AN AFROCENTRIC VIEW OF THE
RHETORIC OF DICK GREGORY

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
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By
Ethel Patricia Harris, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
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Reading Committee:
Dr. John Makay
Dr. Linda James Myers
Dr. Osborn Smallwood

Approved By

Adviser
Department of Communication
To my children, Isaac and Nichole.
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VITA

July 3, 1948..............Born - Tuscumbia, Alabama


1972......................International Study Tour of the Rhetoric and Poetics of the British Isles, Department of Communication, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

1972......................Teaching Associate, Department of Communication, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

1972......................M.A., The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

PUBLICATIONS


FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Rhetorical Studies. Professor John Makay

Studies in Organizational Communication. Professor Gary Hunt

Studies in Mass Media. Professor Tom McCain

Studies in Communication Education. Professor George Lewis
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Chapter I
Introduction

The numerous words used in Black language to express the concept of "talk" are indeed testimony to the importance of oral expression in Black communication. "Rapping", "shucking", "jiving" and "sounding" are some of the words mentioned by Thomas Kochman in his analysis of Black language behavior.\textsuperscript{1} It has been well documented that there is little evidence of Black leaders who were not also excellent orators;\textsuperscript{2} for they have always understood the power of the word in the Black community.

It is precisely the power of the word whether in music or in speeches in today's Black society that authentically speaks of an African past.

The pre-slavery background was one in which Nommo, the magic power of the Word, was believed necessary to actualize life and give man mastery over all things....In traditional African culture, an infant is a mere thing until his father gives and speaks his name. No medicine, potion, or magic of any sort is considered effective without accompanying words.\textsuperscript{3}

As in African society, so in early African communities in America, plantation slaves, unable to read or write,
depended on the life-giving power of the word in life, death, disease, health and liberation. It is no wonder that Molefi Asante asserts that "to understand contemporary Black rhetoric in America means that one must understand that Nommo continues to permeate Black activities."5

Today, verbal play and skill with words carry great value in Black communities where verbal dexterity is brought to the high level of refinement best expressed in sermonizing and street language. In the school of "street learning", verbal skill is practiced and fostered. Beginning with one-liners, this school of wits and oral repartee has graduated entertainers and preachers among whom Dick Gregory can be counted.6

Where have all the Black revolutionaries gone? This question was the theme of an article in a publication of Ebony. The author of the article concluded that the names and personages of H. Rap Brown, Stokely Carmichael, and Huey P. Newton have disappeared from the Black rhetoric of revolution.7 One man whose discourse was heard with force perhaps equal to that of Brown, Carmichael and Newton continues to participate in the struggle for human dignity and is one of the longest lasting spokespersons in the Black Movement. The man is Dick Gregory, a person whose rhetorical discourse continues to be unique and certainly worthy for the contemporary study of rhetoric and public address.
Some have said that Dick Gregory lives in two worlds—the one a world of performance and the other the world of reform. Perhaps Gregory would describe these two worlds as the one of the career and the other his vocation. To differentiate between the two he states, "my 'career' involves my work as a comedian, lecturer, author, recording artist, television and film personality. My 'vocation' involves my participation in the struggle for human dignity—the human rights movement....My vocation, which began in the 'civil' rights movement, has now been expanded to include the 'human' rights and peace movements...." The rhetoric of the latter is the communication this writer investigated.

**Justification of the Study**

While it is commonly acknowledged that language is a manifestation of our cultural environment and that consequently, "no language is improper among its users, since it alone is capable of the task for which all language exists: communication," the monologue on the appropriateness, logic and uniqueness of Black communication continues. In deference to the wealth of literature supporting the language-culture relationship, the traditional American definition of language is still limited to some notion of a particular "standardized" usage. Consequently, Black oral communication in America is often not fully
understood outside of a context of Black listeners. Many contemporary researchers in communication have questioned those observations and analyses that do not reflect an awareness of Black cultural norms. These researchers include Saral, Asante, Kochman, Abrahams and Beltran. Their common perspective and that of this writer is that:

a. There is a need to develop the concept of the nature and use of language in oral rhetoric in America, based on the multiethnic nature of the society.

b. The development of a multiethnic approach to language must be based in part on the acceptance, understanding and exploration of Black communication patterns.

Asante contends that the subject of an Afrocentric study is definitionally related to people of African descent. An attempt is made in this study to expand the concept of language and explore the nature of Black oral communication through an analysis of the rhetoric of Dick Gregory.

Some justification for a study of the speaking of Dick Gregory can be found in Reverend James R. McGraw's description of the man.
Dick Gregory: The very mention of the name conjures up a variety of opinions and emotions. He has been described in show business columns as 'the Will Rogers of our time.' But those who know satire best liken him to Mark Twain. Bayard Rustin has called him 'our leader,' and disapproving Mississippi whites designate him as 'that millionaire nigger.' He is loved and hated, admired and berated, often misunderstood, and occasionally honored with laurels praising his almost superhuman efforts in the struggle for human dignity. But whatever the response, his is a voice our society must hear.13

In the quest for human dignity Gregory as a humorist, historian, sociologist and political analyst has participated in numerous activities of major social concern, such as the assassination probes of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin L. King, world hunger and the war in Vietnam. He has also sought to make points as a write-in candidate for the office of president in 1968 and as mayor of Chicago in 1966. In 1980 he was one of the few Americans permitted to have an audience with the Iranian revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in regards to the fate of the 52 American hostages. Gregory has employed strategies and tactics ranging from nonviolent demonstrations to fasting. Moreover, he has lectured extensively at universities and colleges across the country. Thus, by studying the rhetoric of Dick Gregory, this writer hopes to expand the concept of language and the nature of Black oral communication. In addition, the
writer hopes this study will be of merit in promoting the acceptance, understanding and exploration of Black communication patterns.

Statement of the Problem

This study attempts to represent an "inside" view of Dick Gregory's rhetorical behavior as seen through Black eyes and interpreted according to Black norms. Such an assumption suggests the following as the major research question governing this study: How is Gregory Afrocentric in his rhetorical perspective and how does this philosophical concept relate to the use of Black language and rhetoric within the social context of the Black audience?

Asante contends that Afrocentricity questions one's approach to every conceivable enterprise of human affairs. By determining Gregory's Afrocentric perspective the writer can uncover his true self, pinpoint his center, clarify and reveal the focus through which he attempts to see the world in order to survive and solve conflicts. Thus the reader will have a clear conception of who Gregory is and what he will and will not allow to be said or done to others like himself.

As a Black man, Gregory is born with a certain heritage and identity. As he speaks about life, death, birth, love, happiness or sadness, his language should reflect himself, his people, their motifs and when speaking about
his own people, a universal experience. Asante notes that since the Afrocentric perspective is one wholistic organic process, it contains no separable realities. All political, artistic, economic, ethical and aesthetic issues are connected to the knowledge of Afrocentricity. "Mind and matter, spirit and fact, truth and option are all aspect or dimension of one vital process."\(^{15}\) Thus the writer will isolate and define the symbols and experiences of Gregory's Afrocentric perspective and reveal how they relate to the use of Black language in the social context of the Black audience.

In an effort to provide complete and cogent answers to this inquiry, significant underlying questions relating to the major research question will be addressed. The first two of these will deal with Gregory the man and the remaining four will offer an assessment of his rhetoric. These are:

1. What is the biographical and ideological background from which Gregory has emerged as a speaker?
2. What is Afrocentricity and how does Gregory's rhetoric reflect this world view?
3. What is the substance and function of Gregory's rhetoric?
4. In what styles and techniques does the substance appear?
5. What seems to be the probable impact of Gregory's delivery upon the Black audience?

6. What conclusions about Gregory's rhetoric can be drawn which contribute to our knowledge about rhetoric?

By analyzing Gregory's background, the writer will view his intellectual growth pattern in order to determine his true character. As a young man, he made a commitment to the Black people of this country because of his sense of duty and also committed his life to the human rights of man. This was not only a committed act, it was courageous and unselfish given the environment during this particular time in history. Ku Klux Klan groups were reorganizing and going public; bombings and murders were taking place regularly and Southern Whites were appropriating the Black vote. This arena greeted Gregory when he stepped into its center. His effective management of that arena left us a memorable legacy.

A revelation of the substance and function of Gregory's rhetoric will determine his interests, ethical and moral values and information relevant to them, his attitudes about human behavior and conduct and the choices he deems necessary and appropriate as responses and actions. Moreover, such revelations will also reflect Gregory's value judgements and his justification of them.
Within the Black community how one speaks is just as important as what one speaks. Tone, gesture, rhythm and styling can contribute to the power of the message. By analyzing Gregory's style and techniques the writer hopes to reveal not only his manner of expression but also his method of managing and arranging details of human behavior in his efforts for achieving his objectives to uncover unreality, expose issues and demonstrate his creativity in changing behaviors.

"The culmination of the speaker's behavior is the oral delivery of his speech to an audience." This writer will determine the effectiveness (impact) of Gregory's rhetoric in terms of his delivery and his relationship to the Black audience, his power or lack of it, his ability to motivate, captivate and make points. Because this is an Afrocentric study, the reader or listener, however, serves as the ultimate test as to the effectiveness of Gregory by choosing whether or not to incorporate his authenticity into his or her behavior.

**Research Procedures**

Intensive research was begun at the William Huxley Thompson library where I attempted to read and find out what could be learned about Dick Gregory and his discourse. These readings included Gregory's books as well as magazine and newspaper articles about him which are included in the
bibliography. I then proceeded to contact Gregory first by getting his mailing address from the Johnson Publication Offices in Washington, D.C. and Chicago, Illinois, and eventually contact was made through his wife Lillian. On February 22, 1976 I spoke to Gregory on the telephone and an initial interview in Anne Arundel, Maryland was granted. A second interview was held in Columbus, Ohio on April 23, 1976 and a third interview in York, Pennsylvania in March 1982. The writer made extensive use of the Black Studies Library at Ohio State University and then contacted by phone Molefi Kete Asante. His work provides the major methodological approach for this research. Asante communicated by letter also and provided critical comments for this study. On November 4, 1982 the writer met Asante at Fort Columbus Airport and accompanied him to The Ohio State University where he spoke at a program emphasizing the conflict and change of Africa and was sponsored by the Department of Black Studies. The opportunity to meet and speak with Asante provided this writer with additional insight on his methodology and perception of Afrocentricity. The writer also contacted and met in person with Dr. Linda Myers, a psychologist in the Black Studies Department at The Ohio State University, who has outlined a Black model of psychological functioning based on the Afrocentric philosophical assumptions in the Egyptian Mystery System. Dr. Myers provided the writer with additional interpretations
of the Afrocentric perspective for this study. Furthermore, a computer search on Gregory and other Afrocentric writers was conducted in the Mechanized Information Center at Ohio State University and in New York.

Since 1970 the researcher has been in Gregory's audience and recorded selected speeches. During the year 1976-1977 I heard Gregory speak three times at the following institutions: Anne Arundel College in Anne Arundel, Maryland; The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio and Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In 1982 the researcher also heard Gregory speak at York College in York, Pennsylvania. These speeches provide major material for this study.

Critical Methodology

Bernard L. Brock states that in the process of rhetorical criticism "the critic not only needs a language to describe man as he responds to his world but also a theoretical framework for understanding man's basic rhetorical tendencies."18 However, I began to experience the problem that traditional rhetorical methodologies do not easily address themselves to Black awareness, Black achievement or Black culture. I then began a search for a methodology that would shed more light on the Black perspective behind speaking events.
Although African cultural history does not contain anything of the stature of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, men were engaged in speechmaking in ancient Egypt for the purpose of inducing cooperative action long before a system of rhetoric evolved in Greece.\(^{19}\) Furthermore, "what is in essence the Western appreciation of the written word is not historically shared by Africans and such a statement does not imply cultural superiority or inferiority but cultural difference."\(^{20}\) Thus while African culture did not produce a written treatise on rhetoric, it is nevertheless perhaps moreso than Western society, an expressive society.

This study critically analyzes the language of Dick Gregory by extending the theoretical base for understanding what happens when Afro-Americans and other people communicate. Kariamu Welsh, speaking about Afrocentricity, writes the following:

> Historically, it is without precedent, combining the elements of philosophy, science, history and mythology to give us the clearest perspective on that peculiar and particular group of people called the African-American. ...It does not take away from the universality or humanity of man to have a particular culture or history to stand as one's center since all cultures share certain universal traits; but, they do not necessarily resemble each other. Afrocentricity resembles the black man, speaks to him, looks like him and wants for him what he wants for himself.\(^{21}\)
In 1970, writing as Arthur Smith, Molefi Asante contended that "the traditional ideas about oratory as explained by Whites be reevaluated when analyzing African American speakers...."22 Since that time Asante has developed a message-culture derived methodology which seeks to find a source of critical analysis in the cues of the speaker's culture.23 Among the constituent principles identified in Asante's metatheory are frame of mind, structure of linguistic code, delivery of message and scope of context. These principles may be applied in developing a critical methodology for any other ethnic groups within the multi-ethnic American society. My intention is to use these principles and the notions of Black oriented social scientists and humanitists in an effort to determine what is unique in Dick Gregory's rhetoric.

Frame of mind refers to the way "certain social, creative and psychological factors contribute to the total view of language."24 Quoting Dixon and Foster, Asante points to certain features which are relevant in contributing to the creation of the African-American frame of mind. They include the values of humanism, communalism, empathetic understanding, rhythm, the attribute of oppression/paranoia, limited reward and styling.25

Social realities such as time, audience, type of government (oppressive/cooperative) create possibilities
as well as constraints for the Black speaker and constitute the context. However, the audience remains the principal barometer for what the speaker will say.

The structure of linguistic code is derived from a people's heritage and transmitted through the mores of the society. Lyrical quality, vocal artifact and indirection are cited as three components of the code structuring in the rhetorical behavior of Black Americans, with narration being the most common expression of this lyrical quality.

Vocal artifact, a feature of delivery, infers an awareness of the African concept of "nommo": word manipulation through tone, emphasis and expressiveness. Some other components of delivery, flair, imagination and rhetorical style are aptly expressed through indirection: "a way of surrounding the issue before focusing on it."

Audience participation in the creating of discourse is a mark of effectiveness in a speaker. Consequently, delivery is only functional in Black audiences if it results in audience involvement. At the level of the delivery, the speech act may be viewed as a performance.

Asante's metatheory provides a framework for selecting a number of criteria of special relevance for understanding Black oral communication and for examining the speaking of Gregory, a prominent Black orator who has not previously been viewed from an Afrocentrically based
cultural methodology. This analysis therefore, potentially fosters an understanding of the uniqueness of Black communication as a form of expression, while also highlighting the distinctiveness of the creative output of Dick Gregory the orator. Therefore, the use of the Asante metatheory as a methodological guide will undergird my analytical procedure. From this point I shall employ the metatheory as a tool for determining the following: (1) how Gregory views the world from an Afrocentric perspective; (2) the relationship between Gregory's rhetoric and his Afrocentric perspective; (3) the stylistic characteristics of Gregory's speaking; (4) Gregory's basic rhetorical tendencies and patterns; (5) the relationship between substance and technique in Gregory's speaking and (6) what impact does Gregory seem to have on his audiences.

A critique of Gregory's epistemology, i.e., a discussion of the truth or falsity of his statements, unless such a critique presents itself in the context of historical fact, is beyond the scope of this research.

Review of Literature

In spite of all of his rhetorical efforts, there are no rhetorical studies specifically focusing on Gregory; furthermore he has not been viewed from an Afrocentrically-based cultural methodology; however, in 1969 Sharon Kay
Ruhly in her master's thesis investigated the functioning of paradox in a laboratory and in a natural setting. Ruhly, from a eurocentric perspective, selected a speech by Gregory for the purpose of making a criticism of his use of that tool in a natural setting.  

Ruhly posed questions pertaining to the status of the Civil Rights movement at the time of Gregory's speech, his role in the movement, the influence of the local media and the demographic composition of the audience. In describing paradox Ruhly asked questions pertaining to the manifest purpose of Gregory's speech, the audience's response and perception of that purpose and the speech's clashing ideas. Lastly Ruhly offered a scientifically based explanation of the audience response via a semi-experimental study and questioned how could congruity theory be used to explain audience reaction, how to define paradox operationally, what evaluation could be made of the means used by Gregory and what problems were involved in such an inference.  

The findings of the Ruhly study were that the Civil Rights movement as perceived by the Westerville residents was more negative toward property-threatening concepts and more positive toward American traditional concepts than Otterbein members. The influence of the local media was fairly uniform across the audience. Ruhly also found that the manifest purpose of the speech may have been
understanding of the Black situation while some audience members sought entertainment. Audience reaction varied with Otterbein reaction more favorable than that of Westerville. Finally, Ruhly notes problems of methodology such as means other than Chi-square for the study of paradox and that future studies may require different scaling than that of the semantic differential. Furthermore, a new means of establishing groups of degree of polarization may need to be found as well as a new means of measuring pre-treatment attitudes. Ruhly also indicates that further research is needed to establish the exact nature of the use of paradox.33

Over the years numerous articles have been published concerning Gregory's career. One such article in a publication of Ebony by Carlyle C. Douglas presents highlights of Gregory's career and discusses his audiences and major themes. Douglas states that Gregory's fundamental message might be, "This is the most oppressive, morally degenerate, criminal nation on the face of the earth. Us old fools made it this way and it's up to you young folks to fix it. Yes sir, you got a big job ahead."34 The article appeared in 1970. Today Gregory's message is basically the same but updated with recent headlines found in newspapers.
Summary

Nommo, the magic power of the word, speaks of an African past and continues to permeate Black activities. Dick Gregory, a man who achieved fame as a comedian more than a decade ago, graduated from the school of "street learning" where verbal skill is practiced and fostered. In the past several years he has exchanged the night club circuit for the campus circuit and speaks before hundreds of audiences every year. The purpose of this study is to expand the concept of language and explore the nature of Black oral communication through an analysis of the rhetoric of Dick Gregory. With the notion that no rhetorical studies focus on the speaking of Gregory specifically, it is this writer's contention that there is a lack of information conceptualizing and emphasizing Dick Gregory as a persuasive communicator. As a Black rhetorical scholar this writer therefore plans to complete a rhetorical criticism of Dick Gregory from an Afrocentric perspective with the belief that information evolving from the study can contribute to the knowledge in the field of rhetoric and public address.
Notes


5Ibid., p. 268.

6Kochman, "Toward an Ethnography of Black American Speech Behavior," p. 82.

7Alex Poinsett, "Where Are the Revolutionaries?" Ebony, February 1976, p. 48.


10Mitchell, Black Preaching, p. 149.
The 1979 ruling in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in favor of the use of Black English in certain classroom settings, resulted in some of the most recent discussions on this subject.


Very, The Shadow That Scares Me, p. 15.


Ibid., p. 51.

Ibid., p. 75.


24 Ibid., p. 4.

25 Ibid., p. 7.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid., p. 8.

29 Ibid., p. 9.

30 Ibid., p. 11.

31 The one study featuring Gregory did not utilize an Afrocentric methodology. This was Sharon Kay Ruhly, "A Rhetorical Criticism of the Use of Paradox in a Selected Speech by Dick Gregory," unpublished M.A. Thesis, The Ohio State University, 1969.

32 Ibid., p. 34

33 Ibid., pp. 109-110

Chapter II
The Nature and Development of Dick Gregory

With most Black revolutionaries effectively removed from the public view of Americans or obscured by past events and current crises, Dick Gregory's presence and visibility in the 1980's is not at all disconcerting to persons who acknowledge the inevitability of change. Dick Gregory has been speaking prophetic words in the midst of social crisis since 1962, when "We Shall Overcome" expressed the hunger for freedom. He continues to preach what he views as justice and truth today regardless of whether his pulpit is an all-Black church in the South or an all-White northern suburban church or the steps of Chicago's city hall or the commons area of a college campus. The purpose of this chapter is to answer the question what is the biographical and ideological background from which Gregory has emerged as a speaker? The chapter examines Gregory's life from early childhood experiences, his education and military experiences to his career as an entertainer and his struggle for human dignity.
Early Background

Richard Claxton Gregory was born on Columbus Day, 1932 in St. Louis, Missouri to Lucille and Presley Gregory. Gregory's father eventually abandoned his wife and six children and the fatherless family was raised in poverty and on welfare. Perhaps Gregory's sense of comedy was instilled by his mother who believed in smiling twenty-four hours a day. For example, she would often say "we ain't poor we're just broke."¹ Gregory aptly described his poverty with the following:

Pregnant people get strange tastes. I was pregnant with poverty. Pregnant with dirt and pregnant with smells that made me turn away, pregnant with cold and pregnant with shoes that were never bought for me, pregnant with five other people in my bed and no daddy in the next room and pregnant with hunger.²

Even though they were poor Mrs. Gregory taught her children that they had two ways out in life--laughing or crying--with laughter offering more hope.³ Gregory took this advice to heart and he first began to learn the power of a joke early in his life. He used humor for defense when children would taunt him for being fatherless, poor, and the skinniest child in the neighborhood. Gregory reasoned:
Once you get a man to laugh with you, it's hard for him to laugh at you. The kids began to expect to hear funny things from me, and after a while I could say anything I wanted. I got the reputation as a funny man. And then I started to turn the jokes on them.  

Not only did Gregory's neighborhood peers taunt him for his situation but his school teachers and classmates also ridiculed him because of his poverty. One teacher made a point of stating that he was fatherless and on relief in front of the entire class. Since most of Gregory's concentration was centered on lunchtime instead of schoolwork his teachers viewed him as a stupid troublemaker; the result was that Gregory lost what little interest he had in school and was frequently absent.  

Gregory's attitude towards school changed when he was transferred to Cote Brilliant Elementary school where the principal instilled a sense of pride in him. Often he got up in class and talked even when he really had nothing to say; consequently, he received the reputation of a talker who could go on and on about anything at all. Because the teachers talked and listened to him he became interested in learning.  

When Gregory transferred to Summer High School, sports began to interest him. This interest was due to the fact that the teams took showers every evening after practice and his home could not afford such a luxury. People began
to admire Gregory for his training and endurance and stopped putting him down for being poor or crazy.\textsuperscript{7}

Eventually, he became an outstanding runner, and running is a major activity he uses today as part of his effort to communicate issues to the public. In his second autobiography \textit{Up From Nigger}, Gregory refers to running as his first love and describes the importance it has held in his life:

Through running I first became aware of what it meant to be somebody. When I was a kid running track in high school, I found that running wiped out everything. It wiped out the conditions of poverty, a racist system, the humiliation and frustration of second-class citizenship. The race track became the great equalizer, a kind of laboratory of true democracy. On the track the Declaration of Independence became a living reality for a moment--all competitors were created equal. They were in the meet because they had obeyed the rules of physical fitness. They weren't there because they had money or because they knew somebody or because they came from a certain neighborhood. Nor were they there because some good soul said, 'Hey, he's just a poor little Black kid. Let's give him a break.'\textsuperscript{8}

In 1974 Gregory ran an eight-hundred-mile personal marathon from Chicago to Washington to focus national public attention upon his belief that a food crisis exists in America and the entire world. In an effort to overcome the loneliness and pain of his ordeal Gregory concentrated upon the significance of the run. He states:

This run was different. I was no longer running to call attention to Dick Gregory. This wasn’t Flagpole Gregory, the grandstand favorite of the high school track meets in Saint Louis, who used to salute the flag in the homestretch. This was Dick Gregory, running to call attention to the world’s number one problem—hungry, starving folks the world over. This was Dick Gregory, running against famine, against hunger, against time.

As I look back, I realized that I had been training for this run all my life. This was the 'big meet.' I used to run against opponents I could see, guys from another school, another town, another state. No matter whether I won or lost, there was always another meet, another week. But this race was bigger than a game. There was nothing 'sporting' about this event. I was running against a whole system—a system which dared to decide that food is a weapon. The stakes were higher now. It was more than medals, more than recognition, more than endurance, more than crossing the finish line. Every stop of the way on this run, someone, somewhere, was dying.

Perhaps Gregory's first demonstration to focus public attention upon an issue occurred when he learned that his name had been omitted from the scholastic record book because records set in all-Black track meets were never
listed. Gregory, along with a mass of others protesting crowded conditions, went to the Board of Education. Gregory's name was mentioned on television and in the St. Louis Post Dispatch as the leader of the demonstration. One result of the demonstration was the integration of the high school cross country program. Secondly Gregory became motivated to seek recognition for his ability as a runner. He won the state cross country meet and was the only high school runner to finish in a fifteen mile race with college boys. Gregory was made captain of the track and cross country teams and was presented with various awards; nevertheless, he was always introduced as a boy who was born and raised on relief.10

During his senior year of high school, Gregory decided to run for the office of class president. In the past only those students with perfect attendance and membership in prestigious organizations had held office. Gregory aimed his campaign towards the hoodlums and the have nots. He was elected and the office served as a turning point in his life because it led to a new feeling of responsibility in him for others. In track events he had competed only for himself but as class president he had obligations to attend class meetings, be punctual and write speeches.11

Gregory's mother had only completed the third grade; so finishing high school was an accomplishment for his
family. Even though he was ranked in the lowest fifth of more than 700 students, Gregory's coach, Leland P. Lingle, attempted to get him enrolled in Southern Illinois University. Gregory did not take the entrance exam because he simply believed he would not pass it. However, he negotiated an agreement with the dean of the university that enabled him to go to college on an athletic work scholarship without taking the entrance exam. Afterwards Gregory decided not to train or study for the remainder of his senior year in high school. He proceeded to stay out late, drink, entertain girls and smoke cigarettes. Newspapers predicted that he would win the State Meet for a second time; however Gregory finished seventeenth.12

Gregory was often accused of egotism. Perhaps his attitude towards his studies and training during his senior year in school is evidence of egotism. Gregory admitted to believing that he was "great stuff, bigger than the Gregory family, bigger than the school, right up there with God."13 This same attitude existed when he was to write a speech for the Senior Class Day. "I had gotten so big in my own mind that when I disappointed myself there was nothing left to fall back on. Too big for mamma, too big for the teachers, too big for God."14 Gregory did not write the speech but an English teacher wrote one for him which he gave and for which he received a standing ovation.15
Regardless of his failure to write his own speech, Gregory did accomplish many achievements for which he could take pride. They included being captain of the cross country and track teams, recipient of a grant to college, fastest half-miler in the school's history, drummer in the orchestra and marching band, an actor in a variety show and outstanding athlete of 1953. But there was one thing he had not achieved. This was being an American who could eat with his teammates in white restaurants or sit in undesignated areas of movie theaters in Carbondale, Illinois.16

The University and Military Experiences

In 1952, Gregory enrolled as a student at Southern Illinois University. Coach Lingle was the first White man to encourage him to study speech, drama and music. Moreover he laughed at Gregory's jokes and predicted that he would become a first rate entertainer. Gregory found college to be considerably different from high school; during high school he struggled against being broke and on welfare but in college he struggled with being Black. The university's student body was primarily White; persons with freedoms that he could not exercise especially when traveling with the track team.17

While at Southern Illinois University, Gregory contends that he did not finish reading a single book and yet it
was here that he developed his "attitude." This attitude consisted of the anger, confusion and hurt he felt as a result of discrimination. For example, because he was a member of the track team he was allowed to eat in White restaurants but was still the object of discussion and stares by angry Whites. In an effort to cope with the situation, Gregory would sing songs and tell jokes with his teammates. He became known as "happy-go-lucky Greg," "Personality Kid," and "Funny Man". These lables did not bother him because he remembered his mother's advice about there being more hope in laughing; however, Gregory states that he was dying a slow death in attempting to determine why he was on the track team, attending classes and working at a university where a White instructor would write "Negro" on the board with a small "n". Gregory's "saving grace" from death occurred during an incident at the Carbondale movie theater where unknown to him, Blacks had to sit in the balcony. Gregory was under the impression that Blacks who sat there were getting preferential treatment for tipping the usher. One evening Gregory and his date sat downstairs to avoid being seen by another girl he had broken a date with. After a lot of stares and whispers from the white people, he was told by the manager that he had to sit in the balcony. Gregory refused and the police were called. The next evening he returned
to the theater alone and sat undisturbed downstairs. On the following evening he returned with other Black athletes and they too were permitted to sit downstairs. Later the manager made an agreement with Gregory that if he promised to sit in the balcony while a new film, The Robe, was playing so that the manager would not lose White customers, Negroes could sit thereafter anywhere they wanted to. Gregory consented and a small victory had been won for civil rights.  

He continued to develop his attitude especially when his mother died during his first year of school; he whispered to her during the funeral that he would do something to make him proud of her. Eventually Dick Gregory found his opportunity when he noticed that not one Black had won the outstanding athlete award. Gregory informed his coach that if he wasn't the recipient of the award for 1953 he would quit the team. That year he was elected outstanding athlete and the year after that another Black made it but Gregory states he "had to break the ice with a threat." Gregory never got to be as good a runner as his coach and the newspapers said that he would because he had begun performing satire and developing his attitude.

Since he was putting all of his efforts into developing his attitude, Gregory did not keep up his grade
average and in 1954 was drafted into the army. He appeared in talent shows and proceeded to be a winner and eventually he was rewarded for his efforts by being placed in Special Services where he began to tour the country. In the army he began to develop comedy routines and he worked at a great deal of Black clubs. In 1955, he qualified for the All-Army Show at Fort Dix, New Jersey where the winner of the show would have the opportunity to appear on the Ed Sullivan television show. Although he did not win he later stated that he would have been destroyed as an entertainer if he had appeared on the show since he knew very little about show business as an industry.23

In 1956, Gregory was discharged from the army and he returned to Southern Illinois University where he also rejoined the track team. He began to believe that having a diploma had little meaning for a Black person. This discovery was discouraging because he had been taught to believe that if he received the proper education White people would respect him. During the midterm of his final year he concluded that he was in college under false pretenses. He states:

I learned that man is born with all the wisdom needed to gain dignity and respect. If you have to depend upon an education to gain respect something is radically wrong. The really important lesson to learn in life is that it is the man who should be respected, not his education. A man has
gained nothing in life if his education is respected and his manhood is not.\textsuperscript{24}

The Comic Turns to the Stage

Upon concluding that college was not for him, Gregory decided to quit and left school under the false pretense that he had been offered a $25,000 a year job in show business; but the reality facing him was that he had no job at all so he decided to go to Chicago since his brother Presley was living there. He worked at various jobs and was eventually laid off. For a while he received unemployment compensation and was reminded of being on relief. Eventually he got a job as Master of Ceremonies at the Esquire Night Club where he was paid $10.00 a night. Here he began again to train as a comedian. He purchased comedy records, read joke books, watched television and listened to people as he stood on corners trying out jokes, thoughts and ideas on strangers.\textsuperscript{25}

Literally twenty-four hours a day were spent in trying to develop his mind in the fashion he used to develop his body. He sought to determine what made people laugh and he seemed always interested in what they were thinking about. Gregory's efforts began to eventually pay off for he began to attract large crowds and also met his present wife Lillian. For the next year and a half Gregory experienced the ups and downs of show business as far as employment and salary are concerned. In the
interim his wife Lillian had given birth to a child on the floor of their apartment. It was during these trials and tribulations that Gregory had really grown up and was ready for the world of show business.26

Lessons of the Stage

Eventually Gregory was hired as Master of Ceremonies at Mr. Roberts, the largest Negro club in America. The top Negro acts were hosted here and here Gregory learned what he considered to be the greatest lessons in show business. Gregory noticed that Whites who came to a Black establishment would laugh at anything a comic said to relieve their anxiety of being in unfamiliar territory. However, if a Black would play at a White establishment, the Whites would either pity or hate the comedian. Gregory concluded that a person cannot respect someone that he pities and if laughter did occur it would be brief. He then decided that he would have to hit the audience fast before they could think. He thought:

I've got to act like a star who isn't sorry for himself. That way they can't feel sorry for me. I've got to make jokes about myself before I can make jokes about them and their society--that way they can't hate me. Comedy is friendly relations.27

Another lesson Gregory learned was that one had to avoid the topic of sex because of the White man's hangup with a Black sex mystique. He also realized that once he
began working at White clubs that hecklers would be an additional problem. He reasoned:

Handling a heckler just right is very important to a comic. Unless you're well known as an insulting comedian you can't chop hecklers down too hard or the crowd will turn against you. Most hecklers are half drunk anyway, and you will lose a crowd if you get mean with a drunk. On the other hand you have to put a heckler down. If a heckler gets the best of you, that crowd will start to feel sorry for you.28

Not only did Gregory have to consider how to deal with the problem of heckling but he also had to worry about being called a nigger. He reasoned that this would embarrass the audience and the club owner would probably prefer to keep Blacks out rather than lose customers. Gregory began to practice fast comebacks to the name nigger with his wife but he could never get it right because he would always say something that was bitter or evil. Finally he realized that a quick sophisticated response with no bitterness was the answer; thus the audience could not sense that he was angry and it would not have time to pity him. The first time a man called him a nigger Gregory replied:

you hear what that guy just called me? Roy Roger's horse. He called me trigger. You know my contract reads that every time I hear that word, I get fifty dollars more a night. I'm only making ten dollars
a night, and I'd like to put the owner out of business. Will everybody in the room please stand up and yell nigger.29

Gregory passed that test but he still had to face another which dealt with the sex mystic. Eventually the situation occurred at a White establishment where a young White girl stood up and stated that Gregory was handsome. He replied,

Honey, what nationality are you?
She replied, Hungarian. Gregory said, Take another drink. You'll think you're Negro. Then you'll run up here and kiss me and we'll both have to leave town in a hurry.30

The audience laughed and if any hatred existed it was not for Gregory but for the girl.31

Career Success

By continuing to play White establishments Gregory began to meet people who would be able to help him with his career. These included Tim Baker, newspaperman, Bob Orben, comedy writer, Joe Musse and Freddie Williams, booking and contract agents. With the help of these people Gregory received his big break on January 13, 1961 when he was asked to replace Irwin Corey at the Playboy Club. Initially Gregory was offered $50.00 to postpone his act because the audience consisted of a convention of Southern frozen food executives and it was believed that
this was not the best kind of audience for him to break in; however, Gregory decided to do the show even if a lynch mob was in the audience. Initially the audience was insulting but Gregory, who was scheduled to do a fifty minute show, lasted for an hour and forty minutes and received a standing ovation. Hugh Hefner, owner of the club, viewed the second show and signed Gregory to a three year contract with a starting salary of $250.00 a week.32

After the Playboy booking, Gregory began to receive press notices as well as a review in *Time* magazine and offers from agents and record companies. His appearance on the Jack Parr Show made him a success in America and led to requests from the David Susskind show, a $25,000 offer in advance by Colpex Records to record two albums and the opportunity to meet Bob Hope. Finally, he returned to Southern Illinois University to give a concert and with his newly found success he erased the $25,000 lie he had told his fellow students when he dropped out of school.33

*The Haunting Monster*

The monster that had haunted Gregory during his years of schooling at Southern Illinois University still existed and took shape in the form of segregation, which bred hate, fear and racial prejudice. In an effort to alleviate the monster Gregory began to do benefit shows for prisons, CORE and the NAACP. He also began to associate with Roy
Wilkins, Whitney Young, James Farmer and Martin Luther King. At a voter registration rally in 1962 in Jackson, Mississippi where he was to speak, Gregory met a seventy-eight year old man who changed his whole life. This man had been a leader in the voter registration drive and had killed another Black man who had been sent by Whites to burn his house down. The old man was sent to jail for the death of the Black man; this was the first time that he had spent a night away from his wife who died during his absence. This man's attempt to fight a system and demonstrate for a tomorrow that he would never see and for jobs and rights he might not even be qualified to benefit from resulted in Dick Gregory's becoming involved in the Civil Rights Movement for the first time. Previously he had donated money and given speeches; but he realized that this was not enough. He knew that he could stay in the night clubs and satirize but as long as any man White or Black was denied his rights in America, he too was in danger. Thus he decided that he wanted a piece of the action.

Battling Racism

From then on, Gregory defied threats of beatings and murder to devote most of his time, money and energy to the Civil Rights Movement. In May of 1963 Medgar Evers asked him to come to Jackson, Mississippi and Gregory
sensed an impending death. His anguish reached a new
dimension when after rushing home from Mississippi to
grieve with his wife Lillian over the loss of their two and
a half month old son Richard, he was plagued by dozens of
hate telephone calls. In reassuring his wife, Gregory
stated that God took his son's life to prevent his own
death because nothing short of death would have made him
leave the South that day. 35

After the funeral Gregory returned to the Jackson
demonstrations and later went to San Francisco for an
engagement where on his second night learned that Medgar
Evers was murdered. Gregory went to the funeral, then
returned to San Francisco to complete his engagement
where he was asked how he could be funny in light of the
recent events. He replied, "when a man sells his talent
he's a prostitute, and when you're a prostitute you lay
like the customer wants you to lay."36

By continuing to pursue both his career as a comedian
and his newly found vocation in civil rights, Gregory in
1963 was listed in Who's Who In America. In 1952 he had
been listed as a welfare case and eleven years later re-
joiced that he was listed with famous men. He reasoned,

That's why so many people are willing to lay
down their lives to save this great country
from the cancer of hate that is destroying
it. Where else in the world could a Negro,
born and raised on relief, make Who's Who?
....In America, with all of its evils and
faults, you can still reach through the forest and see the sun. But we don't know yet whether that sun is rising or setting for our country.\textsuperscript{37}

Not only did Gregory demonstrate in the South but he also struggled against racism in the North. He also participated in the historic march on Washington, D.C. Soon after that march he returned to the South but this time for the funerals of the four children who died in the bombing of a Black church in Birmingham, Alabama. The fear that had once plagued him during the demonstrations in the South was now gone and the emotion that took its place was anger. No longer was he content to win a foot race as he had done in high school and college; nor was he satisfied with making people laugh and love him as he did in his comedy act. Dick Gregory now wanted respect, dignity and freedom and he was now willing to die to achieve that freedom.\textsuperscript{38}

The Nonviolent Preacher

Since 1962, Dick Gregory has been preaching to achieve respect, dignity and freedom in the midst of social crises. Today he continues to preach at his own expense, and his participation in the struggle for human dignity has cost him over a million dollars in travel expenses, cancelled bookings and innumerable legal expenses. All totaled his efforts equal a very high price for
freedom.  He has forgone the easier, affluent life for a forty-day fast for peace and justice, for campus tours where his monologue is weighted heavily by anger and relieved only occasionally with humor and for far less time with his family than he would like to spend. But he states:

It was not a personal sacrifice. I am more selfish than that. When the white wino in this country has more rights than the Black millionaire it is the rich man who is in trouble. I'm just trying to free my blackness before I free my bank account.

Gregory turned away from the life of a full-time professional comedian because he saw limitations in the use of humor as a social weapon. He reasoned,

Humor has only helped the oppressed in one respect as a narcotic. If humor were the weapon to solve the problem, there'd be comedians in the foxholes of Vietnam. As for me, humor was the only outlet to express my anger...Humor can no more find the solution to race problems than it can cure cancer.

In his struggle for freedom Gregory, a pacifist, became committed to the nonviolent philosophy under the leadership of Martin Luther King. He has totally accepted the nonviolent philosophy even to the point where his own life has been in danger. During the Watts riots he was shot while trying to bring calm to the community. He took the
gun away from the man who shot him and ordered the crowd to disperse; it was not until the crowd did as he asked that he allowed himself to be taken to the hospital for emergency treatment.\textsuperscript{43}

In 1965 Gregory became a vegetarian and viewed the killing of animals as immoral and unnatural. His decision to become a vegetarian was a moral one and had nothing to do with understanding proper diet or losing weight.\textsuperscript{44}

In 1967 Gregory ran as an independent write-in candidate for mayor of Chicago and met Dr. Alvenia Fulton, a teacher of food, nutrition and proper diet. Gregory lost the election and became more involved with the struggle for human dignity; he wanted to do something dramatic and personal to protest the continued slaughter in Vietnam. Dr. Fulton convinced him to fast and on Thanksgiving Day, 1967 he began a fast that lasted 40 days as a social protest against the Vietnam War with distilled water being his only nourishment. Gregory went from 280 pounds to ninety-seven pounds and continued his speaking engagements and traveled to fifty-seven cities and gave sixty-three lectures during the fast.\textsuperscript{45}

Since that time Dick Gregory has fasted numerous times for health and vocational reasons with the longer fasts being the result of his vocation in the struggle for human dignity. In the past few years Dick Gregory has emphasized world hunger in his messages and has staged several cross
country runs to bring it to national attention. Due to these and other acts, Dick Gregory is now better known as a civil-rights activist than as a comedian. William Schechter, author of *The History of Negro Humor in America* calls Gregory the "angriest black comedian" and notes that Gregory is more responsible than anyone else for directing Soul-age humor away from the subtleties and innuendo of minstrels to unmistakably "telling it like it is".\(^45\) He states,

He was the first black to satirize white prejudices and attitudes in front of white audiences, and pioneered in the use of political humor slanted to the race issue. Moreover, his presence, sharp wit and deep perceptiveness have made him an outstanding proponent of equal rights causes wherever he appears.\(^47\)

Today, the new Gregory, lean, bearded, wearing coveralls, stands before campus audiences and conceals none of his wrath. His lectures are punctuated with invectives such as "insane nation," "racist country," and "American hypocrisy". He continues to shatter the dam blocking more exposure for Black comedians with his blunt, scorching commentary on racial intolerance. Dick Gregory is a man who is so committed to his beliefs that he claims death is preferable to continued oppression. He does not fear death nor evil for he feels he has lived with evil too long. He describes himself as having a deep and abiding
faith in the constitution of the United States with a commitment to humanity and true brotherhood in general. He views himself as a man of ethical persuasion, moral standards and honest orientation.\textsuperscript{48} His parting words in night club performances were:

\begin{quote}
I'm gonna leave now, I'm not going to tell you to be your brother's keeper. If you can't learn to be your brother's brother, you'll never keep him well. So good night, God bless you and may nature have fun with you.\textsuperscript{49}
\end{quote}

**Summary**

Born and bred in the ghetto of St. Louis, Missouri, Dick Gregory is a man who easily conjures up opinions and emotions ranging from love and admiration to hate and misunderstanding. Since 1962, he has achieved worldwide attention as a successful comedian, author and recording star. Having forsaken his night club career, today he is one of the country's leading lecturers with a schedule that has called for 300 lectures every ten months.

He has battled racism most of his life with his earliest confrontations with the "monster" occurring during his high school and college years. His personal fight against racism has expanded to the point where he has an active concern for the plight of all people not reaping the full benefits of American citizenship.
This battle began with Gregory doing benefit shows for groups such as the Student Non-violent Coordination Committee, the Congress of Racial Equality, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and other groups busily engaged in demonstrations for equal rights and opportunities; however, for Gregory this was not enough. Thus, he began to take an active part in demonstrations, went to jail and took beatings.

Although Gregory has faced death on numerous occasions, he views himself as a herald of truth with a mission to present that truth. Today he is known more as an activist and less as a top humorist and he continues to make his voice heard and his presence felt wherever he sees injustice.

By analyzing Gregory's background the writer has endeavored to view his intellectual growth pattern in order to determine his true character. Although Gregory attended college his commitment to the human rights of man did not evolve from a textbook or theories offered from instructors but rather from his life experiences and those of his fellow man.

Comedy and human compassion are the two things Gregory holds most dear. Of the first he notes that he is first and foremost a comic and that the combination of comedy and show business provided him with the opportunities and
experiences that molded his life. The writer concludes that Gregory's mother, his childhood peers and comedians like Bob Hope served as influences in his elementary education in comedy during a period of his life when he was a "poor ghetto kid on relief".

Of human compassion, Gregory notes that his involvement in the struggle for human dignity is a direct result of having made a name for himself in show business; however, the writer contends that the lessons of the stage came much easier for him than those surrounding human compassion. Gregory himself notes that it took him four decades to learn that one should fear the monster's creator rather than the monster himself. For Gregory, the social and political system in the United States is his Dr. Frankenstein and its created monsters reside in slums, ghettos and other areas of poverty. "Like Dr. Frankenstein, the system creates the living dead." While in college Gregory was a part of the living dead. He notes that the system controlled his actions and reactions. Today his devotion to the universal order of life has moved him "up from nigger" and serves as a guide to direct him in his efforts to be a personal witness and provide human service.
Notes


2Ibid., p. 44.

3Ibid.

4Ibid.

5Ibid., p. 45.

6Ibid., pp. 59-61.

7Ibid., pp. 64-80.


9Ibid., pp. 228-229.


11Ibid., pp. 90-91.

12Ibid., pp. 91-92.

13Ibid.

14Ibid., p. 93.

15Ibid., p. 94.

16Ibid., p. 96.

17Ibid., p. 97.

18Ibid., p. 96.

19Ibid., p. 98.

21 Ibid., pp. 102-104.
22 Ibid., p. 105.
23 Ibid., p. 107.
24 Ibid., p. 108.
25 Ibid., pp. 101-122.
26 Ibid., pp. 123-144.
27 Ibid., pp. 145-147.
28 Ibid., p. 149.
29 Ibid., pp. 150-151.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid., pp. 154-161.
33 Ibid., pp. 162-164.
34 Ibid., pp. 168-174.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid., p. 208.
38 Ibid., pp. 212-223.
42 Schechter, The History of Negro Humor In America, p. 186.
43 Gregory, The Shadow That Scares Me, p. 17.


47. Ibid.


Chapter III

Afrocentric Consciousness
In Gregory and His Rhetoric

Three broad views of cultural reality exist in the world: Afrocentric, Eurocentric and Asiocentric. These views have been formed by the histories, mythologies, motifs and ethos of the people who constitute geographically close gene pools.\(^1\) Asante states:

\[\ldots\text{neither of the realities can be considered absolute, without variations, or immune to individual modifications and growth patterns. Nor can they account for all of the combinations of cultural realities that we find in various parts of the world. Yet in these three broad views of cultural reality we find the source of communication conflict and harmony among most people.}\] \(^2\)

**Broad Views of Reality Defined**

The Afrocentric viewpoint holds that all things are integrated with culture and nature. There can be no separation of material and spiritual, profane and sacred, form and substance. The continuity from material to spiritual is the reality of the Afrocentric viewpoint.\(^3\)

Asiocentric viewpoints hold that the material is an illusion that the real only comes from the spiritual. The emphasis here is the notion of spirit over matter. In
contrast to this view is the Eurocentric perspective on reality. It holds that the material, the experiential, is real and that the spiritual is an illusion. Everything that is not within sense experiences becomes nonsense. Thus, scholars have written that Asians are spiritualistic, Europeans materialistic and Africans are personalistic. These categories are very general but they do establish a mental picture that is based upon general philosophical orientations.\(^4\)

This writer accepts the position that the Eurocentric or Americocentric view is not the only way to view the world. Since this research seeks to extend the theoretical base for understanding what happens when Africans and other people communicate, the writer will utilize the Afrocentric viewpoint. The purpose of this chapter is to answer the question how is Dick Gregory Afrocentric in his perspective and how does his Afrocentricity relate to the use of Black language in the cultural context of the Black audience?

**Levels of Awareness**

Five levels of awareness are outlined by Asante to enable Black people to "capture the true essence of our souls."\(^5\) Skin recognition, the lowest level, occurs when the individual realizes that he and his heritage is Black. The second level, environmental recognition occurs when
the individual associates the discrimination and abuse of his environment with his Blackness. Personality awareness, the third level, occurs when a person adopts traits associated with Blacks. Interest concern, the fourth level, occurs when the individual accepts the first three levels and displays interest and concern and intelligence in dealing with the problems and issues of Black people. The fifth and fullest level is Afrocentricity. It occurs "when the individual becomes totally changed to a conscious level of involvement in the struggle for his or her own mind liberation."^6

Asante contends that Afrocentricity is beyond demonstrating writing or speaking about Blacks or African issues. "Regardless to our various complexions and degrees of consciousness we are by virtue of commitments, history, and convictions an African people. Afrocentricity, therefore, is only superficially related to color; it is more accurately a philosophical outlook determined by history."^7 This history is based upon the philosophy of West African tribes. For Asante, the full level of Afrocentricity is achieved when the person internalizes values based on West African philosophy.\(^8\)

Wade Nobles, a Black psychologist concurs with Asante in his beliefs concerning the link between Africans in Africa and the New World. While there are those who
contend that western tribes have little shared experience with Afro-Americans because of differences in language, religion and customs, Nobles contends that these differences are minor compared to the binding quality of communality and guiding beliefs. Thus Nobles assumes that "Black Americans derive their most fundamental self-definition from several cultural and philosophical premises which we share with most West African tribes." These premises are basic conceptions of the nature of man and his relation to the other men and his environment. Nobles and other Black scholars believe that African philosophy dictates the values, customs, attitudes and behavior of Africans in Africa and in the New World.

African Philosophy

John Mbiti defines African philosophy as "the understanding, attitude of mind, logic, and perception behind the manner in which African people think, act or speak in different situations of life." In this section the writer will outline those elements of African philosophy that are of essence to the Afrocentric view of reality.

Oneness with Nature

The first premise is the notion that people were part of the natural rhythm of nature, which nothing could break up or destroy. Everything was functionally connected; to
destroy one category completely would cause the destruction of the whole of existence. God was viewed as the originator and sustainer of man. The spirits explained man's destiny while man was the center of the ontology. While animals, plants and natural phenomena constituted the environment in which man lived, there also existed a force, a power, or energy which permeated the whole universe. 12

Identity Survival of People

The second premise is the notion of the survival of one's people--that is the tribe. Studies show that one of the similarities of the distinct tribes of Africa was belief in tribal survival which was reflected in and sustained by a deep sense of kinship. Each member of the tribe was not only related to the tribal ancestors but also to all those still unborn. The individual, in traditional life, did not or could not exist alone and owed his very existence to other members of the tribe. Africans believed that the community (tribe) made, created, or produced the individual; thus unless the individual was corporate or communal, he did not exist. 13

When one member of the tribe suffered the entire tribe suffered; when one member of the tribe rejoiced, all of his kinsmen rejoiced with him--living and dead. When a man got married, he was not alone, nor did his wife belong to him alone. The children from all unions belonged to the
collective body. Thus a cardinal point in understanding the traditional African's view of himself and his self-concept is that he believes "I am because we are: And because we are, therefore, I am." ¹⁴ Myers, speaking Afrocentrically, states that defining self in this manner acknowledges that "I am not a separate, finite, and limited being; but, an extension of all that is. My worth is intrinsic in being." ¹⁵

**Epistemology**

Traditional African philosophy and the Afrocentric belief system are holistic in world view with the notions of unity, one with nature and survival of the people. Both philosophies are atypical to the segmented view of Eurocentric viewpoints. Consistent with this holistic oneness is Myers' Afrocentric concept that self-knowledge is the basis of all knowledge. ¹⁶ Myers notes that this concept is characteristic of the African mode of thought of knowledge and understanding through symbolic imagery and rhythm. She states,

To understand this one must first accept that one is the individual and unique expression of infinite spirit, as is everything else. Once one realizes who one really is, there is no external knowledge per se, only learning more about oneself. With this awareness, knowledge is not external or segmented (i.e., separated from self or into discrete categories and disciplines). ¹⁷
Logic

Another holistic notion is concerned with the African concept of man. Unlike Eurocentric views suggesting a division of the mind and the body and the dichotomy that the mind was the "good" and the body was the "bad", the African concept of man assumed his dual nature as a unity but did not attempt to divide mind from body or refer to or imply an inherent good or evil in either aspect of the duality. Mind and body unite to make the unified man. Thus Africans believed that man, like the universe, is a complicated, integrated, unified whole.18

Two final holistic notions to be discussed here concern the universe and death. Within the African tradition, it was believed that the natural order existed which was unified and permeated by God. The goal of the individual and the tribe as a collective was to blend harmoniously into the flow of the universe. To attempt to change, alter, control, or mess with the universe was to tamper with the will of the gods and was definitely discouraged. In the African and Afro-American tradition, death is viewed as a means to move to another stage and is one more aspect or stage of the rhythmic process necessary to becoming a total person. Unlike the Euro American system where man attempts to control death through advances in the life sciences, and control the universe, lives and destinies of
minority peoples of this world, the African experience treats death as an event which is continuously present and does not attempt to destroy the universe in order to save it from the mysteries of life.  

There are those who question the continuum or retention of African orientation with the transplantation of New World Blacks and contend that Africans and Afro-Americans have nothing in common but the color of their skin. A dirth of historical documentation reveals that an "epic memory" exists between Africans and Afro-Americans in their habits, styles, mannerisms and behaviors. These modalities are reflected in language, music and people customs of Afro-Americans. Nobles states that the rigidly enforced isolation and oppressive system of slavery of Blacks allowed and encouraged New World Africans to retain their African philosophical orientation. Asante, in regard to this point notes the following:

There exists an emotional, cultural, psychological connection between this people that span the oceans and the separate existence. It is in our immediate responses to the same phenomena, it is how we talk, how we greet, how we style, the essential elements of our habitual behavior. We are not African-Americans without Africanity; we are an African people, a new ethnic group to be sure, a composite of many ancient people... And quite frankly our politics, like the expressiveness of our religion, is more often similar in sentiment to that of Africa than of white America...influence then initially takes shape in aesthetics
and matters of style...influence becomes significant...22

This writer contends that this influence effects not only Blacks in America but Blacks transplanted to other areas of the world by colonization of Eurocentrics who believe in the concept of Manifest Destiny. The remainder of this chapter will consider how Dick Gregory is Afro-centric in his philosophy and reveal the relationship this has in his use of Black language in the cultural context of the Black audience.

**Gregory's Afrocentric Philosophy**

In 1966 Dick Gregory viewed himself as the following:

> I am Dick Gregory. I live in America. I am a Negro. I am an individual first, an American second and a Negro third. If a man calls me a nigger, he is calling me something I am not. The nigger exists only in his mind. Therefore his mind is the nigger. I must feel sorry for such a man.23

At this particular time Gregory as an entertainer was at a stage in his life where he viewed America from a comedic viewpoint. As he began to evolve in his Afro-centric philosophy he began to see that the system was more detrimental than he had previously thought. In the epilogue of *Up From Nigger* he admits that the monster, meaning his ego and ambition, had been subdued and he no longer viewed it as a good thing to possess because it had
been created by an oppressive and unjust social and political system. Today Gregory contends that he clearly recognizes and understands the system of injustice that creates monstrous conditions in the lives of the poor. As Gregory has matured in spiritual awareness and understanding he was no longer driven by the monster to outwit, outsmart and outlast the obstacles and barriers in life. Today he is driven by a commitment to the laws of "Mother Nature" and the moral demands of the universal order. In other words Gregory is driven by the premises of Afrocentric philosophy, which inherently lead to the dissolution of barriers and obstacles.

Perhaps Gregory began to subscribe to the Afrocentric philosophy during the events that followed the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Prior to the assassination Gregory held Eurocentric views in regards to his identity and his infinity for material objects. His childhood dream of attending the opera first class was fulfilled when after achieving success as a comedian, he took his wife and children to the St. Louis opera by going first class all the way--first class on the airplane, chauffeur-driven limousine and the most expensive seats in the opera house.
Survival of Tribe

However, the weekend that Jack Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald, Gregory realized that there was more to the civil rights struggle than being called "nigger". He notes that at that point he began his climb "up from nigger" and decided upon Kennedy's death to place his career, his body and his life on the front line in the struggle for civil rights.26 This decision subscribes to the Afrocentric philosophy in that Gregory was concerned with the generation of Afro-Americans that have preceded him and those who follow him. Such an attitude is in accordance with the notion of survival of the tribe.

In an interview Gregory stated that Black people have been rushing the door to get out without being killed for 200 years. He believes that he was one of the lucky ones to get through the door and past the machine guns. Moreover, he envisions blood on his feet because he made it through the blood of Blacks who were killed trying to achieve success. In his efforts to get involved for a cause by protesting, Gregory contends that some of the blood comes off and serves as a motivating factor in his life.27

Cooperation and Collective Responsibility

Afrocentrically speaking, Gregory's attitude towards his ancestors may be viewed as collective responsibility.
Perhaps a better example occurred in 1964 when Gregory was constantly in and out of demonstrations, nightclubs and the country and was often asked if his participation in civil rights demonstrations had hurt his career. Initially Gregory did not have a response but eventually he found an answer to this question by asking if his career was interfering with his demonstrations.28

As Gregory continued to grow as a human being and in his Afrocentric perspective his comedy routine also began to reflect his growth. He no longer restricted himself to racial material and began to do material dealing with a variety of subjects as well as social and political satire. Furthermore he made certain that his bookings were not scheduled too far in advance so that he could be available to participate in demonstrations. He conducted interviews all day, between shows and after the last show of the evening. Moreover, he never turned down a request to help if it were at all possible;29 such behavior exemplifies the Afrocentric premise of valuing interpersonal relationships, sharing and the spirit of cooperation. Gregory describes the results of his involvement with the following:

All kinds of people came to see me...My dressing room was a combination seminar, counseling center and speaker's bureau... It was demanding and exhausting. I never knew what it was to rest up for a performance or to rest between shows. Sleep
became a luxury, a luxury I could seldom afford, and it took up only a small part of my daily routine. My bed became the back seat of a taxi cab or my seat on an airplane. I learned to live on a series of brief, scattered naps.  

Perhaps a better example of Gregory's sharing and cooperation occurred when he changed the focus of his struggle for human dignity from the South to the North in Chicago, Illinois and began to demonstrate against Mayor Richard Dailey's political machine. During his month of July when Gregory was engaged at the Hungry i in San Francisco he commuted every day between the two cities so that the demonstrations would continue nonstop. This effort cost him $6,240 in airfare alone.  

Unity and Survival

During Gregory's evolution "up from nigger" he also began to subscribe to the African premises of unity and survival of the people. Initially he had only been concerned with the survival of the Black race in his participation in the civil rights movement; however, after speaking at a Ban-the-Bomb meeting at Carnegie Hall where he met and spoke with survivors of the Nagasaki and Hiroshima holocaust, Gregory began to realize that the human struggle encompassed more than civil rights and that the real issues surrounded human rights and human survival.
Gregory then joined a world-wide goodwill mission and traveled to Paris, France, West and East Berlin and later to Moscow, Russia. While in East Berlin he became a committed advocate for the survival of mankind. With this act Gregory embraced the African concept that believes that man, like the universe, is a complicated, integrated, unified whole. Gregory states the following regarding his new commitment:

In the Black community, we've known for a long time what it means to be on the losing side. In a nuclear war everybody would be on the losing side, instantaneously losing their rights to 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.' From that moment on, I became an advocate of human rights, human dignity, and human survival.

In the quest for human survival, a favorite pastime for Gregory is feeding hungry poor people. His earliest involvement in the civil rights movement in the South reflected this when he personally collected donations on the streets of Chicago totaling 14,000 pounds of food to deliver to Greenwood, Mississippi. During Christmas 1964 Gregory staged a benefit to give turkeys to needy families in Mississippi. As he distributed food to the waiting people he envisioned hungry people all over the world. He states,
These were not just the hungry people of Mississippi. They had the same look of people you see in newsreels--of people who are waiting to be fed in China, in the Congo, in Europe, in America during the Great Depression. These faces had a universal expression. As I watched them, it dawned on me more strongly than ever that the number one job facing humankind, before landing on the moon or on Mars, before curing any more diseases, before inventing another invention, is feeding human beings all over the world.34

Confronting Death

Not only has Gregory refocused his orientation towards materialism in the struggle for human survival and dignity he has also placed his life on the front line in the civil rights movement. After a demonstration in Princess Anne County in Maryland, Gregory and a co-worker stopped for gas during a blizzard. The gas station attendant recognized Gregory and called him a "nigger bastard." Gregory forgot his commitment to nonviolence and hit the man. Within seconds another car drove into the gas station with men armed with shotguns, and shouting death threats. Gregory was pursued through the blizzard driving fifteen miles per hour. Having not slept for three days, Gregory grew weary and let his friend, a non driver, maneuver the car. After seeing a restaurant with a sign reading "no colored allowed" Gregory decided that death was imminent and went to sleep. When he finally woke up he
didn't know if he were in heaven or hell; however, they had reached Washington, D.C. and Gregory recalled that it was the one and only time he had ever thought of Washington, D.C. as heaven.35

Death was imminent for Gregory again during the Watts riots when he was shot while trying to convince people to return to their homes. He refused hospitalization until he was certain that people would believe that he had not been shot by the police. He states:

I knew I had saved many lives that night: Black lives and White lives, the lives of cops and the lives of civilians. But I also knew that I had to be willing to die to save those lives. I thought once again of the words to the 'Battle Hymn of the Republic': As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free. Freedom is worth dying for, but nothing justifies killing.36

Gregory's attitude towards death is consistent with the African experience in that he does not fear death and views it as a means to moving to another stage of the rhythmic process necessary to becoming a total person. Furthermore, Gregory views death as an event that is continuously present, and thus does not fear or attempt to control its inevitability. He has decided to die rather than live under continuous oppression.
Reverence for Life

As noted earlier Gregory is opposed to the killing of man. This belief is consistent with the African tradition that holds that the goal of the individual and the tribe as a collective was to blend harmoniously into the flow of the universe; any attempt to alter the universe was discouraged. Consequently, Gregory is also opposed to all wars and considered the Vietnam War an atrocity. During the Vietnam conflict he sent a cable to the North Vietnamese government offering to take his wife and children there to reside in a village for the duration of the war to show that he was willing to die for his convictions but not willing to kill for them.\textsuperscript{37} Concerning the draft, Gregory stated that the only way he would allow himself to be drafted to go to war would be under the condition that he be permitted to go to the front line without a gun with the contention that America is worth dying for but there is nothing worth killing for.\textsuperscript{38}

African philosophy dictates the unity of life. Everything is functionally connected. "To destroy one category completely would cause the destruction of the whole of existence."\textsuperscript{39} Gregory takes this belief one step further by not only being opposed to the killing of human beings but also being opposed to the killing of animals. Thus, Gregory is a vegetarian. He is convinced
that killing animals for food is immoral and unnatural and believes that the commandment "thou shalt not kill" applies not only to humans but also to animals since they bleed, suffer and die the same as man when killed for food or sport.  

The Universe

Within the African tradition it was believed that the natural order existed under the unity of God.  

Myers in her Afrocentric paradigm states that other words can be substituted for God—Energy, Consciousness, Mind, Spirit, without changing the principle that "life is created, governed, and redeemed by the extra-sensory."  

Gregory refers to this force as "the universe", "mother nature", and "the true momma of all humanity". He contends that if one is in tune with the universe then he has no fear.  

The Afrocentric paradigm offered by Myers is based on the philosophical assumptions of the Egyptian Mystery System, the earliest theory of salvation which evolved from the world view of ancient Africans.  

James and Diop contend that Christ was a student and initiate of the system. Myers contends that the Afrocentric paradigm is a blueprint for everlasting happiness in that if one seeks unity with God "life becomes an entertainment, and carefree (free from worry, anxiety, second thoughts, fear and guilt)."

Myers also states that separation from
God leads to false desires and false reality with man being in a constant struggle with his environment in an effort to define his self worth on the basis of possession and control. This in turn results in the creation of false problems, false suffering and feelings of oppression. For Myers, falseness refers to the nature of the reality constructed rather than meaning that the person is not experiencing what he believes: "Whatever one believes in, is for the believer at that point." 47

Gregory contends that because people have "pulled themselves from the universe," the result is worry, fear, false hopes and false love. In a speech to students at Anne Arundel College Gregory stated that because the universe is his body guard and protector, he does not need a pistol or locks for his doors. 48 Gregory's beliefs are also consistent with the Afrocentric paradigm in that he contends that long cleansing fasts will result in losing the six basic fears that plague mankind; these include fear of poverty, death, sickness, getting old, being critical and losing your love. Gregory believes that these fears haunt anyone who is captive to the unusual nervous imbalance accompanying a toxic diet and that with the disappearance of these fears one is happily at peace with life in Mother Nature's world. 49
Mind-Body Dualism

Gregory has fasted numerous times to call attention to ending the Vietnam War, the tragic and hypocritical nature of the narcotics problem in America and to focus attention upon the food crisis at home and abroad. In 1972 Gregory was continuing his fast as a protest against the Vietnam war. At the same time he wanted to explore the myths about American dietary habits and decided to participate in the 25 mile Boston Marathon. During the race Gregory came to grips with the mind-body dualism that exists within the Eurocentric world view. The premise is based on the notion that the mind, with its properties for cognition, rational thought and logical analysis, is separate from the body with its impulses, feelings, erotic and destructive urges.

In the African frame of reference no dualism exists between the mind and body for they are viewed as one, both having different functions and are both acceptable parts of the human process. Through functions within the individual, emotional experiences are acceptable and necessary for personal growth and enrichment.

Gregory's experience occurred when he attempted to run the course of the race and collapsed before reaching the finish line. Perhaps he collapsed as a result of not having eaten solid food for more than a year. Nevertheless, Gregory felt that he had failed to run the entire course of
the race; however, an official informed him that he had collapsed at the 25 mile mark which was a little over a mile from the finish line. Gregory then realized the power of the mind over the body. He states:

For months, I had been psyching myself to run a twenty-five mile race. And I did. Only my mind and the finish line were a mile apart... Your head really has to be in the right place to be able to make that last mile.

Confraternity in Africa

Perhaps the pinnacle of Gregory's climb towards Afro-centricity occurred in 1970 when he attended a summit conference of nonaligned nations in Lusaka, Zambia. Gregory states:

All my life I had wanted to visit Africa, and I particularly wanted to attend the conference...I was both excited and apprehensive about landing in Africa. Africa was the continent of my heritage, but I only knew it from the Tarzan movies. Having been born and raised in America, I identified more with the white man as I watched those movies than I did with the Africans. The Africans were always portrayed as ignorant savages. As a kid sitting in the movie theater, I thought they were real Africans. I didn't realize they were some California Black folks who got a temporary movie gig as extras. As the plane approached African soil, I felt like a kid from a broken home whose parents were separated before his birth. I was going to see my momma for the first time--Mother Africa.
Thus Gregory, generations removed from his ancestry, discovered Africa and recognized it as a real factor in rediscovering his past. During his sojourn he also learned something about African life and the relevancy of African confraternity; Gregory began to notice the difference in attitude between Africans and Afro-Americans. The former were more friendly and openly displayed more respect for one another and did not possess the hangups that were prevalent with Blacks in the states. Gregory began to understand the origin of true "soul." Of his Black brothers and sisters in the states he says:

Once again I realized the terrible destructiveness of an American system which forced Black folks to despise their Blackness. Black folks in America have always shown respect toward those in authority rather than respecting each other. They have said 'yes, sir,' 'no, ma'am' and even 'massa' to white folks in authority. Yet the 'kill rate' in the Black community is a continuing reminder that the same respect is not displayed at home in the Black neighborhood. Black folks kill more Black folks in a month in the thettos of America than the Ku Klux Klan has killed in its entire infamous history. 

Perhaps Gregory's visit to Africa can be viewed as an opportunity to break the isolation and distance between himself and his African brothers and sisters. Nevertheless, the African continuum is an influential element in the philosophy of Dick Gregory. The writer will devote the remainder of this chapter to the interaction of this
philosophy with the use of Black language in the cultural context of the Black audience.

"Language (word usage) reflects the accumulated wisdom of a people." For example, the word Afro-American unmistakably denotes the fusion that has occurred in the collective experience of Africans transplanted to the New World and their descendants. Frame of mind, and the first constituent of Asante's metatheory provides a basis for understanding how Gregory's Afrocentric philosophy relates to the use of Black language in the cultural context of the Black audience.

Elements of the Black Referent

Frame of mind refers to the way "certain social, creative and psychological factors contribute to the total view of language." Frame of mind, then, is the storehouse from which the speaker chooses those linguistic devices he feels are appropriate for him and relevant for his audience. Frame of mind determines the proverbs and narratives which will transmit mutually understood, culturally based values and also determines the speaker's relationship with the audience.

The Black Referent

The factors within the Black frame of mind comprise what Foster refers to as a "Black referent" which reflects the fusion of the African and American experience. He
defines a Black referent as "a mental backdrop composed of numerous values, attitudes and expectations that form a network derived from a community of common experiences that often is referred to as a way of looking at life."\textsuperscript{59}

He does not contend that all Black people in all situations employ one Black referent but he does contend that there is less of a variance between Black referents and non Black referents. The elements Foster includes in the Black referent include the values of humanism, communalism, empathetic understanding, rhythm, the attribute of oppression/paranoia and the principle of limited reward.\textsuperscript{60}

Humanism in a Black referent is the "concern for human life in relationships between the self and other."\textsuperscript{61} According to Foster a creative force lies within each individual and provides purpose and fulfillment to life; unless the individual gives of himself to another the creative force may die. Necessity rather than philanthropy motivates one to serve others and at the same time one recognizes that human differences must be encouraged and understood rather than denied and feared.\textsuperscript{62}

Communalism, the second element, refers to the "relationship of the individual to the group in the larger quest for survival and the ultimate goal of a just social order."\textsuperscript{63} This referent does not emphasize self-centeredness and rugged individualism but stresses the individual's awareness of
the relationship and consequences of his actions to the group.64

A third component, oppression/paranoia refers to "a high degree of sensitivity by Blacks for situations perceived as being dangerous."65 Foster notes that many Whites cannot or do not choose to perceive the pervasive oppression of Blacks and do not understand the cautious attitude of most Blacks. Therefore, they often speak of widespread paranoia existing in Black communities. What Whites perceive as paranoia is viewed as a strategy of survival by Blacks; however, a consequence of oppression is that it occasionally leads to paranoia in the correct sense of the term. Another unfortunate consequence is that oppression incorrectly perceived can lead to resignation and paralysis and may eventually become self destructive.66

The value of empathetic understanding is the fourth component in Foster's Black referent. This value means that "knowledge of social beings can only be acquired when dispassionate, objective analysis is supplemented with empathetic understanding."67 Foster contends that epistemological systems of knowledge propose "I think, therefore I am" and are inadequate for people of non-western heritage. The knowledge of the non-western heritage of Afro-Americans proposes that "I feel therefore I think, therefore I am."68
The rhythm component of the Black referent "reflects the belief that life itself has a continuity and rhythm that should be replicated within interpersonal and intrapersonal relations." This component is manifested in Afro-American art, music, literature and religion. Rhythm is concerned with "the way things, ideas or human beings fit together and form a whole." With Blacks, the focus of the rhythm component is upon the movement, flow and unity of life rather than upon the precise interrelationship of the parts.

The last component Foster offers is the principle of limited reward. The idea here is the "belief that no matter how great the effort, the expectation of return will be lower for Blacks than for non Blacks." The fact that Blacks accept that they will receive less than Whites for an equal effort is manifested in income and education statistics. This component does not exist for the majority of white people and many of them perceive that Blacks receive less because they put forth less effort. Skillful use of this component, exploiting the limited reward idea, could conceivably have a significant impact on a Black audience.

**Perceptions About the Black Audience**

With the exception of research in the area of Mass Media, minimal information has been articulated about the
Black audience in the field of public address. The focus of mass media research has been upon the lack of Blacks in the media and its effect, viewing behaviors and preferences in programs. In the literature on public address the writer found only scant allusions to Black audiences with the exception of one brief article dealing with the nonverbal aspects of Black communication. Consequently, this writer constructed her perception of the Black audience by using the principle from Myers' Afrocentric paradigm that states "whatever one believes in, is for the believer at that point" as a framework for interpretation.74

Through research Johnson has illuminated the collective perspective and state of mind of Black people which has evolved from the Black experience. This has given rise to perceptions that are at the root of word creation and dissemination.75 Since Blacks have a similar culture (meaning a shared way of life), this writer contends that shared perceptions relating to behavior patterns, values and attitudes also exist within the Black audience. Using the Black referents of Foster and Asante and the premises of Mitchell as a basis, the writer argues that the Black audience (1) desires to give of itself in a warm, close and sharing fashion; (2) is unified from within and views itself as a group in communal terms rather than an isolated individual; (3) possesses a high degree of caution and sensitivity for
perceiving situations as being dangerous; (4) possesses at least two dimensions when viewing human affairs—reason and feeling; (5) tends to focus on the rhythmic aspects of a relationship and in viewing life in its totality; (6) confirms the belief that Blacks will receive less than non Blacks regardless of the effort involved; (7) will avoid situations that will confirm the inequality of the principle of limited reward; and (8) defines the communicative boundaries as far as the Black style is concerned, and (9) demands to hear certain expressions, see certain things and enjoy certain kinds of humor.

Thus one may infer that in general, the Black audience desires a Black rhetorical language that (1) exhibits a true acceptance of humanism as an affirmation of life and its positive values in both philosophy and deeds as opposed to being concerned with the individual in terms of "looking out for number one" or keeping your nose out of other people's business; (2) de-emphasizes self-centeredness as in "doing your own thing" and reflects an awareness of the speaker's objectives to the welfare of other people that would make for a meaningful contribution to the struggle for power and development in Black communities; (3) perceives the reality of Black oppression in the American historical experience ranging from loss of life to employment discrimination and in the application of law and the knowledge of its existence in a variety of forms today; (4) realizes
the necessity but insufficiency of objective dispassionate analyses in describing and explaining human behavior. Instead subjective analysis (feeling) must be coupled with objective knowledge (reasoning-scientific methods) if one wishes to claim a truth in understanding human affairs; (5) articulates a recognition that a harmony, a rhythm, a totalness exists in the object being considered and provides ample terms that describe movement or change from one point to another; (6) confirms and accepts as fact that Blacks will receive less than Whites for an equal effort in the unjust and cruel exercise of power in American society; and (7) employs their (the audience) characteristic Black style so that cadences are not only familiar but also have an impact.

As noted earlier the social, creative and psychological factors within the Black referent comprise Asante's Frame of Mind constituent of his metatheory and also contribute to a total view of Black language. Thus in studying the language of Dick Gregory his frame of mind is important for analytical consideration. Gregory's frame of mind is rooted in the Afrocentric philosophy as outlined in the beginning of the chapter.

Asante contends that the full level of Afrocentricity is achieved when the person internalizes African values.76 The components within Foster's Black referent may be viewed
as modifications of African philosophy. For example, humanism reflects the African proposition of the notion of unity. Communalism coincides with the African notion of survival of one's people and cooperative effort. Oppression/paranoia and limited reward may be viewed as modifications of the African concept of identity (We are I am, I am we are) in that Blacks who are aware of their self definition as a race of people, realize that if one Black individual suffers or is oppressed, the race as a whole suffers. Empathetic understanding is reminiscent with the Afrocentric notion of the union of opposites as in the mind and the body and also by acknowledging both rational processes and feelings as equal aspects of the human condition. Rhythm may be viewed as modifications of the oneness with nature or the natural rhythm of nature.

This writer contends that Gregory has internalized African values on the basis of his Afrocentric philosophy and the fact that he utilizes Black values to appeal to his audiences. The remainder of this chapter will focus on those elements of Afrocentric philosophy and the Black referent within the context of Gregory's speeches.

Humanism and the Notion of Unity

This value probably more than any other serves as the primary motivating factor of Dick Gregory and he constantly
appeals to the audience to develop the concept of humanism. One student when introducing him was moved to describe him as:

...a man whose character has transcended the bounds of personal ego and has shifted into the realm of humanism. That transcendence has afforded him another view of himself and mankind as a whole...77

The universe is Gregory's creative force and it serves as his purpose and fulfillment to life. He contended that there is a universal God locked within each individual and that if one searches within himself he will find true universal love. This universal force motivates Gregory to "work his butt off" to convince what he refers to as "un-informed running around waving your flags" people of the lies that exist within a free Democratic society.78 In a speech at Franklin and Marshall University Gregory compared "spiritual" people with Christians, Moslems and Hindu and noted that the latter have waged wars in the name of religion. He argued that once Americans become spiritual they will no longer embrace prejudice, jealously, worry, and hate. Gregory's belief in humanism motivates him to battle against anything that causes suffering for poor and elderly folks, to fast and to picket at sites such as the White House in an effort to bring attention to the problems plaguing our country.79
Communalism-Survival of People

Gregory contended that Americans can survive the problems that exist in this country in that people such as the Duponts and Mellons can manipulate the country, but have no control over the universe.\textsuperscript{80} The quest for survival and the ultimate goal of a just social order are definite terms for communalism. Survival demands "...a willingness of the individual to see his fulfillment in group or communal terms...."\textsuperscript{81} Gregory's rhetorical language reflected an awareness of the relationship of his objectives to the welfare of other people. For example, he noted that his decision to run from Los Angeles to New York was not determined on the basis of individual needs but rather in terms of the needs of others.

The run was to dramatize a couple of things. It wasn't a physical fitness program. It wasn't a ego trip...It was about exposin the airwaves....The run was about to talk about 55 million Americans go to bed every night hungry...We talked about a third of all the cat and dog food that's sold in this country is consumed by who? Humans... That run last year we was tryin to warn you that 93% of all the water you drink in this country is unfit for human consumption....\textsuperscript{82}

Gregory was not satisfied with the fact that he embraced the concept of communalism for he often questioned the "do your own thing" Eurocentric attitude of the White students that comprised a small segment of his audiences.
This attitude is contrary to the communalism referent and the Afrocentric notion of cooperative effort; Gregory advocated that their job is "more than about being self". He contended that they must protect the elderly, young and poor folks "instead of 24 hours a day tryin to hog a position" for themselves. Gregory urged them to consider who they are and what they are about, for he believes that they hold the burden of responsibility for solving this country's problems. Gregory furthermore urged all young people to use their power in communalistic efforts rather than drinking beer and smoking reefer because "the very faith and destiny of this nation" depends upon them.  

**Oppression/Paranoia**

After listening to the rhetoric of Gregory many Whites have accused him of exaggeration and paranoia; however, Gregory as a Black man has shared the Black experience of oppression. Consequently suspicion and mistrust of power and authority are manifested in his rhetoric. This same cautious attitude was apparent in Gregory's rhetoric when he spurned use of the birth control pill, the war in Angola and the presidential campaigns. The following excerpt perhaps best exhibits Gregory's mistrust and what others prefer to label paranoia.
They got a bill they fixin to push through on yaw. Called the Humphrey Hawkins right to work bill. You better read that bill. Its one of the Nazi pieces of legislation baby they have a right to assign you a job and if you don't take it they can put you in jail. You better check that bill out. Them is work camps they fixin to come up with. And don't you think for one minute that if you be buggin this system and upsettin them and you got a doctor's degree they will tell you we can't find anything open for you in medicine but there's somethin open in the sawmill and if you don't take it they put you in jail. They fixin to lay some laws on you now like we got on these Indians.84

Gregory then began to use language that revealed the oppression of not only Blacks but Indians and poor Whites as well. He continued:

We got federal laws in America that say that the federal government have a right to send a Indian kid to any school they see fit and if all of us was Indians in the state of Maryland demonstratin today come September they could send our kids to Oklahoma at six years old. Yaw better start checkin it out. What they do to Indians yesterday they do to Black folks today they do to White folks next week. That's right. Them Indians that live on reservations nigger say 'I sure feel sorry for them Indians'. Livin on ghetto ain't nothing but a reservation nigger. That neighborhood you White folks livin in ain't nothing but a reservation. And none of the three of us can move. Indian better not come off that reservation without the big folks tellin him to and nigger bet not move in the wrong neighborhood and you white folks live they bust your head wide open.85
Although Gregory has achieved "star status" as a lecturer, comedian and entertainer, he is still subject to oppression as a member of the Black race. For example, in a speech to students at Anne Arundel College Gregory painfully recalled reading a sign on the door of a store at a shopping center as he and his son were jogging. The sign read "no dogs allowed please":

He said 'daddy, you squeezed my hand'. I said, 'I'm sorry son'. I was. 'I didn't realize it. I was lookin at that sign and rememberin when it used to read no niggers allowed but it never said please'. I live in a nation that got more compassion that have more compassion about keepin a dog out than it had about keepin my mammy out.86

Foster contends that an unfortunate consequence of oppression is that it occasionally leads to paranoia in the correct sense of the term. He states, "If eight out of ten times Black people have witnessed an unjust and cruel response to their initiatives, then it is not surprising for them to conclude the response will be the same in all future attempts. Such a conclusion is necessary."87 This writer contends that Gregory is truely paranoid in his attitude towards the FBI and the CIA. On every occasion that the writer witnessed Gregory, he would always imply that CIA and FBI agents held him under constant surveillance with the intention of discrediting him. Note the following excerpt:
You agents thats got to follow me around everywhere I go....And all that little crazy talk about what you goin to do with my kids....And all them little old dirty things yaw be tryin to find on me now. No you give that up. No that over. Yaw love to discredit me. Yaw's love to find me drunk backseat of the car six o'clock in the mornin naked with a six year old boy. No that ain't goin to work. All the dirty little things I used to do I don't do no more.88

One may or may not choose to perceive the above as paranoia; the point to be made is that Gregory views it as a strategy of survival where the condition of oppression is still a reality for Black people and therefore a significant referent in his rhetoric.

**Empathetic Understanding**

As an Afro-American Dick Gregory is a product of a culture that is unlike the Eurocentric culture which suppresses and controls feelings and focuses on cognition and intellectual processes; instead the Afro-American culture recognizes and values feelings and impulses. Therefore, Gregory's rhetoric possesses at least two dimensions when viewing human affairs--reason and feeling. This was evident when Gregory questioned the negative attitude many people have towards George Wallace. Most people who oppose Wallace and what he stands for would probably base their attitude on Wallace's racist behavior; in other words, their analysis would be based upon reason and scientific
methods; Gregory, however, combined reason with subjective analysis to claim what he perceived to be the truth—that is people should not "try to do in" Wallace but instead the type of system that produces people like Wallace. Gregory stated:

I don't understand a lot of people's attitude towards George Wallace. I mean I'd be upset with Wallace if he floated down here from outer space actin the way he actin. But I can understand George Wallace. He's home grown American boy. And whether you like it or not, every belief and attitude he got he did not only learn it and nurtured it and developed it in this country under this system ...So I don't know why everybody tryin to do in Wallace...Why don't they do in the type of system that produces the George Wallaces and get it over with once and for all.89

Empathy was also used by Gregory to examine Black behavior. He contended that Blacks are also a part of the racist system of this country by explaining that the absence of the Black father in the home is due to the mentality that is learned in childhood of wanting and needing material things that Whites have; Gregory noted that Blacks cannot obtain the majority of these things because racism blocks the path to a job which is the primary means of attainment for most Blacks. Gregory argued that Blacks need each other and not things. Gregory supported his view that Blacks are a part of the racist system of America by noting that Blacks assume the likes and dislikes, actions
and thinking patterns of Whites.\textsuperscript{90}

Gregory advocated that White women empathize with the Black movement in their efforts to understand the women's liberation movement. He contended that the women's movement was accepted when people thought that it only encompassed the question of going braless or without underwear; but when women began to protest for equal pay and better job equality the movement was criticized by many Americans. Gregory also urged the Whites in his audience to empathize with the Black movement in order that they may understand the manipulative tactics of "the powers that be". He contended that the difference between White people and Black people is that the latter are aware of the manipulation aimed at them while Whites are surprised by such tactics. As evidence he cited the killing of Black students that occurred at South Carolina State and Jackson State and urged that Blacks were not surprised by these incidents; he then contended that the Kent State killings by the national guard surprised the White public and concludes that the fact that no Blacks were in the crowd of demonstrators and that Whites became the "new nigger". As further support Gregory argued that evils such as drugs and police brutality are no longer limited to the Black community as their sole victims. White communities in the past had no reason to fear the police or worry about the
availability of drugs. The situation now has changed he argued with Whites becoming the "new nigger." 91

Limited Reward

Although Whites experience negative aspects of our society Black people still must confront the reality that they will receive less than Whites for an equal effort: This is the focus of the principle of limited reward. A similarity of experiences and perceptions existed between Gregory and the Black audience in receiving less rewards and often lead to creating favorable attitudes between them. For example Gregory stated that he did not receive one vote when he ran as a presidential candidate in 1968 in Cookes County, Chicago, Illinois. The inference here was that even though he voted for himself, his vote was not counted and that hundreds of other black ballots are either lost or stolen. 92

In another example of limited reward Gregory revealed the pathetic nature of a country that thinks more of feeding dogs waiting to die than it does the elderly or poor people by noting that a minimum of $3.00 a day was used to feed each of the 6,700 animals that were housed each month in Atlanta, Georgia. 93

Perhaps the best example of limited reward in Gregory's rhetoric occurred when he discussed the February 9, 1976 cover of U.S. News and World Report that depicted eight
builders of America. Gregory noted that the cover did not contain the pictures of one Black man nor a White woman. He states:

Over 50 million niggers in America and they don't think that there's one nigger man that qualified to be a genius. I got four of them niggers in my house. 94

Although Barbara Jordan's picture was on the cover, Gregory reasoned that "it's fashionable now to hire a Black and to hire a woman so they get a Black woman say get it all." Gregory concluded by stating that Jordan should stay on the cover and that some Black men and White women should be depicted and "if you ain't got no room for it take some of them White boys off." 95

A final example of limited reward in Gregory's rhetoric occurred when he lashed out against the press and what he alleged as their lackadaisical attitude towards Black deaths in this country. As an example he related the kidnapping and taking of hostages that occurred in Washington, D.C. by Hinafi Muslims. The incident was precipitated by the drowning murders of a Hinafi muslim family. Gregory referred to the murders as the "most vicious crime in the history of this country." 96 He reasoned that had Whites instead of "niggers" died the press would have covered the story and the results would have created interest from the public which would have led to an attempt to solve the
crime. Had this occurred Gregory inferred that the kidnappings would also have not occurred.\textsuperscript{97}

**Rhythm**

Thus far the writer has examined five elements of the Black referent in Gregory's language that correspond with the audience's experiences. Of all the components discussed, rhythm, the sixth component, is the most obvious yet the most difficult to describe. The writer's intent here is not to describe the proverbial rhythm by Blacks and romanticized in Western literature but rather to emphasize "the way things, ideas or human beings fit together to form a whole."\textsuperscript{98}

An example of the rhythm component in Gregory's rhetoric may be found in the following excerpt:

How many of you would like to fast that one day a week and help dramatize that spiritual energy that will open up what they been doin to us?...I know a lot of you don't know how powerful fasting is--you makin bad grades--you be getting ready not to graduate--you be tryin to find a job on the job market--You just go on and fast...and see if you can't do anything you want. Why because they told you that you only use ten percent of your brain and nobody ever asked what ever happens to the other ninety. The other ninety is used to digest your food
and when you stop eatin for twenty four hours that ninety starts gettin released and will tune you into the powers that you was meant to have in the first place. Now briefly let me show you why you use so much energy to digest your food. We eat and drink a minimum of six pounds, a maximum of ten or twelve pounds a day. It is impossible for you to go to the toilet to urination or havin a bowel movement and dump more than one pound every twenty-four hours. So let's take the minimum. If you puttin six pounds in your body within a twenty-four hour period and only dumpin one pound, what happens to the other five pounds? Cause in a week you will be thirty-five pounds overweight. You can't even see it with the human eye. That's why people tell you you shouldn't wear the same clothes over. Cause five pounds of what you ate is pushed through all the holes in your body. Otherwise you would die and that's a hell of a process, baby. And when you stop eatin for a twenty-four hour period that process starts tunin back into you. Those of you that don't believe it just give yourself three days. Those of you that think this food thing ain't what we tell you, just go seven days without eatin anything but sugar or sugar products and see what happens to your body. Those of you that got these little hyper-active kids take them off of all that food with them additives and that food coloring and see if you don't see a change in them within six hours time.99

Here Gregory focused on the movement flow and unity of the human body and related that process to fasting. By noting the relationship between the brain, food, and its effect upon the digestive system, Gregory recreated the natural rhythm of the human body. He then suggested that fasting is a natural method to regain the energy that is used to
digest food and thereby enables one to have a greater mental capacity. In addition, Gregory asserted that sugar, sugar products, food additives and food coloring interrupt the natural rhythm of the human body and human existence products result in negative aspects. Thus Gregory views them as being corruptive to the stability of man.

Rhythm is also associated with "motion". Gregory uses rhythmic language of this nature when he suggested that the president create a new cabinet position under the heading of "secretary of food and nutrition" to deal with basic human needs. He related this idea with the notion that our weather patterns are being manipulated to create food shortages and result in inflated food prices. Gregory then weaved a narrative about food riots and electronically controlled supermarkets; here one can see Gregory's use of rhythm to suggest movement from one moment to another:

And they know once they create food shortages food prices goin to go sky high on the same force that manipulate the food prices and the shortage run supermarkets. That's why a federal law came through that said this little thing got to show up on all your food in supermarkets cause when the price go up yaw might think yaw goin to rip off the supermarkets but they already tested out and ready to put into effect what they call electronically controlled supermarkets that when you take the
product off the shelf this little thing will be followin you all the way to the door--electronic computer and when you pay for it this will be scratched with an electronic eye and try gettin out without paying for it--the door will lock and a bell will ring and they goin to put you in jail. These pimps say they goin to starve you to death. You ain't goin to rip them off baby....lol

The strength of this excerpt lies in Gregory's ability to provide ample terms to describe movement or change from one moment to another. The action verbs "take", "followin", "scratched", and "getting out", suggest motion rather than stillness. Moreover, the "lock" of the door, the "ringing" of the bell, and subsequent placement in jail conjure up images associated with motion and thus enabled the listener to sense the process, the rhythm of the situation.

Summary

In this chapter the writer has outlined the elements of African philosophy that are the basis of the Afrocentric view of reality and the Afrocentric philosophy of Dick Gregory. Asante states that "Afrocentricity... is only superficially related to color; it is more accurately a philosophical outlook determined by history." Perhaps Dick Gregory, unconsciously cognizant of the Afrocentric philosophy in 1976, grasped this point as he pondered the Black Power movement during its early beginnings. Gregory
concludes that the words "Black Power" and "Black is Beautiful" replaced "We Shall Overcome" as the new phrases of freedom. More important was his analysis of the meaning of the clenched-fist salute as a means of communication. Gregory states that it embodied the language of brotherhood and sisterhood, a sign of empathy and identity, affection and solidarity. The most significant part of his analysis was that the clenched-fist salute and the soul-grip handshake became shared reminders that "Blackness is not a color, but rather an attitude."103

The writer contends that Gregory's philosophy is Afro-centric in that he (1) is committed to the laws and moral demands of a universal order; (2) exhibits concern with the notions of unity and survival of people, sharing, collective cooperation and responsibility; (3) values interpersonal relationships; (4) has forsaken materialism for spiritualism and communalism; (5) does not fear or attempt to control death or its inevitability; (6) believes that the natural order exists under the unity of God; (7) accepts the view that separation from the universe leads to false desires, false problems and false reality; (8) perceives his goal as blending harmoniously into the flow of the universe and thereby accepts the unity of life; (9) accepts the view that unity with the universe results in peace and happiness; (10) accepts the dual nature of
man with the notion that the mind and body unite to make a unified man; (11) accepts the belief that emotional experiences are necessary for personal growth and enrichment and (12) attempts to eliminate the isolation and distance between himself and his African brothers and sisters.

Because Blacks have a similar culture that has evolved from the Black experience, the writer contends that shared perceptions relating to behavior patterns, values and attitudes also exist within the Black audience. Thus the writer perceived the Black audience as a warm, sensitive, unified group that views human affairs from the dimensions of reason and feeling and focuses on the rhythmic aspects of a relationship. Moreover, the audience adheres to the value of limited reward and will avoid such situations that adhere to the principle. More importantly the audience is a definer of the communicative boundaries as far as the Black style is concerned and demands to hear and see certain things and enjoy certain kinds of humor.

The writer has also concluded that the audience is a principle barometer for what the speaker may say and that his arguments must correspond with the audience's experiences. Thus the speaker's language should exhibit an acceptance of humanism, de-emphasize self-centeredness, perceive the reality of oppression, couple subjective analysis with objective analysis, articulate rhythm, confirm
as fact the principle of limited reward and employ characteristics the elements of the Black referent that comprise frame of mind (humanism, communalism, oppression/paranoia, empathetic understanding, rhythm, limited reward and styling).

On the basis of the Frame of Mind constituent, the writer contends that Gregory, as an experienced speaker, is cognizant that the elements listed in the Black referent and the Afrocentric philosophy are appropriate for him and relevant for his audience. Thus through language that exhibits the Afrocentric philosophy, Gregory transmits mutually understood culturally based values which also aid in establishing a positive rapport with his Black audiences.
Notes


2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. 10.


6 Ibid., p. 56.

7 Ibid., p. 33.

8 Ibid., p. 57.


10 Ibid.


13 Ibid., p. 29.
14 Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophies, p. 29.
16 Ibid., p. 6.
17 Ibid.
19 Ibid., p. 61.
25 Ibid., p. 18.
26 Ibid., p. 19.
27 Gregory Interview, April 14, 1976.
28 Ibid., p. 24.
29 Ibid., p. 43.
30 Ibid., p. 44.
31 Ibid., p. 103.
32 Ibid., p. 51.
33 Ibid., p. 52.
36 Ibid., p. 116.
37 Ibid., p. 139.
42 Myers, "Oneness: A Black Model of Psychological Functioning," p. 10.


47 Ibid., p. 17.


50 Gregory, Up From Nigger, p. 220.


52 Ibid.

53 Gregory, Up From Nigger, p. 222.

54 Ibid.


56 Ibid., p. 211.

57 Myers, "Oneness: A Black Model of Psychological Functioning", p. 17.


60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid., p. 12.
64 Ibid., p. 13.
65 Ibid., p. 16
66 Ibid., p. 17.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid., p. 18.
69 Ibid., p. 19.
70 Ibid., p. 20.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid., p. 21.
74 Myers, "Oneness: A Black Model of Psychological Functioning," p. 17.


Introduction to Gregory speech, Franklin & Marshall College.


Ibid.

Ibid.

Foster, "Toward a Definition of Black Referents," p. 12.

Taped Gregory Speech, Anne Arundel College.


Ibid.

Ibid.

Taped Gregory speech, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University.

Foster, "Toward a Definition of Black Referents," p. 16.

Taped Gregory Speech, The Ohio State University.

Taped Gregory Speech, Anne Arundel College.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Taped Gregory Speech, Anne Arundel College.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Ibid.

Ibid.
98 Foster, "Toward a Definition of Black Referents," p. 20.


100 Foster, "Toward a Definition of Black Referents," p. 20.

101 Taped Gregory Speech, Anne Arundel College.


103 Gregory, Up From Nigger, p. 136.
Chapter IV

The Rhetorical Substance of Dick Gregory

The previous chapter was concerned with the philosophical ideas of Gregory on a factual and descriptive level. To merely state what Gregory believed is insufficient if this study is to be viewed as a contribution to the knowledge of public address. Karl Wallace contends that "the rhetorician must, among other things, characterize the substance of speeches, the materials of which they are made." The purpose of this chapter then is to identify, interpret and assess the substance of Dick Gregory; furthermore the writer utilized Wallace's ideas to assess Gregory's substance.

For Wallace substance is that foundation of materials in speeches called judgments and appraisals which reflect human interests and values and are evoked by the need to make choices so that one may act or prepare to act or appraise an act that has occurred. Wallace contends that rhetorical discourse and the materials of ethics are one and the same. In so doing he has derived a scheme of rhetorical topics that represent a topoi of ethical values. These include the desirable, the obligatory and the
admirable or praiseworthy and their opposites.\textsuperscript{2}

Things that are desirable are dependent upon one's motives, goals or ends and also include interests, achievements and freedom of choice and action. Duties are included in the obligatory class of things and may pertain to one's family, profession, politics, citizenship, the government and group mores. Things that are morally obligatory and acts that are praiseworthy derive their meaning from the esteem and respect that others have for us. The praiseworthy and admirable class of goods and values refer to character traits which reflect virtues such as honesty and kindness.\textsuperscript{3}

For Wallace the traditional modes of proof (logical, ethical and emotional) are not "abstract" and "unreal" except when used in historical criticism. Instead he suggests that modern rhetoricians adopt the term "good reason" to refer to all the materials of argument and explanation. Wallace argues that the word "reason" implies that rational proof exists and is equivalent to traditional forms of reasoning; furthermore, he contends that the term "good reason" suggests the relationship between content and form and focuses on what the form is expressing. Thus the concept of good reasons embraces both the substance and the processes of practical reason.\textsuperscript{4} Gregory "reasons" by using anger as a major emotional feature of
sarcasm, scolding and sometimes humorous claims about the plight of Black people in a White racist society.

**Main Topics of Gregory**

Wallace contends that rhetorical topics may be derived from his topoi of values. Utilization of these has led the writer to determine that Gregory's pet aversions are the United States government, the CIA, FBI, the super rich and the tricks they play. He denounces the American mentality, colleges and universities, racism, sexism, and organized religion. On the other hand, he has an affinity for fasting, the elderly and poor, vegetarianism, being spiritual, the universe and reopening the investigation of the Kennedy-King assassinations. One minute you applaud him because he has confirmed one of your own prejudices, and a moment later you are silent as he exposes your weaknesses. The writer will now discuss in detail the substance of these topics and assess Gregory's reasoning.

**Kennedy-King Assassinations**

Gregory views the Kennedy-King assassinations as one of the most important issues in this country. He proposes that the inquiry into the deaths of Martin Luther King, and John and Robert Kennedy be reopened and has fasted and refused solid food to bring national attention to the issue. In a speech to students at Franklin and Marshall
College, Gregory claimed "If James Earl Ray shot Martin Luther King my mamma shot him." Gregory's substance was political in nature in that he implied that the FBI was implicated in the circumstances surrounding King's death and thus interfered with his general welfare. Gregory's reason consisted of statements surrounding the death of Martin Luther King and was based on information supposedly obtained from government documents through the Freedom of Information Act. For example, he noted that the Invaders, a Black gang involved in a riot that precipitated King's decision to go to Memphis, was on the FBI payroll. Gregory also cited the negative reaction of FBI agents upon learning of King's death and the premise that King's bodyguards were relieved from their duties prior to the assassination. Gregory may have intensified the belief in the possibility of a conspiracy theory surrounding King's death; however, he failed to provide evidence to support his claim that Ray did not kill King.

In the same speech, Gregory also contended that the CIA and the mafia united as a force to kill John Kennedy and Sirhan Sirhan did not act alone in the murder of Robert Kennedy. Gregory's reasoning concerning John Kennedy and the CIA was poor in that he failed to provide credible support other than his own general opinions:
Those 28 mafia syndicate hoodlums that been gunned down in this country for the last 18 months was not killed by mafia; the mafia do not use 22 calibers. Every one of them was hit with twenty-twos. They probably change them now. Only the CIA for the last twenty years have used twenty-twos as assassination weapon because its the smallest weapon you can put a silencer on. And the reason the CIA is killin them mafia syndicate hoods is that the FBI informants is because they lied to you when they told you that the mafia and the CIA came together to hit Castro. That was a lie and when it looked like it was gonna come out they changed it and said that the mafia and the CIA came together to hit J. F. Kennedy. And now that these investigations is openin up thats why they poppin them one by one by one. When Giacconner got dumped out in Chicago he knew so much he had left the country and retired and this government got to Mecians to throw him out of Mexico so they could bring him back here and two later when he got back they gunned him down in his house. 8

A little later in the speech, Gregory did present more specific facts by citing journals that served to support his allegations against the CIA and thereby succeeded in adding more validity to the possibility of a conspiracy theory.

Document #89 and document #90 shows the tax returns for 1962 on Jack Ruby and Lee Harvey Oswald. It shows both of them was on the CIA and FBI's payroll. That's why there is such a mystery around their income tax returns. Jack Ruby said to three officials on the Warren commis- sion 'please take me back to Washington, D.C. Take me out of this jail in Texas and I'll tell you some things that will
blow the lid off this case; but if you leave me here I'll die.' And they said 'we'll get in touch with you when we get back to Washington.' And they went back to Washington and they never got in touch. Jack Ruby died. They said he caught a cold which led to pneumonia which led to cancer. Who was those three officials? One was a congressman from Michigan named Gerald Ford. The other was Earl Warren himself and the third was a insignificant guy by the name of Leon Jaworski... 9

When Gregory contended that Sirhan Sirhan did not act alone in the shooting of Robert Kennedy, he raised pertinent questions that conveyed conviction to his audience:

The autopsy on Robert Kennedy threwed them a whole lots of light on it. I gave it to the Rockefeller Commission. ...Why is this important? This is important because it shows that Robert Kennedy was hit with three different with three bullets. The bullet that killed him went into the back of his skull right here at point blank range at a quarter of an inch. Another bullet hit him here, another hit him there. That's a very important document because the question happens to be theirs. How could Sirhan Sirhan shoot Robert Kennedy three times in the back standin in front of him? How could Robert Kennedy die from a bullet that went into the back of his head at point blank range at a quarter of an inch when nobody witnessed when Sirhan Sirhan came close to within three or four people besides Robert Kennedy? The only people behind him was the secret service that guarded him. And if they do their homework right they will find out that the bullet that killed Robert
Kennedy went into his head in the ambulance on his way to the hospital with what they call a Rain gun and now they tell us that they got information in the archives that cannot be released to you for seventy-five years but I'm glad they said you cause I went up and got mine. And I have passed this on to the people that's investigatin and they see the same thing that I see. 10

This passage provided a concise, plausible explanation of the data Gregory utilized as a basis for his claim.

**Government Agencies**

Not only did Gregory hold the CIA and FBI responsible for the Kennedy-King assassinations, he also blamed them for the deaths of other Americans. In a speech to students at Anne Arundel College Gregory contended that the deaths of King, Malcolm X, Kennedy, Sharon Tate, the attempted assassination of Gerald Ford and Watergate were all related. Here again, Gregory's substance may be characterized as political in that the foci of his arguments centered on appeals relating to the values of rights, freedom, and justice. Nevertheless, Gregory failed to offer an explanation in his reasoning to show the connection between these occurrences. He did, however, suggest that the assassination attempt aimed at Gerald Ford was a "Rockefeller engineered trick" to place him in the White House as President. Moreover, he questioned the fact that Manson was found guilty of the Sharon Tate murder but was
not at the scene of the crime and was also not allowed to testify in his behalf at the trial. In an effort to add validity to his questions Gregory pointed out the fact that Manson's lawyer has not been heard of or seen since he demanded that Manson be permitted to testify. Such an effort, however, was mediocre in that Gregory did not present evidence to implicate the CIA with the murders.

Gregory made additional allegations against the CIA which included his belief that it invented the swine flu virus and the Legionnaires disease, shipped drugs into this country inside dead bodies of soldiers who were stationed in Vietnam and then distributed the drugs to young people in order that they could manipulate them. With the exception of the swine flu virus, Gregory's reasoning was poor in that he only offered unsupported opinions; not once did he cite reports on the testimony of others to verify his claim. Here Gregory claims that no one has ever died as a result of the swine flu.

The same way I didn't believe that there was an energy crises I don't believe nobody died from the swine flue. So I went down to Fort Dix New Jersey and checked it out for myself. Since your free press didn't check it out. I found out something very interesting that the New York Times ought to tell you about. There is no record at Fort Dix New Jersey where anyone died from the swine flue. So that means that on this planet earth for the last 25 to 50 years there was no recorded record of anyone died of the swine flue until you started gettin
that shot. They have a record there. As a matter of fact the record is kind of strange cause it shows this guy died of two different times. One record says he died on October of '75 the other says he died February of '76 but they all say he died from exhaustion. He did have the A Victorian strain of flu but that didn't mean nothin to them; they made him go out and drill for eighteen hours knowin he was sick and he came back in went to bed and died. Matter of fact when we get to checkin around the only swine flu we can find is this article here in the Washington Post, Sunday January the ninth 1977. It says CIA link to 1971 swine virus in Cuba. Yeah, the CIA have now admitted that in 1971 they developed and dropeed the swine virus over Cuba. I wonder if that's the same one they dropeed on you. See we know about all the Jews Hitler killed but what don't nobody want to talk about is all the Germans Hitler killed. Yaw go on believin that all this stuff is developed for people other than you and you be surprised who its goin to end up on.

Gregory's reasoning appears to be somewhat rational in that he cited facts based upon the newspaper articles, his personal observations and research rather than opinions. However, an important question is, was Gregory's investigation free from prejudice and preconceived notions. It is possible that Gregory's prejudgments could have distorted his perception about the swine flu in that he may have been attempting to rationalize his views rather than investigating the problem.

Although Gregory did not present objective reasoning against the CIA to support his contentions, he did offer good support for his claim that the government "does not
care about you" by citing several examples that warranted his claim. Here Gregory's substance reflected Wallace's category labeled the blameworthy and the reprehensible. Gregory's support included the banning of Laetrile as a cancer cure, the CIA admitting that it tested germ warfare in the New York subways, putting birth control pills on the market with the knowledge that they were dangerous, use of weather modification in creating droughts in the west and freezing temperatures in the south in an effort to affect the quantity and quality of fresh fruit and vegetables, and the government admitting that it injected Americans with a cancer virus known as SB40.13

With the exception of the germ warfare experiment, Gregory devoted a great deal of time and effort to discuss each of the above. For example, when he discussed the controversy surrounding the use of Laetrile in the treatment of cancer, Gregory stated that the Russians have used it for years and have cut the death rate from cancer by 49%. When discussing weather modification, Gregory read a telegram and a mailgram he sent to President Carter expressing his concern about the possibility of weather modification techniques being used in this country. In the context of the correspondence was Gregory's solution to the problem: the development of another cabinet post and a Secretary of Food and Nutrition to handle basic human
needs, ration basic food staples and control food prices to assure poor people that they will not starve to death. Gregory also read a letter he wrote to the President asking him to investigate an article published in the 1977 issue of the Atlantic Monthly Magazine which alleged that American citizens had been injected with a cancer virus called SB40, notify the victims, draft legislation preventing similar incidents and prosecute those responsible. Furthermore, he read responses to his correspondence which added validity to his premise about the government in that the National Cancer Institute admitted that an accidental injection of a cancer virus had occurred and a secretary to the President admitted that federal agencies had been conducting and supporting research for several years to alternate precipitation and divert weather hazards. Although the letter distinguished its efforts from changing weather patterns to modify the climate, the letter did state that "the United States government would refrain from experimental programs to control the climate until consequences could be accurately predicted" and that "there are certainly instances where many of us would like very much to be able to change the weather conditions." A final letter Gregory read was from a scientist who also admitted that millions of people had been injected with SB45 during the 1950's but "several studies indicate that no immediate
ill effects occurred and administration of the vaccine was not a secret and contamination of the vaccine was unintentional and due to lack of knowledge. After reading the letters, Gregory resorted to name calling and invective to register his contempt for the government and its agencies. Phrases such as "stinky slimy degenerate corrupt punks" were registered by Gregory to display his rage. At this point Gregory's substance took on an emotional quality:

Well let me tell you somethin. I know where the president live and this is the last chance he has to straighten out this mess. I'm goin to the White House. It's goin to blow up a whole lots of yaw what I'm going to do. I couldn't get up if I was like you think. I'm goin to get them cancer....So I'm goin to the White House with a picket sign and get arrested and I'm goin to force a world wide issue. Mr. President who's talked to the Russians about human rights he's more interested in human rights in Russia than human rights in America and there's million Americans running around with a abnormal virus which yaw have admitted is. Is that a violation of my human rights? That you won't tell me. And if that don't work I'm goin to get on a plane and take these documents to Russia so I know yaw upset about president talkin about human rights for reds. Yaw goin to do something here. Yaw got a big job. All we askin is you know it's a whole lots of us we tired out here have to fight the burdens for 260 million of yaw and yaw sippin your beer and smokin your reefers and learn how to bugaloo and be slick and go through all your changes. Yaw better wake up and get hip to what's goin on.

Gregory did not provide any clear evidence for these emotionally charged statements. His interpretation of
the government correspondence appeared to be slanted to the support of his views. This sort of speaking was shoddy, irresponsible and may have been dangerous, because a believing audience may have acted upon his biased supporting statements.

The Super Rich

Gregory's emotion was not only apparent when he discussed the government but also when he attacked and harangued affluent members of American society. In each of the speeches the writer witnessed, the "super degenerate pimps" were smashed to smithereens by the most devastating rhetorical artillery. When discussing this group of people, Gregory's substance may be categorized as the blameworthy for he blamed the Rockefeller, Dupont, Chase, Ford and Mellon families for many of America's problems and contended that the entrenched power of these families was interfering with the general welfare of American citizens.

In the speech to students as Franklin & Marshall College, Gregory claimed "this ain't yaws thing; this is for a handful of rich rich aristocratic White folks that manipulate all of us." To support this claim, he appealed to the audience's desire for efficiency, practicality and pragmatism by offering a good explanation concerning the
fifty-five mile per hour speed limit:

Yeah, they tell us that the automobile fatality rate decreased almost 40%. How many of you know about that? You know just yell it out! 55 mile an hour speed limit. You believe they can rip you off like that. They tell you that we are killin less people in automobile accidents because of 55 mile an hour speed limit and all of you that's drivin know that ain't nobody doin 55. Yaw really ought to stop that. And how many of you believe that we got such a huge decrease in automobile fatalities because of a 55 mile an hour speed limit when they've always told us 98 to 95% of everbody that get killed in automobile accidents happen in the city at thirty miles an hour. So if the biggest part of accident fatalities happen in the city at thirty miles an hour how does fifty-five miles an hour speed limit goin to cut it down? As long as they can lie to you and make you believe that that's what it is then we'll never have to say thanks to Ralph Nader who forced the automobile industry to stop puttin out all them defec-tive cars which was killin most of us in the first place.17

Gregory's analogy noted the discrepancy in the reasoning behind the 55 mile an hour speed limit and thus added validity to his claim that the government does not care about you with the use of analogy. Another reason Gregory offered to support his belief that the rich manipulate Americans, pertained to Hustler Magazine. He said:

They just busted Hustler Magazine. And it's a filthy book. But Hustler Magazine is not as filthy as Screw Magazine. How come the state of Ohio didn't bust Screw Magazine and busted this one? Screw Magazine is so much
more filthy than Hustler it make Hustler look like a bible. Because they didn't bust Hustler Magazine for this picture on the front cover. The busted Hustler Magazine for this picture on the back cover. Its a picture of a man's head and that little round circle in the center is what cancer of the brain look like from smokin cigarettes. Hustler Magazine always do ads against why you shouldn't smoke cigarettes. The cigarette industry busted Hustler Magazine? Those rich rich aristocrats that control the cigarette industry.

Gregory's reasoning in the above excerpt seems weak; it is full of innuendo. He did not use factual data and instead offered vague generalizations. However after discussing Hustler Magazine Gregory noted the warning from the Surgeon General printed on cigarette packs and stated that "there is no Surgeon General of the United States no more." By suggesting that the super rich folks "wiped that job out" Gregory may have succeeded in having the audience question the motivation of the rich since the government has not banned the sale of cigarettes even though it is common knowledge that they are a major cause of lung cancer.

In the speech to students at Anne Arundel College, Gregory's case against the rich seemed improved when he presented both statistical data and sufficient evidence to support his premise that "them super degenerate rich rich pimps mainpulate you from the time you wake up in the mornin till the time you go to bed. They decide who you goin to like and who you goin to hate. Decide what
you goin to eat and what you not goin to eat. They decide
the nigger game that's goin to be played; when they say
the nigger game is over the nigger game is over and if you
continue to play it they wipe you out.19 By using the
word nigger Gregory is attempting to capitalize on the
emotions that are associated with the connotation of the
term and thus also create resentment towards the super rich.
Gregory's reasoning in this case appealed to America's
hatred of communism:

You would not tolerate the Russians doin to
you the things they do to you everyday. I
can't understand this mad obsession yaw have
with communism. Communists this communists
that. Communists this communists that--
Watch him watch him. The communists didn't
put red dye number two in your food, fool.
And most of you don't even know what red dye
number two is. Cause if you know what red
dye number two was you would have never
tolerated them takin that out and substitutin
it with red dye number four. I mean the
games they play on you, you would not
tolerate. Do you realize these pimps invented
a tire that they could have gottin rid of that
spare tire in your car thirty years ago...Its
obsolete. As long as they can make you haul
sixty pounds in the trunk of your car that
means you put millions of gallons of gasoline
every hour across this country that you
normally wouldn't have to buy if that
weight was not on the back of that car.
I don't understand how as long as the commun-
ists not doin it its ok. You would never
permit the communists to smuggle in enough
drugs in this country to turn on a whole
generation of kids. You'd stop it. You'd
be outraged. I just don't understand. You
would not permit the communists to sell you
no bad cars that General Motors and Ford run
off them assembly lines.20
Here Gregory switched the audience's attention from the evils of communism to the evils in our establishment. Gregory continued to build his case against the rich by claiming that they were the "real welfare recipients" of the American population. He said,

Let's talk about welfare recipients. Let's talk about the real welfare recipients. Yaw don't want to hear that. Let's talk about the six percent of the American population that controls 97% of the wealth but only pays nineteen percent of the income tax. And out of that six percent that control ninety-seven percent, is twenty-five or twenty-six families and out of the ninety-seven percent they control ninety. Let's talk about the eight top corporations in this country that didn't pay no income tax last year. Let's talk about the top 100 rich families in America that aint never paid no income tax.21

By utilizing statistics of this nature Gregory provided powerful amplification and validity to his claim in that the image he presented depicted what he wanted them to believe—that a small group of people use society to their advantage with a minimum of effort involved. To some auditors the word "welfare" has a negative connotation and is associated with "lazy, good for nothing" people who expect life's necessities to be handed to them on a silver platter without any effort on their part. By referring to the rich as "welfare recipients" Gregory was able to transfer those feelings and beliefs normally associated
welfare, to the rich. Having supported his major premise with the previous data, Gregory contended that the rich not only manipulate White people's fears as in the promotion of the Black sex mystic and the rape syndrome involving White women and Black males but also control bank mortgages, America's educational system and television programming. Using the same tactic involving word association and attitudes, he concluded his attack against the rich by asserting that the number one problem in America is not the way America treats niggers but that there is "a handful of aristocratic White folks that manipulates the fears of the masses of White folks and is havin' their fear manipulated to give you a need for a nigger." 22

Racism

The "need for a nigger" related to what Gregory believed to be the undesirable "racist mentality" that exists in this country. In the speech to students at The Ohio State University, Gregory asserted that racism was central in the action with Cuba and in the Vietnam war:

We really got to do somethin' about this racist mentality in this country. Racism make us pick on Cuba. Cuba got 12,000 troops in Angola and the only way they got over there is the Russians sent for them put them on the plane paid them. Got Cubans over there in Africa aint never been to Havana. And we aint mad at Russia
we mad at Cubans like they just went
over there on they own like they
got the biggest missile program goin
in the world. Kissinger just said to
Castro says 'uh because you in Angola
we not goin to televise your Cuban-
American all star baseball game.'
While he was tellin them that the Russian
hockey team was here whippin us every night.
Check that out. That's why we got messed
up in Viet Nam. Went over there on that
racism. Went over there and had to find
us a nigger. 'Hey you cong.' We stupid
enough to believe there is a Vietnamese
and a Vietnacong. They're all the same.
Aint no such thing as a Vietnamese and a
Vietnacong. They're all the same. They
brought 400,000 Vietnamese refugees over
here and only God know how many of them
Vietkong. How can you tell? That old
funny game we play twenty-four hours a
day. 400,000 Vietnamese refugees over
here and we haven't got enough integrity
to go to Canada and bring our own kids
home.23

Here Gregory's reasoning was not well supported with speci-
fic factual data but was based upon generalization; however,
Gregory scored points with his college audience when he
introduced the issue concerning draft evaders who then
were not permitted to return to the United States but
the government did permit the refugees to seek sanctuary
here.

When Gregory spoke about racism he often focused upon
incidents that struck close to home. For example, in the
same speech, Gregory made a distinction between White
racist people and a White racist system and contended that
Blacks are a part of the racist system:

And I say to you Black folks in America you better hurry up and understand that a White racist system means us too. Cause if you stupid enough to believe that you can be born and raised in this White racist system and not be part of this White racist system you crazy. And if you think all it takes to be Black is to ball up your fist and nap up your hair talk slick out the side of your mouth you better go to Africa and get around some real Black folks. You find out you aint nothin but chocolate covered White folks. That's right. White folks play that nigger game so much they can't even look at me and see them. I aint nothin but chocolate covered White folk. I think White. Niggers act White, we talk White--Everything the White folks like, niggers like--everything that White folks hate--niggers hate. That's why 98% of all Black folks that got killed in America last year was killed by Black folks cause we hate the same thing White folks hate--niggers. All of you Black brothers that still don't understand that racism in your head how many of you will punch a Black sister out and think twice before you roll your eyes funny at a hillbilly White girl that just called you a nigger or got out of your bed? 24

Here Gregory's reasoning was both significant and factual. He was angry and rather than utilizing support he based his arguments on biting, cynical sarcasm. Moreover his use of "we" and "I" in the analysis of Black behavior suggested his desire to identify with his Black audience and point out the need for joint effort in solving the problem. By utilizing this device Gregory demonstrated that he did
not see himself apart from the Black race nor view the problem as a job belonging to others. Moreover, his analysis of Black male behavior definitely scored points (audience approval) with the Black female audience.

Gregory's anger about racism was also evident when he addressed students at Anne Arundel College and contended that a White racist system forces the Black father to leave the family unit because the system promotes the desire for material needs and wants that the Black father cannot supply and also impedes access to employment:

...but the fact that over a third of the Black families in America don't have a man at home means that we should investigate to find out why. All the sociologists say its unemployment. Unemployment--unemployment. Unemployed daddies in Nairobi don't leave home. Unemployed daddy New Deli don't leave home. Why do unemployed Black men in America leave home? For that White racist mentality we taught when we kids. A property--a trinkets...We grow up wantin this and wantin that. And my Black woman grow up needin this and wantin. We have the same needs and wants as White folks have except one thing. White racist system blocks my path and say 'nigger you can't get that job to get all that stuff'... And that White racist mentality in my Black sister is the same mentality that's in that White woman: Just gimme this and gimme that--I need this--I need that...Got to leave home. That's the difference between that Black family unit in America and that unemployed daddy in Nairobi. They not programmed from childhood that you got to have this in the house and you got to have that and
you should live over here and live over there.\textsuperscript{25}

Gregory's reasoning was significant in that it reflected the Afrocentric notion of determining self-worth on the basis of intrinsic criteria and a spiritual ontology rather than the Eurocentric ontology that is based upon external criteria or materialisms. His solution to the problem became evident when he urged his audience to substitute love in the place of material needs and wants; this too is Afrocentric in that the highest value in interpersonal relationships occur between man and woman instead of objects or the acquisition of objects.

**Sexual Discrimination**

If one is to understand the magnitude of racism, Gregory suggested "try sittin one day and understand the magnitude of sexism."\textsuperscript{26} In the speech to students at Franklin and Marshall College Gregory argued that a vicious sexist system is the number one problem that women face in this society and contended that just as Blacks have a racist mentality, women also have a sexist mentality. Here, too, Gregory's substance reflected the undesirable:

Institutionalized sexism. That's why you ladies can go to these schools and your first year here call yourself a freshman and never think nothin of it.
But we would never call ourselves freshwomen. That's why we men can practice institutionalized sexism and not even aware that it's OK for me to stay out all night and come home at six o'clock in the mornin drunk but when my lady come home two hours late I wants to chastize her and find out where she been—go up all upside her head and accuse her of doin a whole lot of things. Racism works the same way. We men can hang out with homosexual men and nobody ever accuse us of bein one. You ladies walk down the street with a lesbian everybody wants to accuse you and her of doin somethin. One of you boys could run up here right now and get naked and do all of this kind of everybody, yeah they was streakin. One of you girls do that they will put you out of school today. They won't even wait till Monday. 'Leave here now.' Then go in town and look at some dudes standin on the corner drinkin wine talkin about who they did it to last night. Let five women be standin on the corner drinkin wine, talkin about who they did give some to last night everybody would be upset.27

Although Gregory's reasoning in the above excerpt was based upon exaggeration and generalization, his criticism was not beyond comprehension or conceivability. To support his belief that women have a sexist mentality Gregory offered the following explanations: women purchase products that exploit them as sex objects; women who use birth control pills do not insist that men use birth control; women vote against themselves when they are anti ERA and women referring to themselves as "freshman" during their first year of college.28 Here Gregory's reasoning may
have intensified the awareness of the problem among feminist supporters and doubters alike.

When discussing sexual discrimination with students at Anne Arundel College, Gregory contributed much in terms of connecting the women's movement with the Black movement. Here his substance centered on the blameworthy rather than the undesirable and he identified college administrations as an enemy of women because they do not teach women how to deal with a sexist system and allocate more monies to male physical education programs than they do to female programs. Gregory also criticized the bicentennial celebrations of America because the focus was upon billions of dollars spent on parades and fireworks rather than ratification of the ERA amendment. Gregory then questioned the attitude of those females in his audience who refuse to boycott commercials that depict women as sex objects. To highlight his point, Gregory effectively utilized a hypothetical illustration about young pre-school boys and the undesirable effect such commercials could have upon them after reaching puberty. The implication Gregory made here was that advertising of this nature could lead to an increase in the number of sexual attacks upon women. Then Gregory advocated that women study the Black movement because "the same thing that was done to Black movement, they fixin to do to your women's movement."29 Gregory
then addressed the audience in this manner:

Oh long as they thought niggers was just marchin and fightin for their rights to eat a Big Mac burger, pee in the White toilet--'we shall overcome; Father God I'll pee with you anything.' When they found out that we wasn't fightin for the right to eat the Big Mac burger and to pee in the toilet--we wanted all of it includin that job I should have had 200 years ago. 'Oh may God you just militant' you movin too fast... We shall--Oh that song aint no good.' Same thing happen to you women...Oh they loved it as long as they thought you was fightin for the right to walk down the street with no brassiere on... Fightin for the right to walk down the street with no drawers on so we could see your booty shake...Oh as long as yaw wanted the right to be doin them things so we could see you good that was a cool movement. 'My God you ladies talkin about you want the right to get my job--you want all your rights. My God they aint nothin but a bunch of lesbians'...I say to you women you better study the Black movement cause they fixin to come down on you. 30

Here, too, Gregory's arguments stemmed from his anger and sarcasm. Gregory's decision to compare the struggle for equality in the Women's movement was excellent in that he not only added clarity and interestingness to his message but also aroused connotative images. In this instance his reasoning was significant in that he succeeded in revealing the parallels to the two movements.
Right to Eat

Although Gregory considered sexism to be the main problem confronting women, he contended that the number one and two problems confronting all of America are a drastic food crisis and pollution of our water. Here Gregory's substance focused on the desirable in that food and water are necessities to banish hunger and thirst and may be viewed as goods that are much prized by all when withheld. In the speech to students at Anne Arundel College, Gregory contended that the food crisis is not a natural one but one that is being manipulated by people who control the farm industry and determine what and how much we eat. His reasons were the following: The right to life doesn't mean anything if one does not have the right to eat. Of the top 100 food conglomerates, four of them control 67% of all the food; weather modification techniques used in Vietnam are now being used in America; a book entitled Report From Iron Mountain that was written by scientists and details the development of methods to create earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, and hurricanes; the fact that it rained every weekend on the entire east coast the previous summer; the unavailability of lids during the increase in home gardening; the pentagon alerted the military to prepare for the possibility of the occurrence of food riots; the price increases of wheat after the Russian wheat deal; higher meat prices
which resulted in a decrease in meat consumption; this in turn resulted in a cut in meat production, a shortage of meat and higher meat prices; federal legislation approving electronic supermarkets to prevent people from stealing food; the amount of unfarmed land that is not being used but if one third of it were used enough food could be produced to feed another 100 billion people; food is not produced in higher volumes because it is more profitable to produce less.31

Here Gregory's reasoning was good in that he shrewdly appealed to the basic needs of the audience. He developed his arguments in detail and presented a dismal picture of the future that implied threats to their economic security. However, he did fail to offer reasons to support his theory concerning water pollution but did note that 93% of all the public water in this country is unfit for human consumption because of floridation and that if the practice were halted the cancer rate could be cut in half in one year. Prior to speaking about the food crises Gregory was nearing the end of his address and noted that he would briefly discuss the two main problems confronting America. Although his explanation of the food crises was adequate, the fact that Gregory did not speak about these topics earlier in his speech suggested poor planning on his part, especially since he stressed their importance.
Care of the Body

After having presented the dismal picture of food riots, food shortages, sky-high prices, electronic supermarkets and the possibility of landing in jail because you stole food you could not afford to pay for, Gregory may have instilled fear in some of his audience members; in any event his implied threats to economic security and well-being were enough to enforce many listener's feeling of a need for a well-directed program of action and retaliation. Yet Gregory's solution which was to care for their bodies by jogging, exercising, reading books to learn about vitamins and how to fast to cleanse their bodies, failed to offer a decision that could be set in motion to rectify a problem with serious ramifications. A prevailing idea in Gregory's solution was his appeal to stop eating dead animal products and food that contains life and blood cells. Here Gregory's substance reflected the desirable. The questions that may be unanswerable, though, is whether his motives were centered on the general welfare of others or self-centered. Since Gregory informed his audience that he conducts food and survival seminars and urged his audience to write to him in care of "health" it is conceivable that he did have their interests in mind. On the other hand, Gregory, in this writer's opinion, is essentially an egotist who makes frequent reference to
himself and makes a practice of letting his speeches grow from his rather than his audiences' mood.

The Trick

Gregory would probably refer to food shortages that occur during bad weather and the resulting higher prices as a government engineered "trick". Reference to the trick is a typical Gregory theme. Variations on that theme included "sugar trick", "coffee trick", "gasoline trick", "Ozone trick", and "energy trick". Each of these may be characterized as being political in nature and embrace Wallace's class of the blameworthy since Gregory believed that the government was responsible for the majority of them.

Because the principle of a free democratic society is basic to Gregory's point of view he feels obligated to make the public aware of what he perceives to be the truth about the tricks that are played in American society. For example, in the speech to students at Franklin and Marshall College, Gregory expressed his opposition to President Carter's energy proposal and noted the following:

Well you see my problem is this: I'm against anything that's a trick. I'm against anything that old folks and poor folks have to suffer behind and aint no way in the world I would ever go along with that rip-off package that they put down. And the only reason they can do that is because
American people is about the dumbest most uninformed runnin around wavin your flags believin everything that these degenerate pimps tell you. You know and then these niggers like me and folks like Ralph Nader they got to get out here and work our butt off to convince yaw that these pimps is lyin to you. Same way that aint what a free Democratic society is supposed to be about.32

To some auditors, Gregory may have put forth a negative image in that he employed name calling, invective and identified himself and his position with a person who is thought of as being anti-establishment; however, for others Dick Gregory has been described as "the darling of the college lecture circuit" who wields tough language with a plea for humanity to which the college-aged naturally respond; thus many of them had come to hear him rub their faces in the muck of American hypocrisy.

To support his notion that Americans are uninformed, Gregory raised a series of rhetorical questions:

Don't it seem kind of strange that the President's energy package don't really deal with energy? It deals with your automobile. What about all these new kind of clothes--Ackron and Dacron--that they make out of petroleum; why don't they ban them? Hell we don't need them since there's such a damn gasoline shortage. How many of you in this room is aware of the fact that every day in America we produce twice as much oil as the Arabs do? How many of yaw know that? Let me see your hands.
How many of y'all know that? But they
got you believin' that the Arabs is the
number one oil producin' area in the
world. We outproduce them every day
in America. How many of y'all know that?
Aint no energy shortage baby. Don't it
seem funny that if they was serious
about an energy shortage they would pass
legislation that would make the auto-
mobile industry start manufacturing
cars that's goin' to last for ten years
instead of break down after you pay
the last note? Don't it seem like
they would pass legislation to make
the automobile industry bottle up them
holes that they deliberately put in
your engine so that you cannot get fifty
to sixty to seventy miles per gallon?
Don't it seem funny that the President
didn't have nothin' in that message per-
tainin' to public transportation? How
many of y'all know that we can run this
whole town just from the garbage that
people throw away? How many of y'all
know that? Let me see your hands.
Don't it seem funny that all them slick
government cats that had to put that
energy thing together--how many of y'all
know that we can damn near run ninety
percent of the energy we use in this
country if we just take the human stool
that we get rid of every day--just a
energy from that would turn this whole
thing around. See that's why they play
games. Aint no energy crisis in this
country and that's what the whole game
is all about. As a matter of fact they
can make your car run with no gas. We
sent one of those big spacecrafts all
the way to Mars y'all know that on a
two year flight and landed on the Fourth
of July. Last year--remember that?
Two years. Did you ever hear where they
refueled? Did you? Then how in the
hell you goin' to tell me you got the
technology to send some big old space-
craft two years through the atmosphere,
stratosphere with all that resistance
and you can't make my car run from New
York to L.A. That's what it's all about baby. And as soon as you understand that the sooner they will stop playing tricks and games on you.33

At this point, Gregory was definitely raging with anger but not without a well formed plan. Also, his skillful use of rhetorical questions aided him in achieving his goal; moreover they gave impact and focus to the message he was trying to communicate.

Gregory offered solutions to the energy problem but this time they reflected practicality. Moreover, Gregory did not fail to explain or defend in a rational way his answers to the energy issue. Thus the audience was not left in a bewildered state and did not need to wonder what they could do to help effect a more desirable situation. Gregory's solutions were as follows: President Carter should allocate small loans and tax breaks to the small farmers as an incentive rather than favoring the gasoline and oil industry; pass federal laws that close schools during the winter months particularly in the colder states and remain open nine months out of the year; stop the monopoly held by the top one hundred food conglomerates; reopen local food markets so that food will not have to be shipped across the country and energy wasted on food processing and refrigerated trucks.34
America's Youth

In the speech to students at Anne Arundel College, Gregory asserted that America's youth must begin to change the system and stop the tricks that are played in American society. Here his substance may be classified as the obligatory in that Gregory claimed that America's youth must assume the responsibility for determining the faith and destiny of this country. As Gregory expressed it:

Traveling around the country today I meet a lot of young folks and I wonder if you youngsters in America really know who you are and what you all about. I would dare say that never before in the history of this planet--I would probably be safe in sayin that never before in this history of this planet have young people ever had the burden of responsibility dropped upon that we older folks in America dropped on you young kids today. Now you can have the same fears, prejudices and hangups your mothers and fathers had or you can take the same don't give a care attitude about straightin this country out that many of us older folks had when we was your age....And the very faith and destiny of this nation right now depends on you.35

Gregory warned the young White students in his audience to "get themselves together" and to prepare for death because they had upset the handful of people who run this country. His reasoning was based upon his belief that today's White youth refused to fight wars and preferred
to be known as lovers and meditators. Many of the young people preferred to go to Canada rather than be drafted to fight in a war they were opposed to and thus contributed to ending the Vietnam war; last the fact that the young people marched on the Pentagon armed only with a moral honest ethical force and said "never again will old men decide where young men goin to die." Here Gregory's reasoning is based upon generalities rather than specifics; however, he enhanced his ethos by identifying himself and his position with the morals and opinions of those who marched on the pentagon. Gregory noted,

And have nerve enough to march on the pentagon. The Russians is scared of the pentagon. People work in the pentagon scared of the pentagon. You young White kids marched on the pentagon and didn't even take a sling shot with you. Didn't take nothin but a high. They was layin there for you. I was there that day. I was goin to die with you. I couldn't believe you was that mellow. They was waitin for you with the 82nd airborne tank; they was goin to bust your head. They thought you was goin to show up with somethin they could deal with. See they can handle your violence and your nastyness and your evilness and your connivin; they can handle all that. You young kids showed up in front of the pentagon with one thing that the superstructure that's runnin this country can't deal with. Moral, honest, ethical force. That just wipes them out...And it worked!
Although Gregory rallied to the anti-war cause and identified with the moral conscience of those who resisted the Vietnam war, his enthusiasm towards America's youth was replaced by cynicism when he addressed students at Franklin and Marshall College. There, he reiterated his claim that America's youth must assume responsibility for solving America's problems. However, he appealed to the audience's sense of duty by reminding them that individualism was a luxury they could no longer afford. Gregory insisted, "you young kids have got to understand that your job is more than bein about self baby. You got to be the protectors of the elderly folks and young folks and other poor folk instead of twenty-four hours a day tryin to hog a position for yourself."37 In registering his disdain for the self indulgence of college students, Gregory made the concern for others paramount:

And you young kids on these college campuses yaw really got to start using yaws power in somethin else other than seein how many goldfish you can swallow. I mean if you so bad swallow a whale. Use that power for somethin else other than seein how many of yaw can get into a phone booth. If you so bad see if you can stop this ripoff Ma Bell got from one end of this country to the other... Let's try this. Somewhere you young kids got to use that power for somethin else other than seein how much beer you can drink or how much reefer you can smoke-- how much cocaine you can endure. Because the same force that's manipulatin you eventually will wipe you out.
Them is the same one thats given you the reefers, the drugs the alcohol and the cocaine...Yaw the biggest fakeout fools in the world. Yaw really think yaw doin yaw's thing don't you? Really doin it. I mean if you goin to get high invent your own thing. Smoke old fogy socks. Yaw got a big job and we need you. And I do not believe that this country has gone beyond the point of no return. And I say to you today that if you willin to change it things can happen if you're not willin to change then I say to you in no uncertain terms have fun and have fun quick baby cause recess is just about over.38

Here Gregory's substance consisted of statements offering students the choice of "doing or dying". His reasoning was practical in that his appraisal of student behavior revealed his notion of how students should conduct themselves and be motivated towards an altruistic manner as opposed to being concerned with self. This in turn reflected Gregory's Afrocentric belief in humanism and communalism.

**Colleges and Universities**

In an effort to aid students in initiating change, Gregory advocated that students organize from one end of this country to the other and say to the colleges and universities that "they exist to satisfy your needs and you don't exist to satisfy theirs...they better start educatin you and stop indoctrinatin you...they better start teachin
you how to live instead of teachin you how to make a livin."39 Gregory concluded that once this occurred things would begin to change. Here Gregory's substance began to reflect the blameworthy and the reprehensible in that he denounced college curriculums and their system of learning as a rip-off where "they manipulate your brain."40 His reasons included the ideas that college did not prepare him to deal with the number one problem in his life which is racism; it does not teach women how to deal with sexism; students who attend college have more hangups, commit more suicides, enter mental hospitals, use more drugs and alcohol than fourth grade dropouts; students develop "perverted degenerate sex patterns" after reading college novels and don't have one thought and "can't figure their way out of a box" when they graduate.41 Although Gregory used exaggerated language to convey his ideas, his reasoning did convey certain tenable judgments and may be considered significant in that his ideas were especially suited for his sardonic wit and parody of college life. More important was the fact that the audience demonstrated its approval at this point in the speech with intermittent applauding.

Organized Religion

Not only did Gregory criticize colleges and universities in their approach to learning he also condemned
their philosophy in regards to religion. Gregory had then opened the door to compare his "spiritual" beliefs to those of organized religion. He began by building a strong case against the precepts or organized religion:

...you have never been taught to reach down inside of you and find your true universal love. You've never been told there's a universal god locked inside of you. And instead of findin that universal god they've got us hooked into isms and osims. America is the most Christian nation in the world. America is the most religious nation in the world and we have surpassed all of the madness that they could have ever thought of. Cause bein a Christian aint enough baby. Bein Catholic or Baptist or Hindu or Moslem --you can be all those things--if you haven't got your spiritual thing togeter you can kiss the rest of it goodbye. 98% of all Black folks that got lynched in America was lynched by Christians remember? But they weren't spiritual. 90% of all them White folks in Boston last year acted a fool over these schools. They was Catholics but they weren't spiritual...Some of the most vile crimes in the history of this planet happened in religion. Look what's goin on in Belfast. Been goin on. Shootin at one another, blowin up taverns, killin them kids, blowin up candy stores, wipen out every--its a religious hassel. No I don't understand that. Lebanon, the Christians and the Moslems just be blowin up one another and tore up a whole town. Over religious hangups. That middle east crisis has religious overtones. The Vietnamese War was Catholics and Bhuddists. They all had a thing...over religion.41

Here Gregory's substance centered on the undesirable in that he perceived religion as a negative factor. More
important Gregory's observations about people with a religious attitude had much support as valid descriptions of their negative behavior. Furthermore his ideas were significant because their organization and arrangement followed a pattern that was especially suited for his task.

**Spiritual Thing**

For Gregory, becoming spiritual was an alternative to the "isms" and "osims" of religion. He contended that this country might begin to change when American people stop being as Christian and as religious as they are and instead try to be a little more spiritual. Here Gregory's substance reflected the desirable. His reasoning was based upon the assumptions that one cannot find poverty, hate, viciousness, prejudice, racism, envy, jealousy or spite among spiritual people; and because spiritual people do not worry or fear anything they have no need for guns or other weapons used for protection and destruction of life. Gregory's reasoning was significant in that it reflected the peace-happiness orientation within the Afrocentric paradigm and because it made a concrete connection between his ideas about being religious and finding one's universal god.
The Universe

Not only did Gregory advocate becoming spiritual, he also advocated getting closer to nature or the universe. In each of his speeches the writer witnessed he contended that we can survive the manipulative tactics of the super rich by tuning into the universe. To students at Ohio State he said:

We can survive this thing cause there's one beautiful thing about them super degenerate pimps that run this thing--they cannot control the universe. I laughed sittin around listenin to Nixon sayin White folks invented law and order. No baby! The universe is law and order. That's what its all about, baby. And all this manipulation they do with you is because you pulled yourself away from the universe. I'm wealthy. Multi-millionaire and you, my kids, whatever you do I'm a help you if you let me know where you are. The universe the same way, baby. We so disconnected from the universe and them pimps know what they do when they put them additives in your food and red dye number two to make you somethin that the universe can't relate with. And that's why they do it. Oh the Rockys and the Mellons and the Du-Ponts--sure they can manipulate the banks cause the banks belong to them. The universe didn't have nothin to do with them banks. You can only manipulate my mortgage cause the mortgage don't belong to the universe. You can manipulate my mortgage cause the mortgage don't belong to the universe. You can manipulate these schools, close them down when they get ready....That's cool, go ahead and manipulate that; control that pimp--tell me--play all of your games. I got somethin you can't have.
I mean that's what we got to start dealin with. Say to these handful of rich rich aristocrats no more. I'm sittin this one out. And you be surprised how easy it is if you willin to use some discipline. If you willin to go out and pull your socks off and just sit under a tree and look at that mighty sun. Think Rockefellers powerful--you think the United States military complex is powerful. Get up early in the mornin and watch that sun roll out and smack night-time dead out the sky. And don't make no noise...Sittin up on that hill in that tent fasin and prayin, I found out somethin I didn't know. I found out that I got somethin inside of me that's bigger than me. And you have too. Yet every few minutes you sit in this room right now billions of cells is reproducin your body. With all the power and money they got in the Chase Manhattan Bank--they haven't got one cell, one vault that can produce a cell. My fingernail grow. My toenails, I clip them off and throw them away. And all the military that's together on this planet can't put all they guns together to produce a toenail.\textsuperscript{43}

Gregory concluded that both he and his audience are the strongest things in the universe and that they are the universe. He claimed that the biggest job he has ever had in his life he has to do now; that is to transfer the power back into his body that this system takes away from him. Gregory then urged his audience to do the same by employing discipline, sacrifice, eliminating television and being careful about what they choose to read.\textsuperscript{44} Here agian Gregory's substance reflected the desirable since
Gregory believed that tuning into the universe would lead to man's survival. His reasoning was appropriate in that it was based upon the Afrocentric notions that life is created, governed and redeemed by the extra-sensory and life is free from worry, anxiety, fear and guilt if one seeks unity with God-universe.

**Taboo Subjects**

Gregory made extensive use of humor to stimulate his audience; at times the substance was often about subjects not normally discussed in public. At Franklin and Marshall College, for example, after discussing the "ozone trick" Gregory contended that the reason the super rich can play games with the American public is that it is basically phony and dishonest. His reasoning centered on a discussion about toilets. He said:

...basically we phony. That's why they get us. Basically we got them aerosol cans in the house for fraud for phony reasons in the first place. Most of the aerosol cans in the house have that air freshener in it. Walk around tryin to freshin up the house with air freshener. Want the house to small fresh? Clean it. I mean we so dishonest we can't even meet people in America no more that admit that toilets are supposed to stink. Aint nothin wrong with a stinkin toilet. That's why you don't put them in the kitchen. I mean you walk into somebody's house now and go to the toilet there's twenty jars of Airwick darin you to just come in here...Goin to have to
admit one thing that that's really not the toilet stinkin. That's you. And if you don't like that, then you change it. Stop eatin all that old dead animal products. Get involved with vegetarianism. Stop eatin all that old processed food with all that old filth in it. And if you're not willin to do that--take that aerosol can and stick it up your booty.45

Here Gregory's substance may be classified as that of the blameworthy in that he used names such as phony and dishonest to label the American public; moreover he blamed the American public for being tricked by the super rich. Gregory's reasoning may be considered significant only on the basis that he succeeded in making a concrete connection between his ideas about the character of the American public and his theme of caring for the body which he introduced earlier in the speech. Thus, the presence of a coherent pattern was apparent throughout the speech and indicated that Gregory gave considerable thought to continuity, unity, coherence and the development of ideas.

Another example of Gregory's use of taboo subjects occurred when he contended that Americans have become so dishonest that very few of them admit that they "fart". Here Gregory united his ideas about dishonest with his themes of the universe and becoming spiritual. Gregory put it bluntly:
We have got so dishonest in this
country you can't hardly meet Americans
anymore that admit they fart. That's
right fart. You sittin there lookin.
I said fart, fart, fart. That's what
I said. Yaw sittin there like you aint
never farted. Yaw sittin there like
you don't know what a fart is. Fart,
fart. You know what I'm talkin about.
Fartin is not only spiritual, fartin is
universal. Fartin is healthy. And if
you don't believe it you try goin five
or six months without fartin. You'll
just swell right up. They attack your
booty with natural gas. I thought we
would run the whole town out with this
one here. See we develop all these
different types of authorities that fart
and act like it wasn't there. You know
what I'm talkin about--this one group
that farts and try to walk away from
them. You cannot walk away from a fart.
That's right. Where you go it go. A
fart just don't stay down and then come
on around up by your head. And then
you got this other group of farters
they assume that if they smell it first
it wasn't them. 'Jesus Christ! You all
smell somethin? I guess so.'

One may choose to view the proceeding as Gregory having
reached the zenith of the sublime ridiculous; never-the-
less it serves as more evidence of his ability to play
upon the risibilities of his audience. One can also deter-
dine that Gregory took tremendous liberties with his
audiences with his habitual discussion of taboo subjects
and one may at times assume that he ran the risk of alien-
ating them; but the Gregory brand of humor, a seemingly
offhand mode of delivery and a perfect sense of timing,
actually created a desired result in which the audience moved from shock to laughter, from possible alienation to entertainment and information.

Summary

The writer has viewed the substance of Gregory's rhetoric by utilizing Wallace's three general category of values and theory of "good reasons" and concludes that Gregory speaks on a variety of topics most of which may be characterized as the blameworthy-reprehensible. Those topics that were characteristically political included the Kennedy-King assassinations, the United States government, the CIA and FBI, the super-rich and the tricks Gregory contended they play on the American public.

Gregory projected a crusading image by attacking the government and the super rich as the responsible agents for each of these topics and defended the rights of the young, poor and elderly. His expressed resentment of the blameworthy-reprehensible was heightened by his avowed belief that the survival faith and destiny of America lied in the power of America's youth. Thus his message was desirable and admirable for America's youth.

Gregory established himself as a selfless humanitarian, a man of probity and goodwill and an expert on civil and human rights affairs when developing his credibility. The motives to which he appealed were freedom, morality, anger,
economic well-being, power, empathy, preservation of the human race, survival of the American public and personal comfort.

With a minimum of embellishment, Gregory spoke directly to the issues of racial and sexual discrimination, education, housing and employment and he did not hesitate to call the names of the rich who he claimed impede the well-being of the American public. Moreover, he punctuated his speeches with name-calling and harsh invectives.

The writer concludes that Gregory's reasoning for the most part was based upon exaggeration, innuendo, and broad ambiguous generalizations that were sometimes unsupported. More often than not he reasoned by using anger as a major emotional feature of sarcasm, scolding and sometimes humorous claims about the plight of Black people in a White racist society. Also Gregory made a practice of letting his speeches grow from his rather than from his audience's mood. While specifics were often missing, Gregory may have utilized general abstractions for their emotional tone and impact. Another reason for the paucity of specifics may be due to the fact that Gregory speaks nine out of twelve months during a year and may find it easier to prepare and present speeches filled with generalities. In an interview with the writer, Gregory noted that audiences do not like to follow the intricacies of a
closely reasoned argument filled with explicit details, whose ramification they cannot easily grasp. He also asserted that he was a "safe nigger" meaning that he could be trusted and if any information he presented was not true he could be sued for slander. This attitude in itself may suggest that Gregory considers himself to be a qualified authority whose opinions should be accepted without question. If this is the case, then Gregory is an irresponsible rhetor who should not be taken seriously or the results could be dangerous, especially in those instances where his reasoning is based upon biased opinions rather than supporting statements.

While Gregory's speeches may be lacking in "good reasons" he compensated by utilizing humor, wit and reasoning that reflected his Afrocentric beliefs and offered criticism that was comprehensible. Moreover his speeches for the most part were not without a well-formed plan where humor was interspersed as relief and served to balance his grim warnings and maintain audience interest.

The choices he offered involved action and appraisal of action. To America's youth, he in a word said "do or die". To White women and Black men he advocated substituting love in the place of material needs and wants. He also advocated that White women study the Black movement and suggested that Black men study African peoples as a
role model of "Blackness". To the general audience Gregory urged them to fast, take care of their bodies, tune into the universe and become more aware of the tricks and manipulative tactics of the superpowers.

Lastly, Gregory took tremendous liberties with his audiences by discussing taboo subjects; but his humor, delivery and timing incited laughter, entertainment and information rather than shock and alienation. In this way his message, though lacking in "good reasonings" was both general and memorable to the point that the audience rather than he could persuade themselves by supplying their own explicit details.
Notes


2Ibid., pp. 117-121.

3Ibid., pp. 121-122.


5Ibid., p. 123.

6Dick Gregory, taped speech, Anne Arundel College, Anne Arundel, Maryland, March 14, 1977.

7Ibid.

8Ibid.

9Ibid.

10Ibid.


12Ibid.

13Ibid.

14Ibid.

15Ibid.

16Ibid.

17Ibid.

18Ibid.
19. Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Dick Gregory, taped speech, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, April 14, 1976.
24. Ibid.
25. Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College
36. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Gregory speech, The Ohio State University.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
Ibid.

Ibid.

Gregory speech, Franklin and Marshall College.

Ibid.
Chapter V  

The Styles and Techniques of Dick Gregory  

Speaking about persuasion in his book *The Art of Persuasion*, Wayne C. Minnich concludes that desires rather than facts and reason "stamp the matrix of beliefs" and largely determine judgment. Thus, if we wish to persuade others, to shape and control their behavior and beliefs, we must remember that "logic is not enough"; we must "use other sources of persuasion, too."¹ Style is one such source. When noting the importance of style Professor John M. Manley wrote,  

Style is a vital organism and consequently is neither the arithmetical nor the algebraic sum of its parts. But in all the sciences of organic life analysis is a necessary preliminary and an indispensable aid to the understanding of the complete functioning of the organism as a whole.²  

The importance of style in speechmaking has been stressed by rhetoricians for over two thousand years. Moreover style means and has meant many things. Extremes in attempts to define the nature of style are epitomized by the contrasting definitions of Swift ("Proper words in proper places make the true definition of style,") and
Buffon (Le style est l'homme meme."") Nevertheless, the rhetorical critic should discover and describe what was said in a specific speech or a series of speeches and how it was said. The previous chapter concerned the "what"; this chapter concerns the "how" and seeks to answer the question in what styles and techniques does Gregory's substance appear? Style refers to "the way speakers put sound and grammatical structure together to communicate meaning;" style is also a point of view, a way of looking at life and a method of adapting to life's realities. Techniques are those linguistic choices and rhetorical methods made by the speaker to accomplish a desired aim. To analyze Gregory's style and techniques the writer utilized the frame of mind, scope and context and structure of code constituents of Asante's metatheory as well as perceptions from social scientists and humanists particularly those calling themselves Afrologists.  

Asante notes that in isolating any part of Black language for rhetorical study, the frame of mind of the language user is important for analytical consideration. Frame of mind refers to the way "certain social, creative, and psychological factors contribute to the total view of language. Frame of mind then is the storehouse from which the speaker chooses those linguistic devices he feels are appropriate for him and relevant for his audience.
Frame of mind determines the proverbs and narratives which transmit mutually understood culturally based values and also determines the speaker's relationship with the audience. Frame of mind determines how a message is structured and what form the message takes and how the message is delivered.

In Chapter III the writer concluded that Gregory's frame of mind was based on the principles of Afrocentricity. This chapter focuses on the concepts of rhythm and styling since Asante notes that they seem indicative in terms of a discussion of the Black frame of mind. Here rhythm refers to "the regular recurrent clustering of tones according to accent and time value." Asante contends that rhythm of this nature is a basic measure of the successful Black speaker: how well a speaker can regulate his flow of words with the proper pauses of audience indentations becomes the standard for the Black speaker before a basically Black audience. Henry Mitchell knowingly refers to this as establishing "a kind of intimate fellowship" and notes that effective speakers employ some form of rhythm in vocal expression; "usually the speaker employs the characteristic style of his audience so that his cadences are familiar to his hearers."

Rhythm explains only a portion of the Black frame of mind. Asante adds the concept of "styling" and views it as a major contributive factor in the Black speaker's frame
of mind as it relates to language. Styling refers to "the conscious or unconscious manipulation of language or mannerisms to favorably influence the hearers of a message" and may be visual and/or audio.\textsuperscript{10} The emphasis here will be on audio styling since Asante states, "what people hear is what we chiefly evaluate; because of this response to vocal clues is significant."\textsuperscript{11} These clues may take several forms, including malaprops, intercalations, and variations in pronunciations.\textsuperscript{12}

Malaprops are humorous misapplications of words or the use of words sounding somewhat like the ones intended but ludicrously wrong in the context. Claude Brown notes that malaprops, colloquialisms and fractured grammar contributed to the evolution of the sound of soul in Black English.\textsuperscript{13} Intercalations are the "filler expressions" that often appear as deliberate attempts at styling but become habitual with repeated use. In this category is "you know", the reigning American intercalation.\textsuperscript{14}

The contextual scope of Black language comprises the historical as well as the present moment and provides a basis for understanding and bringing about new language styles. Moreover social realities such as time and audience create possibilities as well as constraints for the Black speaker.\textsuperscript{15} For example, a Black speaker addressing a Black audience may successfully use referents
which could be quite irrelevant to a White audience. Thus the speaker's stylistic arguments must correspond with the audience's experiences.

The structure of linguistic code is derived from a people's heritage and transmitted through the mores of the society. Lyrical quality, vocal artifact and indirection are cited as three components of the code structuring in the rhetorical behavior of Black Americans. The lyrical quality of the Black preacher has been traditionally eulogized, but in the Black comedian, the barbershop bard and in Black street language, lyrical quality is also bountiful. Narration is the most common expression of this lyrical quality. Vocal artifact infers an awareness of the African concept of "nommo": word manipulation through tone, emphasis and expressiveness....not just knowing what to say, but how to say it and fully utilizing "sound" as a rhetorical artifact. Flair, imagination and rhetorical style are aptly expressed through indirection: a way of surrounding the issue before focusing on it. Indirection utilizes deductive reasoning and creates possibilities for elaborately garnishing the message as opposed to delivering it on the naked platter.16

The techniques discussed in this chapter include mimicry, signification, braggadocio, the dozens, tonal semantics, romantic rappin, spontaneity, and proverbial
statement. The writer shall briefly discuss each. Mimicry is the deliberate imitation of the speech and mannerisms of someone else and may be used for authenticity, ridicule or rhetorical effect. Kernan refers to this technique as "marking" and notes that it is essentially a mode of characterization that is not peculiar to Black people, "although the implicit association of particular ways of speaking with specific social types may be more elaborated than elsewhere."

Signification refers to "the act of talking about somebody through stunning and clever verbal putdowns." In the Black vernacular it is more commonly referred to as "sigging" or "signifyin." The speaker or signifier uses humor to insult the listener either for fun or sometimes to make a point. Since the signifier uses humor the insult is easier to accept and gives the recipient a socially acceptable "way out."

Both braggadocio and the dozens are forms of boastful raps used to devastate enemies. ("Rapping" is a fluent and lively way of talking which is always characterized by a high degree of personal style. Romantic rapping, then, is used by the speaker at the beginning of a relationship to create a favorable impression and be persuasive at the same time.) With braggadocio the bragging may refer to various kinds and dimensions as in physical
badness, fighting ability, lovemanship or coolness. The dozens is a form of signification where, according to H. Rap Brown, one attempts to "totally destroy someone else with words...The real aim of the dozens was to get a dude so mad that he'd cry or get mad enough to fight." In most cases the mother of the person attacked is the object of ridicule.

Asante notes behaviorists in general have yet to analyze the technique surrounding vocal artifact and the idea that intonation and tonal styling are substantive parts of most speaking Blacks. Geneva Smitherman, however, discusses the technique at great length under the headings "tonal semantics" and "intonation". Tonal semantics "refers to the use of voice rhythm and vocal inflection to convey meaning in Black communication." Talk singing, repetition, alliterative work play, rhyme and intonational contouring are cited as the variety of forms included in tonal semantics. Intonational contouring refers to "the specific use of stress and pitch in pronouncing words in the Black style." For example, words like "yeah", "say", "right", and "man" are conducive to the Black speaker's timbre and pitch. Asante states to know how to say these words is to know the secrets of word magic: "that all magic is word magic, and the generation and transformation of sounds contribute to a speaker's power."
As Jack Daniel has pointed out, proverbs are a part of the Black speaker's context. While proverbs have been around for ages, the writer here is referring to the Black speaker's tendency to encapsulate and in a sense "freeze" experience through his or her own aphoristic phrasing. Spontaneity is also a part of the Black speaker's context: "Though Black raps have an overall formulaic structure, the overall specifics remain to be filled in....Rarely does the rapper have a completely finished speech, even in more structured 'formal' kinds of speech-making..." Lastly, the writer will attempt to demonstrate that comprehension of these techniques within the context of Gregory's rhetoric is consonant to the reader or auditor relating to the frame of reference within which they are used.

Paranoid Style

In Chapter IV the writer noted that Gregory's language was characterized by distortion, hyperbole, bitter invective and unnecessary accusations. At the center of this fanaticism was his belief in the existence of a systematic plot by the FBI and CIA to destroy him. Richard Hofstadter labels this exaggerated passion for abusive verbal expression the "paranoid style." It did not refer to the validity of arguments--just the manner in which these ideas were expressed and believed. Gregory's comments
during an interview with this writer exemplified the paranoid style and his preoccupation with thoughts of a conspiracy. He insisted that "the FBI went out to break the Black panthers up...They tried to break me up with lies and connivin."

When asked what techniques does he utilize, he replied that he relies on his feelings; as he further explained, his paranoia became more evident:

Yeah, I mean I am in control from the time I walk out. I know everybody in that audience. I know people in the balcony when they move I can tell you that I watch every face that I see, every energy level. I do this for several reasons: One to watch for that government hit that's out there. That's why I don't allow no noise that's why I don't allow no cameras in the room—be no tapes in the room. The minute there's any noise I watch it and ask them to cut it out or tell them to leave the room.

Gregory then elaborated his belief that "everytime the government has made a hit they have had somebody in there videotaping" and cited the assassination of Malcolm X as an example. When asked if an attempt had been made on his life he initially replied, "Yeah, me--this has happened. Greg. Yeah it happens all the time." When asked the same question a second time he replied "Well, uh, I'm just sayin what I have to look for."

While some people may oppose Gregory's indulgence in monomania, Hofstadter contends that American minority
groups have preferred the paranoid style. He notes that they have interpreted history as a major conspiracy directed against themselves while their enemy controlled an effective source of power which he utilized against the minority group to keep them in a subservient state. The writer contends that Gregory's language and the ideas he espoused to explain reality conformed to a format that was characterized by the paranoid style. In each of the speeches that the writer witnessed Gregory reiterated his belief that the CIA and FBI are involved in a plot to rob America of its moral strength by "plotting genocide for Black Americans, hippies, yippies and anybody else who creates a thorn in the system's side." Because of his faith in America's youth he urged them to "hurry up and realize what this big thing is all about" and emphasized the need to "have fun quick because recess is just about over...because the same force that's manipulatin you eventually will wipe you out." Such scorching language exhibited Gregory's potential for exaggeration but also contributed to his reputation as an outspoken speaker demonstrating a bone deep commitment and hot conviction for an ethically honest and morally sound way of life for America and its people.

Tonal Semantics

Not only did Gregory adapt his language to the attitude of his Black audiences he also employed the
characteristic style of his auditors so that his cadences were familiar to them. By using Black rhythmic speech Gregory's total expression became more powerful on the basis that he "sounded good". Kernan notes that Black audiences are aware of, appreciate and expect this type of verbal behavior. The speech rhythms and tonal inflection Gregory utilized are impossible to capture in print. Moreover, Smitherman argues that to both understand and "feel" the tonal semantics requires the listener to be of a cultural tradition that finds value and meaning in word sound. Note the following which also contains an element of Gregory's paranoia when he referred to the baby crying.

It ain't no accident that all your major nursery rhymes end in violence. And they been knowin' for a long time that if I could plant violence into the heads and minds of little bitty children when they grow up they'll grow up hostile and aggressive. And once I got you that way can do anything to you. It ain't no accident all those major nursery rhymes end in violence. That's the game. Jack and Jill went up the hill. Before its over both of them goin' to fall. Humpty Dumpty can't sit on that wall without breakin' himself into a million pieces. Little Miss Muffit sit on a tuffit and before its over a spider goin' to scare her away. I'll huff and I'll puff the house down. Rock a bye baby in the tree top and before its over the baby and the cradle gon' fall. Yaw hold that baby down for me back there will you? Thank you. Yaw got a big job and you haven't got much time to change this whole thing. Its no accident that the most violent period on television in this country
is every Saturday mornin when they run
those cartoons across this country for
them kids. 36

Here Gregory's style employed a formulaic structure
that utilized rhythm as well as the rhetorical techniques,
repetition, rhyme and alliterative word play. He drove
home his point by repeating the structural unities "it
ain't no accident and "before it's all over." By repeat-
ing these key words Gregory emphasized his point and
achieved more of a persuasive effect than had he uttered
it only once. The "important" key to understanding the
rhythm here lies within the recognition that the sound of
what he uttered was just as important as "sense". Both
sound and sense were used to deliver the word. Thus the
semantic meaning was combined and synthesized with lyrical
balance, cadence and melodious rhythm. The effect achieved
was the conveyance of a psychocognitive message, similar
to that of the African drum in African culture, that reached
down to the deep structure of a common level of life and
shared human experience the words alone could not convey.

When certain phrases appeared to capture the atten-
tion of his audience Gregory varied the phrases and re-
peated them as in the following excerpt:

Price of meat went so sky high millions
of Americans quit eatin it. Millions of
Americans had to cut back on they meat
consumption and that created the prob-
lem. Because so many millions of Americans
cut back on their meat consumption we didn't stop eatin. We started eatin more beans and rice. So many Americans cut back on their meat consumption there was a five month period in the last 18 months when the price of hamburger meat across this country decreased between 40 and 60 cents a pound. So many Americans started eatin beans and rice in the last three years there was a 18 month period where the price of beans and rice was increased 80 to 95 cents a pound...And what does that mean? That means because millions of Americans cut back on their meat production. And because of that cut back on the meat production in about three or four months there be such a shortage of meat the price will go so sky high millions of Americans who haven't stopped eatin meat will stop eatin.37

Here Gregory repeated the phrasal unit "so many Americans"eight times in near succession. Alliteration was evident with the expressions "such shortages", "so sky", and "many millions". By employing the techniques of rhythm, repetition and alliterative word play the writer concludes that Gregory captured the attention of his audience and made the message understandable.

A final example of Gregory's use of tonal semantics occurred when he urged his audience to enter into a new state of consciousness by changing their reality and perceptions:

So I walked off that hill this past summer knowin that I'm not only the strongest thing in this universe I am the universe. You are too. And
the biggest job ever I had in my life I got to do now. I got to transfer the power back to me because this system--this planet--they busy transferrin my power away from me. It takes a lot of discipline. A lot of sacrifice. Got to get rid of them television sets. Got to stop lookin at them movies. Got to be careful about what you read.38

Gregory detailed the types of changes required and the necessity for change by beginning each statement with the words "got to". Repetition of these words reaffirmed the dramatic pulse of the statement. The incremental effect introduced new information while advancing dramatic imagery. The images were also given a unity through the progression of the repeated words tended to revitalize rhythms, thus adding to the intensity of the word's force.

**Intonational Contouring**

Gregory frequently utilized intonation as a technique to give his words a soulful quality; however, like rhythm, tonal inflections are difficult to capture in print. Given these limitations it is even more difficult to illustrate them. However, the writer will underline those words that Gregory intoned in the following excerpts. When speaking about America's problems he said,

I sure am glad they integrate that white
toilet too cause I got to check yours out.
I thought they lied on me. Man they *really*
lied on you...they told me you had a little. Yeah they described it. Little bitty pink one.

Gregory's aim here was to ridicule the phobic insinuations and concerns surrounding the size of Black genitalia. In the past Whites have had a mental preoccupation associated with penis envy; however, this did not exist in the Black community. By stressing the words "really", and raising the pitch of his voice when uttering "little" and almost squeaking the sounds to say "little bitty pink one", Gregory registered a notion of sarcastic disbelief about the size of White genitals. His use of voice inflection not only operated on a semantic level but also registered a different meaning in that he was into a "Black Thang" and thus gave greater psychological weight to his words.

Another image that has unfortunately been attached to the Black personality by Whites is their relegation that it represents all things evil. Gregory recognized this distorted view when he spoke about interracial relationships and said,

Just keep my white lady scared. 'yeah niggers will rape you....' I'm walkin down the street....and comin towards me is a old, dirty, ragged, wrinkledfaced old white woman....She limped up to me and go ahhhhhhhh. I said lady you really got to be puttin me on. You realize I was thinkin about callin the PO-lice myself. 40
Here Gregory slowly pronounced the word "really" and exaggerated the sound. His distinct pronunciation of the word "police" placed the accent on the first syllable. By intoning these words Gregory's aim was to reorder the sensibilities toward the conception of Black men as violent, uncontrollable sex maniacs.

Perhaps the best example of Gregory's use of intonation occurred when he spoke about racism per se. Here he demonstrated that he could "talk that talk" meaning virtuosity in using language skillfully and colorfully. His pronunciation of words were reminiscent of the Black style used by Black preachers when they are "stylin out":

We really got to do somethin about this racist mentality in this country....White racist system blocks my path and say nig- ger you can't get that job to get all that stuff. Hey man I still want it. Baby I love you. You marry me I'll get everything you need. I sure want it too. ...and that white racist mentality in my Black sisters the same mentality thats in that White woman just gimme this and gimme that I need this I need that I aint got no job....Got to leave home. That's the difference between that black family unit in America and that unemployed daddy in Nairobi. They not programmed from childhood that you got to have this in the house and you got to have that and you should live over here and live over there?41

The large number of words intoned here signaled Gregory's effort to stress the need to deal with the problems and
reality confronting America. He launched into a dramatic love rap by imitating the fluent and lively way of talking characterized by a high degree of personal style that is used when its function is to get something from someone or to get them to do something. His aim in the intoning of "everything" was to demonstrate the character's appeal through the acquisition of material objects. As each successive line of the pattern was enumerated, Gregory's voice rose ever higher and became increasingly emphatic. Here, too, he effectively utilized repetition to drive home the importance and cruciality of the notion that people should not base their lives on the material things in life. Since Black audiences enjoy and appreciate this type of style they registered their approval with applause and vocal responses of agreement.

**Romantic Rappin**

As previously noted the love rap or romantic rappin is used to compliment the listener who is mainly a woman. Gregory utilized this type of appeal to note that his spiritual commitment goes beyond the physical agony of sentimental love. He said,

Last summer I was sittin upon the top of the hill in the tent fastin and prayin. I been fastin for ten years and the last time was the first time I ever prayed cause I always thought prayers was somethin
punkish. All the wrong doin niggers
I used to pray. But now I know that
there's just one thing on this planet
stronger than prayer and that's love.
I'm not talkin about that old Hollywood
television love 'I love you baby. How
much you love me? I love you so much
I'll kill you if you mess up.'\textsuperscript{42}

It should come as no surprise that Gregory, being an expert
at knowing what the audience demands to see and hear,
utilized this technique in his rhetoric. Many Black
women, including this writer are accustomed to and even
expect this kind of verbal aggressiveness from Black men.
More important is the notion that Gregory was attempting
to define "spiritual love" by frivolously treating the
type of love that intends to prostrate the flesh or lacerate
the mind. His love requires a reapportionment of psychic/corporeal energy and coalesces around the spirit charged
with exacting the future of our humanity.

\textbf{Intercalations}

"You know" is a frequently used intercalation in
General American speech. Gregory very often used "uh"
and "okay"; however, in cases where there was a predomi-
nence of Blacks in the audience, he expressed a keen
wisdom about what the audience would want to hear and the
type of humor they would enjoy by using Black intercalations
such as 'hey', 'yeah', 'man', 'say', 'cat', 'no', 'now',
and 'baby'. Note the following example:

Now all you folks that own cadillacs and Lincolns, yaw don't have to take out no theft insurance. Aint nobody goin to steal one of them. No. I know a nigger that stole one of my cadillacs and brought it back. 'Say man you want your car back? I can't handle it no more.' yeah.43

Gregory's use of authentically Black intercalations "no", "say", and "yeah" promoted audience identification and constituted some of the coddling he utilized to perpetually reawaken the desire to listen.

**Black Semantics**

The word "nigger" in the previous excerpt may be classified as Black semantics since it is a term rooted in the Black cultural experience. Gregory and comedians Richard Pryor and Red Foxx have been criticized for their frequent use of the term, and particularly by Whites. For Gregory and other Blacks the word "nigger" has multiple meanings and associations and can serve many different purposes in that Black Semantics are highly context bound. For example in a humorous anecdote about doctors Gregory said,

And see doctors kind of leave me kind of weird cause see I got two brothers in St. Louis that's doctors and neither one of them niggers ever finished school. One of em is a surgeon. But he's always been quick to catch on. Call him the killer.44
Here Gregory's use of the term was one of personal endearment as in "he's my best friend." When speaking about racism and the tricks that he alleged are played on Americans "that nigger game don't work no where but right here at home." Here his use of the term expressed disapproval of the actions of the "super powers". In this sense, even White people, when they are acting inappropriately, are called niggers. When Gregory discussed the war in Angola he used the term as a racial epithet and said, "You know them White folks in South Africa don't have nothin to do with them niggers. They don't eat with them they don't sleep with them--they don't socialize with them. When them diamonds got threatened them super White folks told them White folks 'go over there and help them niggers'." 45

Another example demonstrating Gregory's use of the word "nigger" occurred when he narrated a story about cockroaches and said "the first time I was ever called nigger was by a cockroach....Cockroach tol me one mornin 'nigger go in there and get the Black Flagg.'" 46 Here Gregory used the term to mean culturally Black, identifying with and sharing the values and experiences of Black people. For the most part Gregory used the term "nigger" to simply identify Black people period. The following excerpt exemplifies this connotation:
You see Nixon's what you call a poor White boy. See I been knowin for years the first time you give a poor White boy that much power that quick he goin to steal too much too fast. They can say what they want to say about niggers but least when we gets a shoppin bag full we quits. Well most of us do any-way.47

Here Gregory's use of the term had a neutral value and simply meant all persons of African descent that live in America. From the variety of meanings possible for the word "nigger" it is apparent to the writer that words in Black communication fit into a total symbolic and cultural system and can only be decoded within the context of that system. In addition this may also suggest that it is important to note the frame of reference within which words are used; those who are outside of the speaker's frame of reference may misinterpret Black semantics because they lack perspective on Black communication.

Signification

Signification is another technique that may be viewed to outsiders as rude, in poor taste or real provocation. Blacks, however, expect this type of speech act and thus do not interpret it as hostile or aggressive since this technique is a socially and culturally approved verbal strategy in the Black community. Gregory continued the previous excerpt by utilizing signification:
That's somethin else--its a lot of White folks in America believe that they really know niggers. And basically White folks don't know niggers. As a matter of fact the average niggers don't know niggers. White folks runnin around 'them niggers sure like to get high and they be havin so much fun.' That might be the four niggers you know. Listen niggers don't be gettin high havin all kind of fun. Now don't get me wrong I didn't come here to tell you niggers ain't got no habits that we ain't hooked to somethin. I'm just sayin you White folks don't know what we hooked to.48

This type of signifyin may be classified as "light" in that Gregory's aim was to tease and have fun with his audience. Initially he addressed his comments to the Whites in his audience. So as not to polarize them, he then began to humorously put down his Black audience. This type of signifyin was typical of a Gregory address and occurred during the introduction of his speeches. The following excerpt also contains signification but not of the previous nature.

I say to you Black folks in America yaw better hurry up and understand....Everthing White folks like niggers like. Everything white folks hate nigger hate. That's why 98% of all Black folks that got killed by Black folks cause we hate the same thing White folks hate--niggers. Got a whole lots of you Black brothers that will punch a Black sister out but think twice before you roll your eyes funny at a hillbilly White woman that just called you a nigger. You White folks I just gave up on yaw. I really can't understand you White folks. I
can't understand how you White folks in America can be scared of niggers. I mean we ain't got no marines. We ain't got no air force academey. Niggers ain't got no FBI, CIA. How yaw scared of five niggers show up on a street corner? White folks get scared and call the po-lice. But in all honesty you know five niggers show up on street corner niggers get scared and call the police.49

This type of signifyin may be classified as heavy in that Greogry's purpose was to teach or drive home a cognitive message. For Blacks the message was aimed to make them realize that their goals were the same as the oppressor and that they should think about and correct their violent behavior towards one another. Here, too, Gregory attempted to arouse feelings of embarrassment, shame and guilt by revealing the hostilities Blacks possess towards one an- other. His purpose in addressing the White audience was to demonstrate the disquiet in the Euro-American mind that sometimes develops into a Black "phobogenesis". Many Whites may have interpreted Gregory's "play" as real aggression and thus developed feelings of anger and hostil- ity because they were not aware of Gregory's linguistic activity and sociolinguistic rules that must be adhered to when signification occurs. Thus the writer concludes that to correctly decode a message involving signification the auditor must be finely tuned to Black values.
Braggadocio and the Dozens

Closely related to signification are the techniques of braggadocio and the dozens in that each are forms of boastful raps used to devestate enemies. The vocal and verbal styling which emanates from Gregory's frame of mind is antithetical to the cowering image sometimes expressed by Black communicators as a means of controlling the environment. Gregory's styling typically represents braggadocio, which conveys the image of an omnipotent, fearless capable being who can do the undoable. In his "Dick the terrible" invincible image, Gregory affronts FBI and CIA agents he claims are in the audience and persistently follow him around.

All you little pimpley agents thats got to follow me around everywhere I go. I love days like this. I got three speeches today; you got to get off a plane go from Pittsburgh and Philadelphia and back to New York. I'll tell you something else. All you agents followin me around don't mean nothin. If you had on your side lookin for me what I got on my side lookin for you, I would have surrendered a long time ago....50

Gregory's aim was to create the impression that he does not fear personal danger. By informing the agents he perceived to be in his audience of his whereabouts, he demonstrated that he does not go out of his way to avoid anyone or anything and therefore carries himself in a manner that
could possibly threaten or scare a great deal of people.

The following excerpt contains both braggadocio and the dozens:

You agents thats got to follow me around everywhere I go you agents in the room your day is over baby....That little trick you pulled in San Diego I know you think that it didn't work cause this nig-ger was just lucky its deeper than that baby and it look like you pimps ought to be around me long enough to know why you keep missin. Lets sit the record straight since we this close to your headquarters tonight. Tell your boss for me that yaw be better off tryin to kill your mammy than to kill me. Your mamma probably scared of you.51

Thus, Gregory utilized the dozens as an affective-technique to keep the CIA off his back. His reference to "your mamma" is a common specific verbalism of the dozens and is considered a caustic insult in the Black community. Here too Gregory's use of the dozens provided a sense of potency beyond the natural fraility of the body. He then utilized braggadocio to appear indestructible and omniscient to his foes.

And if yaw had on your side lookin for me what I got on my side lookin for you I would have surrendered a long time ago. I'm changin my schedule tomorrow. I'm leavin out of National at two o'clock goin over to Lagwardia and from there I'm goin to you. I just want yaw to know that. Like I said if you had on your side lookin for me what I got on my side lookin for you
I would have surrendered baby. What I got on my side yaw can't deal with it. Its called truth, integrity, ethics, I don't need to walk around with no bodyguard the universe is my bodyguard. Need no pistol don't need no lock on the door in my house. You see if yaw can get past my thing then I'm prayin to the wrong thing.53

Gregory then attested to his strength of character by conjuring up a forceful image due to his relationship with the universe. His definitive image powerfully demonstrated how to deal with the most negative aspects found in a violent society. Gregory concluded by utilizing imagery to present a portrait of himself and his family.

I thought that for one minute when I leave my house for faith and destiny me seein my wife and ten Black kids depended on pimps like you I'd help you pull the trigger. Nobody controls my faith and destiny but me and when I loose that right just give me the gun I'll do it for you. I got so much protection from that universal force yaw be better off tryin to climb up a ladder with a hammer and knock the sun out of the sky than to disturb one little grade of hair on my head. And all that little crazy talk about what you goin to do with my kids shoot I pay you to catch them oldest two. And all them little old dirty things yaw been tryin to find on me now no you give that up. No that over. Yaw love to discredit me. Yaws love to find me drunk backseat to the car six o'clock in the mornin naked with a six year old boy no that ain't goin to work. All the dirty little things I used to do, I don't do no more.53
While Gregory's metaphors may not provide a true estimation of his physical capacities, he was not lacking in the vigor of "nomo-inspired" genius to give forceful validity to his assertions. Here Gregory's word-magic was all-powerful in that the mystical force was immediate and compelling. He manipulated words into concrete images which included a spirituality into the audience that few speakers could match. Moreover his utilization of braggadocio provided buoyancy to the spirit of the audience as well as complete images that made him appear as a total force continuously prepared to defend himself against victimization.

Narration

Boastful raps such as signification, braggadocio and the dozens are just a few of the number of verbal traditions within the Black experience. The narrative is also well established in Black American culture and folklore. Like signification, and the dozens it is highly applauded by Blacks but may be exasperating to Whites who wish the speaker to be direct and "hurry up" and get to the point. One may then assume that the Black audience because of a cultural awareness is more patient, is not as aware of time and appreciates the narrative approach.

Gregory rarely expounded his message in the linear fashion of a lecture; instead, through the technique of narration, he became an actor by dramatizing with gestures,
movement, plot, real-life characterization and circumlocutory rhetorical flourishes. He primarily used narration in the introduction of his address and combined it with humor to relax and establish identification with his audience. One of the most humorous examples of Gregory's use of narration occurred when he spoke about the "sugar trick" and weaved a story about a society where sugar prices were so high that people "pushed" sugar instead of drugs.

All yaw was complainin about the high prices of sugar...I walked down the street niggers cryin 'I don't know why sugar prices' and he got five pies in his hands. I know niggers didn't start eatin sugar till it went up. Like a status symbol to have sugar in your beard. I make a prediction for you tonight...Can you imagine livin in a society with sugar pushers? Yeah and all the sugar addicts be standin on a cor- ner with a cup of coffee tryin to get a fix. And the hipster thing folks be doin at parties be sniffin sugar. I can see that now, 'I ain't thinkin about gettin high; let's go somewhere and see if we can get sweet.' Be nice if they gon to have sugar addicts and sugar sniffers and sugar pushers--society is gon to demand a new type of cop called the sugar buster. Imagine the government would spend millions of dollars to come up with new techniques to aid the sugar buster catch him a sugar pusher. Well let me ask you. How many of you in this room is aware of the fact that right now in America they use dogs to sniff out marijuana. You know dogs can't smell no sugar now. They would train cockroaches. Think about that. Imagine you at a party and they
started that sugar sniffin the 
busters kick the door in and lay 5,000 
cockroaches. Now you can tell all the 
sugar pushers cause they the folks with 
the cans of Black Flagg.54

Gregory prefaced the narrative by noting that people who 
complained about the increase in sugar prices should stop 
eating it. Thus his purpose for utilizing the narrative 
was to make the point that the increase in sugar prices 
was due to the public's demand for and continued use of the 
product. Gregory also utilized the narrative as a communal 
reenactment of the feelings and experiences of a people 
"hooked" on sugar and thus was making a comment on the ridi-
culous behavior of Americans who complain but don't take 
actions to control their lives.

**Mimicry**

Another technique Gregory utilized when in the narra-
tive genre was mimicry. For example, when he spoke about 
teachers and their attempt to establish rapport with parents 
he said,

And these new teachers is really beautiful 
the way they relate with you. She finally 
tricked me over the school once and I go 
over there. She said 'And this is Pamela's 
work.' She said, 'She's just so beautiful 
with her work.' That girl writes so bad 
that paper look like you would just take 
some chicken feet and dip em in ink and 
guess. I guess they been so dumb the 
teacher figures that anything is progress.55
Here Gregory reported not only what was said but the way it was said in order to offer implicit comment on the speaker's background, personality and intent. Rather than introducing the personality or character traits of the teacher in some summary form, Gregory conveyed the information by reproducing phonological features of the teacher's speech. In this particular situation Gregory's mimicry was equivalent to the speaking pattern of a White person. Since he utilized expressive features that were taken as a symbol of the character's membership in the White race, Gregory may have been attempting to indicate that the emotion and affect displayed by the teacher were feigned, especially since he noted that his daughter's penmanship was illegible. Since there was an element of ridicule in his characterization of the teacher, the writer contends that the Black members of his audience were able to interpret his metaphoric communication and therefore the relationship between them and Gregory increased in familiarity, intimacy and resulted in a mutual positive effect.

In the following excerpt Gregory contended that Americans love you to just be who you are". To prove his point he spoke about Lyndon Baines Johnson and said,
That's why L.B.J. had such a firm grip on this country. L.B.J. never pretended to be nothin' more than a old barbecue lickin cowboy. Had L.B.J. been caught with a Watergate he wouldn't have been lyin and hidin and gettin his friends put in jail for 18 months. He'd have got on television that day said 'durn right I done it. Now what yaw goin to do about it?' He would just sit there, barbecue sauce all over.56

Here's Gregory's unflattering description of Johnson, the parodying of Southern regional speech and utilization of a grammatical peculiarity implied that Johnson was uneducated, unintelligent, unsophisticated, uncouth and guileless. Furthermore Gregory's decision to mimic Johnson in this particular manner was relevant because it further processed the perception Gregory intended the audience to have of Johnson.

A final example of Gregory's use of mimicry occurred when he spoke about England's decision to send troops to the war in Angola. This excerpt serves as a testimony to the special skills Gregory possesses for creating imagery to get his message across.

The English is kind of funny. They man said 'we will fight for these niggers but we won't fight with them.' That English commander said don't come over here and alienate these diamonds or I'm comin to kill you nig- ger. 'As I say old bloke we've had a meeting and we've decided we will fight for these niggers but we will not fight with them.'57
Here Gregory imitated the provincial idiom native to the British to replay a scene for the audience. His purpose was to demonstrate his belief that the war was fought on the basis of greed for control of Africa's resources rather than the liberation of South Africans. By utilizing mimicry he gave his audience the full benefit of all the information he was able to process by virtue of the expressions and context imparted to the character. The writer concludes that Gregory exhibited a finely tuned linguistic awareness and a good deal of verbal virtuosity in being able to reproduce aspects of speech that were useful in this kind of metaphorical communication.

Malaprops

The vocal styling of Gregory was also characterized by the use of malaprops. For example, when signifying about the eating habits of Blacks he utilized a malapropism of the word "sandwich".

Sure we hooked to somethin. Niggers is hooked to mayonnaise. Niggers love mayonnaise. Most food don't taste good to niggers without mayonnaise. Thats the difference between a sandwich and a "sammich."58

His purpose here was to utilize humor to find a common ground of agreement with the Black audience. He then noted that Whites are hooked to coffee and thus focused
attention on his efforts to build a platform of agreement with the Whites in his audience. Such a tactic was perhaps to the extent effective that he gained his audience's attention and gave the impression that he was a "fair" man, one who picked on both Black and White idiosyncrasies.

Gregory utilized a malaprop when he discussed sexual discrimination.

Yaw goin to have to do something with that history book too. Check that word out. His to ry...That's why you women is not represented in his story. That's what it is his story. Look like you would demand to have "herstory". Cause they goin to make you read his story.59

Gregory's aim here was to call attention to the fact that women should begin to deal with terms such as policeman and fireman and begin to contribute a greater effort in the cause for women's rights. The malaprop "herstory" combined with his intoning "his-----to-----ry" added impact to his message.

Pronunciation and Grammatical Structure

Because of his successful career as a comedian Gregory has been accepted into the American mainstream; thus many of the Africanized features of Black English are no longer inherent in his rhetorical language; however he did employ some features of sound that are easily identified with the
pronunciation system of Black English. Some of these are indicated in the following list:

Vowel plus /ng/ in thing rendered as /ang/
thing = thang; ring = rang;

Contraction of going to rendered as gon.
"I was gon tell the president...."

Primary stress on first syllable and front shifting
police = PO-lice; Detroit = DEE-troit

Much of Gregory's pronunciations are similar to White English; however a greater difference existed in the grammatical structure of Gregory's rhetorical language in that he employed aspects of Black Dialect and idiom. The most distinctive use of Black dialect in Gregory's rhetoric occurred in the use of "be". Note the following examples:

Everytime a nigger be late for work you couldn't get the top off the mayonnaise.60

The older you White folks get the more coffee you have to have. Just look like your heart don't start beatin in the mornin. Just wake up you be a zombie till you get that coffee.61

When you get in the car...he be checking out the get lost map.62

The word "done" is also used in Black English and functions like the word "have" in White English. Gregory states,
Yeah the whole country done gone crazy. Money done got bad. Money done got funny. 63

Also when Gregory used the future tense of "be" in combination with the contracted form will "will", he deleted "will"; thus you would hear: "And you be surprised what will happen. You be surprised how easy it is if you willin to use some discipline." 64

Another characteristic of Black dialect that Gregory employed surround the subject of a sentence. Sometimes Gregory would omit the subject of a sentence as in the following excerpt where he spoke of Richard Nixon.

Couldn't get over that when them dudes wrote that book on him. Book ain't even out and everybody know what in it. Say he be drunk. Say him and Pat haven't had sex relations since 1962. 65

Gregory also emphasized the subjects of sentences in a manner known in White English as the "double subject." Note the following example: "one day particularly you Black folks yaw goin to have to apologize to Sammy Davis Junior." 66 In Black English this repetition of the subject indicates emphasis rather than being a duplicate subject.

Not only did Gregory use double subjects, he also used double negatives. This is also found in the speaking patterns of Whites; however, triple and quadruple negatives are the sole province of Black English. Two
examples from Gregory's rhetoric are:

They ain't never seen no White folks like yaw....don't nobody know that wasn't over
no liberation of no niggers.67

A final characteristic of Gregory's Black English involved the use of the third person plural pronoun, "they;" the same form served for subject, possessive and reflexive as in "You ladies can go through some funny things when a dude put they hands under your dress."68

Although Gregory was college educated and has a command of and competence of the English language he utilized the pronunciation and grammatical structures of Black English. This may be due to the fact that historically Black speech had been demanded of those who wish to retain close affinities with the Black community and intrusions of White English are likely to be frowned upon; moreover any users thereof may be promptly ostracized. Since Gregory has achieved admittance into the economic and social mainstream of America, he is not compelled to use White English to meet approval. More important is the notion that a psychological factor may have been operating in Gregory's use of Black English in that Black people tend to feel more comfortable when they can relax and listen to a speech that is presented in the linguistic framework that has been the dialect of their nurture, childhood, identity and style.
Furthermore, Gregory's use of Black English may have served to indicate that what was being engaged in was a Black speech act and thus may have functioned to emphasize group solidarity by signaling to the audience that the speech should have been interpreted in terms of the sub-cultural rules for interpreting speech acts. Two additional points of significance include the notion that the previous examples of Gregory's Black English illustrate that the beauty and power of idiom lies in its succinctness; for him to have said the same things in standard English would have taken a great many more words. Last the writer contends that Black dialect and Black English perhaps require less effort to comprehend than White English. On this basis the writer assumes that Black English is more understandable than White English and thus more significant meaning and interpretation could have been attached to Gregory's language by his Black auditors.

**Indirection**

Although Black English is succinct and requires less effort to comprehend than White English, the opposite is true when a speaker utilizes indirection. Here the speaker builds his case by using the power of suggestion and innuendo and the auditor must decipher and explicate the totality of meaning. Moreover when a speaker utilizes
indirection he approaches an issue in a circuitous manner and does not proceed in a point by point progression but instead toys with related ideas and concepts before focusing on his prime target.

What Sharon Ruhly, studying Gregory from a Afrocentric perspective, calls paradox, is, speaking Afrocentrically, Gregory's masterful use of indirection. A classic example of this was Gregory's elaborate explanation of the "trick" surrounding the made for television film, "Roots". Here Gregory demonstrated that he has a great imagination and a flair for rhetorical style. Instead of stating what he perceived to be the trick in a few sentences Gregory began by noting that the film and the book depicted two entirely different views. He then proceeded to meander around this by speaking about how people can be tricked into viewing anything. He then left this point and began to talk about the manipulative tactics involved in making people believe that they had just experienced the coldest winter in years. Gregory then returned to the subject of Roots but began to relate the film to the history of Jesus Christ and the film, "Rocky"; finally he returned to the subject of "Roots" and gave an elaborate explanation of the opening scene where Cicely Tyson gave birth to her first son. In what might be described by a non-afrocentric audience as an extensive and
circuitous description, Gregory picturesquely depicted the agonizing scene as a master plan for birth control. Here, too, Whites may find this technique exasperating and resort to tuning the speaker out but Blacks appreciate the technique and are attentive and interested in the approach.

**Proverbial Statement**

Like indirection, proverbs are a characteristic technique utilized in Black raps and are a part of the Black speaker's context as well. Gregory drove home his points with short, succinct statements that had the sound of wisdom and power. When urging his audience to out-trick the tricksters he interspersed his paragraphs with, "you got a big job", and closely followed it with an addendum-like proverbial statement, "and you haven't got much time". Other proverbial statements Gregory employed, although not as original as the aforementioned included: "Check that out", "they don't care about you", and "they fixin to wipe you out." The conjuring effect of these statements allowed Gregory to create a dramatic tension which urgently revealed the social problem embedded in the context in which they were uttered.
Spontaneity

Spontaneity is also a part of the Black speaker's context. Gregory was a master at being spontaneous in that he captured the spirit of the moment by referring to events that occurred within the context of the speechmaking situation. For example, during an address where he asked if anyone had ever had "claps" someone in the audience responded by asking Gregory if he had ever had them. Gregory answered,

Up until tonight I was the only nigger that ever had clap. First two White dudes I ever seen raise their hands. I thought all them VD clinics in White neighborhoods was for me--I'll take that back. Last Sunday in California, Richard Pryor was in the audience and he raised his hand. Up until then I been doin this for ten months and nobody ever in the whole country had claps but me. I was so glad Richard Pryor raised his hand cause at least I like to know where I got mine from. I don't know why you laughin I've never seen a woman raise their hands. So it means its just us.71

Thus Gregory read the vibrations of the audience and after sensing their surprise, quickly reacted with the above response and used it to his advantage.

Although the text of Gregory's speeches for a given period appeared the same, he would often vary the context by referring to people entering the room or personalities of that particular area. For example, when addressing
an Ohio State University audience Gregory made references to Woody Hayes who at that time was head coach of the football team and to the prominence of football fever in the city of Columbus, Ohio. Moreover, many of the ideas in his speeches referred to news making events of the day or week, especially in the area of politics. By taking advantage of process, movement and creativity of the moment, Gregory's speeches always appeared fresh and immediately personalized for any given situation.

Summary

The writer has analyzed the styles and techniques of Gregory's substance by utilizing the frame of mind, scope of context and structure of code constituents of Asante's metatheory as well as perceptions from social scientists and humanists particularly those calling themselves Afrologists. Gregory's styling made use of vocal clues that included Black semantics, malaprops and pronunciations in Black English, Black dialect and a grammatical structure in the Black idiom. He drove home his points by utilizing proverbial statements, and sound through tonal semantics in the forms of repetition, alliterative word play, intonational countouring and Black intercalations. This wide use of ebb and flow in his rhetorical drama was a strong ingredient in the process binding
Gregory and his audience.

Since Gregory's roots are still firmly rooted in the Black community his approach to language was principally lyrical; thus through the technique of narration combined with humor and mimicry he not only relaxed his audience but also identified with it. Gregory also employed the Black socially and culturally approved techniques of signification, braggadocio, the doxens, indirection and the love rap. With the exception of the latter, their correct semantical interpretation depended on a good deal of shared cultural knowledge. Gregory was also a master at being spontaneous by referring to events that occurred within the speechmaking situation. Perhaps Gregory's styles combined with these techniques kept his audiences awake, alert and involved for as long as three hours after the speech odyssey first began and created a unifying effect on Black auditors in particular.
Notes


7 Ibid., p. 5.

8 Ibid.


11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., p. 6.


15 Ibid., p. 7.

16 Ibid., pp. 8-10.

17 Smitherman, *Talkin' and Testifyin*, p. 94.


21 Asante, "Metatheory for Black Communication, p. 6.


23 Ibid., p. 145
26 Smitherman, Talkin and Testifyin, p. 96.
28 Dick Gregory taped interview, Columbus, Ohio, April 14, 1976.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
32 Gregory speech, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, April 14, 1976.
33 Ibid.
35 Smitherman, Talkin and Testifyin, p. 135.
37 Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College, Anne Arundel, Maryland, March 14, 1977.
38 Gregory speech, The Ohio State University.
39 Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
42 Gregory speech, The Ohio State University.
43 Gregory speech, Franklin and Marshall College.
44 Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
49 Gregory speech, The Ohio State University.
50 Ibid.
51 Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
54 Gregory speech, Franklin and Marshall College.
55 Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College.
56 Ibid.
57 Gregory speech, The Ohio State University.
58 Ibid.
59 Gregory speech, Franklin and Marshall College.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
62 Gregory speech, The Ohio State University.
63 Gregory speech, Franklin and Marshall College.
64 Gregory speech, The Ohio State University.
65 Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College.
66 Gregory speech, The Ohio State University.
67 Gregory speech, Franklin and Marshall College.
68 Ibid.
70 Gregory speech, Anne Arundel College.
71 Ibid.
Chapter VI
Dick Gregory's Delivery

The importance of effective delivery as a constituent in speech effectiveness is seldom debated. Quintillian concluded, "I dare affirm that even a mediocre speech will be more effective if delivered well than the best speech, if poorly delivered."¹ Demosthenes is reported to have said that delivery is first, second and third in importance in speaking.² Speaking about man's persuasive behavior in *The Psychology of Communication*, J. Jeffrey Auer concludes that "the culmination of the speaker's behavior is the oral delivery of his speech to an audience."³ The purpose of this chapter is to answer the question what seems to be the probable impact of Gregory's delivery upon the Black audience? Impact here refers to the speaker's ability or power to impress, arouse, hold attention and interest. To analyze Gregory's delivery the writer utilized the delivery of message constituent of Asante's metatheory.

Asante notes that although the oral discourse as practiced by Black Americans is characterized by its artistic instrumentation, the speech, as an art form, is functional and is made not for art's sake alone, but for
its impact. He contends that the audience's vocal affirmations as well as the speaker's linguistic code, presence, and method of delivery are significant factors in determining the impact of the delivery of the message. 4

Audience Response

To the Black speaker vocal response from the audience functions as feedback and is similar to the applause that occurs during certain American cultural events. Such responses should not be viewed as interruptions of the speech but as affirmations and testimony to the impact of the delivery of the message. 5 The manner in which a speaker elicits such response is known in Black communication as call-response and is an African derived process where spontaneous verbal and nonverbal interaction occurs between the speaker and listener; each of the speaker's statements (calls) are punctuated by expressions (responses) from the listener. 6 Although this practice has been more carefully reserved in the Black church it is also a basic organizing principle of Black American culture; Smitherman notes "it enables traditional Black folk to achieve the unified state of balance or harmony which is fundamental to the traditional African world view. 7

Gregory succeeded in arousing in his audience a desire to give vocal assent. Outbursts of "amen", "that's right", "tell it like it is", "speak the truth", "preach", "
"all right now", and "go ahead" punctuated his addresses. Nonverbal responses included clapping hands, jumping up and down, nodding the head, slapping five, waving hands, stomping feet and the like.

Smitherman notes that call-response can be disconcerting to both parties in Black-White communication because the call-response pattern is not present in the White cultural heritage; thus the White audience may not engage in the response process and may remain relatively passive. If this is the case, the Black speaker, judging their lack of involvement, may get the feeling that the White audience is not listening and may repeatedly punctuate the call with questions such as "Are you listening to me?" "Did you hear me?" Such questions may also annoy the White audience. Blacks may also at times not be their natural selves and respond at all; thus also preventing maximum communication. 8

Gregory, based on this writer's observation, did not appear to have this problem since his humor and expert sense of timing were almost a guarantee for spontaneous responses from both Black and White audiences. Moreover his approach was a manifestation of how audience cues may be used to foster involvement and create a communion with the audience.
Code Structuring

By utilizing call-response as a communicative system, Gregory adhered to the principle that no sharp line exists between performers or communications and the audience; "for virtually everyone is performing and everyone is listening." Asante contends that when a speaker views delivery of a message as a performance, he must concern himself with the linguistic code in that certain constraints and possibilities are placed upon him.

Vocal artifact, a feature of the structuring of linguistic code, infers an awareness of the African concept of "nommo": word manipulation through tone, emphasis and expressiveness...not just knowing what to say, but how to say it and fully utilizing "sound" as a rhetorical artifact. Asante contends that,

Effectiveness is dependent upon vocal expression as a lasting impact, not upon gesture or supporting evidence, for obviously a speaker may claim evidence and perfect gesticulation and not be effective; whereas by appropriately modulating tones a speaker can make his evidence and gesticulation accomplish his ends.

Smitherman also notes that sound is highly functional with the Black audience in that word sound and word use trip a familiar social chord where it is nearly, impossible to filter out the strictly linguistic-cognitive abstract
meaning from the sociocultural psycho-emotive meaning. "This is all the more applicable to the communication system of a people with a cultural base in which the two realities are considered to be one."¹² Thus sound in the sociocultural context is meaningful and hence functional.

As a Black speaker, comedian and entertainer, Gregory expertly utilized sound to tap his audience's souls and inner beings in the same way that a musician uses the symbolic language of music to strike inward responsive chords in his listener's hearts. His delivery was characterized by variations of tonal sounds from whimpering to shouting, crescendo and pianissimo, embodying musical vocal rhythms and abounding in repetitions so that his message captured the uniqueness of the Afrocentric speech drama.

At the conclusion of a Gregory address, the writer often heard auditors reply, "he sure sounded good." Asante notes that such statements are a proper approbation and display approval and understanding of the energy expended in the speech.¹³

In Chapter V the writer detailed the style and manner in which Gregory structured his ideas and concluded that the linguistic code utilized by Gregory resulted in his establishing an intimate relationship with his Black audiences. A summary of Gregory's linguistic code follows.
Gregory's use of authentic Black intercalations and intonation gave his words a soulful quality, demonstrated his virtuosity in using language skillfully and carefully, promoted audience identification and constituted some of the coddling he utilized to perpetually reawaken the desire to listen. When this occurred Black audiences enjoyed and appreciated this type of style and registered their approval with applause and vocal responses of agreement. Gregory's manipulation of words into concrete images induced a spirituality into the audience that few speakers could match; moreover his utilization of braggadocio, love rape, signification and the dozens provided buoyancy to that spirit.

Gregory's use of narration combined with humor served as a communal re-enactment of the feelings and experiences of Black people and relaxed and established identification with his audiences. He also exhibited a finely tuned linguistic awareness and a good deal of verbal virtuosity in his utilization of mimicry. When his use of mimicry contained elements of ridicule aimed at Whites, the relationship between him and his Black audiences increased in familiarity, intimacy and resulted in a mutual positive effect. His use of malaprops enabled him to find a common ground of agreement with both Black and White auditors, added impact to his message and were perhaps effective to
the extent that they aided in gaining his audience's attention. Lastly Gregory's masterful use of indirection demonstrated that he has a great imagination and a flair for rhetorical style and was significant in that Blacks appreciate the technique and are attentive and interested in the approach. All totaled, Gregory's communication was highly dependent on his style and skill in structuring the linguistic code and his interaction with the affective responses of involved audiences.

**Presence**

When viewing the delivery of a message as a performance Asante notes that the speaker must not only concern himself with the linguistic code but with his presence as a speaker.\(^\text{14}\) Webster defines presence as "a quality of poise and effectiveness that enables a performer to achieve a close relationship with his audience."\(^\text{15}\) Asante notes that this quality consists of the speaker's appearance, grace, countenance and manner.\(^\text{16}\)

Gregory's presence was marked with interest in what he was saying and sufficient energy to present his ideas vigorously. One's attention did not wander because of boredom during a Gregory address and little effort was needed to listen and understand what he said because of a presence that commanded and encouraged attention. An aura of enthusiasm on Gregory's part motivated and
encouraged the audience to hang on to his every word. Gregory, in the unfolding of his address, identified and moved the spirit of his audience by a mastery of the spoken word, a correct sense of timing, being creative, feeling the audience, stimulating listener participation and utilizing humor.

The writer would probably be safe in concluding that Gregory attracted large audiences in part because he is a nationally recognized entertainer and comedian. In an interview with Gregory, the writer asked whether he still considered himself a comedian. His response was: "Oh yeah and a good one. I'm one of the funniest ones there is today." Most of Gregory's humor occurred in the introduction of his speeches where he aroused interest and placed the audience in a receptive frame of mind. Often Gregory interjected humor when making a serious point to relax his audience from the tension that had resulted. Feedback in the form of vocal response, laughter, and applause attested to Gregory's effective use of humor and the fact that he had the audience's attention.

Much of Gregory's humor was found in narration and signification. A masterful storyteller, "the word" came to life in his lengthy rhythmic narratives when punctuated with humor. The examples provided in Chapter V express
Gregory's creative spirit as he enraptured his audience with an engaging performance. Gregory's skill and excellence as a comedian have afforded him a reputation and standing among the Black community and college audiences as well. Lastly, Gregory's use of humor reduced the likelihood of fatigue since he often spoke for a period of three hours or more.

Although Gregory was "longwinded" his presence was not affected in a negative manner. With an innate sensitivity to the pre-eminence of the word in African-American life and thought, Gregory relied heavily on vocal creativity to identify with his audience and establish a spirit of presence. For the elements of his style, use of audience cues, indirection, rhythm and humor provided and created a particular magic with the spoken word and had a positive effect with Black audiences in particular because of their sensitivity to Gregory's frame of mind.

A probable impact of Gregory's rhetoric, then, was an afrocentrically created presence which took little note of time or content as Eurocentrically conceived, for time is to be used till one is finished. Time is the present and the content by itself devoid of the creative spirit has limited impact.
Presence not only affects the speaker's relationship with the audience but also is "integrially related to how a man chooses to argue, contend, affirm or entertain.... By using language common to the audience a speaker is not merely understandable, he is credible." In Chapter III the writer noted the commonalities that existed between Gregory and the Black audience. These included a desire to give of oneself in a warm, close sharing fashion, the viewing of human affairs from the dimensions of reason and feeling, the focusing on the rhythmic aspects of a relationship, an adherence to the value of limited reward and the avoidance of situations that adhere to the principle.

In Chapter III the writer also concluded that the audience is a principle barometer for what the speaker may say and that his arguments must correspond with the audience's experiences. Gregory established his credibility as a speaker by doing just that in that he exhibited an acceptance of humanism, deemphasized self-centeredness, perceived the reality of oppression, coupled subjective analysis with objective analysis, articulated rhythm, confirmed as fact the principal of limited reward and employed characteristics of the Black style.

Gregory was also credible as a speaker because he exhibited a genuine sensitivity to his audience. In
cases where he had been seen addressing Black audiences he expressed a keen wisdom about what they would want to hear and the type of humor they would enjoy. His use of the paranoid style of authentic Black intercalations, his ability to read the vibrations of the audience, and his precise wording of proverbs, braggadocio and indirection as well as skillful intonation promoted audience identification and constituted some of the coddling used to perpetually reawaken the desire to listen.

Although each of these units of expression have an overall formulaic structure, Gregory balanced the "traditional mold" by individual improvisation and brought a unique contribution to these Black culturally approved communicative structures. Furthermore, his use of call-response synthesized the audience and speaker in a unified movement and also established his credibility; for the process requires that "one must give if one is to receive and receiving is actively acknowledging another."\(^{19}\) The essence of call-response is such that emphasis is on group cohesiveness, cooperation and the collective common good. This wide use of ebb and flow in the rhetorical drama was a strong ingredient of the process that bound Gregory and his audience.

Gregory's utilization of the pronunciation and grammatical structure of Black English perhaps implied his
desire to retain close affinities with the Black community. His use thereof may have attributed to a psychological factor in that Black people tend to feel more comfortable when they can relax and listen to a speech that is presented in the linguistic framework that has been the dialect of their nurture, childhood, identity and style. Gregory's use of Black English and dialect may have functioned to emphasize group solidarity by signaling to the audience that the speech should have been interpreted in terms of the subcultural rules for interpreting speech acts.

Certain elements in Gregory's style such as audience cues, signification, braggadocio, indirection, Black semantics and tonal semantics demonstrate that within the broad parameters of what is culturally acceptable, different audiences have different expectations. As noted in Chapter V, these units of expression do not exist in the cultural heritage of White audiences. For example Whites remain passive in giving responses to audience cues and may consider "calls" from the speaker annoying and interruptive to the communication process. Whites may also take braggadocio and signification as more than idle threats. Moreover they may not be cognizant of Black semantics, a system that depends not only on the immediate linguistic context but on the sociohistorical context as well. Thus White audiences may misinterpret the speaker's point
because of a lack of knowledge in the Black cultural experience. Finally, the psychocognitive message of tonal semantics may be misunderstood by White audiences because an understanding and feeling of tonal semantics requires the listener to be of a cultural tradition that finds meaning and value in word sound. Thus the application of these units of Black expression in Gregory's rhetoric may have had a negative impact with an ethnic group unknowledgeable or insensitive to his general frame of mind.

**Delivery Choices**

Asante offers the kind of delivery as a final criteria for determining a speaker's impact. This includes the choice of physical styles and the choice of modes. Physical styles include pompous or conversational and reflect the rhetorical setting while modes include impromptu, manuscript, extemporaneous or memorized and underscore the effect of situation and audiences upon the speaker. "The typical rhetorical setting is persuasive and the proper decisions of the speaker as to physical style and mode influence the persuasive impact upon audiences."20 While Black speakers have used both memorized and manuscript speeches, Asante contends that Black speakers generally prefer the extemporaneous mode.21

Gregory's delivery choices included a physical style that was conversational and an extemporaneous mode of
delivery. On the occasions that the writer heard Gregory speak, the overall formulaic structure was similar; however Gregory filled in specifics by improvisation and took advantage of anything that entered the situation—a listener's response, spur of the moment ideas, a baby crying. By taking advantage of process, movement and creativity of the moment, Gregory's delivery seemed fresh and immediately personalized for any given situation. At times his delivery appeared to be casual conversation, but on the whole Gregory's delivery was flamboyant, flashy, exaggerative, stylized, dramatic and spectacular.

Summary

The writer has analyzed the probable impact of Gregory's rhetoric by utilizing constituent of Asante's meta-theory. Gregory succeeded in arousing in his audience a desire to give vocal assent to his rhetoric and is therefore a prototype for the Black community. His expert use of sound probably created a lasting impact upon the audience since he captured the uniqueness of the Afrocentric speech drama.

The structuring of Gregory's linguistic code resulted in his establishing an intimate relationship with his Black audiences, promoted audience identification, induced a spirituality into the audience and provided buoyance to that spirit. All totaled Gregory's communication was
highly dependent on his style and skill and his interaction with the affective responses of involved audiences.

In spite of that fact that Gregory gave very lengthy speeches, his presence commanded and encouraged attention. His enthusiasm combined with a mastery of the spoken word, humor and wit, a correct sense of timing, vocal creativity and a feeling for the audience, stimulated listener participation and created a positive impact with Black audiences in particular because of their knowledge of and sensitivity to Gregory's frame of mind. A probable impact of Gregory's rhetoric, then, was an Afrocentrically created presence which took little note of time or content as Eurocentrically conceived.

Gregory was credible as a speaker because he exhibited a genuine sensitivity to his audience and expressed a keen wisdom about what they would want to hear and the type of humor they would enjoy. He employs a conversational style combined with an extemporaneous mode. By taking advantage of process, movement and creativity of the moment, his delivery seemed fresh and immediately personalized for any given situation. Last the writer concludes that Gregory was an emphatic, dramatic and powerful speaker who made things seem real and created a positive and lasting impact on Black audiences.
Notes

2 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid., p. 118.
10 Asante, "Metatheory for Black Communication," p. 11.
11 Ibid., p. 10.
16 Asante, "Metatheory for Black Communication," p. 11.
17 Dick Gregory interview, Anne Arundel College, Anne Arundel, Maryland, March 14, 1977.
18 Asante, "Metatheory for Black Communication," p. 11.
19 Daniel and Smitherman, "'How I Got Over': Communication Dynamics in the Black Community," p. 34.
20 Asante, "Metatheory for Black Communication," p. 11.
Chapter VII
Summary and Conclusions

"Nommo", the magic power of the word, speaks of an African past and continues to permeate Black activities. Dick Gregory, a man who achieved fame as a comedian more than a decade ago, graduated from the school of "street learning" where verbal skill is practiced and fostered. In the past several years he has exchanged the night club circuit for the campus circuit and speaks before hundreds of audiences every year. The purpose of this study is to expend the concept of language and explore the nature of Black oral communication through an analysis of the rhetoric of Dick Gregory. With the notion that no rhetorical studies focus on the speaking of Gregory specifically, it is this writer's contention that there is a lack of information conceptualizing and emphasizing Dick Gregory as a persuasive communicator. As a Black rhetorical scholar this writer therefore planned to complete a rhetorical criticism of Dick Gregory from an Afrocentric perspective with the belief that information evolving from the study can contribute to the knowledge in the field of rhetoric and public address.

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This study attempts to represent an "inside" view of Dick Gregory's rhetorical behavior as seen through Black eyes and interpreted according to Black norms. Such an assumption suggests the following as the major research question governing this study: How is Gregory Afrocentric in his rhetorical perspective and how does this philosophical concept relate to the use of Black language and rhetoric within the social context of the Black audience?

In an effort to provide complete and cogent answers to this inquiry, significant underlying questions relating to the major research question will be addressed. The first two of these will deal with Gregory the man and the remaining three will offer an assessment of his rhetoric. These are:

1. What is the biographical and ideological background from which Gregory has emerged as a speaker?
2. What is Afrocentricity and how does Gregory's rhetoric reflect this world view?
3. What is the substance and function of Gregory's rhetoric?
4. In what styles and techniques does the substance appear?
5. What seems to be the probable impact of Gregory's delivery upon the Black audience?
6. What conclusions about Gregory's rhetoric can be drawn which contribute to our knowledge about rhetoric?

What is the biographical and ideological background from which Gregory has emerged as a speaker? Born and
bred in the ghetto of St. Louis, Missouri, Dick Gregory is a man who easily conjures up opinions and emotions ranging from love and admiration to hate and misunderstanding. Since 1962, he has achieved world wide attention as a successful comedian, author and recording star. Having forsaken his night club career, today he is one of the country's leading lecturers with a schedule that has called for 300 lectures every ten months.

He has battled racism most of his life with his earliest confrontations with the "monster" occurring during his high school and college years. His personal fight against racism has expanded to the point where he has an active concern for the plight of all people not reaping the full benefits of American citizenship.

This battle began with Gregory doing benefit shows for groups such as the Student Non-violent Coordination Committee, the Congress of Racial Equality, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and other groups busily engaged in demonstrations for equal rights and opportunities; however, for Gregory this was not enough. Thus, he began to take an active part in demonstrations, went to jail and took beatings.

Although Gregory has faced death on numerous occasions, he views himself as a herald of truth with a mission to present that truth. Today he is known more as an activist
and less as a top humorist and he continues to make his voice heard and his presence felt wherever he sees injustice.

By analyzing Gregory's background the writer has endeavored to view his intellectual growth pattern in order to determine his true character. Although Gregory attended college his commitment to the human rights of man did not evolve from a textbook or theories offered from instructors but rather from his life experiences and those of his fellow man.

Comedy and human compassion are the two things Gregory holds most dear. Of the first he notes that he is first and foremost a comic and that the combination of comedy and show business provided him with the opportunities and experiences that molded his life. The writer concludes that Gregory's mother, his childhood peers and comedians like Bob Hope served as influences in his elementary education in comedy during a period of his life when he was a "poor ghetto kid on relief."

Of human compassion, Gregory notes that his involvement in the struggle for human dignity is a direct result of having made a name for himself in show business; however, the writer contends that the lessons of the stage came much easier for him than those surrounding human compassion. Gregory himself notes that it took him four
decades to learn that one should fear the monster's creator rather than the monster himself. For Gregory, the social and political system in the United States is his Dr. Frankenstein and its created monsters reside in slums, ghettos and other areas of poverty. "Like Dr. Frankenstein, the system creates the living dead." While in college Gregory was a part of the living dead. He notes that the system controlled his actions and reactions. Today his devotion to the universal order of life has moved him "up from nigger" and serves as a guide to direct him in his efforts to be a personal witness and provide human service.

The writer has outlined those elements of African philosophy that are the basis of the Afrocentric view of reality and the Afrocentric philosophy of Dick Gregory. Asante states that "Afrocentricity...is only superficially related to color, it is more accurately a philosophical outlook determined by history." Perhaps Dick Gregory, unconsciously cognizant of the Afrocentric philosophy in 1976, grasped this point as he pondered the Black Power movement during its early beginnings. Gregory concludes that the words "Black Power" and "Black Is Beautiful" replaced "We Shall Overcome" as the new phrases of freedom. More important was his analysis of the meaning of the clenched-fist salute as a means of communication. Gregory states that it embodied the language of brotherhood and
sisterhood, a sign of empathy and identity, affection and solidarity. The most significant part of his analysis was that the clenched-fist salute and the soul-grip handshake became shared reminders that "Blackness is not a color, but rather an attitude."

The writer contends that Gregory's philosophy is Afrocentric in that he (1) is committed to the laws and moral demands of a universal order; (2) exhibits concern with the notions of unity and survival of people, sharing, collective cooperation and responsibility; (3) values interpersonal relationships; (4) has forsaken materialism for spiritualism and communalism; (5) does not fear or attempt to control death or its inevitability; (6) believes that the natural order exists under the unity of God; (7) accepts the view that separation from the universe leads to false desires, false problems and false reality; (8) perceives his goal as blending harmoniously into the flow of the universe and thereby accepts the unity of life; (9) accepts the view that unity with the universe results in peace and happiness; (10) accepts the dual nature of man with the notion that the mind and body unite to make a unified man; (11) accepts the belief that emotional experiences are necessary for personal growth and enrichment and (12) attempts to eliminate the isolation and distance between himself and his African brothers and sisters.
Because Blacks have a similar culture that has evolved from the Black experience, the writer contends that shared perceptions relating to behavior patterns, values and attitudes also exist within the Black audience. Thus the writer perceived the Black audience as a warm, sensitive, unified group that views human affairs from the dimensions of reason and feeling and focuses on the rhythmic aspects of a relationship. Moreover, the audience adheres to the value of limited reward and will avoid such situations that adhere to the principle. More importantly the audience is a definer of the communicative boundaries as far as the Black style is concerned and demands to hear and see certain things and enjoy certain kinds of humor.

The writer has also concluded that the audience is a principle barometer for what the speaker may say and that his arguments must correspond with the audience's experiences. Thus the speaker's language should exhibit an acceptance of humanism, deemphasize self-centeredness, perceive the reality of oppression, couple subjective analysis, articulate rhythm, confirm as fact the principle of limited reward and employ characteristics of the Black style. Gregory is a master at doing just that by utilizing the elements of the Black referent that comprise frame of mind (humanism, communalism, oppression/paranoia, empathetic understanding, rhythm, limited reward and styling).
On the basis of the Frame of Mind constituent, the writer contends that Gregory, as an experienced speaker, is cognizant that the elements listed in the Black referent and the Afrocentric philosophy are appropriate for him and relevant for his audience. Thus through language that exhibits the Afrocentric philosophy, Gregory transmits mutually understood culturally based values which also aid in establishing a positive rapport with his Black audiences.

The writer has viewed the substance of Gregory's rhetoric by utilizing Wallace's three general category of values and theory of "good reasons" and concludes that Gregory speaks on a variety of topics most of which may be characterized as the blameworthy-reprehensible. Those topics that were characteristically political included the Kennedy-King assassinations, the United States government, the CIA and FBI, the super-rich and the tricks Gregory contended they play on the American public.

Gregory projected a crusading image by attacking the government and the super rich as the responsible agents for each of these topics and defended the rights of the young, poor and elderly. His expressed resentment of the blameworthy-reprehensible was heightened by his avowed belief that the survival faith and destiny of America lied in the power of America's youth. Thus his message was
desirable and admirable for America's youth.

Gregory established himself as a selfless humanitarian, a man of probity and goodwill and an expert on civil and human rights affairs when developing his credibility. The motives to which he appealed were freedom, morality, anger, economic well-being, power, empathy, preservation of the human race, survival of the American public and personal comfort.

With a minimum of embellishment, Gregory spoke directly to the issues of racial and sexual discrimination, education, housing and employment and he did not hesitate to call the names of the rich who he claimed impede the well-being of the American public. Moreover, he punctuated his speeches with name-calling and harsh invectives.

The writer concluded that Gregory's reasoning for the most part was based upon exaggeration, innuendo, and broad ambiguous generalizations that were sometimes unsupported. More often than not he reasoned by using anger as a major emotional feature of sarcasm, scolding and sometimes humorous claims about the plight of Black people in a White racist society. Also Gregory made a practice of letting his speeches grow from his rather than his audiences' mood. While specifics were often missing, Gregory may have utilized general abstractions for their emotional tone and impact. Another reason for
the paucity of specifics may be due to the fact that Gregory speaks nine out of twelve months during a year and may find it easier to prepare and present speeches filled with generalities. In an interview with the writer Gregory noted that audiences do not like to follow the intricacies of a closely reasoned argument filled with explicit details, whose ramification they cannot easily grasp. He also asserted that he was a "safe nigger" meaning that he could be trusted and that if any information he presented was not true he could be sued for slander. This attitude in itself may suggest that Gregory considers himself to be a qualified "authority" whose opinions should be accepted without question. If this is the case, then Gregory is an irresponsible rhetor who should not be taken seriously or the results could be dangerous especially in those instances where his reasoning is based upon biased opinions rather than supporting statements.

While Gregory's speeches may be lacking in "good reasons" he compensated by utilizing reasoning that reflected his Afrocentric beliefs and offered criticism that was comprehensible. Moreover his speeches for the most part were not without a well-formed plan where humor is interspersed as relief and serves to balance his grim warnings and maintain audience interest.
The choices he offered involved action and appraisal of action. To America's youth he in a word said "do or die". To White women and Black men he advocated substituting love in the place of material needs and wants. He also advocated that White women study the Black movement and suggested that Black men study African peoples as a role model of "Blackness". To the general audience Gregory urged them to fast, take care of their bodies, tune into the universe and become more aware of the tricks and manipulative tactics of the superpowers.

Lastly, Gregory took tremendous liberties with his audiences by discussing taboo subjects; but his humor, delivery and timing incited laughter, entertainment and information rather than shock and alienation. In this way his message, though lacking in "good reasons" was both general and memorable to the point that the audience rather than he could persuade themselves by supplying their own explicit details.

The writer has analyzed the styles and techniques of Gregory's substance by utilizing the frame of mind, scope of context and structure of code constituents of Asante's metatheory as well as perceptions from social scientists and humanists particularly those calling themselves Afrologists. Gregory's styling made use of vocal clues that included Black semantics, malaprops and pronunciations in
Black English, Black dialect and a grammatical structure in the Black idiom. He drove home his points by utilizing proverbial statements, and sound through tonal semantics in the forms of repetition, alliterative word play, intonational contouring and Black intercalations. This wide use of ebb and flow in his rhetorical drama was a strong ingredient in the process binding Gregory and his audience.

Since Gregory's roots are still firmly rooted in the Black community his approach to language was principally lyrical; thus through the technique of narration combined with humor and mimicry he not only relaxed his audience but also identified with it. Gregory also employed the Black socially and culturally approved techniques of signification, braggadocio, the dozens, indirection and the love rap. With the exception of the latter, their correct semantical interpretation depended on a good deal of shared cultural knowledge. Gregory was also a master at being spontaneous by referring to events that occurred within the speechmaking situation. Perhaps Gregory's styles combined with these techniques kept his audiences awake, alert and involved for as long as three hours after the speech odyssey first began and created a unifying effect on Black auditors in particular.
The writer has analyzed the probable impact of Gregory's rhetoric by utilizing the delivery constituent of Asante's metatheory. Gregory succeeded in arousing in his audience a desire to give vocal assent to his rhetoric and is therefore a prototype for the Black community. His expert use of sound probably created a lasting impact upon the audience since he captured the uniqueness of the Afrocentric speech drama.

The structuring of Gregory's linguistic code resulted in his establishing an intimate relationship with his Black audiences, promoted audience identification, induced a spirituality into the audience and provided buoyancy to that spirit. All totaled Gregory's communication was highly dependent on his style and skill and his interaction with the affective responses of involved audiences.

In spite of the fact that Gregory gave very lengthy speeches, his presence commanded and encouraged attention. His enthusiasm combined with a mastery of the spoken word, humor and wit, a correct sense of timing, vocal creativity and a feeling for the audience, stimulated listener participation and created a positive impact with Black audiences in particular because of their knowledge of and sensitivity to Gregory's frame of mind. A probable impact of Gregory's rhetoric, then, was an Afrocentrically created presence which took little note of time or content as Eurocentrically conceived.
Gregory was credible as a speaker because he exhibited a genuine sensitivity to his audience and expressed a keen wisdom about what they would want to hear and the type of humor they would enjoy. He employs a conversational style combined with an extemporaneous mode. By taking advantage of process, movement and creativity of the moment, his delivery seemed fresh and immediately personalized for any given situation. Last the writer concludes that Gregory was an emphatic, dramatic and powerful speaker who made things seem real and created a positive and lasting impact on Black audiences.

Conclusions

After completing the research and analyzing Dick Gregory's speaking the writer has arrived at the general conclusion that the rhetoric of Gregory reveals a strategy of paradox where on the one hand he indicates a sense of paranoia while on the other hand he exhibits a sense of self confidence. This suggests to his audience that he, like them, is subject to persecution within his belief system and at the same time his sense of oneness in regard to the universe allows him to continue to forge ahead without any fear. This suggests to the audience that they, too, are capable of the same thing if they adhere to the notion of being one with the universe or "God".
A second conclusion is although Gregory's philosophy is basically Afrocentric in orientation, he has not reached the full level of Afrocentricity according to the paradigm offered by Dr. Linda James Myers. The spiritual-material ontology described by Myers states that as one becomes most Afrocentric in thinking the focus diminishes in terms of the material to that which is defined as the essence or source of all things—the spiritual or that which is known in an extra-sensory fashion. An example of Gregory's non-Afrocentric approach is evident in the way he utilizes fasting. In order to cleanse his body he focused on what he consumes materially. If he were adhering to the Afrocentric ontology Myers proposes, his focus would be on what he puts into his mind or consciousness in terms of thoughts. The focus would be on the spiritual instead of the material. The same notion can also be applied to his rhetoric. For example, Gregory argued that women are oppressed. If he were adhering to the Afrocentric ontology offered by Myers his emphasis and rhetoric would be such that he would acknowledge that they are oppressed only to the extent they succumb to the Eurocentric view which states "that what is real is based on the material."
Although Gregory has not reached the full level of Afrocentricity, a third conclusion is that he is sincere in his John Donne-like concern for humanity. Like the disciples who were charged by God through his son Jesus to go out, act, use authority and live mission, Gregory's rhetorical mission surrounds involvement and concern with love, justice, feeding the hungry, clothing the poor, freeing the oppressed and liberating those who have been enslaved. By traveling to college campuses to "speak out" about the inhumanity of man Gregory not only looks to his own interests but also to the interests of others. Last year he broke a seventy day fast that consisted of a seaweed base drink. At the conclusion of the fast he hiked 100 miles from his hospital bed in New Orleans to Baton Rouge, Louisiana in twenty-eight hours. The fast was monitored by doctors in an effort to see the effects of hunger in regards to human effort. Gregory's weight went down from 156 to 104 pounds. Dr. Joseph Allinn stated that the test results will yield data that have never been determined by man before and will be useful in combating world hunger.
Several other conclusions about Gregory's speaking and Black communication can be drawn from this study. These deal with his speaking in relation to rhetorical theory and the research procedures followed in this investigation. First Gregory's delivery gave full expression to an art learned through his delivery of that art to his people: not oblivious to, but within the limits of what was historically, socially and culturally expedient for moving that group. However, his communication was often not fully understood by those outside the Black frame of reference. Thus a second conclusion is that future research that focuses on Black communication should reflect value, meaning and an awareness of Black cultural norms.

This study has focused on Gregory's rhetoric in terms of his Black audiences. A third conclusion indicates that further research could attempt to measure and describe the emotions and opinions of Gregroy's White auditors. A fourth conclusion of this research deals with adaptation. Rhetorical theory has long directed students to consciously and carefully adapt their speaking to audiences. Yet this important concept was not utilized by Gregory in terms of his White auditors. There was a time when Gregory's audiences primarily consisted of Whites with relatively few Blacks. Perhaps he has polarized his White auditors by utilizing Black referents to a maximum degree.
Further research could analyze Gregory's audience adaptation and discover why Gregory's White auditors have decreased in number.

Fourth, Gregory seemed to rely on emotional appeals rather than logical materials of support. Although he presented himself as a moral, honest man, the number of unsupported arguments he utilized suggest irresponsibility because of highly general claims backed by what appeared to be minimal evidence which could result in misleading unsuspecting auditors. Further research could focus on an examination of this conclusion in light of immediate and delayed speaker and audience actions.

Finally several conclusions about the research procedures used for this study are worthy of note. Correspondence with Asante, conversations with Dr. Myers and interviews with Dick Gregory were unquestionably necessary for this study. Residing and working in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Ohio afforded the writer ample opportunities to visit the areas where Gregory spoke.

Traditionally the researcher has stated what problems emerged in conducting research for the study. One problem was that the metatheory offered by Asante did not suggest a method of analysis for assessing the substance of Gregory's rhetoric. Thus the writer was forced to utilize an Eurocentric approach for this aspect of the study.
Further research would suggest an Afrocentric approach towards assessment. Second, when the writer began the study, Afrocentricity as a method of analysis did not exist within the field of rhetoric and public address. That which the writer was hoping to define as Afrocentricity could not have been known without the philosophical assumptions laid out by Black psychologists. It was only when the writer met Dr. Linda James Myers, through Dr. John Makay, her advisor, that she began to find what she sought from the Afrocentric view.

For the purpose of the reader, the writer wants to point out from a Eurocentric perspective that this crossover of disciplines might be perceived as problematic or a deficiency; but from the Afrocentric perspective such a problem does not exist principally due to the holistic nature of the perspective. In other words because the Afrocentric perspective does not segment knowledge into disciplines, the notion of the writer having to look outside rhetorical theory to find information is not problematic.

Third, the Afrocentric paradigm offered by Myers is so new that the writer did not have time to digest the literature as much as she would have preferred. Dr. Myers and the writer discussed the specifics of the paradigm since she is still in the process of completing
the paradigm. Eurocentrically one would assume that the paradigm is incomplete since the Eurocentric ontology adheres to the principle "if you can't count or measure it, it does not exist." However, Afrocentrically the paradigm is complete simply because the Afrocentric view does not look to the written word as a basis for knowledge but instead utilizes the oral tradition and emphasizes process.

Thus the data has been analyzed and the questions for the study answered. The writer concludes by noting that Dick Gregory continues to speak across America and his rhetoric with its humanistic viewpoint serves to remind us (1) of our commitments and responsibilities to each other as members of the human family, (2) not to lose sight of collective concerns in the suffering of millions of people throughout the world, and (3) to be less self-centered in our thoughts, words and deeds and more mindful of needs other than our own. One may or may not accept his rhetorical viewpoint but there must be worse ways of spending an afternoon or evening than sitting in a Gregory audience being made to laugh and occasionally think.
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