect student customers to act like politicized consumer activists.* (Featherstone 31-32, emphasis mine)

[I]t is the view of the authors of this legislation that the academic freedom protections to prevent indoctrination in the classroom are generally buried in “faculty handbooks,” as faculty “responsibilities,” never codified as a student right. (David Horowitz, testimony in front of the Ohio Senate March 15, 2005, Students for Academic Freedom website)

Transnational corporations have replaced the nation state as the university’s counter-part/client and agency has been re-defined in market terms. (Strickland 4)

Introduction

In late January 2005, Republican Sen. Larry A. Mumper presented to the Ohio Senate Bill 24— a piece of legislation that attempts to restrict not only university hiring and firing practices, but also the kinds of materials that students should be asked to debate in the classroom, the types of speakers schools would be allowed to invite to campus, *and* the kind of scholarship that professors would be permitted to produce. For example, Bill 24 states, professors “shall make their students aware of serious scholarly viewpoints other than their own through classroom discussion or dissemination of written materials […] and shall be hired, fired, promoted, and granted tenure on the basis of their competence and appropriate knowledge in their field” (Sec. 3345.80, 3). While at first
glance, Bill 24 might seem fairly innocent, its rhetorical and political affects are far reaching. As shown above, Bill 24’s language is vague and unspecific. We are not told where the line between “appropriate knowledge in the field” and inappropriate knowledge is; what constitutes a scholarly viewpoint versus an opinion, or what happens when professors cross these invisible lines. Because Bill 24’s language is so unspecific, policy enforcers can easily use the Bill to regulate the university’s practices to fit their political, economic, and cultural aims.

Senate Bill 24, with its unclear goals, is not specific to Ohio, however; Bill 24 is merely an emblem of a larger national movement that is affecting individual universities across the country. In fact, just a month after Bill 24 was introduced into the Ohio Senate, the University of Colorado Board of Regents (supported by two Colorado Senators) began the process to fire Ward Churchill, a tenured professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of Colorado. Churchill’s case illustrates the how the line between scholarly work and what is read as a personal viewpoints is not drawn clearly. The Colorado Board of Regents claimed that an essay written by Churchill, which critiques the US’s history and present-day policy in relationship to the events of September 11, 2001, violates the university’s (and state’s) “academic freedom” clause because it does not produce “balanced” scholarship (“SAF Home Page”). At the point of writing this chapter, the University of Colorado Board of Regents is undertaking an investigation of Churchill’s scholarship in order to find evidence of fraudulent sources to better justify his dismissal (“SAF Home Page”).
Indeed, the Colorado situation and Senate Bill 24 are reminiscent of the Red Scare in the 1950s; however, today students are taking more of a lead in policing professors and universities. The activist group Students for Academic Freedom (SAF), “a national coalition of independent campus groups dedicated to restoring academic freedom and educational values to America’s institutions of higher learning” is responsible for both The University of Colorado’s Board of Regents’ investigation of Churchill and the introduction of Ohio Bill 24 into the Senate (“Mission and Strategy”). The cultural and political power wielded by this student-led group is remarkable; in addition to the Colorado Board of Regents reaction to Churchill and there are a number of Bills in support of “The Student Bill of Rights” circulating at the state level.⁴

SAF demonstrate what Liza Featherstone suggests in my beginning epigraph: that students, as products of the corporate/consumer university will act as “politicized consumer activists” (31-32).⁵ Although Featherstone argues that students can and do become consumer activists and use their knowledge of how the university functions as a corporate-backed money-making venture to fight against international exploitation of workers, some students—members of SAF attending the same universities as members of the anti-globalization groups Featherstone describes—see their own identities as student consumers as a means to procure “intellectual diversity,” “pluralism,” and “inclusion” (“Student Bill of Rights”).⁶

SAF’s activism in these recent cases demonstrates how college students have embraced the identity of the “injured” (as Wendy Brown might suggest) student who is dis-empowered by the classroom.⁷ For example, SAF’s mission statement claims:
[SAF] is a campaign to promote intellectual fairness, civility, reasoned intellectual pluralism and inclusion in higher education; to secure more representation for under-represented viewpoints; to end the tyranny of majority or minority viewpoints; and to create a positive learning environment for all students regardless of political or religious beliefs. It is a campaign to ensure that intellectual difference is fairly treated. (“Mission and Strategy”)

SAF uses the god/devil terms such as fairness and tyranny to appeal to student’s anxieties about the role of the university and to show how SAF members see themselves as victims of abuse by the university at large. SAF makes clear that they believe the university discriminates against them. In addition to the strong term “abuse,” which further supports their injured identity, SAF employs rights discourse framed with enthymematic terms such as “inclusion,” “pluralism,” “diversity,” “openness,” and “fairness” throughout its Mission Statement and Bills of Rights. SAF’s political rhetoric illustrates that on the one hand, its members are sophisticated rhetoricians who have learned to execute the available means of persuasion. On the other hand, students, persuaded by these very enthymematic terms due to their familiarity, have also learned how to employ the Burkian terministic screen.

However, as I will demonstrate further below, not only does SAF employ a discourse of rights, they also appeal to their audience’s values of individualism, family, normalcy, empowerment, and consumption even as they appropriate feminist terms. SAF’s rhetoric of abuse, for instance, evokes the language present in university sexual harassment policies. Drawing from the feminist belief that abuse is about power and control, for example, SAF describes “the relationship between professors and students is
one of inequality. Professors have power over students’ futures” (“Mission and Strategy”). Like in the World Bank report *Engendering Development* (Chapter Four), SAF twist the terms of abuse to reflect their own political project and renounce other “liberal” ideologies such as feminism. SAF’s appeal to identification (with other abused students) and difference (from the power hungry and dangerous professors who teach them) persuades other students to at once differentiate themselves as they tell their story of abuse while identifying with those who, like them are injured and thus able to support them. Like in the contemporary welfare policies I examine in Chapter Two, these students see the neoliberal corporate university and the marketplace (of black and white ideas) as the primary way they can acquire normative and productive citizenship. SAF represents the university professors who teach them as falling outside of the mainstream of US normal citizenship (in that professors take advantage of the university system and are thus able to “abuse” students). Like in the Bank policies I describe in Chapter Three where a supra-national organization takes the place of the state, professors must be disciplined by an entity outside the academy’s walls, not by the academy itself. In other words, the university cannot be trusted to take care of their student’s complaints or their professor’s “irresponsible” practices.

Although these students have experienced how in the late twentieth century the market often exceeds the state (indeed, they have seen a rise in their out-of-pocket cost for education along with a rise in corporate grants to the university), they turn (quite literally) to the state/State to police the university. As adept rhetoricians, the students of SAF employ a sophisticated, albeit ahistorical, discourse of rights along with a rhetoric of market fundamentalism that is difficult to counter or disagree with in order to ask the
state to intervene in the affairs of the university. SAF’s arguments use familiar appeals to point out both the problems and the solutions to university educational practices.

Although SAF’s rhetorical choices resonate with other neoliberal policies I have examined throughout this dissertation, as I show in this chapter a very similar rhetoric appears in our local classrooms. SAF’s student members are acting politically as persuasive policy-makers but they do so following the cultural narrative laid out by neoliberal policies. SAF’s rhetorical choices suggest (and reiterate how my own students have described themselves) that student identity at the turn of the century has been directly affected by the rise of neoliberalism: students see themselves as consumers who deserve a “diverse education” simply because they pay for it (whether out of pocket or via state taxes) and because they have seen how the lack of state regulation has effected them, they turn to the state. SAF’s leader, David Horowitz in several of his public speeches claims, “You can’t get a good education if they are only telling you half the story—even if you are paying $30,000 a year” (“SAF Home Page”). Like my other examples in this dissertation, in order to persuade their audience, SAF uses emotional personal testimonies to recount times when their “academic freedom” was compromised while also appealing to audience member’s neoliberal consumer sensibilities.²

As a result, in the rhetoric and composition classroom specifically, we see not only the material-labor ramifications of neoliberalism that scholars such as Henry Giroux, Bruce Horner, Donna Strickland, and Marc Bousquet have chronicled,¹ but also how students’ identities and educational desires and values are shaped by the anxious rhetorics that frame neoliberal policies. While many composition classrooms seek to empower students to constructively criticize the university through public writing, for example,
SAF demonstrates that as students, they are already acting as empowered persuasive policy-makers by being publicly and actively critical of the university. I contend that SAF’s arguments for academic freedom and the testimonies they publish illustrate where our own pedagogical practices fail; SAF members show us their demands for a pedagogy that makes sense for students of the twenty-first century. As products of a neoliberal economy and culture, SAF’s student-members display how their sense of justice and empowerment is bound to their identities as consumer-citizen-activists.

How does the cultural-economic situation of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century inform our student’s rhetorical choices? How can we begin to productively address our student’s identities as neoliberal consumers, activists, and learners? What is missing in the university, broadly, and the rhetoric and composition classroom, specifically, that would address the needs and desires of our students? If we were to create a rhetoric and composition pedagogy that directly addresses our student’s neoliberal identities what would it look like?

In this chapter and the proceeding Postscript, I start to answer these questions. I begin by considering some of the current rhetoric and composition scholarship on student activism in the age of neoliberalism. I show how scholars have discounted the identities of students who associate with or share the beliefs of the SAF movement. Next, I explore the rhetoric of SAF’s rights discourse, mission statement, and actions as represented by their organization’s website. I argue that the means of persuasion employed by SAF shed light on who our students are and what pedagogies might best reach them; I also illustrate that although SAF, like other student activist movements, is somewhat of an anomaly, the “average-every-day” student (as presented by SAF’s public testimonies and my own
classroom experiences) share some of SAF’s views. SAF’s rhetorical choices unwittingly invite a pedagogy that makes sense to them and that addresses their educational and labored relationship to the changing national economic culture that surrounds them.

The Consumer-Activist Student

Both Henri Giroux’s essay “Globalizing Dissent and Radicalizing Democracy: Pedagogy, Politics, and the Responsibility of Critical Intellectuals” and Nancy Welch’s “Living Room: Teaching Public Writing in a Post-Publicity Era” paint a somewhat hopeful view of students, their activism, and their concern for political, cultural, and economic injustice. Giroux, for example, reminds us how student organizations such as United Students Against Sweatshops, Project Hip Hop, and Student Labor Action Association have been critical of and active against the labor practices, economic inequalities, and expanding market forces that characterize their realities in the early twenty-first century. He suggests that this activism reflects what students learn in the classroom.

Likewise, Welch shares a compelling story of one of her student’s public writing and public activism; the student Welch describes is arrested for speaking out—in the form of posted public poetry—against the US’s responses to the 9/11 attacks. Welch notes that her student’s willingness to undertake street level activism demonstrates the need for feminist composition and rhetoric scholars to teach the history and practice of public activism. She also points out that in the current neoliberal economy where citizens are silenced and the market rules, teaching the history and rhetorical conventions of in-
your-face activism is one way to combat the cultural and economic climate that silences more progressive ways of thinking.

While I find both Welch’s and Giroux’s celebration of these sort of student-led, on-the-ground activism compelling, my experience (and that of most of my colleagues both here at Ohio State University and elsewhere) suggests that the student activism described by Giroux and Welch, where students put to action what they are taught in the classroom, is the exception not the norm. Rather, unlike Welch’s and Giroux’s students, my students tend to be less interested in the material realities of globalization, for example, then they are in supporting the US’s international endeavors and their “rights” to a fair classroom and grade. In sum, my students are not the best audience for Welch’s and Giroux’s radical pedagogies. I do not mean to disparage my students, especially because many of my students are among the first in their families to attend college and their education goals reflect the pressure of being that first family member to attend college. Rather, I highlight these characteristics of my students because they demonstrate quite clearly the “elephant” in the room that the scholars above tend not to address: those students who are not necessarily interested in being enlightened by our progressive politics—those students who seek to obtain gainful employment so that they might transcend or maintain their class status.

While Welch argues, for example, “At the same time that compositions have shown renewed interest in public writing, neoliberal social and economic policies have dramatically shrunk the spaces in which most students voices can be heard” (1), I suggest that the forces of neoliberalism have actually opened up spaces for students to resist our teaching in formal and organized ways. SAF’s public, state, and federal level activism
describe in my introduction to this chapter demonstrates this point quite clearly. In fact, SAF has ample support from legislators, senators, and conservative groups. Students who think as SAF does, do not come to class dis-empowered, they come with quite a strong support system for resisting our practices: an established language of rights, an activist group ready to support their resistance, and in some cases university-wide or state supported legislation.

As Elizabeth Flynn in her essay on student resistance to feminism points out rather cynically

[we] might conclude, then, the resistance to that which is dangerous or oppressive [to us as liberal-minded or progressive scholars] is important and necessary, while [student] resistance to that which […] [we consider] libratory is debilitating. (18)

SAF’s belief-system, which many of my students share, demonstrates to us as scholars and teachers that resistance is in fact not debilitating—but rather empowering. In other words, as rhetoric and composition scholars we sometimes are baffled by the very students who are resistant to our methods and who do not follow our pedagogical practices to “empower” them; in turn they actively seek other ways to make their desires heard. We often describe these students to each other in the privacy of our offices or copy rooms, as difficult, uncooperative, or even lazy. Yet, as SAF’s legislative activism demonstrates, students are not lazy or uncooperative, they are serious about their education and they desire an education that appears to relate more specifically to their economic needs (in an unstable economy) and their personal values. And, since they pay for their education, they are not afraid to use their personal experiences, rights discourses,
consumer power—or at least the rhetoric of consumerism—to make sure they get what they want.

Neoliberalism, and the consequences of a neoliberal economy, has affected the way members of SAF specifically, and our students generally, represent themselves, their values, and their educational aims. What I find most interesting is that SAF first uses rights discourse to demonstrate how the university’s practices are “abusive,” disenfranchising, and oppressive. These students’ rhetorical choices suggest that because they identify themselves as consumers of education, they have the right to a particular form of education.

For example, while SAF leader Horowitz, as I mention above, repeatedly suggests that students deserve a balanced education based on what they (or their parents) pay in taxes and tuition, SAF student members focus primarily on students’ right to decide what it is that the university should spend student activity fees on and the sorts of professors the university promotes or hires. In an open letter to SAF, for example, one student criticizes that most student money at his institution goes toward supporting “far left and radical organizations on campus; [they] receive between six and ten times as much money as is provided to campus conservatives” (Dogan 1). To secure their goal of the university supporting a variety of activities, SAF appeals to the state/State through the Academic’s Bill of Rights and Student’s Bill of Rights. SAF recognizes that turning to the state to control university activities appears to compromise their support of what they call academic freedom (the rhetorical weight of this term will be explored further below). In the Frequently Asked Questions portion of the Mission Statement the first question and answer is the following:
Question: Is there a conflict of interest in appealing to the legislature for help in the case of public universities, since the principles of academic freedom seek to protect the university from political interference?

Answer: There is no conflict. The state legislatures and publicly appointed boards of trustees have a fiduciary responsibility to taxpayer-funded institutions and their tax-paying supporters. Among them is to insure that these institutions serve the whole community and not just a partisan political or philosophical faction. If public universities become politically partisan they act to subvert the democratic process, which is not what their creators intended. It is illegal under state patronage laws to use state-funded institutions for partisan purposes. […]

Defending the non-partisan character of public institutions is a responsibility of legislators. (“Mission and Strategy”)

As the two above examples illustrate, the university asks students as citizen-consumers of education to pay for certain activities and courses but they feel they do not have the agency to decide which ones they want the money to go to. SAF further exhibits their ties to their identities as consumers throughout their mission statement. In the following example, SAF compares campaign finance reform to how the university needs to reform its support for campus organizations.

[S]tudent programs of a partisan nature should be fair and balanced. The principle of campaign finance reform is recognized in the society at large but is currently absent from campus affairs where the vast preponderance of general student funds is devoted to promoting ideas at one end of the political spectrum. This is
unbearable whatever set of partisan agendas should exercise power at any given moment. […] The allocation of student activities funds and the selection of visiting speakers should be conducted in a manner that observes the principles of intellectual fairness and inclusion. Students for Academic Freedom will advocate reforms that make the “public square” of the university a more inclusive and representative marketplace of ideas. (“Mission and Strategy”)

SAF arrangement of their argument is quite significant. The above statement is placed just above their formal call for universities and state and federal governments to adopt the Academic’s Bill of Rights. As I will show further below, throughout SAF’s Mission Statement they employ rights discourses and name themselves as victims of professor’s whims, yet these students also demonstrate that because they are ultimately the consumers of education (and they embrace the motto that the consumer is always right) they deserve a particular type of education. By drawing a parallel to their identities as victimized consumers and the current debates on campaign finance reform, SAF articulates further their rights in ways that all members of their audience (students, professors, and administrators) might recognize.

In addition, as student-consumers of education, they are asked by the university to pay for certain activities and courses but they feel they do not have the agency to decide which ones they want the money to go to. Thus, as SAF demonstrates, rights discourse and the capitalist sense of the market become bound together in their arguments. Students see that part of their right is to choose what it is that they will consume and not to be told what they should consume.
Yet, as demonstrated above, just as students see themselves as consumers of education they find themselves in conflict with the actual teachings in the classroom. While they believe that academic freedom is a crucial part of US national identity, they also believe that because they pay for their education, as empowered consumers of education, the university should provide them with the product they ordered. However, SAF’s connection between student identity and consumer identities is not their primary means of persuasion. Rather, as SAF concludes in the their Mission Statement: “To sum up: The campaign is about Intellectual Fairness, Diversity, Civility, Reasoned Intellectual Pluralism, Inclusion and Respect for Intellectual Difference” (“Mission and Strategy”). The terms pluralism, inclusion, and respect represent the enthymematic terministic screens from which SAF draws. Despite the fact that SAF ends with the above statement, the arguments that surrounds their over all mission for academic freedom equates the values they list with the values of the market; in other words, their participation as consumer-citizen-student entitles them to the US ideals.

The Disabling University and Student Rights

SAF uses its website to disseminate most of its information and serves as a national “hub” that connects interested visitors with other SAF members or local chapters. The site changes on a weekly basis and serves as news source for its visitors often reporting on or making public any sort of political activism that members might have performed. On this site, visitors can also learn about SAF’s mission and plan, who in the public media are reporting about them, what states are considering SAF’s “Student
Bill of Rights,” and what student-members think about university professors and administrators. Below is a screenshot of the SAF homepage.

(Figure 5.1 “SAF Home Page”)

On the top bar of the SAF’s homepage there is a blue and white banner that displays three monkeys (one with its hands over its ears, another with hands over its mouth, and the last with its hands over its eyes), the organization’s name, the phrase “You can’t get a good education if they are only telling you half the story,” and a list links for visitors to explore the site. The monkey logo that SAF uses is significant because the logo implies that the existing university system is disabling—in its current practice the university makes students deaf, blind, and dumb monkeys. However, as SAF’s banner further suggests, knowing the full story (over “half the story”) can provide
university students the path to normalcy—they will be able to see, hear, and speak clearly. As visitors navigate more deeply into the site, the monkey logo disappears on several of the documents written by student members; this demonstrates how students gain a voice through SAF’s organization.

Under the banner and links are three columns. The first column on the left lists information for individual state actions, donations, campus chapters, and informational literature. The middle column includes recent articles produced for or about SAF along with a box outlined in red that links to the “Abuse Center.” The last column contains a collection of “basic texts” including the “Student’s Bill of Rights,” the “Academic’s Bill of Rights” (the texts of these bills are virtually the same), and general commentary on the organization.

One of the “basic texts” in the last column is SAF’s “Mission and Strategy.” The Mission Statement describes SAF’s four goals:

1. To promote intellectual diversity on campus
2. To defend the right of students to be treated with respect by faculty and administrators, regardless of their political or religious beliefs
3. To promote fairness, civility and inclusion in student affairs
4. To secure the adoption of the “Academic Bill of Rights” as official university policy. (“Mission and Strategy”)

These goals illustrate SAF’s ethos as a fair and concerned organization. SAF draws from the enthymemes civility, inclusion, and fairness to support their call for a “Student’s Bill of Rights” and conger up their audience’s sense of safety. The above goals, because they rely upon the audience’s already stated assumptions about the university’s role, persuade
audiences to consider their own educational experience and set up the terms in which visitors might frame their complaints (this will be further examined below). In other words, the goals reify for the audience already taken-for-granted terms and help those audience members to establish their own ethos when walking through SAF’s grievance process. SAF’s goals demonstrate to visitors that as an organization SAF will protect students’ best interests because the university does not; these goals make clear the necessity for a local, state, and national “Student’s Bill of Rights” since universities do not serve student’s best interests.

Although the “Student Bill of Rights,” contains several enthymemes (freedom, civility, rights, community, knowledge, and values—common language for rights) SAF does not explicitly outline how students will secure these rights. For example, point one of the “Student Bill of Rights” states, “Selection of speakers, allocation of funds for speakers programs and other student activities will observe the principles of academic freedom and promote intellectual pluralism” (“Student Bill of Rights”). In this example (and elsewhere), SAF does not define the terms pluralism or academic freedom; rather, the taken-for-granted history of the terms (pluralism and freedom) persuade SAF’s audience. Point five likewise claims, “An environment conducive to the civil exchange of ideas being an essential component of a free university, the obstruction of invited campus speakers, destruction of campus literature or other effort to obstruct this exchange will not be tolerated” (“Student Bill of Rights”). Again, we are not told what constitutes a “civil exchange of ideas” nor are we taught of the deeper history of the movement for a “free university.” The words “obstruction,” “destruction,” and “tolerated” are anxious appeals. Thus, as an emotional appeal, rights discourses in the US evoke a broader
Yet, although SAF’s rights discourse draws from historic and enthymematic terms it actually “operates in an ahistorical, acultural, acontextual idiom: […] enduring universality rather than provisionality or partiality” (Brown 97). Rights discourses, like SAF’s “Student Bill of Rights,” persuade because they are dependent upon an audience’s collective prior historical and cultural memory and not necessarily the current realities that might produce them. Rights discourses lay out the very argumentative frames that audiences are able to immediately identify with; the terms that frame rights (such as, in SAF’s case, the terms freedom, intellectual pluralism, and civility) place the discourse in an ahistorical context and present for potential SAF members, the sorts of arguments that will be persuasive to others. Kenneth Burke suggests, “the nature of our terms affect the nature of our observations” (1341). Burke’s remark sheds light on SAF’s rhetorical choices. To some extent, SAF is limited to rights discourse because as a discourse it draws from an already established rhetoric that depends upon both the rhetor’s and the audience’s understanding of the cultural moments that produce the need for rights.

Burke rather cryptically explains that when a rhetor employs god-terms like civility, fairness, and inclusion, “many implications ‘necessarily’ follow” (1341). Burke might suggest then that, rights discourses function syllogistically in the sense that as a discourse, rights provide a tested and historic activist response that can be predicted—their implications are assumed to follow. SAF’s argument for student’s rights, as Wendy Brown points out, may appear universal, generic, and general to audiences (97); this common discourse of rights thus functions as a terministic screen which hides the broader
power relationship behind the plea for rights and removes rights from its broader social and political underpinnings. The discourse of rights that SAF begins to unfold above is persuasive and difficult to counter because it is framed in a deeply historic rhetoric of domination, emancipation, and nationalism.

In fact, in the “Academics Bill of Rights” SAF claims, “Because free inquiry and its fruits are crucial to the democratic enterprise itself, academic freedom is a national value as well.” SAF adeptly couples the ideals of US national identity with the kind of cultural work in which the university is supposed to engage. This turn to national values is significant because it evokes the 1950s Red Scare where professors (among others) were targeted for un-American activities and for putting the nation in danger. Thus, if an audience member were to disagree with SAF’s arguments, they would appear as uncivilized, un-American, and even communist —which is the picture that SAF paints of university professors and administrators. For example, SAF describes the roles of the university and professors:

Universities are institutions of learning not platforms for political parties or intellectual sects. They exist to serve all their students, not just those who share the political or particular beliefs of their professors, especially on matters where reasonable people disagree. […] Unfortunately […] Liberal Arts faculties at most universities are politically and philosophically one-sided, while partisan propagandizing often intrudes into classroom discourse. It is appropriate for faculty to want open-minded students in their classes, not disciples. Faculty bias is reflected in the curriculum of courses available, in the manner in which they are
taught, in readings assigned for classroom study, and in discussions only open to one side of a debate. (“Mission and Strategy”)

In this description, SAF characterizes professors’ and university administrators’ aims as antithetical to student’s “open-minds.” SAF describes professors as making the classroom a hostile environment. SAF also suggests that the current way that universities run its liberal arts programs is not only partisan but also autocratic. Yet, in this example, especially coupled with the discourse of rights, SAF begins to develop an argument from the perspective of the injured or the disenfranchised. In the first example above, SAF suggests that students are being denied respect merely because they have intellectual differences. The second example, likewise, describes how university professors disenfranchise some students while privileging others.

In the next examples below, how SAF moves to differentiate themselves from professors is noteworthy because just as they ask to be allowed to have open minds, they aim to restrict professors from helping to open their minds by expressing a viewpoint that might differ from theirs. In these restrictions, SAF employs identification and difference as they work to establish a void between themselves and their professors. SAF rhetorically constructs professors as intellectual-ists, a form of discrimination that—like racism or sexism, for example—places students in a compromised power position. As I will demonstrate further below, SAF names professors as oppressive enemies. Such a differentiation gives the testimonies that they publish on the website more authority. Finally, in all the examples above, SAF assumes that the university and its practices injures or abuses students. This anxious rhetoric of abuse is continued on SAF’s “Abuse Center” website.
Abuse and Agency: Student’s Perceptions Education

The emotional rhetoric of abuse that SAF employs is further demonstrated by clicking on the red box labeled “The Abuse Center” found in the middle column of their homepage. The idea of an “Abuse Center” evokes the growing public understanding of the need for crisis centers, women’s shelters, and safe houses. Much like in *Engendering Development* (see Chapter Four), feminist terms and ideologies are appropriated by SAF just as they and their members disavow themselves from feminist practices. In fact, in the frequently asked questions section of SAF’s mission statement, SAF uses language that resonates with feminist sexual harassment policy:

The relationship between professors and students is one of inequality. Professors have power over students’ futures. The trust relationship between teachers and students is crucial to the learning process. In order to create an environment in which students feel free to express themselves, professors must observe restraints, or their authority can be abusive. (“Mission and Strategy”)

Here, SAF describe students as vulnerable and afraid of the power that professors can have over them therefore making their appeal to rights necessary. Like in the women’s rights movement in the 1970s and 1980s, where women demonstrated their need to be protected by the state from job discrimination and sexual harassment, SAF suggests that their lack of power and agency in the university entitles them to some sort of state protection. Yet SAF also shows the important persuasive links between using their own voice and personal stories, rights discourse, and consumerism; through these they are able resist this vulnerability.
On the “The Abuse Center” page, visitors are presented with a statement that the complaints listed on the page are meant to be examples and by no means a guarantee that a professor/teacher was/is guilty or that legal action would be sought.

(Figure 5.2 “Abuse Center”)

Right below this statement, visitors have a choice to look at the most recent complaints, or at list of complaints by school, or “lodge a complaint” themselves.

When making a formal complaint, the visitor is prompted to provide her or his name, email, phone number, the class title, the subject, and the professor’s name. In a box below this basic information, the visitor is invited to categorize the complaint in as many ways as necessary: “required readings or texts covering only one side of issues;” “gratuitously singled out political or religious beliefs for ridicule;” “introduced
controversial material that had no relation to the subject;” “forced students to express a certain point of view in assignments;” “mocked national political or religious figures;” “conducted political activities in class (e.g. recruiting for demonstrations);” “allowed students’ political or religious beliefs to influence grading;” “used university funds to hold one-sided partisan teach-ins or conferences;” and “other” (“The Abuse Center”). These categories, to some extent, limit and control the nature of complaints that the students can express.

Visitors are also asked to describe the complaint more specifically in their own words, recount any action taken, and report the response from the professor or the school administration. The complaint process demonstrates to the students the sort of evidence that should be considered not only valid to them but also to other victims of “abuse.” Visitors are invited to tell their story so that other victims might be able to identify with their complaints. This turn to personal experience made public gives students the idea that their own encounters with professors are not just their own, rather they are part of a common experience across the nation. Second and Third Wave feminists also used personal experience (ala the traditional speak-out at take-back-the-night rallies calling out publicly the names of rapists or abusers) in a similar confessional-style testimony. Through this turn exists a trope that threads throughout several of the policy examples I examine in preceding chapters, the authority of personal experience. As I have argued throughout this project, the authority of personal experience is a direct product of a neoliberal economy that already privileges one’s “personal responsibility.”

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In the example below, the student uses her or his personal experiences with a professor to demonstrate how the professor was abusive. However, the student is unclear about the specificity of the abuse and yet by using terms to identify with one way of thinking (saying the professor “rails against capitalism”) and differentiating from the ideology of “US imperialism,” the student creates a black and white argument that might be easy for other students to identify.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Complaint:</th>
<th>Required Readings, Singled Out,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Description of Complaint (please be as detailed as possible, including quotes from your professor where applicable):**
The professor rails against capitalism and deceptively encourages classmates to blame the problems of the world on US imperialism by way of white man. Insists on degrading the Constitution and the US Government by way of saying it was designed to keep white men in power, offering no empirical or compelling proof. Told the class the electoral college was rigged for Bush in the 2000 election.

**Action Taken:**
None directly. I argued the elecoral [sic] college claim. She said she had evidence but never presented it. I went home and looked it up on the web, and every state's electoral vote went to the candidate that won the state. So she basically told the class a lie since no proof supported her outlandish claim.

**Response from Professor or Administrator (If Any):**
Professor told me I was wrong and hadn't researched the subject enough to bring it up in class.

**Time of Posting:** Tuesday, September 28, 2004

(Figure 5.3 “Complaint 1”).

In the above example (and the ones that follow) the student identifies with a conservative ideology yet, he or she never comes out and directly identifies as such. As the next example illustrates, the student is actively working to differentiate herself/himself from the “liberal” identities of her/his professors. Rather unselfconsciously, the student here complains about her/his professor not giving specific examples, but the student does not actually supply tangible examples of how it is that the teacher has abused the student. The “abuse” is contingent upon the professor not listening to the student and holding a differing view than the student does. The lack of specificity in the student’s complaint, I
suggest, is significant because it implies that there is more than a mere identification with one ideology and differencing from another happening. As writers, when students are unable to provide tangible examples, it often indicates that the student is not fully grasping the material; the student is not able to move beyond the emotionality of the issue.

Consider, for example, another student’s testimony:

During a class discussion in 2002, [my professor] was preaching to class how the Reagan Administration was responsible for our country’s social woes. Then when she started in [on the] “uselessness” of Nancy Reagan’s “Just Say No” campaign, I chimed in that I was a parent of a young child in the 1980’s, and I thought that Mrs. Reagan’s anti-drug crusade bringing awareness to parents and to the public was admirable and that it was a good beginning to help parents understand why children turn to drugs. [The professor] became annoyed with my comment as started some obvious liberal mumble jumble (her usual verbal communication) to counter my comment. Her attitude toward me and my coursework changed, giving me a “0” on a journal page about an experience during our life. (“Compliant Two”)

In this example, the student demonstrates (and perhaps matches the professor’s) his or her authority on the “Just Say No” campaign by bringing up her or his children and her or his personal experiences with trying to raise a drug-free child. The student’s testimony above also implies that the student finds that his or her personal experiences with his or her family to be a sufficient ethos and pathos appeal—more so than the professor who most likely studied the topic and who might be dismissive of such “personal”
understanding. This student’s experience in the classroom shows an important tension between professors and students. While I think that our students do not realize the training that we as graduate students and professors have had and that we have not arrived at our conclusions only out of experience but also out of formal study. As this student illustrates, personal experience is more tangible and thus more persuasive to her or him than individual study. To this extent, neither the student nor the professor is reading their audiences well.

However, the student’s appeal to ethos and pathos resonates with how, in the late 1990s, welfare also appealed to a citizen’s sense of responsibility for the family (see Chapter Two); likewise, the emotional power of this student’s testimony also is reminiscent of how former World Bank President Wolfensohn, in his speech for gender inclusion (see Chapter Four), ends by turning to the family as a core social actor. All these examples demonstrate the rhetorical power of an emotional appeal to that which is most familiar—the family. What might indeed be confusing to this student is how or when to use her or his “experience” as evidence because at the end of the student’s testimony she/he laments that the last journal entry about a personal life experience was given a zero. Thus, this student might think that it is her/his emotional argument from the position of the personal that the professor would find compelling. On one level, the student is asked to connect with her/his own life but she or he is unable to see the need to contextualize her/his experience.

Importantly, however, the student employs more than an emotional appeal here. The student describes, for example, the professor’s teaching as “preaching” which is unlike the term teaching because it connotes an uneven exchange of information where
the audience is merely spoken to and asked to merely agree. Describing the professor’s
teaching style as “preaching,” demonstrates this student’s feeling of disconnect between
the classroom materials, his or her personal experiences, and the professor’s knowledge.
In fact, the student describes the professor’s response to her or his comment as “obvious
liberal mumble jumble (her usual verbal communication).” What is apparent in this
example is that the professor’s overall lesson and response to this particular student is
unclear—the student was unable to identify with the terms and values that the professors
used. I do not mean to suggest that this teacher was at fault per se, rather, I want to point
out and validate this student’s perception of the professor because this perspective is not
uncommon in the rhetoric and composition classroom or the university at large. In the
above instance (and the one that follows) both students employ a rhetoric of blame and
suggest that the professor must be more responsible and responsive to their students’
learning needs or personal values. In other words, increasingly, the college classroom
does not reflect the prior contextual knowledge they bring with them to the classroom;
moreover, as SAF demonstrates, professors do not respond well to this sort of personal
knowledge.

In the next example below, the student also begins with an emotional appeal but
then quickly goes on to castigate and demonstrate her or his anger about a set of
professors.

I know an older teacher in the English department, and she is very sick, so my
friend can't in good conscience complain about her (for that reason alone). But
she is part of a fiercely-feminist/liberal English department where the vast
majority of the professors all look, act, and think alike. […] [For example one
professor]\textsuperscript{19} tried to supplant open lines of inquiry with induction of fear in those who dare to question her or her department's methods. [She] and her ilk see themselves as cleansers, rescuers, reformers and salvors [sic] of the great corpus of the English language, but they jealously attack anyone else who wants to reserve the same right. The net result has been the creation of a bizarre, academic metalanguage designed to striate students into desirable and undesirable clumps who can then be treated disparately. Read the memos on the wall--read the ad copy for Rhetorical composition or for poetry--nothing is in plain English, it's in the High and Sacred Language of Goop--nobody understands it. ("Complaint Three")

In this example and the one that precedes it, both students specifically target “liberal” talking professors—or liberal jargon—as incomprehensible. The student here in the above example further suggests that the language that the professor uses is designed to speak to one group of students but not the other. To me, this student indicates not only that the professor privileges only one group of students but that professors are not reading their audiences well; they are not appealing to what the majority of students want to learn. In turn, the students quite literally feel injured, even perhaps implicated\textsuperscript{20} by the subject matter the professor introduces and the way the professor communicates their subject matter.

In all the examples above, there might be some “truth” to the students’ complaints. For example, the first student claims that her/his professor spent a significant amount of class “railing again capitalism” and perhaps the professor did indeed do so. More likely however, this student perceived the professor’s attempts to make connections
between capitalism, the US Constitution, and global imperialism as non-constructive criticism. Perhaps, what the professor is guilty of (as so many of us are) is simply assuming that our students understand our language, or that they can just as quickly make connections between events and representation, or that they do not see how students take constructive questioning of popular ways of thinking as a form of castigation.

SAF’s rhetoric, as established by these two examples, clearly suggests that their movement is born out of their desires for an education they can make sense of, a desire for clarity. Rights discourse, with its enthymematic framework makes sense to these students. From this emotional, reactionary, and perceived disenfranchised place, students then turn to what it most familiar to them: their personal rights and identities as consumers. In doing so, as adept rhetoricians, these same students appeal to university boards and administrators by making their arguments resonate with the university’s changing identity as a corporate entity and the general US public’s sense of the relationship between the nation and the corporation. As the above examples demonstrate, just as students see themselves as consumers of education they find themselves in conflict with the actual teachings in the classroom. While they believe that academic freedom is a crucial part of US national identity, they also believe that because they pay for their education, as empowered consumers of education, the university should provide them with the product they ordered.
The Neoliberal University

Because the university’s identity at the end of the twentieth century has been transformed to meet the growing needs of a neoliberal economy, SAF’s rhetorical connections between academic freedom, nationalism, personal experience, and a pedagogy that they can make sense of might be persuasive to administrators and boards. Ronald Strickland points out that due to shifts in the economy that are related to globalization, funding for scientific research has begun to dry up and so universities must turn to corporations for funding; often this funding is contingent upon the university producing specific applications and students to meet that corporation’s needs. Just as the sciences have been forced to look outside the university’s gates for money, universities pressure the humanities to become “skilled training programs focused more or less on fulfilling employer demands for well-trained knowledge workers” (Strickland 1). While in the past, universities served mainly to civically acculturate students to a growing national culture, globalization complicates this view especially as students are being trained to execute the needs of transnational corporations (1).21

In this way, the university, as scholars such as Wendy Hesford, Eileen Schell, and Laura Bartlett22 have suggested, has become a crucial part of the neoliberal market economy (whether we like it or not) and not just a crucial part of national culture. While certainly the neoliberal economy has affected the manner in which universities fund departments, structure its governance, and even administers and hires teachers, this economy works in quiet and more complex ways. As I have demonstrated here, students are active participants in the process to neo-liberalize the university. With the university’s new promise for jobs and flexible skills that fit this changing economy, it is not surprising
that students also wish for classroom practices that appear to prepare them for their roles in the new global economy, not simply what they perceive as professor’s ungrounded opinions.

SAF’s rhetoric suggests they want the classroom to reflect a pedagogy that more obviously fits their value systems and educational goals. Given the timeliness of the beginning of the twenty-first century (kairos) of these student’s complaints and their evocation of finance reform, SAF members anxiety suggest that to them the humanities fields are not responding to the demands of the market because its classroom practices appear not to prepare them for the jobs they will one day hold. Thus, the rights discourse and consumer rhetoric that SAF employs throughout their entire website challenges our default assumption that one of the main goals of the rhetoric and composition classroom should be student-centered empowerment, not student preparation for the global economy.  

While I do not mean to suggest that students should not feel empowered in/by the classroom, I point out that often students come to class already working as empowered student-consumer activists. In fact as SAF demonstrates, students are actually claiming to be dis-empowered by the classroom—as teachers we are doing the exact opposite of our pedagogical goals. I think, then, as Flynn suggests, student resistance to our pedagogies must not be looked at as counterproductive. Rather this sort of resistance invites us as scholars and teachers to reconsider our pedagogical goals and how we reach them. Student complacency with the university’s new ethos, raises for rhetoric and composition teachers questions about how we can balance our own pedagogical goals of making students critically aware of the power structures that maintain class stratification,
persuading students to think one way versus another, for example, while we also address our student’s desire for a pedagogy that not only makes sense, but that also provides marketable skills for the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

In the following Post-Script, I look to the composition and rhetoric classroom, and teaching about public policy-making specifically, as a place to complicate neoliberal belief systems that students like SAF bring to the classroom. I also demonstrate how we might address their concerns about their education goals while we challenge our privileged modes of teaching. While I do not mean to suggest that we must modify the rhetoric and composition classroom only to these students’ needs, I do think that the audience of our students who are produced by our current cultural moment challenge our rhetoric and composition pedagogies to move beyond the basic ideals of identity politics and student centered empowerment. I suggest, that since students come to us as injured-student-consumers, we must design a pedagogy that meets the needs of our student’s neoliberal identities—not just those students who already engage in acts of resistance (whether we agree with them or not).

To do so, I turn to the policy manuscript *Response to Homeland Security Documents*. This document inadvertently lays out a pedagogical heuristic for beginning to help our students to understand the cultural and rhetorical situation produced at the turn of the twentieth century. I conclude by illustrating how, along with Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan’s concept of “linkages,” how I have used ideas from this document to establish a working methodology that invites rhetoric and composition students to
critically write and read not only public policy but also public texts. Ultimately, my conclusion invites rhetoric and composition scholars to consider what our students’ neoliberal identities can teach us about what we teach and how we teach it.
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Notes for Chapter Five

1 In fact, Bill 24 uses exactly the same language that other “Academic Freedom” bills utilize. This is also the same language Students for Academic Freedom employ in their Mission Statement and in their “Student’s Bill of Rights.”

2 More specifically, to date, over ten states have legislation similar to Ohio Senate Bill 24 under consideration (see SAF http://www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org/ for more information).

3 I place the words “academic freedom” and “balanced” in quotations for two reasons. First, I want to highlight these words as two of the core ideals that structure the language of The Academic Bill of Rights. Secondly, these exact words were used by the group Concerned Academics.

4 As of May 1, 2005, SAF has policies circulating at the state level in nineteen states. In addition, they proposed at the federal level a house resolution.

5 I will explain SAF’s connection to consumerism further below; but as a side note, each time SAF’s website features a speech that was give by one of their members, one of the first points the member touches upon is that students pay for their education. They frequently quote David Horowitz claim that “You can’t get a good education if they are only telling you half the story—even if you are paying $30,000 a year” (see SAF’s website).

6 The rhetorical appeal of these words will be examined further below.

7 In her book States of Injury Brown threads the idea that people demand rights when they perceive that they are in danger, that their core identities do not fit with the larger nation-state.

8 They also have adeptly considered their audience’s needs and therefore provide them with a handbook that teaches interested student groups how to form a local SAF chapter and lobby for their student rights.

9 I do not divide the fields of rhetoric and composition (as some scholars do) because in my classroom and scholarship, these are not separate entities but rather one field that employs rhetorical conventions and knowledge to produce eloquently written (broadly defined) texts.

10 See for example Tenured Bosses ad Disposable Teachers, Beyond the Corporate University, Terms of Work for Composition. Each of these scholars make important connections between the rise of neoliberalism and the sort of labor practices that composition instructors face. While I find the discussion in all these texts incredibly important, I am surprised that few scholars have discussed how our current political, economic, and transnational moment produces students with needs and desires that fit the rhetorical situation this moment produces.

11 In fact, my students have other personal agendas too: their personal goals to finish school and find a job and their aspirations to rise above their current economic class status, for example.

12 I do not mean to set up a false binary between progressive “activist” students and those “every-day” students. Certainly, I suspect that both these groups of students have the common goal to get good jobs, make their families proud, and maintain/transcend their class status. However, I think some students put more energy into one over the other.

13 I want to point out that SAF does not identify as a conservative or liberal organization. They claim to be concerned that universities do not engage balanced teaching. In fact, during his testimony in front of the Ohio Senate, Horowitz provided several examples as to why academic freedom was necessary. While one of many overly “liberal” examples disparaged a Criminology professor for using an essay question on an exam that asked to students to explain why President George W. Bush is a war criminal, Horowitz also used an overly “conservative” example of another professor calling all women who had abortions killers.

14 In addition to SAF, students also have another less formalized complaint system on ratemyprofessor.com. Thus, students come to us with multiple venues in which to have their voices heard.

15 While I use SAF to demonstrate the identities that many of our students bring to the classroom, I want to point out that according to SAF, The Ohio State University does not have an active chapter.

16 SAF has both an “Academic Bill of Rights” and a “Student Bill of Rights.” Because the language of these bills is so similar, I am unclear about what the difference between the two is. The example, I have here does represent one of the differences between the two documents.
17 One SAF’s mission statement’s frequently asked questions is the following “The term ‘hostile learning environment’ has been used by feminists and other supporters of speech codes to infringe free speech and to limit the open exchange of ideas. How can we use similar terminology without encouraging the censors of free speech and free thought on campus? Besides, shouldn’t higher education be a “hostile environment” for everyone’s ideas? Isn’t a university a place where everyone who attends is forced to question their beliefs?

Answer: We have chosen to use the term ‘negative and coercive learning environment’ to avoid the anti-free speech implications of the more familiar term, although it is perhaps best to refer to the positive issues of freedom from indoctrination and respect for intellectually serious ideas. The forces of censorship on campus have used the term “hostile learning environment” to limit free speech. But this is a bad use of the term with the intent to embargo the expression of different viewpoints. Our intent, by contrast, is to expand the arena of free speech by promoting civil discourse and protecting viewpoints that are currently intimidated or suppressed. A university should definitely provide a challenging environment for ideas, but not one that penalizes genuine debate. A negative and coercive learning environment is not created because individuals disagree with each other. (It is characteristic of the anti-free speech attitudes of those who refer to ‘hostile learning environments’ that they embargo all speech they consider offensive even among peers.) It is created when individuals in authority convey that debate is illegitimate or treat students who disagree with them with personal discourtesy. Teachers are hired to teach all their students not just those who agree with them. The agenda of Students for Academic Freedom is to promote and protect diversity of viewpoints. An environment that encourages vigorous, reasoned and civil debate is by definition non-hostile and positive. The creation of a positive learning environment, which is respectful of serious intellectual diversity, describes our agenda” (http://www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org/essays/pamphlet.html). In this long example, SAF tweaks the terms “hostile learning environment”—words that so often appear on university sexual harassment statements—to a “negative and coercive learning environment” and yet the terms evoke the same sort of abuse.

18 Aristotle claims that when a rhetor uses personal experience, it often has somewhat of a logical appeal. It is difficult for an audience member to disagree with how one feels, what he or she “experienced.” I do not mean to say that using personal experience is a poor way to persuade an audience. In fact, I do suggest that personal experience has its place and that is why I warn of the danger of over using the personal so much so that it loses its persuasiveness.

19 While these students complaints use the names of the professors they feel were abusive, I have chosen not to use these names so as not to further persecute them.

20 I say implicated here not so much because SAF has textual evidence of this claim but rather I pull from my own “personal teaching experience.” Sometimes I find students to resist my attempts to teach them how to analyze topics such as global labor conditions, human rights violations, colonial literary production, trauma narratives, and travel/touring practices into the classroom. When they are faced with their location within the global economy, many students feel implicated by their nation’s material wealth and position of power. Some of my students, I see shut down; they cross their arms over their chest and want to know why we need to go over all this “bad stuff.” Thus, in my classroom, I invite students to dialogue about their personal response to such topics so that they can both privilege their first ways of coming to a new topic and perhaps be open to exploring new ways of thinking about the topic.

21 The corporatization of the university is Strickland suggests is further demonstrated, for example, when universities invoke the “empty notion of ‘excellence’ as the measure of success, administrators are redefining universities as quasi-corporations whose goal is to satisfy ‘consumers’ (students, and corporate employers)” (4). About four years ago at The Ohio State University (OSU), the administration hired a consultant to produce a pithy saying that would describe the university’s mission for excellency. The product of the expensive endeavor was “do something big.” After several complaints OSU changed their motto to “do something great.”

22 See for example, Bartlett, “Feminization and Composition’s Managerial Subject,” in Works and Days; Schell, “Toward a New Labor Movement in Higher Education: Contingent Labor and Organizing for Change” in Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers: Writing Instruction in the Managed University; and
Hesford, “Global/Local Politics and the Promise of Service Learning,” in Radical Relevance: Toward a Scholarship of the Whole Left.

23 See for example Ira Shor’s When Students have Power, Paulo Freire A Pedagogy of the Oppressed, and Nancy Welch’s Getting Restless: Rethinking Revision in Writing Instruction. Likewise, even by simply pursuing the CCCC’s conference schedule we see that several scholars still are concerned with student empowerment.
POSTSCRIPT

TOWARD A TRANSNATIONAL RHETORICAL-CULTURAL STUDIES PEDAGOGY

We should help [students] to recognize that culture, politics, and ideology shape public conversations. We should highlight the ways in which material forces shape what gets said, who gets heard, and how these forces have structured public discourse throughout history. (Weisser 235)

In Chapter One I laid out how my overarching dissertation project works to extend what Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan call a “transnational feminist cultural studies” methodology by “address[ing] asymmetries of power and complex constructions of agency” and paying “attention to the linkages and travels of forms of representations as they intersect with movements of labor and capital in a multinational world” (357).

With their call in mind, I have illustrated in each chapter how policy-making’s rhetorical power transcends its geographical location. The policy-making process has direct material and cultural effects not only for the people that policy purports to manage but also for the audience that is addressed throughout the policy-making process. Yet, as Kaplan and Grewal aptly point out, recognizing the “linkages” among representations enables us to articulate the “diverse, unequal, and uneven relations of historically constituted subjects” and demonstrate the power differentials present in cultural production (359). Thus in each of my chapters, I demonstrated the rhetorical appeals and
common language that is persuasive in a neoliberal economy. I suggest that there are several common rhetorical linkages in late twentieth-century policy-making that differ from policies that were created before post-industrialism in the US: a shift in who writes policy and who policy is written for; a change in the role of the state for overseeing how and which policies are enforced; a movement toward privatization and corporatization of previously state-led institutions; an emphasis on citizen’s roles as economic actors; and an appeal to pathos. Each chapter shows that anxious rhetorics of individualism and nationalism make up a discourse of normalcy that cannot be separated from the late twentieth-century’s global networks of power.

Yet, as I illustrate in Chapter Five, neoliberalism’s cultural climate not only effects how policy-makers govern us, but also how we govern ourselves (Campbell 35). Although Students for Academic Freedom (SAF) student members are merely emblematic of the students who enter our classrooms in the twenty-first century, the testimonies on their website make clear that we need to adopt pedagogies that will address our students intellectual and practical labor needs in a neoliberal economy. While Kaplan and Grewal call for a method of analysis that accounts of linkages of power, they do not extend their theory to the classroom. A transnational cultural studies method must be applicable to the classroom.

We must teach our students how to account for linkages of power and representations through analysis while we attend to the material needs of our students produced by the late twentieth century’s transnational economy. In other words, at the forefront of a transnational cultural studies pedagogy also should be our students material needs for analytic skills that will translate beyond the classroom.
The public document, *Response to National Security Documents*¹ composed by humanities scholars at the Ohio State University, offers direction as to how we might create a pedagogy out of public policy analysis and attend to the material needs of our students. *Response* suggests, for example, a plausible (although broad) heuristic for teaching students the tools of examining public policy—and by default write public policy critically:

- Put public policy in its local and historic contexts;
- Examine how the people policy effects might understand themselves and their predicaments;
- Consider how policy-makers own history, culture, and conceptual framework informs the creation of policy;
- Look at the relationship between language and culture;
- Write clear and realistic definitions/representations for taken for granted concepts like freedom, development, and security;
- Imagine the material consequences of the language of policy;
- Understand the motives behind policy-making and then break down the black-white barrier by considering how audiences’ receptions of texts are based on their own circumstances.

*Response* also provides a tangible example of Kaplan and Grewal’s transnational cultural-studies practices because it demonstrates specific ways in which we can account for and teach about “linkages” among our own preconceived notions, policies about other people, and popular culture practices. For example, *Response* reinforces the claims I make in the preceding chapters, when it points out that the definitions and terms we use
in public policy often “reinforce our own viewpoints and make it difficult to conceptualize cultural and political phenomena from a variety of perspectives” (6). I find Response’s call to look at policy from several viewpoints compelling because, to some extent, its call mediates between what members of SAF ask of their professors—that we consider multiple viewpoints and not necessarily privilege one way thinking over another—and our own pedagogical aims to make students critical analyzers and writers.

Yet, as my analysis of the anxious rhetorics of public policies make clear, to write policies that more accurately represent the people and issues the policies are made to address, policy-makers must develop a better sense of the assumptions and modes of persuasion policy-makers bring to policy writing. Policy-maker’s lack of awareness about the assumptions both they and their audience members bring to a text is one of Responses biggest critiques of the policy-making process.

I suggest that the rhetoric and composition classroom—with its focus both on analysis and production of texts—is particularly well-suited to create what I call a transnational rhetorical-cultural studies\(^2\) pedagogy that both teaches students to make crucial links between representations and addresses their desire for a pedagogy that makes sense. Likewise, because more recently rhetoric and composition teachers have begun to use public texts in the classroom, I advocate that guiding students through the process of reading and writing public texts with a transnational cultural-rhetorical lens can help us show our students the important links between classroom and “real world” practices.
By teaching them to employ a transnational cultural-rhetorical lens, students will learn to articulate the material consequences for rhetorics that are taken for granted, like the ones that support SAF’s rights discourse, welfare’s fantastic appeal to normalcy, and the Bank’s neocolonial assumptions, more clearly. Specifically students will be able to account for how the historicity of institutionally embedded modes of persuasion relate to the timeliness (kairos), location, and material circumstances that make some rhetorical appeals persuasive to US audiences and others not. By placing a mode of persuasion in its historical and cultural context, students will be enabled to consider their own needs and desires as twenty-first century students. As such, students will have the insight to contemplate what rhetorics appeal to them and why and connect those appeals with the larger histories or cultural memories that the rhetorics resonate. A transnational rhetorical cultural studies pedagogy also asks students to consider the social and cultural implications of a text and consider how/why those texts are produced, consumed, believed, and disseminated.

Such a pedagogy, I suggest, can be facilitated by foregrounding traditional rhetorical concepts such as the relationship between audiences, authors, and text. I suggest that it is here, in teaching students how to analyze in this traditional manner (and perhaps what might seem more apolitical to our students), teachers might better be able to communicate otherwise dense power inequalities that many students (like SAF members) assume merely to be liberal jargon. Guiding our students to analyze the dynamic relationship between the audience, author, and text can help them notice the multiple ways of reading a text and move them beyond a black and white reading. However, as a cultural studies pedagogy, critique and accounting for “linkages” is not
enough. Students must be enabled to blend critical reading with critical intervention while considering their own position as students learning within the walls of the academy.

Response also highlights this important dynamic (and rhetorical) relationship between authors of policies, their audience, and their subject: “The humanities offer American citizens mechanisms for examining their values, developing disciplined thinking about their own condition, and understanding the aspirations and challenges facing other peoples around the globe” (emphasis mine 4). While Response in general focuses on the need to bring a humanities emphasis to the policy-making process, I emphasize the above phrases to call attention to another key concept we need to teach our rhetoric and composition students: critical and analytical self-reflectivity.

With this in mind, I offer suggestions about the ways that a transnational rhetorical-cultural studies pedagogy could extend the rhetoric and composition classroom’s study of public texts. I focus specifically on bringing a transnational rhetorical-cultural studies lens to analyses of the policy-making process to provide insights into the ways in which policy makers construct particular realities about some groups of citizens—realities that resonate with their silently addressed audience. This lens also will aid students to become self-reflexive and account for the rhetorics that are ultimately persuasive not only to policy-makers but also to students themselves as part of the US American public. I propose that teaching students to examine the common persuasive links among policies at the local (especially SAF’s “Student’s Bill of Rights”), national, and international levels gives students a tangible “skill” that will help them write public texts.
Practical Pedagogies

As I mention above, the classic rhetorical triangle can be used as a heuristic to help students begin to mediate between the multiple viewpoints our students want us to bring to the classroom—so that we are telling them multiple sides of the story and not just “half the story” (as SAF advises)—while giving students a method void of what they might consider jargon. Likewise, teaching students self-reflectivity can begin by asking students to unpack the dynamic relationship between a writer, her/his audience, and the subject. Allowing students to account for who is the creator of a text and who is the intended audience—i.e. who is supposed to be persuaded by this text—helps them begin to consider what presumptions both the author and the audience bring to the text to make meaning out of it.

For example, visual images of third world people present in the Bank pamphlet I analyze in Chapter Three, tend to be fairly familiar to my students. As I mention in that chapter, the images resonate with pictures students have seen magazines such as National Geographic or ads to donate money to children who live in the third world. When reading about the history of colonialism in the US and its ties to national identity in my second level writing class, I sometimes bring images such as the ones I examine in Chapter Three to my students.

I begin by simply telling them that the image comes from a promotional pamphlet produced for and by the World Bank. We spend a little time talking about who the Bank is and what their global economic goals are. I then allow the students to take a moment to simply describe the photograph: who is the subject of the photo, what does he/she wear, what is the subject doing, what colors are present, etc. With these questions in mind, I
invite them to name as many audiences as possible for the images. As students generate several probable audiences—members of the World Bank, US citizens, themselves as students looking at the image, corporations, and so on—I ask them what in the image provides context clues that makes all the audiences they name plausible? This question, which invites them to consider multiple audiences and thus viewpoints in one image, demonstrates to them the prior knowledge that all disparate audience members must bring to the image in order to make the image persuasive. By considering who makes up the many audience members of the image my students move beyond a simple black white reading of the image. Likewise, it forces them to consider multiple viewpoints each audience might bring to the image.

Next, I inquire who are the authors of the image? Again, the students tend to produce several plausible choices: the World Bank, the country that the image comes from, the photographer that took the picture, the person who cropped the image, etc. I then invite them then to explain why they think each author would make the visual rhetorical choices she or he made and consider, based on the image, what each author might have assumed of her/his audience? The conversation often then turns to how the physical, cultural, and historical location of the audience informs both the author’s rhetorical choices and the audience’s reading of the text.

Once students have discussed the various audience and author combinations, I encourage them to return to the idea that they might be an audience for the image before them. I ask again, what knowledge the author of image assumes they have and I ask what about the image makes them believe the image is an accurate reflection of World Bank policy?
Because Gayatri Spivak suggests that policies or governing institutions that represent “others” are “central to first world subject formation” (qtd. by Kaplan and Grewal 359), I ultimately try to guide my students toward considering what the image tells us about who we are. Because students see how they are persuaded by such images they begin to recognize how their own ambivalence or complacency with global and normative relationships—what Spivak calls “third world nostalgia” (qtd. by Kaplan and Grewal 359)—control how they/we formulate and read transnational policy arguments. Students, looking at the transnational image, are then able to articulate how the images that the Bank uses are dependent upon a legacy of representing third-world people in limiting ways.

Guiding students to work through the questions that I suggest above will help them to begin to see there is not just one side of the story that we teach, rather there are multiple viewpoints and ways to consider what makes an image or text as “true” to them versus another audience. Likewise, by breaking down analysis and knowledge attainment to what might seem like direct questions about a relationship, quietly removes the “liberal jargon” that students protest. These questions allow them to arrive at finding their ways of understanding the goals of the humanities.

This sort of in-class analysis models for students the sort of analytic eye they might bring as they write public policy. To demonstrate their self-reflectivity and critical eyes, I teach them to consider as they write:
• Who would find your argument persuasive? Why?

• What in recent history might help to make your argument persuasive?
  How have current events shaped your intended audience’s attitude toward
  the argument?

• What assumptions do you make about your audience? Your subject?
  Why?

• Do you find this argument persuasive? What informational needs does it
  fulfill for you?

While teaching students the traditional rhetorical relationship between an
audience, author, and text assists students to consider multiple viewpoints and their own
reception of a text, this method does not fully address the economic needs students bring
to the classroom. As SAF demonstrates, students want to leave university with a skill set
that will enable them to survive in a new transnational economy; and to a great extent I
understand and agree that students pay a lot of money for their education and should
leave us more “marketable” then they did when they entered. Thus, it is our
responsibility to make clear connections between classroom practices and “real world”
tangible practices. A rhetorical cultural studies pedagogy includes not only teaching
students how to critically analyze texts and their relationship to it, but it also requires that
students become producers of new knowledge.

SAF’s organization shows students their ability to be policy-makers—even if not
necessarily critical policy-makers—and demonstrates to us as teachers how our students
are empowered and how our job is to continue to foster that empowerment. Likewise, as
the World Bank report Engendering Development recommends, students must be at the
forefront of policy change and invites them to respond to their methods of development. By teaching students how to be both crucial *actors* and *producers* of public policy, we might begin to address students’ needs for a pedagogy that has a direct relationship outside the classroom. As *Response* makes clear, the humanities do provide students of the twenty-first century a vital skill set for analyzing and writing public policy. Teaching students these important skills provides us ways to teach students how to be better policy-makers.

For example, to show students the practical importance of critical policy-analysis, in my course “Women, Culture, and Society” I ask students to read portions of the enrolled national welfare bills alongside popular depictions of “the welfare queen,” personal welfare stories, and academic responses to welfare policies. I then challenge students to research the welfare programs in their local communities and produce memo-style reports of their findings. Moving beyond critical inquiry and analysis, I have students work as a class to re-write welfare policy so that it reflects the needs and realities of welfare recipients in the Ohio area. By examining the rhetorical and ideological arguments within the personal narratives of welfare recipients and the representation of welfare recipients in popular media, students began to make links between the dialogic and persuasive nature of written texts and their own prejudice. I want my students, ultimately, to recognize the intricacy of texts and see that the social, material, ideological coalesce within them. I also guide them to see how dense texts like the welfare bill directly effects how they think about welfare policies while in turn to welfare policies work to persuade them.
To show students their power to create new knowledge and be cultural actors, in “Visual Rhetorics of Nation,” I designed formal assignments that have the potential to be extended beyond the classroom. For example, in one assignment, I invited students to choose a public debate/issue and examine how images help to structure an audience’s understanding of the topic. Students employed analytic skills such considering the rhetorical modes of persuasion, historical context, and audience of the images; in addition, they were asked to use research to support their thesis claims and show, through analysis, an alternative story than the images appear to tell. Next, the students were invited to demonstrate their alternative story by either producing new images or by manipulating already existing ones with digital media (Photoshop). Ultimately, students produced eloquently written justifications of their created images to show their thinking behind the project alongside refined critical essays.

Both these assignments were structured, in part, to allow students to respond productively to the focus/themes of courses that highlighted challenging concepts, which they, in other circumstances, might have, labeled “liberal jargon.” When students are able to make connections between rhetorical interpretations and “real world” representations, they begin to question the truth-value of popular representations and begin to see from where their own assumptions about that representation come. Likewise, when students produce texts that mimic those that they analyze, they are enabled to act mindfully. Thus, students do not feel constrained by their critical minds; rather, they can see themselves as active and skilled participants in a global society. Pedagogical writing assignments that inspire such analysis and production provide
students with concrete ways to move beyond a position of implication and become informed citizens, critical actors, and persuasive writers in a globalized world.
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Notes to Postscript

1 *Response to National Security Documents* makes clear the benefits of bringing humanities criticism, methods, and knowledge to (trans)national policy making. Although the document’s audience is clearly other academics and policy-makers, I suggest that the resulting publication inadvertently lays out a pedagogy we might employ in the rhetoric and composition classroom. In particular, *Response* demonstrates the sort of analytical categories and contextualization that public policy makers must engage in order make policy reflect how “the roles and responsibilities [...] U.S. citizens [have] [...] are dynamically connected with citizens in other nations and around the world” (10). As *Response* suggests, a humanities perspective of policy-making “helps to further cultural knowledge of understanding both inside and outside of the United States” (8).

2 Thomas Rostek in the book *At the Intersection: Rhetoric and Cultural Studies* informs my initial thoughts about how rhetorical methods and cultural studies goals can enhance the rhetoric and composition classroom. However, as whole collection of essays, none of the scholars address the classroom as a place to begin to merge these two seemingly disparate fields. As I demonstrate throughout all my chapters, analysis can help us better understand the persuasiveness of a text, unless we teach students how to apply that analysis in their own writing projects, then we merely just be continuing to isolate our analysis to the ivory tower.

3 I draw from James L. Kinneavy’s description of the rhetorical triangle (see *A Theory of Discourse: The Aims of Discourse*).

4 Certainly, as the whole of this dissertation suggests, traditional rhetorical study is anything but apolitical. However, our students often see already established ways of looking as less political, less dangerous. Thus, these concepts, with their long history might meet our students desires for a return to tradition—to something that makes sense.

5 For more on Cultural Studies pedagogies see Bruce McComiskey *Teaching Composition as Cultural Studies: Pedagogy in the Aporia between Modern Harmony and Postmodern Discord*, Simon During *Cultural Studies: A Critical Intervention*, and J. Blake Scott *Risky Rhetoric*.

6 One point one of the rhetorical triangle represents the speaker/writer/producer (the rhetor); the second point represents the listener/reader/viewer (the audience); and the third point represent the subject or text that is exchanged between the rhetor and the audience.


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