

The
Pennsylvania
Scholars Series

Marie Hochmuth Nichols

INTRODUCTION Amanda G. McKendree

MARIE HOCHMUTH NICHOLS: RHETORIC AND CHARACTER Ronald C. Arnett

MARIE HOCHMUTH NICHOLS AND THE OBLIQUE ROAD TO ITHAKA Jim A. Kuypers

NOT SO HIDDEN FIGURE: MARIE HOCHMUTH NICHOLS’S LEADERSHIP
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MY NATION, MYSELF: DONALD TRUMP’S SPEECH TO THE BSA Mary E. Stuckey

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INTRODUCTION: MARIE HOCHMUTH NICHOLS

Amanda G. McKendree

This volume of the Pennsylvania Scholars Series reflects on the teaching, scholarship, and service of Marie Hochmuth Nichols. As you will learn from the essays that follow, Nichols's scholarly journey exemplifies the Pennsylvania Communication Association's efforts in "defining communication excellence in teaching and practice." She has inspired legions of colleagues and students through her many contributions to the communication discipline.

"Marie Hochmuth Nichols: Rhetoric and Character" by Ronald C. Arnett offers a biographical sketch of Nichols and examines reflections from her peers and reviews of her work. *"Marie Hochmuth Nichols and the Oblique Road to Ithaca"* by Jim A. Kuyers invites us to introduce ourselves to Nichols and highlights her leading role in bringing the work of Kenneth Burke to the communication discipline. *"Not So Hidden Figure: Marie Hochmuth Nichols's Leadership in the Communication Discipline"* by Jeanne M. Pursuit considers Nichols's leadership legacy by highlighting two specific speeches. At the heart of this essay is Nichols's concern about the purpose and need for communication studies. We conclude this issue with Mary E. Stuckey's *"My Nation, Myself: Donald Trump's Speech to the BSA."* Using Nichols's work as an interpretive lens, Stuckey examines the implications of presidential rhetoric in the current historical moment. Stuckey's insights remind us that Nichols's work continues to inspire thought and reflection on significant public concerns.

The initial impulse of this issue was to approach Nichols as a "hidden figure" of the communication discipline. However, as these four essays reveal, she was, perhaps, not so hidden after all.

MARIE HOCHMUTH NICHOLS: RHETORIC AND CHARACTER

Ronald C. Arnett

I am honored to respond to the marvelous contributions of Marie Hochmuth Nichols.¹ At the very beginning of my career, I attended my first conference, interviewing for a position in the field.² That Central States Speech Association Conference convened in Southfield, MI, in 1977—the year Marie Hochmuth Nichols delivered her famous keynote address, “When You Set Out for Ithaka.” Paul Boase, the Director of the School of Interpersonal Communication at Ohio University, and Paul Keller, my undergraduate professor at Manchester College and co-author of *Monologue to Dialogue: An Exploration of Interpersonal Communication*, invited me to lunch at the conference. During our time together, Marie Hochmuth Nichols, who knew both of my teachers, stopped by to talk to them. I was too young to know how fortunate I was to have such a conversation. I remember nothing of the discussion, but I remember the mannerisms of Dr. Nichols. She was keenly part of the conversation. She was intense, leaning into the conversational space as she spoke. She commanded the table, with me saying nothing; I did not know I was in the presence of an outstanding scholar and teacher, a major character in the development of this discipline. I missed my chance to offer praise, and now I have an opportunity to rectify my mistake. Those of us within this discipline stand on the shoulders of great ideas and great characters, of which she is an exemplary model—a scholar-teacher in creative pursuit of excellence and in active resistance to what she deemed unreflective fads.

Reflections: Her Peers

John Patton³ (2001) describes Nichols's educative background, noting that all degrees but her Ph.D. were earned within Pennsylvania. Growing up in Dunbar, Pennsylvania, she attended Catholic school until enrolling in the University of Pittsburgh, receiving a B.A. in English and History in 1931 and an M.A. in English in 1936. She earned her Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin in 1945 with her dissertation entitled “William Ellery Channing, D.D.: A Study in Public Address.” Patton (2001) stated that after a brief teaching engagement at the University of Pittsburgh, Nichols taught at Mount Mercy College (now Carlow University) in Pittsburgh from 1935 to 1939, then moved to the University of Illinois-Urbana, where she served as a full-time instructor of speech from 1939 to 1969, earning tenure and full professorship there. Nichols also held distinguished lecturer positions at San Fernando Valley State College in 1961 and Herbert Lehman College in 1973. Additionally, Nichols was the Green Honors Lecturer at Texas Christian University in 1975 and guest lectured at the University of Southern California, where she met her husband, Alan G. Nichols (Patton, 2001). Throughout her scholarly career, Nichols embraced both history and emerging new insights.

Jane Blankenship, 1978 President of the Speech Communication Association, offered comments on her colleague in an essay published in *Communication Quarterly* in 1986, appropriately entitled “The Song of the Open Road: Marie Hochmuth Nichols as Teacher.” Blankenship stressed the image of the open road as the umbrella action metaphor for her essay, talking about the way in which Nichols loved to learn and her willingness to encounter the unknown and the unexpected. Blankenship (1986) stated that Nichols’s gift to us was a heart and spirit open to intellectual adventure; she cared for others and for ideas. Nichols displayed a love

of enduring values while pushing the envelope of new insight. She reflected upon the importance of emerging new rhetorics, issued demands for existential engagement, and explicated the work of Marshall McLuhan long before he became a sensation in popular culture. Nichols's scholarship and life appropriately revolved around the title of Kenneth Burke's 1935 book *Permanence and Change*. She understood her intellectual task as a rhetorical critic attempting to advance issues of ethical substance within society.

Nichols encountered her craft with accuracy, care, affection, and respect, whether in scholarship for print or scholarly engagement of ideas as she worked with her students. Nichols was interested in assigning students to read scholarship of original voices, not paraphrasing the insights of later scholars. She took students' ideas and the origins of those ideas seriously. Nichols was a role model of intellectual care as she published books, studied in the library, and worked in her office, whether assisting students on campus or showing up at a student's apartment for a cup of coffee. When she left a student's home, she often quietly left money if she knew that her hosts were in need of temporary financial support (Blankenship, 1986). Her work highlighted humanizing values, stressed the importance of public discussion, valued diversity of opinions within the public domain, and championed enlightened choice. She chastised those who simply wanted to blame the generation prior to them for their shortcomings. Each generation and person must uniquely answer a call to do something that tries to make the world better. Posturing through blaming others abandons our own responsibility. We are born into a moment that we cannot control, but we can try to influence the world for the better while we are here; our activity is the only legacy we can leave behind.

Nichols understood rhetoric as a lens for apprehending and engaging human nature. For her, humane studies recognize that we are born into a world of dialogue that exists before us and continues long after our presence is no more. We participate in personal recollections that gather and shape comprehension of existence and our own identity. Rhetoric unites with history, moving identity from the shallows to complexity of insight. Substantive persons rhetorically understand the importance of their own lives, the context of their lives, their engagement with others, and their comprehension of existential possibilities. When Nichols walked each year to a university commencement, there was an unspoken pride and affection for all those there. She quietly demanded, however, that the graduates do something rhetorically, something that publically matters, with the opportunities given to them.

During her time leading the Speech Association of America (now the National Communication Association) in 1969, Nichols stressed excellence with her presidential address, entitled "The Tyranny of Relevance." She made five claims related to the oppressiveness of undue applicability. First, she claimed that our discipline articulates the ways in which communication shapes our lives. Second, Nichols contended that the term relevance has, at times, become a bully slogan. Third, she suggested that our discipline encourages debate and discussion, offering an alternative to issues of physical violence. Fourth, she asserted that fundamental change by violence and bullying is short-sighted. Fifth, she directly addressed issues of irrelevance and those claiming the discipline as irrelevant. Blankenship (2004) called Nichols's speech one of the most controversial ever delivered at a National Communication Association conference. Blankenship recorded that one well-known senior member of the discipline referred to Nichols as a "troglodyte," yet another called her a "prophet" (Blankenship,

2004, p. 4). Nichols unmasked the “god term” of that historical moment—*relevance*. She moved the focus of attention back to one basic fundamental issue: We are here to help one another understand the present via long history of insight gathered prior to an individual’s presence on this earth.

Patton (2001), in an edited volume on *Twentieth-Century Roots of Rhetorical Studies*, focused on Nichols’s contribution to the humane tradition of the field. He emphasized the innovative nature of her thinking and her scholarship, which was ever-attentive to historical knowledge and principles. She focused repeatedly on facts, gathering them, uniting them, and working with them rhetorically. Within Kenneth Burke’s dramatism of act, scene, agency, agent, and purpose, Nichols sought simplicity within the complexity (Patton, 2001, p. 125). Her cries against the mantra of relevance in the 1960s and 1970s constituted a prophetic message. She was familiar with historical and contemporary material and even led seminars on McLuhan, B. F. Skinner,⁴ and existentialists. Her reading appetite and scholarly instincts took her into a wide range of subject matter. In her life of rhetorical study, Nichols attended to those that aimed high, calling us to a more significant purpose. She stated repeatedly, “In speech making, as in life, not failure but low aim is crime” (Patton, 2001, p. 132). With her thoughtful scholarship with Burke, I. A. Richards,⁵ and rhetorical history, Nichols reflected interest in both tradition and innovation, requiring both to be tested in the rhetorical interplay of everyday life.

When asked what something should be relevant to, her answer was simply--all aspects of being human. Relevance cannot be hegemonically limited to social change, to commercial life, or to innovative theory construction. Relevance has almost unlimited connections to the human condition. Nichols’s relevant interests included persons as diverse as Cicero and Aristotle, Susanne Langer,⁶ Mortimer J. Adler,⁷ Michael Polanyi,⁸ and, in her final years of life, attentiveness to the insights of existentialism and even Skinner. She read not simply those with whom she agreed, but those who were part of the rhetorical public.

In the *Southern Communication Journal*, there is a brief editorial by Andrew King⁹ (1994) that remembers Marie Hochmuth Nichols. The essay commences with a reminder that October was her month, with its Indian summer. Graduate students fondly remembered her study of Abraham Lincoln, George Bernard Shaw, I. A. Richards, Kenneth Burke, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and George Saintsbury.¹⁰ Her students connected to her like a diaspora of rhetorical idealists. Nichols supported historical reading, instruction, discipline, tradition, and a willingness to fight against bullying even when it came with the word “relevance” (King, 1994). She cautioned against undue optimism of the 1960s and the feeling that the humanities had triumphed. She called for hope tempered with a tenacious deep pessimism that bids one to never take for granted the vital and important. Indeed, Indian summers in remembrance of her announce the importance of skepticism about unreflective optimism.

The eulogies at her memorial service read like a “Who’s Who” in the history of the discipline of communication, with Kenneth E. Andersen,¹¹ Jane Blankenship, John Patton, and Don Bryant¹² all commenting on her significant contribution. After her formal retirement in 1976, Nichols continued to write, lecture, and direct dissertations right up until her final illness. “Perhaps that is how we will remember her best: seen through the office doorway, looking up from a busy desk with a welcoming smile, eager to share adventures on the road to Ithaka”

(Wenzel, 1979, p. 3). Nichols's door remained open to students and colleagues who sought advice and direction.

Marie Hochmuth Nichols's scholarship reads ironically as relevant for this historical moment, as she examined topics of pessimism, addressed the confusion over germaneness, and offered reflective essays on the quests for home. She engaged rhetoric in a manner that moved the conversation forward. Her work with the tradition of rhetoric announced the connecting link in Hannah Arendt's (1954/2006) book *Between Past and Future*. Nichols, like Arendt, understood the vitality of tradition as quite different than ideology. Tradition opens up conversations with a larger human community; ideology limits exchanges to a specialized number of voices. As an administrator, as a scholar, and as a teacher, Marie Hochmuth Nichols understood the power and the importance of that which links the past to the future. It is not relevance—it is tradition. The first editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* and the first president of the National Communication Association as a woman by a vote of all members was a person of courage and conviction willing to walk into the midst of controversy and utter one word: *tradition*, perhaps a term most detested in the historical moment of 1969. Only an individualistic culture that tries to stand above all human connections could attempt to convince people that all that has transpired before us is of little relevance.

Reviews of Nichols's Work

In the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, Marie Hochmuth Nichols's work was reviewed by Bower Aly¹³ (1964). Nichols was known as an outstanding teacher. Her book on *Rhetoric and Criticism*, published by the Louisiana State University Press in 1963, collected eight of her lectures. The chapter titles are illustrative of the breadth of her interests. She stressed issues of humane study, history, ghost writing, approaches to public address, rhetorical criticism, Kenneth Burke, critical theory, I. A. Richards, and George Bernard Shaw. She looked at theory from a macro standpoint, while she examined the particularity of the rhetors within their own culture. Nichols documented her positions clearly with evidence and support as she engaged scholarly language that makes one envious of any student who sat in classes illuminated by such insights. Aly (1964) summarized his response to this work, stating that the lectures sparkled with an orality that maintained one's attention with significant questions guiding each essay. Careful use of sources provided the reader with intellectual assurance. She defined rhetoric as "the theory and practice of the verbal mode of presenting judgment, choice, knowledge, and feeling" (Aly, 1964, p. 323). Nichols's understanding of rhetoric was not limited to reason alone. She did not provide a rationale for the study of rhetoric; she presumed its importance. Each essay was clear, situated within an urbanity that announced the lofty importance of the task of rhetoric.

Another review came from the thoughtful work of Don M. Burks¹⁴ (1964), who discussed the importance of Nichols's work as framing how judgment and choice shape decision-making rhetorically (Burks, 1964). Burks stressed Nichols's understanding that rhetoricians could no longer be content to abide by the work of Aristotle alone. For instance, in her lecture on Shaw, Nichols began with a quotation from Mandeville's *The Fable of the Bees*. According to Nichols, Mandeville provided an "unflattering explanation" of a scholar's motivation (Burks, 1964, p. 147). Working from this premise, Nichols refers to the young Shaw as "a shy intellectual hoodlum" (as cited in Burks, 1964, p. 147). She explicates Shaw's work, not just

descriptively, but critically, opening up the text for further comment and consideration. Criticism does not end the conversation: it opens dialogue up to further discussion among a diverse set of readers. Walter Fisher (1964), in *Western Speech*, discussed Nichols's contribution to humane studies of rhetoric as a way to understanding its importance for judgment, imagination, and moral action. Her work illuminated the fact that the advisory function for guidance and decision-making rests primarily with rhetoric.

Patricia M. Ball¹⁵ (1964), in commenting on *Rhetoric and Criticism*, perhaps most aptly describes the importance of Nichols's work as a crusade to articulate the fundamental importance of rhetoric. Language mattered to Nichols, and she rejected the trendiness of her own era, which sought to minimize the humanizing scope of rhetoric. She understood everyone as having an obligation to become a rhetorician: able to make arguments, generate evidence, and work from a tradition of thought. She was a propagandist for the humanities and for rhetoric. She recognized that the shaping of ideas through organization and presentation did and does fundamentally matter.

The *Review of Communication* initiated retrospective summary essays on former presidents of the National Communication Association; the first person to be so honored was Marie Hochmuth Nichols. She had served as president of the association in 1969. The essay by Jane Blankenship (2004), an outstanding leader and scholar in her own right and president of the association in 1978, begins with a reminder of the turmoil of the era in which Nichols resided as president. The country was in turmoil, and the communication discipline was shifting, as evidenced by its association's changing names: The Speech Association of America became the Speech Communication Association in 1970 and the National Communication Association in 1997. Such a moment was a time of major social change. In 1976, Marie Hochmuth Nichols received the Distinguished Service Award from the Speech Communication Association, and in 1995—17 years after her death—she became one of its Distinguished Scholars. Blankenship (2004) outlined a career of 30 years for Marie Hochmuth Nichols. She was the first woman elected to an association presidency by “a vote of the whole membership” (Blankenship, 2004, p. 1). From 1963 to 1965, she served as the editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. Again, she was the first woman to do so in the then 47-year history of that journal. She was a pioneer, a leader, and an extraordinary teacher, scholar, and administrator.

Nichols's Work

In the introduction to the 1948 *National Association of Secondary School Principals* (NASSP) *Bulletin*, Hochmuth examined speech and society, working with a theme of her historical epoch: corruption in human relations, which she contended was simply pervasive. Talk between persons in a highly competitive society requires a social competence that seeks cooperation and a pragmatic desire not to destroy human places of work and leisure. She quoted Alfred North Whitehead,¹⁶ stating that we now live in a broken condition in which we can no longer assume continuity of ongoing connection in human history, education, and knowledge (Hochmuth, 1948). The dominant theme of that historical moment can be termed a social breakdown, recognizing that the world is a dangerous place. The general agreement was that stability was a thing of the past; citizens recognized the reality of decreasing collaboration in groups, among groups, in nations, and among nations. Hochmuth (1948) suggested that in that

moment, as well as in this one, we need procedural tools to bring people together, teaching parliamentary procedure and process.

Perhaps the greatest skill, according to Hochmuth (1948), was the ability to elicit cooperation and coordination of persons and ideas. This skill requires social competence and communicative articulateness. Such social aptitude recognizes that democracy is not just a structure or procedure; it is a milieu invested in the vivacity and significance of group life. Clarity of expression must invite responsibility to work with others, refusing to dismiss others. This social competence requires a capability to understand and work within democratic structures and should engage nimbly in communal adjustment in order to assist others. We must go beyond provincialism that refuses to acknowledge both internal group work and interaction between and among groups of difference. What makes all of this possible is human speech. Human speech seeks cooperation and understanding as primary, recognizing that our health and well-being is dependent upon that of others.

In 1952, Marie Hochmuth published an essay in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* on “Kenneth Burke and the ‘New Rhetoric,’” situating this essay as important—it came out just two years after Burke’s publication of *Rhetoric of Motives*. Hochmuth (1952) connected Burke to what she contended was the grand tradition of rhetoric. Burke’s interest in the doing of literature was pragmatic, as he explained the rhetorical call of acts to point to the necessity of symbolic action upon a scene, which moves imagination. Burke offered rhetoric as a comprehensive view of art, bringing forth its importance after it had fallen into disuse. Persuasion is not limited to ideas, but commences with identification with another. For Hochmuth, old rhetoric remained with persuasion, and new rhetoric linked intimately with identification. Burke even equated teaching with the office of rhetoric (Hochmuth, 1952). The pentad of Burke’s rhetoric of act, scene, agency, agent, and purpose underscored his grammar of motivation. The manner in which rhetoric is punctuated through speech, action, and environment does not begin with us alone. His rhetoric speaks to the complexity to the embedded nature of rhetoric, its complexity, and its social prominence.

In Karl Wallace’s¹⁷ 1954 edited work on the *History of Speech Education in America: Background Studies*, Marie Hochmuth, along with Richard Murphy, provided a historical examination of rhetoric and education, looking at “Rhetorical and Elocutionary Training in Nineteenth-Century Colleges.” They began with a historical reminder: Edward T. Channing was inducted on December 18, 1891 as the Boylston Professorship of Rhetoric and Oratory at Harvard University (Hochmuth & Murphy, 1954). During the early 19th century, John Witherspoon¹⁸ brought systematic training of rhetoric to Princeton, and Timothy Dwight¹⁹ emphasized the importance of rhetoric at Yale. Hochmuth and Murphy (1954) reminded the reader that John Quincy Adams published his work on rhetoric and oratory in 1810. Adams was a professor of rhetoric and oratory at Harvard from 1806 to 1809. The textbook widely used at that time was Hugh Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*. Blair was a Scottish minister with a stress on the heart of the Scottish Enlightenment: sentiment (Hochmuth & Murphy, 1954, p. 159).

The notion of elocution and rhetoric in America separated before the middle of the 19th century. The elocutionary movement focused closely on delivery, with rhetoric classically linked

to discovery of ideas, invention, and organization. By the mid-1800's, elocution became a required subject in many schools throughout the country, contrasted with the decline of George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric* and Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*. By the third quarter of the century, elocution was losing its power, and rhetoric (the classical form) emerged once again as the point of study. Elocutionary training did not die out completely, however; it moved increasingly to the point of electives rather than being part of mandated classes. Rhetoric, tied to argumentation and debate and evidence, increasingly became the center of public speaking. Classical education in rhetoric was consistent throughout the century. The essay ended with John Quincy Adams offering a keynote for the age of rhetoric in which he eulogized Aristotle and the ancients. However, Adams added one phrase that was problematic when he suggested that there was little to add to the study of rhetoric. Fortunately, the discipline did not follow Adam's assertion.

In an essay dealing with "The Criticism of Rhetoric," Hochmuth (1955b) cited a statement on criticism from John Dewey: "[C]riticism, I hardly need point out . . . is not fault finding. It is not pointing out evils to be reformed. It is judgment engaged in discriminating among values. It is taking thought as to what is better and worse in any field at any time, with some consciousness of *why* the better is better and *why* the worse is worse" (as cited in Hochmuth, 1955b, p. 4). Those who understood rhetoric as a way to understand texts and arguments critically analyzed addresses delivered by those in power. Rhetoric enacts all available means of persuasion. It requires *phronesis* of judgment about what is better and worse, knowing that each evaluation is contextual.

Criticism necessitates analysis, synthesis, and, of course, discrimination. Criticism *via* rhetoric includes the following basic questions. First, the speaker dwells in a persuasive situation—what is necessary in a particular moment? It is the persuasive situation that permits something to be heard, without attentiveness to words alone. Meaningful rhetoric propels persons in a given direction. Second, does one understand the distinctiveness of a given audience? Third, what is the responsiveness to the uniqueness of a place that shapes the rhetoric? Fourth, is one attentive to purpose, a direction, a clarity, and a reason? Fifth, does one enact the right thing being said at the right moment? The critic recognizes rhetoric as the intimate and organic linkage between means and ends. One searches for the appropriate way to get to a given place and purpose, ever responsive to an audience and the rhetorical situation. Most importantly, time and timing matters: saying the right thing, at the right time, in just the right amount of quantity, with the right words. This is one of the major reasons that the Gettysburg Address continues to be an exemplar of rhetoric.

In 1955, Marie Hochmuth discussed the retirement of one of her speech communication colleagues, Wayland Maxfield Parrish,²⁰ at a luncheon at the annual Speech Association of America conference in 1954. Multiple papers were read in Parrish's honor by dignitaries, including by well-known scholars such as Hochmuth and Everett Hunt. Parrish directed Hochmuth's master's thesis in 1936, just before he left the University of Pittsburgh. Hochmuth remembered Parrish's comment about her thesis; he stated succinctly: "You write just like a German" (Hochmuth, 1955a, p. 160). His comments struck a chord with Hochmuth. Her heritage, indeed, was German, and there were not many psychiatrists around helping with comments from thesis advisors. Parrish simply wanted her to understand that each sentence is

not an uninterrupted journey that takes into account every bit of scenery. Parrish functioned as a policeman of writing concerned about the deterioration of the English usage. Hochmuth (1955a) ended the tribute with a quote from Ogden Nash that stated that an eagle does, indeed, scream. At the meeting, Hochmuth said that Parrish did not scream, but perhaps she should do it for him: yelling that each word does matter.

In a symposium on Burkean criticism, Hochmuth (1957) initiated her remarks by alluding to critical approaches to literature offered by an English literary critic, David Daiches.²¹ Daiches stated that there is no one approach to the examination and engagement of and with literary art. Hochmuth then paused in lament, saying that many rhetorical scholars want diversity for their own work, not for positions contrary to their own. Hochmuth suggested that, in 1957, the focus was more on process than on theory, with more attentiveness to rhetoric as a technique capable of evoking particular emotions directing action. She stated that, fortunately, Burke united rhetoric, dialectic, and ethics; he did literary analysis with a rhetorical heart. Hochmuth argued that Burke sought a critical methodology, as he distinguished differences between old and new rhetoric—a theme Hochmuth stressed in a variety of her publications. Identification assists in understanding how a shepherd acts on behalf of a flock. Identification frames how a project offers performative identity. Burke’s work did not seek to preserve tradition for its own merit, but rather to experiment with the emerging development of rhetoric and its differing forms of identification. Rhetoric is not full of techniques; it dwells in the very biology and nature of the human being. Identification is key, ever so opposed to abstract application of technique that seeks to impose the five components of Burke’s pentad. Rhetorical attentiveness is deeper and more thoughtful than technique alone.

In Hochmuth’s (1958) essay on “I. A. Richards and the ‘New Rhetoric,’” she cited Richards and his book *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936), which indicated that rhetoric had sunk to a diminished status. Richards’s lifelong work centered on rhetorical functions (Hochmuth, 1958). In 1923, Richards published a significant work, *The Meaning of Meaning: A Study of the Influence of Language upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism*, with C. K. Ogden. Language, for Richards, was an instrument for human becoming. It was a system of signs, not a mere signaling device or system or a simple code. Rhetoric is a symbolic organ in the midst of growth. Hochmuth emphasized Richards’s highlighting of signs functioning by membership in a context of a figure within a whole. Signs are always contextually situated. A sign depends upon a context, even if it is a residential trace. A family of signs becomes symbols; they direct, organize, record, communicate, and distinguish. Language, understood as symbol, permits thought, the referent, and the object to give insight *via* a rhetorical understanding of “causal relations” (Hochmuth, 1958, p. 3). Richards’s famous triangle of symbol, reference, and referent acknowledges the connections as indirect, permitting casual relations to hold. He was prone to connect casual relations and referents with the notion of thinking *of* and *within*. Thinking is contextual and tied to attentiveness to a given sign. Language divides into symbols, which organize an emotive use of words, which excite. Communication, for Richards, begins when human beings are apart and need to reconnect.

Language transaction is communication. The old rhetoric, for Richards, was closely aligned to dispute with words such as “persuasion,” “exposition,” and “interrogation.” Richards contended that the old rhetoric began with Aristotle and perhaps ended with Archbishop

Whately.²² Whately's focus was largely on style and anticipated conclusions. The new rhetoric does not begin with a specific end. Richards cited George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric* as an art of adaptive discourse. The new rhetoric unites mode of presentation and task with the contextual nature of human meaning. Rhetoric does not confuse meaning with dictionary definitions; instead, rhetoric understands grammar as the way in which symbols cooperate with one another, pointing to referential relationships, akin the way in which poetry communicates. Rhetorical criticism relies upon interpretation that permits one to appreciate the critical way and manner in which things are organized. Meaning includes context and content, inclusive of all aspects of the senses and understanding the experiences of rhetoric. Rhetoric becomes an ordering and an account-giving, adapting the discourse to its context. Rhetoric and poetic joined forces within the insight of I. A. Richards, giving rise to the human condition, not just technique, being relevant. Style can become an immediate relevance, missing the long importance of the ideas themselves.

Marie Hochmuth Nichols (1971) described the intimate connection between rhetoric and style. She quoted Alfred North Whitehead, who stated, "It is an aesthetic sense" (cited in Hochmuth Nichols, 1971, p. 140). She noted that Burke understood rhetorical style as a form of ingratiation. A textured understanding of style from Cicero states that one "must discuss trivial matters in a plain style, matters of moderate significance in the tempered style, and weighty affairs in the grand manner" (Hochmuth Nichols, 1971, p. 140). Indeed, there are multiple descriptions of style, rhythm, cadence, and appropriate diction. The key to style, for Nichols, is the "promoting attitudes of acceptance and rejection" (Hochmuth Nichols, 1971, p. 141). There is not one style. Content, historical moment, audience, and skill set of the speaker shape the possibility of style. The key to style is to bring attention not to the speaker, but rather to the words, the ideas, the emotions, and significance of the rhetoric.

Perhaps the phrase most associated with Marie Hochmuth Nichols came from her 1969 presidential address, "The Tyranny of Relevance." She referred to Douglas Ehninger's²³ plea for relevance with our discipline, a social relevance. She wondered whether or not, in the historical moment of her time, the term relevance had not taken on a sinister tone, becoming a "bullying slogan" (Nichols, 1970, p. 9). Nichols asked the basic questions: relevant to whom and for what? Joining the craze of relevance requires giving up what one can contribute holistically to the world; the term "relevance" moves too quickly into the realm of substitution, forgetting additive contributions that arise from difference. The manifesto of the concerned committee of students and teachers asked, How could the professoriate remain politically neutral? Marie Hochmuth Nichols (1970) cites a friend who had been a part of Hitler's youth movement; he and she worried about a political association becoming too politically charged. She asked "relevance to what society?" (Nichols, 1970, p. 10) and "relevance to whom and to what?" (Nichols, 1970, p. 10). Nichols ended her address with the following statement: "[O]n the day the *Saturday Evening Post* was announced as folding, a victim, not of irrelevance to its readers who were increasing in numbers, but to the advertiser and the pitchman, Eric Sevareid closed his daily editorial with these sobering words: 'The tyranny of relevance may be the death of us all'" (Nichols, 1970, p. 10). Relevance can sacrifice standards of excellence for ideological currency.

In a review of *The Prospect of Rhetoric*, Nichols inaugurates the work with a citing of Robert Hutchins, the president of University of Chicago from 1929 to 1945, who emphasized the

importance of full humanity (Nebergall & Nichols, 1972). The initial five position papers in this volume on *The Prospect of Rhetoric* are authored by a “Who’s Who” within the field: Karl R. Wallace, Richard McKeon,²⁴ Lawrence Rosenfield,²⁵ and Samuel Becker,²⁶ with a final essay by Henry Johnstone.²⁷ There was considerable disagreement on the way in which rhetoric was understood by speakers such as Chaim Perelman,²⁸ Wallace, and others—with Wallace framing rhetoric as word, speech, and gesture, “the art of discourse” (Nebergall & Nichols, 1972, p. 92). Nichols claimed that the most profound paper came from McKeon, in which he framed a theory of rhetoric as architectonic art. Rosenfield stressed the decline of rhetoric in the West, and Johnstone pointed to an existential rhetoric that, in Nichols’, judgment was not thoroughly explicated. Becker introduced a behavioral science approach, dismissing the need for rhetoric, as he wondered whether or not civil disobedience fits under the rubric of rhetoric. Becker also opposed the focus on a source message; he argued for rhetoric as message–audience. There are 90 pages of these papers with six respondents, including people such as Perelman, Wayne Brockriede,²⁹ Wayne C. Booth, and others. Edward P. J. Corbett³⁰ wondered why so little attention centered on McLuhan, Harold Innis, or Walter Ong; or some of the dialogic writers, such as Martin Buber, Søren Kierkegaard, Paul Tillich; or those engaged in questions of culture, such as Ernst Cassirer, Langer, and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Incorporating some of their work, along with questions about Mao Tse-tung, Karl Marx, and intercultural differences might have also generated interesting new insights. Instead, there was considerable “sniping at the scientists” (Nebergall & Nichols, 1972, p. 95). After looking at all of this material and the report from the Pheasant Run Conference,³¹ additional reports were presented, including reports from three committees: the Committee on the Advancement and Refinement of Rhetorical Criticism, the Committee on the Scope of Rhetoric and the Place of Rhetorical Studies in Higher Education, and the Committee on the Nature of Rhetorical Invention. All three reports were provocative and sensitive, with Nichols bringing attention to a remarkable, timely, and important question: She stated, “[M]ore than forty males presented their wisdom about rhetoric for the 70’s and beyond” (Nebergall & Nichols, 1972, p. 96). Nichols stated appropriately: “Would the inclusion of four or five females have greatly lowered the quality of the discussion?” (Nebergall & Nichols, 1972, p. 96). Nichols then circled back to Hutchins and stressed that critical content includes the consciousness of many.

In an essay that Nichols (1974) wrote for Walter Fisher’s edited book *Rhetoric: A Tradition in Transition*, she suggested that a humane rhetoric has a particular purpose that works to bridge the chasm between and among persons. Humane rhetoric has a practical contribution. A humane tradition within rhetoric seeks bridges and pursues peace and justice. The rhetoric does not fall in love with itself, but acts as a form of service for and about something greater. The existential moment of her writing about humane rhetoric reminded people about the importance of addressing the issues before us. She cited that humane rhetoric must point to a future that does not destroy its past; one cannot defend the “not yet” as the only sense of hope. Humane rhetoric is always relational, moving one person and ideas to another, acting as a rhetorical bridge. The metaphor of a bridge between and among persons and ideas serves as a relational reminder that such an education is something that none of us in the field of communication can or should abdicate.

I conclude this essay with Marie Hochmuth Nichols’s most famous address, “When You Set Out for Ithaca,” which was her keynote address at the Central States Speech Communication

Association in Michigan on April 15, 1977. She reminded her audience that all the clamor of the 1960s and 1970s about being relevant resulted in “the rhetoric of the new left . . . [being] almost archaic” (Nichols, 1977, p. 145). She reminded all that prophecy is a risky business. In her 1977 address, Nichols returned to Ulysses’s journey and struggle to find his homeland. She argued that if we are not careful, we begin to think that nothing has happened of significance before we have arrived on the battlefield. There is a long history of voices before us. There is travel before our arrival and long after our absence. “Journey,” used to describe education, means to understand and try to assist not just products, but also our students and us. Too often we are too eager to listen to Calypso, forgetting that we have a call to and from a homeland. There are many siren songs that one must warily avoid. Nichols then cited an article entitled “Can Ethics Be Taught” by Derek Bok,³² president of Harvard University from 1971 to 1991 and again from 2006 to 2007, which called for increased attention to moral reasoning (Nichols, 1977). Speech communication scholars, such as Richard Johannesen,³³ then started writing about communication ethics. Nichols worried, however, that we might be moving too quickly from debate to dialogue, both necessary in rhetorical ethics.

The discipline requires a broad-based understanding of a humane rhetoric that provides, in the words of Kenneth Burke, “equipment for living” (as cited in Nichols, 1977, p. 153). Nichols concluded her address with another quotation from Hutchins, who stressed that the key to an education is not only what we know and learn, but also our purpose for learning. It is rhetorical purpose that directs our actions and engagements with another. Nichols’s conclusion of the address cited James I. McCord’s³⁴ address to the Princeton Seminary graduating class of 1975. She recited a few lines:

“When you set out for Ithaka
 pray that your road’s a long one,
 full of adventure, full of discovery. . . .
 Keep Ithaka always in mind.
 Arriving there is what you’re destined for.
 But don’t hurry the journey at all.
 Better if it goes on for years
 so you’re old by the time you’ve reached the island,
 wealthy with all you’ve got along the way,
 not expecting Ithaka to make you rich.
 Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey.
 Without her you wouldn’t have set out”
 (as cited in Nichols, 1977, p. 156).

Nichols reminds us that a rhetorical education that refuses to forget the importance of engagement, activity, and responsibility. Nichols understood that when all is finished, what matters is the journey. A good life does not find completion, but, at best, an opportunity to pass the torch of a meaningful life’s journey to another. This is both the joy and the sacred responsibility of rhetorical education.

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Notes

1 When citing Marie Hochmuth Nichols’s work, I use the surname she had at the time of the work’s publication.

2 I am thankful to Chuck Vick, the gracious interviewer, and the department of St. Cloud State University for eventually hiring me.

3 John Patton was recognized by the National Communication Association in 1977 with the Karl R. Wallace Memorial Award for outstanding scholarship in rhetoric and public address. His work largely focuses on rhetorical criticism.

4 B. F. Skinner was chair of psychology at Indiana University, finishing his career at Harvard University. He is known for his work in behaviorism and helped popularize the field of behavioral psychology.

5 I. A. Richards was a literary critic and rhetorician who contributed to the New Criticism movement of the twentieth century. Marshall McLuhan was among his students while he taught at Cambridge University.

6 Susanne Langer was one of the first American women to achieve a career in philosophy and be recognized as an American philosopher. She is known for her epistemic view of language.

7 Mortimer J. Adler (1902–2001) founded the Great Books of the Western World program as well as the Great Books Foundation. He founded the Institute for Philosophical Research in 1952 and also was a member of the Board of Editors for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

8 Michael Polanyi was a Hungarian-British scientist turned philosopher who wrote about the realm of “tacit knowledge.” His scientific research was encouraged by Albert Einstein, and he was a senior research fellow at the University of Oxford.

9 Andrew King has written widely on twentieth century rhetorical criticism. He has served as editor of the NCA *Quarterly Journal of Speech* and is the current chair of communication at Louisiana State University.

10 George Saintsbury (1845–1933) was, according to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, “the most influential English literary historian and critic of the early 20th century.” In 1895 he became Regius chair of rhetoric and English literature at the University of Edinburgh. He retired from that position in 1915.

11 Kenneth E. Andersen is Professor Emeritus at the University of Illinois-Urbana. He was recognized by the Speech Communication Association for distinguished service in 1994 and is known for his groundbreaking work in communication ethics.

12 Don Bryant was a professor at University of Iowa. He was recognized by the Speech Communication Association for distinguished service in 1972 and was named a Distinguished Scholar posthumously in 1995.

13 Bower Aly served as president of the National Association of Teachers of Speech (later NCA) in 1944 and was later awarded for distinguished service to the organization. He spent the majority of his career as a professor at the University of Oregon and is known for his work on the history of American public address.

14 Don M. Burks was recognized by the Speech Communication Association in 1979 for his distinguished scholarship in rhetoric and public address. His work on rhetorical sensitivity is highly cited.

15 Patricia M. Ball was Lecturer in English at the University of Leeds, authoring *The Central Self* and *The Science of Aspects*.

16 Alfred North Whitehead was a mathematician, philosopher, and metaphysician at Harvard University. He wrote one of the most important works of mathematical logic with former student Bertrand Russell.

17 Karl Wallace was president of the Speech Association of America in 1954, and there is now an NCA memorial award for outstanding scholarship in his name. He is best known for his work on public speaking, Francis Bacon, and the fundamentals of rhetoric.

18 John Witherspoon was the sixth president of Princeton University, where he encouraged and expanded the university's emphasis on education in rhetoric. He came to the United States from Scotland in 1768, and was the only clergyman and college president to sign the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

19 Timothy Dwight was president of Yale University from 1795 to 1817. He was a prominent Puritan and taught theology and rhetoric at Yale for 30 years.

20 Wayland Maxfield Parrish was a prominent professor at the University of Pittsburgh, where he served as head of the communication department's Division of Public Speaking, and at the University of Illinois. Both universities now sponsor awards in his name.

21 David Daiches was a Jewish literary critic, scholar, and writer raised in Edinburgh. He was President of the Association for Scottish Literary Studies, Director of the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at Edinburgh University, and later president of the Saltire Society.

22 Archbishop Richard Whately was an English scholar and theologian who served as the Archbishop of Dublin beginning in 1831. His work was influential in logic, rhetoric, theology, economics, and literature (he was one of the first to recognize the talent of Jane Austen).

23 Douglas Ehninger was president of the Speech Association of America in 1968. The National Communication Association has placed their Distinguished Rhetorical Scholar Award in his name.

24 Richard McKeon was an American philosopher mentored by John Dewey at Columbia University. He taught at the University of Chicago for 40 years, where he stressed the importance of rhetoric as an intellectual art and was a founding member of the Chicago School of literary criticism.

25 Lawrence Rosenfield was awarded the National Communication Association's Lifetime Teaching Excellence Award in 1999. He is known for his work in speech and rhetorical criticism.

26 Samuel Becker was president of the Speech Communication Association in 1974 and was granted its Distinguished Service Award in 1989. He received the Speech Communication Association's Distinguished Scholar Award in 1992, and the Distinguished Service Award was named after him in 1995.

27 Henry Johnstone was granted the NCA's Distinguished Scholar Award in 1998. He founded and edited the *Philosophy and Rhetoric* journal and is known for his idea of the "rhetorical wedge."

28 Chaim Perelman was a Polish philosopher known for his work on rhetorical audience in *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (1969). He was a leading argumentation theorist in the United States and taught at the Pennsylvania State University.

29 Wayne Brockriede received the Speech Communication Association's Distinguished Service Award in 1986 and the Distinguished Scholar Award in 1994. He is known for his work in rhetorical criticism and argument.

30 Edward P. J. Corbett was an American rhetorician and scholar. He was a founding member of the Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking and is known for his work on classical rhetoric.

31 According to Bitzer and Black (1971), the Pheasant Run Conference was the third installment of the National Developmental Project on Rhetoric, in which reflections were made on the two "Wingspread Conferences" at the Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, WI, occurring earlier in the year. The Pheasant Run conference served to expand upon the ideas and observations made at the Wingspread Conferences for the future of humanities scholarship of rhetoric.

32 Derek Bok served as the 25th President of Harvard University. He was an American lawyer and professor who stressed the importance of oral communication.

33 Richard Johannesen is known for his work in rhetorical theory, criticism, and ethics. He served as Chair of the Northern Illinois University Department of Communication.

34 James I. McCord was president of Princeton Theological Seminary from 1959 to 1983. He was a leader in the ecumenical movement.

MARIE HOCHMUTH NICHOLS AND THE OBLIQUE ROAD TO ITHAKA

Jim A. Kuypers

In 1939 Hoyt Hopewell Hudson wrote to alumni of Princeton University explaining what he called the “principle of the indirect attack, or the oblique approach”¹ to obtaining the best education Princeton had to offer:

By [this approach] I mean that if a fellow faces you with the avowed purpose of getting the most out of you, and trains his sights to accomplish that end, he is likely to get very little. Getting the most from Princeton must be very much the same as getting the most from a book, a friendship, or an experience. Consider the friendship. You don’t take a person as your friend because you are scheming to get something out of him. Or if you do, then you don’t know what friendship means and will never get anything worth getting. Rather you discover, apparently by chance, that this person means something to you. There is a give and take between you. You find him. He finds you. You begin to feel that you know him, and you perceive that knowing him invigorates and enriches you.²

So it was for me with Marie Hochmuth Nichols. I discovered her by chance, and in reading her work, getting to know her, discovered throughout the years that we had much in common. Most definitely, knowing her both invigorated and enriched my scholarly life. That is what this chapter is about, how that initial meeting grew into a deeper understanding of Nichols’s work, and how she eventually became part of my group of seven. By that I mean the seven rhetorical scholars who most influenced my development as a scholar. I would be unsurprised to discover my story is not unique, and that many of you have traveled the oblique road, knowingly or unknowingly.

Regardless, it is my hope that you *will* find similarities with my experience in your own discovery of Nichols; even more, perhaps you will encourage those who have missed meeting her on their path to take a moment now and introduce themselves. Such an instance will not be regretted. As for me, especially now looking back, I see clearly how knowing Nichols has enriched me. In the pages that follow I trace my story of “meeting her.” Specifically, I share how we met, and then detail a few of the more important “conversations” I had with her, and share how these conversations often turned into places of importance in my scholarly work. I conclude by sharing some thoughts on how her work is relevant to us today.

Discovery

My first exposure to Marie Hochmuth Nichols was in Marilyn J. Young’s Historical-Critical Methods course at Florida State University. It was my first graduate course, which I was taking in a spring semester. I was a video store manager by day and now a neophyte graduate student by night. The discussions were so stimulating and

Young so full of information; her dynamically modified Socratic method of teaching (portions of which I later incorporated into my own style of teaching) was truly enriching. It also led to my taking copious notes since so much of each class discussion moved beyond the boundaries of the readings. One such entry was “Marie Hockmuth Nichols, look her up!” Something Young said about her had struck me enough to write her name down. I did look her up that semester, and saw there was far too much to read. And yet, one essay did make its way onto my reading list that spring, her introduction, “The Criticism of Rhetoric,” penned as Marie Kathryn Hochmuth, contained in *A History and Criticism of American Public Address*, volume III, of which she was editor.³ I retrieved the book from our library, and that chapter was my oblique introduction to Nichols and her view on rhetorical criticism. Nichols has been with me since. In the fall I took Rhetorical Criticism with Young as my formal introduction to the art, and found that the principles put forth by Nichols served me well.

In both Rhetorical Criticism and an advanced seminar on criticism I took later with Young, I discovered more of Nichols, particularly her well-read, and in my opinion landmark essay, “Lincoln’s First Inaugural,” a beautifully written and executed piece of criticism. Also, I discovered she, along later with L. Virginia Holland,⁴ took the lead in introducing our discipline to the wild and wonderful works of Kenneth Burke, although at the time I did not read any of them; they were oranges hanging on farther trees. Time constraints, other interests, and simply the flow of graduate school saw me put those aside for a later time. I was, however, entranced by the titles of her other works: “When You Set Out for Ithaka . . .”⁵ “Rhetoric and the Humane Tradition,”⁶ “Rhetoric and Style,”⁷ “The Tyranny of Relevance,”⁸ “The Search for Excellence,”⁹ and *Rhetoric and Criticism*.¹⁰ And some of those saw the light of my reading lamp while I was still at Florida State. One I well recall was her speech on relevance. It was not what I initially thought it would be, but that is part of the oblique approach, and I was not disappointed.

Relevance

In “The Tyranny of Relevance,” Nichols wrote of the “backstairs” that serve as the “secret entranceway to knowledge”; this portal consists of “unobtrusive words” that have “uncertain meanings that are permitted to slip off the tongue or the pen without fear and without research . . .”¹¹ In the eighteenth century we had natural law, reason, sentiment, perfectibility; in the nineteenth we had fact, evolution, progress; in the early twentieth we had relativity, process, function. Nichols highlighted that certain backstairs terms had developed in the 1960s and were influencing communication scholarship: white devil, black power, military industrial complex, the Establishment, and importantly for her essay, relevance in education. She pointed out that relevance is an abstraction, but was being treated as an “objective reality” in educational circles. “But we need,” she poignantly wrote,

to ask ourselves whether or not the idea of relevance has not taken on more sinister aspects in our time, whether it has not become a bullying slogan, allied with power, designed to stop thought, as slogans frequently do; whether it fosters unreason, instead of reason, whether, under it, the

freedom of the teacher to teach and the student to learn are not threatened, whether under it also, the curriculum is about to become a patchwork, not a unified system of teaching based on a philosophy of education, but on power, and whether under it we are preparing to sacrifice standards of excellence for we know not what.¹²

Her summary of her deliberations is illuminating: “Relevance to *what* is indeed a key question.”¹³ I was impressed at how Nichols spoke truth into the roiling ideational trends of the day, that she would risk the wrath of ideologically driven peers to speak out for a humane rationality that would critically examine the discipline’s uncritical, passionate beliefs.

Although not thinking specifically of Nichols’s speech at that time, in 2000 I penned an essay titled, “Must We All Be Political Activists?”¹⁴ In that essay I wrote of backstairs terms, but in an oblique way, calling attention to a growing trend to foster an ameliorative dimension in all criticism, led by the battle cry of “race, gender, class.” Those were the backstairs terms. We are today, I am inclined to believe, still embracing these terms, but within a growing attention to social relevance. Terms such as social justice, race, gender, inclusion, and diversity are the favored backstairs terms. We have officers and presidents of the National Communication Association speaking uncritically about embracing a preferred interpretation of these terms and openly calling for political activism through scholarship. Would it not have been amazingly eye-opening if one of them had penned a presidential address with the same bold, critical stance as did Nichols? One finds oneself asking, after rereading Nichols, if these new backstairs terms are but a justification for scholars with a political itch to simply rewrite the curriculum and scholarly norms to fulfill their political passions. Nichols’s poignant end question on “relevance” is this: “I want to know whose ideology should guide us in our judgment of what is relevant and what is not.” Pausing to consider her thought, I am of the opinion that she would want to know the same today, only with the term “relevance” replaced with one of our association’s contemporary backstairs terms.

Kenneth Burke and the “New Rhetoric”

I was introduced to Kenneth Burke in one of Marilyn Young’s seminars in Rhetorical Criticism. Once again, I put an essay of Nichols on my reading list: “Kenneth Burk and the ‘New Rhetoric.’ ” After graduating from Florida State University with my M.A. in communication studies, I matriculated to the University of Iowa to study rhetoric with Bruce Gronbeck and Donovan Ochs; interestingly, I ended up with Michael Calvin McGee as my doctoral advisor. It was while there, awash with critical theory of the Frankfurt school and French postmodern elites, that I longingly picked up that essay to read. I was struck by this admission:

To read one of [Burke's] volumes independently without regard to the chronology of publication, makes the problem of comprehension even more difficult because of the specialized meanings attached to various

words and phrases. . . . One cannot possibly compress the whole of Burke's thought into an article. The most that one can achieve is to signify his importance as a theorist and critic and to suggest the broad outlines of his work.¹⁵

Nevertheless, she was able to “compress” in many ways, and her summing up was eye-opening to me; I later discovered that I was not alone in my appreciation of her efforts. Burke himself had complimented her, as have other illustrious rhetorical scholars.¹⁶ I knew after reading that essay that I wanted to learn more about Burke; unfortunately, that was frowned upon at Iowa at that time. For numerous reasons I withdrew from Iowa after completing my first year in their doctoral program. Rethinking what I wanted to do, I knew Burke would eventually be part of that new direction.

After a thoroughgoing review of my options, I joined the communication program at Louisiana State University, where I studied with Andrew King. And of course, with King came Burke. When King offered his graduate seminar in Burkeian dramatism I immediately signed up. I remember it well, where I sat, how the class situated itself as a large semicircle with King behind a thin lectern situated just in the middle between the two ends, like a classical orator at the bottom of a large amphitheater. He would often step out from behind the lectern and talk to us. Now, Nichols suggested that one approach Burke chronologically noting shifts in meanings and emphases. Burke with Andy King was a different beast entirely; complete immersion, sink or swim. King’s artistry of teaching and deep knowledge of the material were on display, master illuminating master. During each class he would begin discussion with all of us easily following along. Then he would ratchet it up a notch, and a few of us would drop off; then ratchet it up again, and a few more would drop off until finally he would touch upon an epiphany, and then drop back down to speak again to us all. Something for everyone, each pushed to his or her highest. I cherished that course with him; after one class early in the semester I sought out Nichols’s other works on Burke following this in-class exchange with King:

Me: “Well, with Burke, can’t Identification be both means and end?”

King: “Yes! Brilliant!”

King responded that I had just been brilliant. Where did I get that idea, though? I knew it wasn’t mine since I remember such moments of epiphany, and I’d not read enough of Burke yet to have those about his work. I had, though, recently reread Nichols essay on Burke in preparation for the course, so that idea was fresh in my mind. I decided to share this.

Me: “Well, I had read Marie Hochmuth Nichols’s essay on Burke and seem to recall her making that point.”

King: “Excellent, you read an apostle of the Master. She was like John the Baptist speaking to the discipline in the Wilderness. Everyone should read her.”

And then he was off on another point. Interestingly, it appeared that I had lost no intellectual credit for having read Nichols and remembering some key points rather than having deduced my point from reading Burke himself. In Kingspeak, that class was like taking a bath in steel.

No doubt but that Nichols's work played an important part in developing my taste for Burke. We read primary materials in that class, and King was exceptional as a guide. Yet there was a bit of the oblique approach in me, and I wanted to strike out to explore something I was not required to read. Nichols was someone I had come to trust, so it was natural that I looked to her.

After Graduation

Immediately after graduation my top research goal was to rework my dissertation into a book. Yet even then an earlier seed of an idea was beginning to sprout, one again informed obliquely in part by my exposure to Nichols. As early as Historical-Critical Methods with Young I had taken an interest in the developmental history of our field, especially the generative days of the Cornell School. My readings of Nichols, and others such as Everett Lee Hunt, Hoyt Hopewell Hudson, and Waldo Braden had grounded me well in a rhetorical humane tradition. It seemed to me, though, that our discipline was too often chasing the latest trend, and in doing so often overlooked our historical strengths. My early readings of Nichols helped form this impression, and as I mulled over this growing idea I realized that she also needed to be part of what eventually became a major project. So, she informed part of my decision to approach Andy King about co-editing a book on *The Twentieth Century Roots of Rhetorical Studies*. Three generations of important scholars were included in that volume, including a chapter by John H. Patton on Marie Hochmuth Nichols.¹⁷

The goal of the book was grand, perhaps even fantastic. We sought to explore the conception of rhetoric of eleven major Twentieth Century rhetoricians through analyses of their oeuvres. We focused on scholars from the early period, the middle period, of which Nichols was included, and then scholars from the last part of the twentieth century. Individual chapters provided an overview of that scholar's conception of rhetoric, whether it involved criticism, teaching, or theory. We felt that the communication discipline often highlighted scholarly production outside of our own area; however, we grudgingly acclaim the work of our own critics, teachers, and theorists. By exploring the conception of rhetoric that guided the scholarly understanding of these critics, the chapters collectively act to dispel a myth: that the speech communication discipline was spawned from a monolithic and rigid center eventually called neo-Aristotelianism. Importantly, we sought to showcase historical strengths of rhetorical studies, and to show the centrality of rhetoric to the formation of the discipline and to the study of human communication. Nichols was among those central to proving our thesis. Her work on Kenneth Burke and I.A. Richards, her editing of the 3rd volume of *A History of Rhetoric and Public Address*, clearly demonstrate the discipline had begun movement away from

Neo-Aristotelianism long before Edwin Black penned his landmark book, *Rhetorical Criticism*.¹⁸

Purpose Practice Pedagogy

The “Roots” book was published in 2001, and since then I have grown increasingly concerned over the diminution of rhetorical studies as an area of emphasis in our undergraduate education. How can this be given its centrality to a true liberal arts curriculum, and to understanding the creative and complicated act of persuasive communication to the proper functioning of our Constitutional Republic? There is no simple answer, but the question, again obliquely, finds a parallel with something I had read in Nichols’s work years earlier, while a graduate student at Florida State University.

In her short editorial, “The Search for Excellence,” Nichols shared her thoughts about how to maintain “excellence” in the discipline of communication, particularly with a focus on the rhetorical side of the discipline: “Although we doubtless helped permit rhetoric as a term to fall into disuse, and permitted other disciplines to take over, our job now is to continue the reclamation with instruments and insights adaptable to the deepest study of language.”¹⁹ This was news to me at the nascence of my career. Looking back obliquely, I had been alerted to the issue, and that sensitivity would continue to grow into action long after I had forgotten I had read that particular editorial by Nichols.

Upon rereading her editorial for this chapter, however, I am reminded today how we still have difficulty locating our disciplinary center. As I type this, you will no doubt recognize that among the newest trends is data analytics, with even some rhetorical scholars jumping on the bandwagon. Certainly, it is an important development of which to be aware, but one of which most disciplines should be aware—it is in no way unique to communication studies. Yet I see some in our discipline rushing to embrace it, make it central to our cause, when in reality it is not something central to our discipline, but rather tools of numerical analysis that can be used by all disciplines. We are seemingly, with great regularity, looking to embrace what others are doing, even as other disciplines piratically take the fruits of our rhetorical scholarship. Nichols certainly acknowledged that rhetoric was only one of our discipline’s interests, yet within that rhetorical interest she urged us to retrench, reclaim, and recommit to excellence in the area. Nichols wrote of not only this but of creation: “Our object should be to gather the splinters of language study into a central discipline that all other disciplines must respect.”²⁰

With this observation in mind, another oblique influence from the search for excellence of which Nichols wrote is seen in this publication, *Purpose, Practice, and Pedagogy in Rhetorical Criticism*.²¹ The book served to fill a void in our discipline’s literature concerning the purpose, practice, and pedagogy associated with performing rhetorical criticism. Yes, such literature exists that touches upon these issues (predominantly purpose), but it does so primarily as scattered journal articles and as sections within chapters of textbooks on rhetorical criticism. This edited book brought together 15 established rhetorical critics, each of whom addressed three questions:

1. What do you believe the purpose of performing rhetorical criticism should be?
2. How do you perform rhetorical criticism in your own work?
3. How do you teach others how to perform rhetorical criticism?

The idea was to provide in one convenient location well thought out and argued opinion pieces that stress the more personal nature of criticism, and that would to serve as a disciplinary resource, and as a teaching and learning aid. Importantly, it could serve as a place to go for justifications for arguing for the importance of teaching rhetoric, for it to be considered, in the words of Nichols, “a central discipline that all other disciplines must respect.”²²

Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism

A good portion of my published research involves exploration of the intersection of media and politics for which I use an eclectic rhetorical lens. Over the years I have moved from framing analysis to dramatism in analyzing that intersection; through it all, though, I have always considered myself a metacritic, with a healthy percentage of my work devoted to explorations of how we define rhetoric and engage in criticism. Nichols’s work impacted my own in this area; I can see it, but really cannot point to a specific location. Again, the oblique approach prevailed with her. I would take classes, and meet her along my path; after graduation, I would be researching, and come across her work. I am not one to ignore relevant work just because it has an older pedigree. I recall once at Iowa having a paper returned in which every single citation in the bibliography with a date more than 20 years old was circled. The comments read, “relevance?” Much of Nichols’s work would, lamentably, be deemed irrelevant by that instructor and others of like mind. But while on the oblique path, one may find relevance in work young and old. I hold Nichols among good company in our discipline, which is why she was included in *Twentieth Century Roots of Rhetorical Studies*. With this in mind, there are two areas where I see her in my work, and that is in my conception of the nature of rhetoric and the nature of criticism.

So, what is rhetoric? A challenging question, but one that Andy King and I answered by beginning with this definition: “The strategic use of communication, oral or written, to achieve specifiable goals.”²³ I can imagine as I type this some of you thinking, “that’s not right, what about...?” Of course, it *is* limited, but we felt that it presented a sound entry level understanding to rhetoric, one that could be expanding upon with later additions to the concept, such a Burkeian identification. And I feel that Nichols knew of these limitations as well. Using her in my text at just this point of departure I inserted her definition from her essay, “Rhetoric and the Humane Tradition”:

[R]hetoric is an act of adapting discourse to an end outside of itself. It serves many ends, from promoting decision to giving pleasure. It does not include ships, guns, an alluring sun, the dance, or the Cathedral of Chartres. It does not include rolling drums or the sound of marching feet; it does not include extralinguistic symbols of peace or the clenched fist of

power. It does not deny that there are other symbolic forms for altering behavior, which often accompany or reinforce it.²⁴

Among the important pedagogical objectives of beginning with a pragmatic and narrow definition of rhetoric is to stress the point that as one moves further away from the use of symbols with generally agreed upon meanings (in our case spoken or written words) to the use of symbols with imprecise meanings (ships, guns, and alluring sun; furniture, dance) “one finds that the *intentions* of the rhetor, or communicator, play less a part in the rhetorical exchange and that the *impressions* of the receiver play a greater role.”²⁵ In this sense the meaning behind the rhetoric increasingly shifts from the person crafting the message to the impressions of those receiving the message irrespective of the intentions of the original communicator.²⁶ There were many from our discipline’s past (and present, too) who see such distinctions in our understanding of rhetoric, but I chose Nichols for special reason. She situated her understanding and discussion clearly within the humane tradition, and that is something I valued. At the end of “What is Rhetoric?” her essay, “Rhetoric in the Humane Tradition,”²⁷ is one of the five we recommended for additional reading.

Ever since my very first exposure to criticism I had viewed it as an art. It certainly makes sense, to me, that at least in so far as we view the construction of rhetoric to be an art that the method best suited for uncovering its nuances should be an art as well. When I was writing the chapter, “Criticism as an Art” for the textbook *Rhetorical Criticism: Perspectives in Action*,²⁸ I was quite aware that student readers were unlikely to have been exposed to criticism, but rather to social scientific ways of generating knowledge. So how to introduce them to this different way of generating knowledge? As I was reviewing what I wanted to write, I began my outline by stressing my own ideas about this process of producing criticism: what is it, what is it designed to do, why do it, and so on. After that, I looked back at what had been written before on the subject, at least in terms of what I had stressed in my own studies as being important. Finally, I looked at what others were saying about it at that time. Unsurprisingly, Nichols found her way onto my list of scholars for inclusion. What had she written that was so important?

Nichols consistently argued for rhetoric’s position in humane studies, and her view of criticism fit into her world view on that subject. Such studies are “concerned with the formation of judgment and choice,” she said. Additionally, they teach us that “technical efficiency is not enough, that somewhere beyond that lies an area in which answers are not formulaary and methods not routine.” Criticism reminds us that beyond “the area of the formula lies an area where understanding, imagination, knowledge of alternatives, and a sense of purpose operate.”²⁹ Her view of rhetoric and criticism as a humane study fit in with my love of the early discipline, as seen in *Twentieth Century Roots of Rhetorical Studies*, so it made sense to reread Nichols with an eye toward inclusion. I wanted what I wrote to be grounded in that tradition, looking forward, but conscious of whose shoulders I was standing upon as I worked to introduce the idea of criticism to neophyte critics, many of whom would have little or no idea about the relationship of humane studies and the production of criticism.

My idea was to emphasize the different nature of criticism vis-à-vis science, something others had pointed out, but that I wanted to do in a way that extended the comparison while concurrently making it accessible to a new generation. Nichols's work resonates well still today. The way I see it, science and humanities view our world in greatly different ways, and this is seen clearly in the amount of personality allowed into one's investigation of phenomena; in short, they differ in the amount of influence a scientist or critic has on the actual workings of the study. Scientists must adhere to a strict method, *the scientific method*. *All* scientists use this basic method with a goal of successful experiments being *100 percent* replicable by other scientists. Although the actual application of the method can take different forms, the method dominates, and the personality of the researchers are minimized or removed entirely from the study, the method, itself. Viewed in this manner, "likes and dislikes, religious and political preferences are supposed to be as far removed as possible from the actual study. Even the language scientists use to describe the results of their studies distances them from the results of those studies. For example, in scientific essays one normally finds a detached use of language, with researchers forcing themselves into the background by highlighting the study itself: 'This study found that. . . .'"³⁰

Criticism is a method, one of many in the humanities, that stands on the opposite end of a methodological scale measuring the inclusion of the personality of the researcher. It actively involves such traits. Choices are made during all phases of criticism that include large amounts of personality: what to study, why to study, how to study, a rhetorical artifact. The personality of the critic is considered an integral component of the study, even as rigorous and "objective" ideals for arguing one's critical point are stressed.³¹ The method of criticism, founded on the goals of increasing understanding, providing insight, and fostering appreciation for a rhetorical artifact, is one open to having critics use a variety of means, with some even developing their own perspectives for approaching an artifact.³²

Viewed in this manner, criticism is necessary, as art, for bringing to bear a method well suited for generating knowledge about artistic productions—rhetorical artifacts. It is art, not science. Just like the artifacts it illuminates, it also uses probability-based methods of argument. As such a method, it exists on its own, and is *not* subordinated to other ways of generating knowledge (i.e., social scientific or scientific). And here Nichols speaks again today, articulating this point, "It is reason and judgment, not a [computer], that makes a man a critic."³³ And thus two important, personal parts of criticism, insight and imagination, top statistical applications when studying rhetorical action.

Drawing Nigh to Ithaka

My favorite quote from Nichols is simple in its structure, yet quite sophisticated in its underlying announcement of her incredible understanding of humane study:

*The humanities without science may be blind, but science without the humanities may be vicious.*³⁴

Let that declaration sink in for a moment.... The need for humane study could not be made much clearer. For Nichols, humane study included in a large way the study of rhetoric, and the study of rhetoric, although certainly able to be examined from a multitude of methods, also necessitates the method of criticism.

Her unwavering commitment to developing the entire student, as much as one could while at a public institution, was unquestionable, as was her trepidation over educational and disciplinary trends that would diminish that development. I am inclined to believe she would be troubled by recent trends in both areas when I recall these words: “When thoughtful activity is to be circumscribed by the need for scientists, I would suspect that we may no longer be thinking of the fully developed person.”³⁵ The uncritical acceptance of the push for STEM training,³⁶ and our own discipline’s embrace of big data are two such trends. I have seen, for instance, in my own department, the diminishment of communication studies in exchange for communication science. Calls for restraint and a liberal arts approach that included rhetoric and criticism were met with replies, even from some in rhetoric, of that does not “moving us forward.” I do not believe Nichols would applaud such moves, but rather say that we are in some way diminishing our disciplinary selves in our search for relevance. Perhaps in the future someone will remind those rushing to embrace the latest trends of her essay, “When You Set Out for Ithaka...”. I would certainly suggest those rushing to exchange rhetoric for the latest trend read it, to remind themselves the reasons for rhetoric’s importance in our curriculum are longstanding. She had many good points in that essay, certainly ones relevant to many of our disciplinary discussions today:

Does it really make any sense at all for departments of communication to minimize its importance, or subordinate it to some of the narcissistic orientations that are dominating departments of speech communication? Does it make any sense to encourage the “triumph of technique over purpose” in our multitudinous studies in communication? Do we have our eyes on Ithaka, or have we lost our way?³⁷

Importantly, we know that so many of generation Z (iGen) have declining abilities in problem solving, and like the generations X (Baby Bust) and Y (Millennials) before them, in communication skills as well.³⁸ To this situation, Nichols’s question of 40 years ago still obtains: “Does it make any sense at all, in an age of declining verbal skills, to minimize work in rhetoric in departments of speech communication,--its techniques, its history, its criticism? Is it more important to offer work in body language or ‘People Reading?’ ”³⁹ Today we might ask is it more important to offer work in social media data analytics or perhaps in social dimensions of games, sims, and virtual environments? Although certainly of interest, and touching upon important societal developments, are they truly helping to establish communication as a central discipline? Are they truly helping move students beyond a technical proficiency or helping to fully develop them in

Nichols's sense? She was well aware of the dangers of trying to look into the future, warning us on this very point: "Prophecy is a risky undertaking in a world governed, at least in part, by forces over which we do not have much control."⁴⁰

I think part of the difficulty with deciding what to teach in departments of communication stems from a basic fissure in how we view our students. Are they adult citizens who will go out and influence society and work; or are they kids who will be future workers and consumers who happen to be citizens? Nichols certainly embraced the former view, and that is among the main reasons I admire her so. She embraced students as a whole persons, and felt, as did many others during her day, that communication studies, of which rhetoric is part, should work to improve humans as humans, and not just provide job skills or exposure to the latest disciplinary trends.

It behooves us to follow her advice on this point. She certainly is not alone in our discipline's history in calling for such a view, although hers is a voice coming out of especially turbulent times, and thus takes on a quality that I feel may resonate with many today. These gems of insight are peppered throughout her essays, demonstrating that she was not writing about this only once, but that it was a theme interwoven throughout her scholarship (and teaching). There are several quotes from Nichols that are particular favorites of mine. The first is actually a quote by Richard Weaver that she chose to highlight in her Ithaca essay:

If democracy means anything it means that everyone is an advocate of policy, he must listen to many arguments, and he must make arguments in refutation. He cannot make his honest-held views acceptable to others and he cannot disarm an opponent of an argument unless he has some understanding of the probative value of statements."⁴¹

Quite apropos, particularly in this time of increasing political incivility. It is a reminder that blind adherence to one's ideological position is sure to bypass argument as well as civility. Another that touches upon this theme is one that comes deep from within the humane tradition and speaks most certainly to our times as well:

I believe that the humane tradition in rhetoric means that we must in our muddled times use our effort to train men and woman who can make an authentic statement, an honest judgment, and display a contagious allegiance to truth, justice, tolerance, courage, and hope, all parts of man's work as citizen and statesman.⁴²

Again, most relevant to our present day. Those wishing to train our students to think for themselves, to participate fully in our Constitutional Republic, will do quite well to incorporate Nichols's work into their effort to do so. I am grateful for that moment, in that first graduate class, when Young's enthusiasm for Nichols touched me. It guided me—obliquely, yes—to a remarkable person, one whose scholarship not only impacted my own, but those of so many others. Through all of us so touched she still lives today.

Notes

1 Hoyt H. Hudson, "The Oblique Approach: Discovery and the Learning Process as By-Products of a Formal Education," *Princeton Alumni Weekly* 39, no. 16 (February 3, 1939): n.p.

2 Hudson.

3 Marie Kathryn Hochmuth, "The Criticism of Rhetoric," in *A History and Criticism of American Public Address* vol. 3, ed. Marie Kathryn Hochmuth (New York City, NY: Russell & Russell, 1954). Hochmuth later changed her name to Marie Hochmuth Nichols.

4 Holland's dissertation was on Aristotelianism and Kenneth Burke, and although directed by Karl Wallace, Nichols was on Holland's dissertation committee. Holland had an impressive body of work on Burke, even more so considering he had yet to be accepted in our discipline. See L. Virginia Holland, "Rhetorical Criticism: A Burkeian Method," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 39 (1953): 444-450; Laura Virginia Holland, "Aristotelianism in the Rhetorical Theory of Kenneth Burke," Dissertation, DAI 15.01 (1954): 146, <http://hdl.handle.net/2142/58945>; L. Virginia Holland, "Kenneth Burke's Dramatistic Approach in Speech Criticism," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 41 (1955): 352-358; L. Virginia Holland, "Counterpoint: Kenneth Burke and Aristotle's Theories of Rhetoric," (New York City, NY: Philosophical Library, 1959); L. Virginia Holland, "Kenneth Burke's Theory of Communication," *Journal of Communication* 10, no. 4 (1960): 174-184.

5 Marie Hochmuth Nichols, "When You Set Out for Ithaka . . ." *Central States Speech Journal* 28 (1977): 145-156.

6 Marie Hochmuth Nichols, "Rhetoric and the Humane Tradition," in *Rhetoric: A Tradition in Transition*, ed. Walter R. Fisher (Michigan State University Press, 1974), 178-191.

7 Marie Hochmuth Nichols, "Rhetoric and Style," in *Patterns of Literary Style*, ed. Joseph Strelka, (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971), 130-141.

8 Marie Hochmuth Nichols, "The Tyranny of Relevance," *Spectra* 6, (February 1970): 1, 9-10.

9 Marie Hochmuth Nichols, "The Search for Excellence," *Spectra* 5, (February 1969): 1, 2.

10 Marie Hochmuth Nichols, *Rhetoric and Criticism* (Baton Rouge, LA; Louisiana State University Press, 1963).

11 “The Tyranny of Relevance,” 1.

12 “The Tyranny of Relevance,” 9.

13 “The Tyranny of Relevance,” 9.

14 Jim A. Kuypers, “Must We All Be Political Activists?” *The American Communication Journal* 4, no.1 (2000). <http://acjournal.org/journal/vol4/iss1/special/kuypers.htm>

15 Marie Hochmuth [Nichols], “Kenneth Burke and the ‘New Rhetoric,’ ” *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 38 (1952): 144.

16 James L. Golden, Goodwin F. Berquist, William E. Coleman, J. Michael Sproule, *The Rhetoric of Western Thought: From the Mediterranean World to the Global Setting* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 2003), 254

17 John H. Patton, “Marie Hochmuth Nichols: Voice of Rationality in the Humane Tradition of Rhetoric,” in *Twentieth-Century Roots of Rhetorical Studies*, ed. Jim A. Kuypers and Andrew King (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), 123–142.

18 Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (New York City, NY: Macmillan, 1965).

19 “The Search for Excellence,” 2.

20 “The Search for Excellence,” 2.

21 Jim A. Kuypers, ed. *Purpose, Practice, and Pedagogy in Rhetorical Criticism* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Press, 2014).

22 “The Search for Excellence,” 2.

23 Jim A. Kuypers and Andrew King, “What is Rhetoric?” in *Rhetorical Criticism: Perspectives in Action*, 2nd ed. Jim A. Kuypers, ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), 10. Italics omitted.

24 “Rhetoric and the Humane Tradition,” 180.

25 Kuypers and King, 11. Italics in original. As I mention in *Rhetorical Criticism: Perspectives in Action*, one “receiver” of the rhetoric is the critic who examines the instance of rhetorical discourse. The further removed from agreed upon meaning the symbols under consideration are, the more power the critic has over deciding what they mean (over and above what the author of the rhetorical discourse intended them to mean). This can, and sometimes does, lead to abuses by the critic. For more on this see Jim A. Kuypers, “*Doxa* and a Critical Rhetoric: Accounting for the Rhetorical

Agent through Prudence,” *Communication Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (1996): 452-462.

26 Kuypers and King.

27 “Rhetoric and the Humane Tradition,” 178-191.

28 Jim A. Kuypers, ed., *Rhetorical Criticism: Perspectives in Action*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield, 2016).

29 *Rhetoric and Criticism*, 7.

30 Jim A. Kuypers, “The Art of Criticism,” in *Rhetorical Criticism: Perspectives in Action*, 2nd ed. Jim A. Kuypers, ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), 22.

31 See Wayne Brockriede, “Rhetorical Criticism as Argument,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 60 (April 1974): 165-174 and also Kuypers, “The Art of Criticism.”

32 See “The Experiential Perspective,” in Bernard L. Brock, Robert L. Scott, and James W. Chesebro, eds. *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth-Century Perspective*, 3rd ed. (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 85-95; Jim A. Kuypers, “An Eclectic Approach to Criticism,” in Jim A. Kuypers, ed. *Rhetorical Criticism: Perspectives in Action*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), 239-252.

33 “The Criticism of Rhetoric,” 13.

34 Marie Hochmuth Nichols, “Rhetoric and Public Address as a Humane Study,” *Rhetoric and Criticism* (Baton Rouge, La: Louisiana State University Press, 1963), 18. Italics mine.

35 “Rhetoric and Public Address as a Humane Study,” 4.

36 Fareed Zakaria, “Why America’s obsession with STEM education is dangerous,” *The Washington Post*, March 26, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-stem-wont-make-us-successful/2015/03/26/5f4604f2-d2a5-11e4-ab77-9646eea6a4c7_story.html and Michael Collins, “Why Education Reforms Have Failed -- and How to Make Them Work,” *Industry Week*, March 17, 2016, <https://www.industryweek.com/education-training/why-education-reforms-have-failed-and-how-make-them-work>

37 “When You Set Out for Ithaka . . . “ 152.

38 “The Strengths and Weaknesses of Every Generation in your Workforce,” accessed November 1, 2018, <https://www.getsmarter.com/blog/career-advice/know-your-generational/>

39 “When You Set Out for Ithaka . . . “ 152.

40 “When You Set Out for Ithaka . . . “ 154.

41 “When You Set Out for Ithaka . . .” 151.

42 “Rhetoric and the Humane Tradition,” 188.

NOT SO HIDDEN FIGURE: MARIE HOCHMUTH NICHOLS'S LEADERSHIP IN THE COMMUNICATION DISCIPLINE

Jeanne M. Persuit

Introduction

While writing this essay about Marie Hochmuth Nichols, I was tempted to romanticize her as a “hidden figure” — a brilliant woman diligently working behind men to advance the study of communication to places we couldn't imagine the discipline without. However, describing Marie Hochmuth Nichols as a hidden figure of communication does a disservice to both Nichols and the African-American women who were actually hidden figures, not recognized for their contributions to American space exploration until their story was told decades later (Shetterley, 2016). This metaphor simply does not describe Nichols; she was not hidden nor was her impact on the discipline overlooked until now. She served as the first female editor of *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, our oldest journal, and she was the first woman to be elected president of the Speech Association of America (SAA), now the National Communication Association, by the vote of the whole membership (Blankenship, 2004, p. 75). In addition, and most significantly, our discipline's understanding of the work of Kenneth Burke and I.A. Richards would simply not exist if she had not introduced us to these scholars (Blankenship, 2004, p. 75; Ott and Domenico, 2015, p. 240). Nichols's presidential address at the 1969 SAA convention in Chicago, titled “The Tyranny of Relevance,” and a speech manuscript she wrote, “Writing for the Q.J.S.,” illustrates the real person who Marie Hochmuth Nichols was — a product of her time even as she broke the barriers for women to follow in her footsteps. This essay will examine her impact on the communication discipline through her words — the 1969 Tyranny of Relevance, which was never published in its entirety (excerpts were published in *Spectra* following the conference) and the “Writing for the Q.J.S.” manuscript. Both speeches reflect her experience in leadership and both highlight her two concerns about the discipline's legacy: the purpose and need for communication studies.

Communication Ethics Approach

When we study our discipline's history, we must consider the historical moment in which we are working alongside the historical moment of that period in communication studies. Learning from our predecessors requires a commitment to dialogic communication ethics, which allows for understanding. According to Arnett and Arneson (1999):

Once the Enlightenment presuppositions of paradigmatic stability, progress, and universal certainty collapsed as coordinates of normative agreement, the study of communication ethics became an effort of learning through dialogic engagement of the other. With the ground of universal certainty shattered, petite narratives provide mobility of ground that situates embedded agents, offering temporal footing for meeting and

addressing the world, offering a temporal place for interpretive understanding in search of negotiated communication habits of the heart. (p. 64)

Reading the manuscripts of Nichols's most controversial speech requires a temporal place for interpretive understanding of her leadership obligations, her training and education, and her own negotiations of her place in the field. An example of how she negotiated her place comes from her critique and response to a male-only gathering of rhetoricians. Morris and Palczewski, in their essay tracing the history of women and LGBTQI individuals in NCA, relate the story of Nichols publicly questioning the lack of any female scholars at the Wingspread Conference, which was held to discuss adapting the teaching and study of rhetoric to the 20th century. Even though Nichols critiques relevance as a definition, she advocates for the need of speech education to be responsive and adaptable in the 20th century. According to her review of the Wingspread Conference report, Nichols wrote,

More than forty males presented their wisdom about rhetoric for the 70's and beyond. This reviewer, in something of a huff, would like to ask the question: Would the inclusion of four or five females have greatly lowered the quality of the discussions? Such a distribution would probably have been more in line with the realities of the present. (Morris and Palczewski, 139).

Nichols also met the temporal moment when she was elected to the SAA presidency. She had already served on committees and as the editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, but as Blankenship (2004) writes, "In addition to being a rhetorician at a Big Ten university, she fit in with the one-every-10-years rule for electing women" (p. 76). Because of this unfortunate rule, she had to be considered for the presidency at exactly the right time, whereas her male colleagues could decide when and how they could become SAA presidents on their own timeline.

Rejecting the romantic metaphor of the hidden figure also means rejecting the idealization of Nichols as a woman on a pedestal. Her 1969 speech, "The Tyranny of Relevance," gets at the heart of the issue of speech discipline relevance, but neglects to analyze what the call for relevance is pushing back on in the first place.

The Tyranny of Relevance

Blankenship explores the five themes of "The Tyranny of Relevance" in her retrospective essay of Nichols's career. The first theme, which she continues to proclaim throughout her career, is that the speech communication discipline dealt with verbal symbols – words – and that other symbolic manifestations such as dance or architecture were in the realm of other fields of study (Blankenship, 2004, p. 5). Nichols continued this argument well beyond the 1969 SAA Convention.

Nichols begins her address by quoting Daniel Webster in a Senate speech from 1830 where he declares his enchantment with the United States despite the unrest confusion of the time.(p. 1) She compares this to the "disillusionment" stemming from the turmoil of the current time, and that this turmoil did not just affect K-12 and higher education, but it started there (p. 2)

She situates the term “relevance” in a historical tradition of terms that “having from constant repetition lost their metaphorical significance” such as the terms “reason, nature, and natural law” in the 18th century. The terms she groups “relevance in education” with in the 20th century are hypocrisy, colonialism, military-industrial complex, racism, and the Establishment (she adds “futurism” in her own handwriting to this list).

She meditates on the effect of the word, and words like these, saying “The history of this age will not be completely written, if it is written at all, without an understanding of the part words are playing, whether they slip lightly off the tongue or not.” The title, “Tyranny of Relevance” comes from the effect she believes that “relevance in education” is having on the speech discipline and education as a whole.

She recalls Ehninger’s speech from the previous year’s SAA, where he “...observed that if he were to name priorities, he would have to give first consideration to the problem of making speech [communication] education socially relevant.” “‘Because speech as an academic subject first flowered and has always found its most congenial habitat in the predominately Protestant Anglo-Saxon Middle West,’ said Ehninger, ‘we have traditionally been a WASPish profession.’” She cites a few more paragraphs of Ehninger’s speech, a call to the discipline to unite in giving speech communication relevance to improve society ‘...to study not only how to make ideas safe for people but how to make people safe for ideas.’ This sets up her argument that relevance is an agreeable idea in the abstract (as Ehninger was describing it), but that its use had become an unexamined, unreflective descriptor that needed to be analyzed through the tools of our discipline. As Blankenship (2004) notes, “Raising an alarm about any contemporary ‘god term’ is a tricky matter, and taking on the multi-faceted god term, ‘relevance,’ in troubled times proved to be no less difficult.” This would prove to be the second theme of her speech.

The third theme was her concern that physical violence, of the sort of protests and riots Nichols mentions “on my campus in its name [relevance] 11 files of index cards – guides to a library of 4,000,000 volumes – were destroyed” (p. 5), was supplanting argumentation and debate, and that argumentation and debate were being confused with physical violence. The fourth theme Blankenship identified is that “...change is needed, but it should not be brought about by violence” (Blankenship, 2004, p. 78). Nichols supports this theme with her description of campus speakers such as the poet Allen Ginsberg, Senator J. William Fulbright, and S.I. Hayakawa being prevented from speaking on campuses because of protestors, stating “When either the schools or its teachers become political footballs, abdicating to the pressures of slogans of the moment, their use as distinct cultural institutions will have ceased” (1969, p. 30).

The final theme of her speech was to defend the Speech Association of America in response to complaints after the 1968 convention that SAA and the convention were both irrelevant (Blankenship, 2004, p. 78). Nichols (1969a) asks “Does this mean merely maintaining the tradition chaotic as admittedly it has sometimes been? Indeed it does not. It means that our curriculum and our teaching must be adjusted to the common experiences and needs of mankind to be clear...it means letting the arts make us see clearer what are our common experiences, hopes, ideals and feelings are” (p. 33). At the time, SAA included the field of speech disorders – and many of her references are to the scientific support of new speech therapies and understanding speech behavior (Nichols 34).

Morris and Palczewski (2015) describe the challenge that emerges when we discuss the figures of our discipline's history:

Herein lies one of the complexities of histories of sex/gender and sexuality. Even champions of one identity ingredient may not see themselves in that role, and, in fact, may participate in the very privileges that exclude peoples. Hochmuth Nichols is no exception...[with] her speech "The Tyranny of Relevance" which motivated the entire Black membership of the Association to walk out on her presidential address, Nichols reminds us that progress is never linear and liberatory politics are not necessarily coalitional. (157)

She takes rhetorical risks in her arguments that made the audience at SAA uncomfortable at the least and openly hostile at the most. As Morris and Palczewski stated, the Black Caucus walked out in the middle of the speech. One of the more problematic passages and the one which might have inspired the walkout comes mid-speech, when she responds to the idea of a "relevant" speech program:

Suppose we do give up white middle class standards of language training. Might we be playing the 'cruellest hoax' on all of our minorities...when we know that more than 50% of minorities will work in an integrated world, dominated for the foreseeable future by white middle class standards? Are we to continue to adjust the minorities to the lower rungs of the economic ladder, rather than help them claim 11% of the top-echelon positions, 11% of the middle positions to which they are entitled? (p. 16).

This paragraph presents some of the problems of the framing of the speech. The strength of this speech was her daring to unpack, methodically, through the methods of our discipline, the term "relevance" and its impact on higher education and the teaching of speech. However, she frames relevance as an emotivistic approach to education: students and faculty wanting relevance to reflect their personal preferences for what kinds of things they want to learn, teach, and produce (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 12-13). However, the speech does not examine what situation, what circumstances, or what inequity had led to this point in history, where students demanded some connection of their studies to the world in which they lived. We can encounter the ideas in the speech with the understanding of Nichols as an embedded communicative agent, as Arnett and Arneson (1999) explain:

Dialogue is understood as the communicative exchange of embedded agents standing their own ground while being open to the other's standpoint, conceptualizing meaning that emerges in discourse situated between persons while engaging a common text in their communicative event. A dialogic ethic assumes an embedded communicative agent, recognizing that a human being lives within an ongoing conversation that began well before a specific interpersonal interaction begins. This understanding of dialogue presupposes the importance of narrative; narrative gives birth to a given set of social practices, virtues, and understandings of the "good" that are carried forth in a dialogue. A dialogic ethic begins with the presupposition that we enter into an ongoing human conversation that is never concluded. (80)

Nichols entered into an ongoing human conversation that is still not concluded with the Tyranny of Relevance speech: how do we negotiate the relevance and legacy of the study of communication? The 1969 speech is reflective of a historical moment. Fifty years later, we are in another historical moment, but the ongoing conversation bears striking similarity to 1969. What other terms do we use that have been proclaimed god terms but are actually necessary, difficult processes and goods we need to bring about and enact social justice? For example, terms like diversity and inclusion in our discipline are being parsed and debated on social media and CRTNET at the time of this writing, and the politicization of the academy is still a topic of debate and concern. However, Nichols acknowledges the ongoing conversation of the speech communication discipline toward the end of her speech, stating, “Relevance cannot exist in a vacuum. The answer to ‘Relevant to what?’ consists in the answer ‘Man.’ There is a continuity, not of the word, but of man, -- relevance is determined by what man was, is and will be, not what he seems to be” (1969a, p. 34).

Blankenship (2004) describes it as “one of the most controversial addresses in NCA’s history. Some, perhaps many, in the audience came ready to do battle over nothing less than the future role of the academy in the larger social scene” (p. 78). Nichols’s speech divided the membership. Leaving the question of whether her rhetorical risks paid off or damaged her legacy as NCA president, what can be said is that she was not afraid to take these risks to provoke a conversation. As a rhetor, she was clearly influenced by the historical moment in which she emerged as a scholar and teacher, as were many of her contemporaries. Arnett and Arneson (1999) illustrate this in their description of that time:

In an era in which we hovered as a family around the radio and listened carefully to powerful and dominant orators/leaders outlining steps toward hopeful victory, our common sense suggested the power of public speech. Great communication teachers were shaped by significant public conversations of so many powerful orators who emerged from this era. Is it a coincidence that we discover Karl Wallace (1944, 1950, 1955, 1963), Franklyn S. Haiman (1952, 1958), Paul Boase (1969, 1980), Marie Hochmuth Nichols (1977) and many others configuring the discipline around public discourse themes in hopes of countering stories inconsistent with democratic themes and keeping the world safe from an authoritarianism that almost captured the world spirit? (p. 46-47)

As a leader, she looked to the content and methods of our discipline to guide her in her words to the membership of SAA, trusting in the rhetorical tradition of argumentation and debate. The boldness of her leadership, to take stage and speak passionately of these topics to the convention body further demonstrates her status as a not-hidden figure in our field.

Writing for the Q. J. S.

Before Nichols became president of the SAA, she served as editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, the longest-running journal published by NCA. According to Blankenship (2004), “...her 1963 appointment to the editorship of the QJS marked a major milestone both on her path to the presidency and in this history of the Association, as the first woman editor in its 47-year history” (p. 75). Since Nichols served as *Quarterly Journal of Speech* editor from 1963-

1965, only six women who have been editors of the journal. The next woman to serve as editor would be Martha Solomon, 25 years later. Of the 35 *Quarterly Journal of Speech* editors since 1916 (the NAATPS Publication Committee served as the editors in 1915), only seven women have served as editor (*Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 2019).

The manuscript “Writing for the Q.J.S.” appears to have been given after her tenure as editor. According to the University of Illinois Archives (K. Nichols, personal communication, June 11, 2019), versions of this manuscript always accompany drafts of “The Tyranny of Relevance,” which assumes that it was also part of the 1969 SAA Convention program. Nichols alludes to this near the beginning of the manuscript: “In planning this program I presumed Waldo Braden and Owen Peterson had in mind something like ‘helpful hints’ to the prospective writer for the *QJ* by someone who has worked with the professional journals both as a writer and editor of other peoples’ writing” (1969b, p. 1). In this manuscript, and in contrast with “The Tyranny of Relevance,” she demonstrates her qualities as a mentor, but still shows her deep care of the state and future of the discipline. In addition, this manuscript reveals a much more personal speech than “The Tyranny of Relevance.” Instead of using public examples from current events or correspondence she has received from colleagues in the field as support for her arguments, she creates intimacy with the audience by using her own experience as a writer and scholar:

I must talk from the point of view, not of a publish-or-perish author, but of an enthusiast, for I’ve had ink on my fingers and in my hair since I was a sophomore in high school, long before I knew there was such a thing as having to write for professional advancement and long before I knew much about a decent English sentence. (Nichols, 1969b, p. 2)

She then creates a list of eight reasons people write and submit journal articles without placing any value judgments on any of these reasons. Number four, for example, is “some do it to educate themselves, for by writing a thing down, one sometimes understands difficult things better,” while number seven is “I once had someone write in order to dedicate an article to her mother” (1969b, p. 3). Again, the tone of this section is in contrast with the “Tyranny of Relevance.” While that speech is more of a public address in the vein that Arnett, Arneson and Bell (2006) describe, this presentation is much more invitational in style, as she invites the audience to participate as scholars in creating knowledge, rather than arguing a specific point of view. While I am hesitant to label it “invitational rhetoric” as Foss and Griffin (1995) theorize, this speech does embody more of its characteristics: “In invitational rhetoric, resistance is not anticipated, and rhetors do not adapt their communication to expected resistance in the audience. Instead, they identify possible impediments to the creation of understanding and seek to minimize or neutralize them so that they do not remain impediments” (p. 6).

Although Nichols offers multiple motivations to submit to QJS, she offers a clear explanation of the journal’s purpose and significance in the discipline:

It is the journal which has had the largest circulation and frequently has been thought to be the journal designed to meet at least some of the needs of the whole profession, and its character is determined by that. It is not regional, as your Southern Journal is. It is not

primarily pedagogical as the Speech Teacher set out to be; it is not intended for the larger technical audience as the Speech Monographs were intended to be (1969a, p.4) ¹.

By defining not only what the journal is, but what it is not, she situates the publication in the plurality of venues offered to communication scholars to share their work. In addition, she articulates the purpose of each of the sections of the journal – articles, the Forum, and book reviews. In this section, she offers much more guidance to how scholars can improve the visibility and relevance of the discipline with language that inspires more than it critiques, calling QJS “...one of our most important professional journals. It should represent the best we can do” (1969b, p. 5). Nichols reminds the audience that the same care and attention to detail that a director has in directing a performance, or a linguist “who is meticulous in his examination of language structures” must be given to their submissions to QJS. The orientation of the discipline at the time was toward speech, and this is demonstrated in her advice to authors: “As a field, we are considerably more accustomed to speaking than to writing, and the skills differ. Carefully selected words and sequences of words matter very much in writing, when a reader does not have an opportunity to interrogate if the meaning is not clear” (1969b, p. 8). In sum, this manuscript reflects the sense of responsibility Nichols had toward the stewardship of QJS and its future impact on the discipline.

A Prescient Figure

In conclusion, Marie Hochmuth Nichols can be described more as a prescient figure, rather than a hidden figure. Toward the end of “The Tyranny of Relevance,” she explains how relevance is not only a concern of the moment, but in the past and future of the organization, and that each member of SAA must attend to this concern: “The speech teacher today must not be a cyclops with one eye only for instant relevance. Indeed, he must be even more than a Janus looking backward and forward. He must determine what is relevant today in both terms of the past and hopes for the future.” (1969a, p. 34). In “The Tyranny of Relevance,” she pushes the membership to consider what relevance really means in the context of the discipline and the world they lived in. In “Writing for the Q.J.S.,” her words remain as fresh and applicable today as they were 50 years ago. We have an obligation to participate in creating new communication knowledge; and we also have an ethical obligation to support colleagues in this effort. The contrast in the language and tone of the speeches may be striking, but Nichols’s voice as an intellectual leader and a prescient figure in the discipline comes through in both. In the words of her colleague and former student, Jane Blankenship (2004), “She was elected because she was well known as a major scholar-teacher. She was a person of extraordinary energy and eloquence. She could honor the past while looking forward. There were big problems to deal with, and she had the forthrightness and courage to begin facing up to them” (p. 76).

Enacting a dialogic communication ethics approach to Nichols’s work allows us to interact with her in our current temporal space, while providing the flexibility to understand her historical moment and, most important of all, to learn from her still.

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Notes

1 *Southern Journal* is now the *Southern Communication Journal*; *Speech Teacher* is now *Communication Teacher*, and *Speech Monographs* is now *Communication Monographs*.

MY NATION, MYSELF: DONALD TRUMP'S SPEECH TO THE BSA

Mary E. Stuckey

On July 24, 2017, amid the chants of “USA! USA! USA!” Donald Trump began speaking to thousands of Boy Scouts assembled for their quadrennial jamboree in Glen Jean, West Virginia.¹ Parts of the speech were standard fare for presidents speaking at such events. He saluted “the moms and dads and troop leaders,” he lauded the young men for their service activities, and then pointed to them as examples of model citizens. But, as is his wont, he also said things that were less predictable. Rather than exhorting the Scouts to enter public service, for example, he said of the nation’s capital that, “In fact, today I said we ought to change it from the word swamp to the word cesspool or perhaps the word sewer. But it’s not good, not good.”² On top of that, ignoring the fact that this event, like the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) in general, has a long tradition of nonpartisanship, Trump referred to the effort to repeal and replace Obamacare, insulted the media by mentioning “fake news,” and rehearsed the events of Election Day. He used the Boy Scout oath not to transcend politics, but to state that he expected “more loyalty” from his fellow partisans. And, in a situation where most presidents strive to inspire the young men in the audience, Trump told a long, rambling, and somewhat depressing tale that included mildly salacious elements centered more on his past than the Scouts’ futures.

Trump’s performance may have been unusual for a president, but for him it was fairly typical.³ While Fox News emphasized the more normal parts of the speech, the rest of the media were quick to read his speech at this event as exemplary of Trump’s signature style. Journalists referred to its jarring partisanship⁴ and its inappropriateness⁵; one journalist characterized it as “self-obsessed, petty, and hateful”⁶ while another compared the occasion to a Hitler Youth rally.⁷ The reaction to the speech prompted the BSA to reassert its own commitment to nonpartisanship and to state that the president’s use of their jamboree “as a backdrop for political statements” was “inappropriate.”⁸

This speech thus stands out, even among the controversial Trump oeuvre, as one requiring careful analysis. It highlights precisely the kinds of concerns that animated Marie Hochmuth Nichols in her long career, and her work provides a useful lens through which this speech can be assessed and judged. The essay therefore unfolds in three parts. First, I contextualize the essay with specific reference to Nichols’s work. I then outline briefly the history of presidential speech to the BSA Jamboree. With those two elements in place, I then move to a detailed analysis of Trump’s style and what it reveals about the state of the contemporary presidency. I conclude with a brief discussion of the consequences of Trump’s style for both his own political fortunes and those of his institution.

Style, Ethics, and Public Address

Marie Hochmuth Nichols was, of course, both broadly and consistently concerned with the ethics of public rhetoric.⁹ She found in speech texts important information about both individual-level actors and the culture in which they are embedded. For Nichols, rhetorical criticism is a matter of assessing judgment and choice, and thus is fundamentally also a matter of assessing a given speaker’s ethical commitments.¹⁰ Those commitments are most prominently

revealed through examination of a speaker's style. For Nichols, style reveals the person within. She worried about ghost writing, for example, because of its ability to mask the source of rhetoric, to allow the individual to disappear behind a wall of boilerplate, to disguise the truth of whose mind is being revealed in a given text.¹¹ This, of course, places her in opposition to those critics who focus on the presidency as an institution. Institutionalists take speech writing for granted and assume that if words come out of the president's mouth—or out of his administration—he is accountable for them.

But Nichols is not concerned with that kind of institutional accountability. She wrote, “If style is the man himself (sic), then a close scrutiny of the details of style should tell us what manner of man is doing the speaking, or the writing, and in what relationship he conceives himself to be with his audience.”¹² A dedicated Burkean,¹³ Nichols understood rhetoric to be primarily concerned with identification,¹⁴ and so she understood rhetorical style to be one of the ways in which a rhetor seeks to establish identification with their audience. Style thus reveals the range of options open to a rhetor; the choice made among those options reveals how that speaker understands her audience and her relationship with it.

Writing in her own turbulent time, Nichols asked, “But can we, in the light of the chaotic culture of which we are a part, lightly dismiss the ethical dimension of language? Is it possible to teach students that survival in a democracy is not possible without the maintenance of some cultural norms or the legitimate alteration of those that are no longer workable?”¹⁵ These questions speak also to our contemporary moment, especially given the presence of a president who seems to care little for the political values and norms underpinning our democracy. Consequently, it is to a discussion of how previous presidents have understood and upheld those norms that I now turn.

American Citizenship, National Values, and the Boy Scouts of America

While the BSA has been increasingly implicated in the “culture wars” in recent years, it also has a long history of positioning itself as specifically nonpartisan, and generally apolitical.¹⁶ This is, of course, true only in the most superficial sense; the BSA as an organization does not endorse candidates for political office, advocate for or against specific policies, or affiliate with any political party. But it does claim to “prepare young people to make ethical and moral claims over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law,”¹⁷ a mission that is implicitly political.

Presidents, however, generally respect the pretense that requiring young men to live up to a narrow if unspecified definition of what it means to be “physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight,” is nonpolitical when they or their surrogates speak to jamborees. These gatherings, which include tens of thousands of Scouts, offer opportunities to camp, compete in various activities, and earn merit badges. There are also concerts, shows that promote brotherhood and scouting, and speeches. Presidents often speak at these events, hoping to bask in the reflected glory of earnest youth.¹⁸ In doing so, they connect their personal ethos and that of their institution to the civic virtues publicly associated with scouting. They do this by consistently highlighting themes that associate the president and the presidency with the Scouts: they laud the Scouts' patriotism; valorize their commitment to public, and especially

governmental service; and hold Scouts up as models of the character essential to democracy. Presidents make these claims in individual ways that, while generally eschewing policy specifics, still underline their own views of citizenship, national identity, and the policies that accompany those views.

Patriotism

Those views of national identity are connected to and support the nation itself. Most presidents valorize the nation in abstract and value-laden terms. Harry S Truman, speaking in 1950 at Valley Forge, for example, did not hesitate to call upon that reference, first rehearsing the travails of Washington's troops and then stating, "I know that we still have, in this country, that same unconquerable belief in freedom."¹⁹ He equated the international aspects of our national revolution with the international alliances so important to the Cold War. For Truman, patriotism was an implicit value that manifested itself in dedication to "human advancement," the promotion of the "fellowship of human beings," along with "the possibility of cooperative human action," and "peace based on mutual understanding."²⁰ Truman understood patriotism not as dedication to a narrow view of the nation, but as an expansive set of actions that implicated the nation in the international order. Embroiled in a Cold War with the Soviet Union and a hot "police action" in Korea, Truman offered a sweeping, globally engaged version of citizenship.

Not yet mired in Vietnam, Lyndon B. Johnson advocated an equally explicit, but more domestically-centered, conception of patriotism. For him, the BSA was explicitly about service to the nation and involved the recognition that "this is my country and I must prepare to serve it well."²¹ He called on the Scouts to honor the nation's dedication to freedom not by holding out the hand of fellowship abroad as Truman had, but by holding it out at home, to other Americans.

These two brief examples demonstrate how presidents have taken the opportunity provided to them by the jamboree to valorize the nation in ways that are specifically nonpolitical but still tied the Scouts and the nation to the presidents' policy agenda. Presidential pronouncements on service accomplish the same goal with significantly less subtlety.

Service

The BSA is one of the nation's most significant civic organizations, with a long history of voluntarism. Unsurprisingly, presidents have capitalized on that by lauding the scouting ethos of public service and tying it to their own service to the nation. The most obvious way they accomplish this is by using their own experiences with scouting or that of their staff as examples of the importance of service. George HW Bush, for example, specifically noted the presence of three Eagle Scouts on his staff,²² while Bill Clinton and George W. Bush mentioned their own experiences as well as those of their aides.²³ Presidents thus explicitly connect themselves and their administrations to the ethos of the Boy Scouts.

They also use that ethos to validate service to causes important to their administrations. In his discussion of service, LBJ emphasized the idea that "government is not far away but it is the people in your home town,"²⁴ connecting his Great Society to the various local communities. George HW Bush, the progenitor of the "Thousand Points of Light's" call for national

voluntarism, saying “By actively engaging in the lives of others, you are demonstrating a central theme, a central idea of this administration: that from now on in America, any definition of a successful life must include serving others.”²⁵ Bill Clinton thanked them for answering his call for community volunteers, and George W. Bush urged them to join his “USA Freedom Corps,” and even mentioned the website’s URL.

Each of these presidents thus noted, however briefly, the idea that the Scouts served something greater than themselves—they sustained their communities and their nation through their selfless acts of volunteering. This voluntarism was one of the many pieces of evidence presidents offered for the quality of the Scouts’ characters and the role of scouting in building both their individual characters and the national character.

Character

The presidency depends on ethos. The president, as the country’s only nationally elected public figure, exercises an important representative function, embodying the nation even as he (and I use the pronoun advisedly) articulates its most cherished beliefs. So it is both important and useful for the president to locate and announce exemplars of national citizenship, people who model correct behavior, who exemplify certain values, and who behave and believe in ways that support and sustain democracy.²⁶ The Boy Scouts, with their history of citizenship and service, are tailor-made for presidential claims about national character.

George W. Bush made perhaps the most explicit argument connecting scouting to citizenship: “When you join a Scout troop and put on a Boy Scout uniform you make a statement. Your uniform is a sign that you’re a certain kind of citizen, trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent. These are the values of scouting, and they’re important values for America. By working to live up to them, you’re bringing great credit to yourselves and to our Nation.”²⁷ Scout values and American national values were for Bush one and the same.

In speaking to the Scouts every president made a similar claim, although the values they highlighted varied. For LBJ, the Scouts exemplified “the American idea” which “is also the belief in expanding opportunity and in progress,”²⁸ a claim that implied that those citizens of good character, like Scouts, would support both the Great Society and also civil rights. George HW Bush told the Scouts that “to serve and to serve well is the highest fulfillment we can know,”²⁹ a statement that was completely consistent with his vision of a nation of citizen volunteers. Truman’s ideal Scout/ citizen was a cosmopolitan ambassador of freedom, willing to carry the message of American freedom across the globe, while also experiencing and learning from other cultures.³⁰ Bill Clinton’s was equally cosmopolitan, but was also dedicated to ensuring equality at home, helping to “build that one America, strong and united and good.”³¹

All these presidents took the opportunity offered by speaking to the BSA’s jamboree, as they do when speaking to many similar events, to valorize their audience, identify it with the nation’s key values, and, by doing so, to display their own understanding of and connection to those values. In the process, they underlined for the audience the enduring values that cohere to create national identity. When they do this in a specifically nonpartisan context, and by refusing

to interject partisanship into that context, they flag those values as belonging to the nation, not to a party, and thus those values retain their ability to unify the audience and the nation. This, of course, is one of the basic functions of presidential ceremonial rhetoric. And it isn't what Donald Trump did when speaking to the jamboree in 2017.

Donald Trump's Nation

President Donald Trump's 2017 speech to the Boy Scouts is unusual for several reasons. It is, for example, significantly longer than any of the other speeches given by presidents at the National Jamboree. While there was obviously a standard prepared speech text, just as obviously, there were sustained moments when the president went off-script. Rather than hewing to the expectation that the speech would be nonpartisan, if not strictly apolitical, Trump frequently injected partisan and political themes. Finally, Trump put his own unique spin on the presidential tendency to emphasize the importance of patriotism, service, and character. That spin, while in some ways consistent with the practices of previous presidents, also undermined the unifying potential of those practices by grounding them in a discussion of his personal life and experiences, diminishing the abstract and constitutive nature of the rhetoric, making it about Trump as a person rather than about the president as the national representative. In doing so, he also diminished the ethos of the Scouts and the presidency while focusing on his own personal ethos.

Trump absolutely included the standard elements of presidential speech on occasions like the jamboree. He noted the Scouts' patriotism, specifically referencing their activity in placing flags on veterans' graves.³² He commended them to the audience as exemplars of national character and citizenship. He admired their service, noting the members of his own administration who were Scouts, and commending the Scouts in general for their tradition of volunteerism. He did this in almost the same way as previous presidents, connecting Scouts' service to his own agenda, saying, "The Scouts believe in putting America first," a claim that was more explicitly political than most presidents chose to be, but not entirely out of line with their rhetoric. These aspects of the speech were written as are most presidential ceremonial addresses—the tone is friendly, the language a bit formal, the content tends toward the generic. It is, in short, exactly the kind of language Nichols found distressing because of the way it masks the "true" speaker. But when it comes to an institution like the presidency, this masking serves a specific purpose: it allows the institution to stand in for the individual president and creates a kind of national unity based on shared values that would be impossible if the speaker had no institutional support.

This kind of rhetoric was undermined, however, as Trump appeared to ad lib parts of his speech; the moments when he injects his own persona into the persona of the institution are jarring. Most presidents, with a varying degree of success, inhabit the presidency; they adopt to the requirements of the role while inflecting it with their own style. Trump sits uneasily at best with the role; he focuses almost exclusively on his own persona to the detriment of that of the institution. During this event, as in so many of this other moments, his efforts to occupy the role of president, to speak "presidentially," feel stilted and forced. He is unable to sustain it for long; he blurts, he interjects, he interrupts himself. These tendencies are very much on display in this speech.

The Centrality of Self

President Trump opens the speech, for example, saying he is “thrilled to be here. Thrilled.” This kind of repetition, typical of Trump, is unusual in a president, and minimizes the import of the sentiment. Rather than underlining the claim through repetition, his overabundance of words reduces the import of any one of them—in this case, that effect is strengthened by the fact that he immediately appears to complain about having to be present. He says, “And if you think that was an easy trip, you’re wrong.” Given that he had taken a relatively short flight (from Washington, DC to Glen Jean, West Virginia) in a presidential helicopter, this is a fairly graceless opening.

It also shifts the focus away from the Scouts, at whose event he is participating, and to the president. It becomes his event, not theirs. In these important first few moments of the speech, as he sets the frame, the emphasis is not on the Scouts, but on Trump. He may be thrilled to be there, but apparently that thrill is less about the ability to honor the Scouts and more about the size of the assembled crowd. Trumps exclaims, “Boy, you have a lot of people here. The press will say it’s about 200 people.” Here, Trump seems to be implying that the large number of Scouts gathered to see him, not for an event at which he played only a very minor role.

Trump then made another typical stylistic move, asking “who the hell wants to speak about politics when I’m in front of the Boy Scouts?” a query that foregrounds the practice of nonpolitical speech at this event. By putting what is normally in the background in the foreground, Trump also foregrounds the constructed aspects of the presidency, a move that undermines its rhetorical power. But it also foregrounds him as a person willing to undermine his own institution, and thus builds his own personal rhetorical power at the institution’s expense. That willingness is underlined by his use of profanity in speaking to a group of young (some of them quite young) people. He is less interested in being appropriate than in making his own point.

Finally, he commits to the supremacy of self above institution by saying that instead of talking about politics, he will instead talk about “success.” Here, he ignores both the collective Boy Scouts and their tradition of volunteerism and service to others. First, he ignores their collectivity by focusing on a story that doesn’t relate to them or their organization. Second, he ignores the sense of group identity by choosing a theme that highlights the individual rather than the community. “Success” can of course be defined as collective—other presidents, like Lyndon Johnson and the first George Bush did precisely that—but that isn’t what Trump means. He defined success—and its absence—in strictly individual and financial terms. He shifted the focus from the Scouts to himself, and measured them in terms alien to their organization. That vision of the nation is displayed in other aspects of his rhetoric as well.

Success and Service

Donald Trump has often been accused of being self-centered, if not narcissistic.³³ Certainly, self-absorption runs throughout this text. A full five months after his inauguration, for example, he was still comparing himself to Barack Obama (“By the way, just a question, did President Obama ever come to a jamboree?”) and relitigating the 2016 election (“Do you

remember that famous night on television?”). In these examples he seems more concerned with defending his own personal accomplishments and how they are best measured and understood than with the past and future accomplishments of his audience. This marks the occasion as one concerned with narrow personal concerns than with national values.

And indeed, the longest sustained argument of the text is about these narrow concerns. In striving to make what appears to be a point about the importance of finding “your passion” and dedicating yourself to the goal of success in whatever field that may lie, the president tells a long, often meandering story about businessman William Levitt. Levitt first found material success through hard work, parlayed it into a wealthy retirement, and then attempted and failed to make a comeback. As inspiration, given that the story ends in disappointment, it doesn’t work. Rather than emphasizing the importance of individual and collective effort, it seems instead to undermine that message. Making matters worse, Trump included in the story a seemingly irrelevant detail about a party both he and Levitt attended, along with the “the hottest people in New York.” This aspect of the story, featuring a young Donald Trump, who was nevertheless successful enough to be invited, seemed to be as much about his need to have that success recognized by the audience as to offer to them a vision of the kinds of success to which they might aspire. This is not a move presidents usually feel required to make. While the story ostensibly points to the moral “Never give up!” it is unclear what the object of the exercise is meant to be: whether it’s about amassing personal wealth, or getting invited to certain parties, or has some other measure.

The point I’m making here is less that the president chose his story badly or told it poorly, although both those things are true. More importantly, however, is that his style of communicating, distinguished by his tendency to inject himself into narratives that properly belong to others, runs against the grain of the institutional presidency. Presidents usually associate themselves with organizations like the BSA in order to demonstrate their affinity with the values those organizations represent. They do not normally use those organizations as backdrops to push their own sense of personal success, as President Trump did here. That was not the only way in which Trump differed from his predecessors to the detriment of the speech and of his office.

Interruptive Discourse

Speeches like this one are moments when presidents get to speak in abstract terms that provide for a broad base of agreement. Whatever one’s feelings about a particular chief executive, for example, it is hard to fault him for saluting the BSA’s tradition of national service. There were plenty of such moments in Trump’s 2017 speech, but he tended to undercut them by interjecting political partisanship into otherwise unifying statements. He said for example, that

by being a Boy Scout, you learn to contribute to your communities, to take pride in your nation, and to seek out opportunities to serve. You pledge to help other people at all times. In the Scout oath, you pledge on your honor to do your best and to do your duty to God and your country. And by the way, under the Trump administration, you’ll be saying ‘Merry Christmas’ again when you go shopping, believe me, merry Christmas. They’ve been downplaying that little, beautiful phrase. You’re going to be saying ‘merry Christmas’ again, folks.

Even setting aside the lack of logical continuity in this excerpt, the associations Trump creates between the Scout duty to God and country and the supposed new freedom to say ‘merry Christmas’ when shopping is tenuous at best, and the recourse to one of his standard campaign themes contrasts sharply with the tone one expects of a sitting president on such occasions. He seems to have ignored the fact that he is there as the representative of his institution (the president is always the honorary BSA president), and argues as if the event is connected to his campaign.

This was perhaps the most egregious, but is not the only example of the president’s tendency to interrupt one idea with another. He interrupted his praise of the Scouts on his staff to (perhaps jokingly) threaten one of them with the loss of his job if he failed to “get the votes tomorrow to start our path toward killing this horrible thing known as Obamacare.” He interrupted his praise of Scout loyalty to note the size of the crowd and remark on “fake news.” He interrupted his discussion of the importance of “doing something you love” with claims about the stock market and reminiscences about the election. And he interrupted his acclaim of Scouts in general by asserting rather obscurely, that, “I’ve known so many great Scouts over the years. Winners. I’ve known so many great people. They’ve been taught so well and they love their heritage.” All of these interjections placed the emphasis not on the original point but on that which interrupted it. These acts of interruption and digression are hallmarks of Trump’s oratorical style, and they signal an impatience with the norms of political discourse, an inability to sustain an argument, and a willingness to disregard the content of his prepared speech in favor of a momentary impulse.

Presidents consistently agree to speak on occasions like the Scout National Jamboree. They do because they find value in associating themselves with such occasions. These events allow presidents to underline the symbolic significance of their institution, to amass rhetorical resources in service of that symbolic significance, to associate their administration and their goals with important, politically neutral national values, and to accrue for themselves a certain amount of good will. In speaking to the Scouts in 2017, Donald Trump did none of these things successfully. Rather than focusing on the Scouts as emblematic of the nation, he shifted the attention onto himself; rather than highlighting the importance of service to something larger than oneself, he narrowed his discussion to the centrality of personal success; and rather than offering a coherent narrative of the significance of scouting in the development of ideal citizens, he injected partisanship into the story of the nation. In all of these ways, he actively curbed the potential import of the speech and reduced the rhetorical resources he could hope to derive from it.

Conclusion: My Nation, My Self

No one is likely to argue that a speech given before several thousand Boy Scouts, volunteers, guests, family members, and the assembled media is important in the usual sense of that word. No new policies are likely to be announced, nothing of much note is likely to occur. Speeches like this one, however, matter precisely because of their banality. The nation is glued together by the commonplaces that ground such speech; it is connected by the mundane things that provide common ground across demographic, geographic, and ideological differences.

Presidents generally recognize this and respond to these occasions by offering a noncontroversial version of the nation and its goals and values; exhorting us to be better citizens by holding up models of exemplary behavior, encouraging unity by rehearsing shared values; and implicitly requesting support for their important administrative endeavors by connecting them to those shared values. This kind of speech, unlike the policy-laden discourse we associate with deliberative rhetoric, operates below the analytic radar. Because it is so obviously noncontroversial, it passes virtually without comment, and that is the secret of its success.

By this measure, Donald Trump's 2017 speech to the BSA was a dismal failure. While Fox News reported the speech in relatively neutral terms, and primarily stressed its fairly standard features, the majority of the media pointed to its break with tradition, its explicit partisanship, its use of profanity and allusions to sex, and in general excoriated the speech as inappropriate and offensive.³⁴ These are reasonable judgments.

But my concern here is not primarily with those judgments; it lies in the style and ethics of the speech. Stylistically, Trump is an outlier among presidential rhetors. Where his predecessors were generally brief, formulaic, and full of praise for the Scouts as exemplary national citizens, his speech was long, full of non-sequiturs, asides, and self-interruptions, and was self-congratulatory in tone. Seeking to bolster himself, President Trump undermined his institution.

Donald Trump is a weak president. He is inexpert at bringing institutional resources to his aid in policymaking, and he is similarly blundering when it comes to mustering the rhetorical resources of his office to the service of national unity. This is because he is seemingly uninterested in unifying the nation. His scripted language in this speech speaks to national unity. His blurts and interruptions speak to his political base. Stylistically, he allows the latter to disrupt the former, indicating in no uncertain terms which is to be considered dominant. Trump is not offering himself as president of all the people, but of only some of them: those who value individual success above the collective good, who see citizenship as an individual rather than a collective enterprise, and who prize the self above the nation. This is not a unifying vision in the tradition of the US presidency, and his rhetoric may well damage both the national fabric and the institution's ability to continue weaving it together.

Notes

1 Donald J. Trump: "Remarks at the National Scout Jamboree in Glen Jean, West Virginia," July 24, 2017. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=126749>.

2 Trump, "Remarks at the National Scout Jamboree."

3 On Trump's rhetorical style, see Olivia Goldhill, "Rhetoric Scholars Pinpoint Why Trump's Inarticulate Speaking Style is so Persuasive," *Quartz*, April 22, 2017. <https://qz.com/965004/rhetoric-scholars-pinpoint-why-trumps-inarticulate-speaking-style-is-so-persuasive/>

4 Yoni Applebaum, “Trump’s Mistake at the Boy Scout Jamboree,” *The Atlantic*, July 24, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/07/trumps-mistake-at-the-boy-scout-jamboree/534774/>

5 Dominic Montanaro, “Trump’s Boy Scouts Speech and the Thin Line Between Openness and Recklessness,” National Public Radio, July 25, 2017. <https://www.npr.org/2017/07/25/539241800/trump-s-boy-scouts-speech-and-the-thin-line-between-openness-and-recklessness>

6 Christina Cauteneuri, “Trump’s Boy Scout Speech is a Reminder of how Different the Girl Scouts Organization is,” *Slate*, July 25, 2017. http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2017/07/25/the_boy_scouts_loved_trump_s_speech_reminding_us_how_different_girl_scouts.html

7 Christina Silva, “Trump Boy Scout Speech is Nazi Hitler Youth Rally, Left Says,” *Newsweek*, July 24, 2017. <http://www.newsweek.com/hitler-trump-germany-nazi-president-641392>

8 On the reaction, see, Alan Binder and Mitch Smith, “After Trump Injects Politics into Speech, Boy Scouts Face Blowback,” *New York Times*, July 25, 2017. <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2017/07/24/trumps-boy-scout-jamboree-speech-calls-for-health-care-action-more-loyalty-in-dc.html>. On the Boy Scouts’ response, see Alana Abramson, “The Head of the Boy Scouts Just Apologized after Trump’s National Jamboree Speech,” *Time*, July 27, 2017. <http://time.com/4876705/donald-trump-boy-scout-jamboree-speech/JennaJohnson>, “After Trump’s Partisan Speech, Boy Scouts of America Reiterates that it is “Wholly Non-partisan,” *Washington Post*, July 25, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2017/07/25/after-trumps-partisan-speech-boy-scouts-of-america-reiterates-that-it-is-wholly-non-partisan/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.549a5c8e75b7.

9 She was also, of course, interested in the logical, aesthetic, and rhetorical elements of language, as well as with its ethics. See Marie Hochmuth Nichols, *Rhetoric and Criticism* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1963, 148.

10 Nichols, *Rhetoric and Criticism*, 78.

11 Nichols, *Rhetoric and Criticism*, 46-47.

12 Nichols, *Rhetoric and Criticism*, 14.

13 John H. Patton, “Marie Hochmuth Nichols’s Voice of Rationality in the Humane Tradition of Rhetoric and Criticism,” in Jim A. Kuypers and Andrew King, eds. *Twentieth-Century Roots of Rhetorical Studies* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood, 2001), 125; Nichols, *Rhetoric and Criticism*, 79-82.

14 Nichols, *Rhetoric and Criticism*, 82-83.

15 Marie H. Nichols, "When You Set Out for Ithaka..." *Central States Speech Journal* 28(1977): 145-156, 150.

16 See, for example, Bryan Wendell's blog on the Boy Scouts and politics, July 22, 2017: <https://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2016/07/22/can-packs-troops-teams-or-crews-participate-in-political-rallies/>

17 See <https://www.scouting.org/>

18 For a complete history of presidential speeches at the National Jamboree, see Bryan Wendell's blog, July 21, 2017: <https://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2017/07/21/a-complete-history-of-presidential-visits-at-national-jamborees/>

19 Harry S. Truman: "Address at Valley Forge at the Boy Scout Jamboree," June 30, 1950. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13551>.

20 Truman, "Address at Valley Forge."

21 Lyndon B. Johnson: "Remarks in Valley Forge at the Boy Scout Jamboree," July 23, 1964. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=26391>.

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23 For Clinton's speech, see William J. Clinton: "Remarks to the 1997 National Boy Scout Jamboree in Bowling Green, Virginia," July 30, 1997. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=54477>. For Bush's see George W. Bush: "Remarks to the National Scout Jamboree at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia," July 31, 2005. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=73866>.

24 Johnson, "Remarks at Valley Forge."

25 Bush, Remarks at the Boy Scout National Jamboree."

26 The Skutnicks are one example of this presidential tendency; see also routine speeches Mary E. Stuckey, *Defining Americans: The Presidency and National Identity* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004) and eulogies Mary E. Stuckey, *To Slip the Surly Bonds: Ronald Reagan's Challenger Address* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2006).

27 Bush, "Remarks to the National Scout Jamboree."

28 Johnson, Remarks at Valley Forge.”

29 Bush: "Remarks at the Boy Scout National Jamboree.”

30 Truman, “Address at Valley Forge.”

31 Clinton: "Remarks to the 1997 National Boy Scout Jamboree.”

32 All of the quotations in this sections are from Trump, "Remarks at the National Scout Jamboree.”

33 See, among others, Amy Ellis Nutt, “Is Donald Trump a Textbook Narcissist?” *Washington Post*, July 22, 2016. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/07/22/is-donald-trump-a-textbook-narcissist/?utm_term=.22248cbd3b48

34 For the Fox response, see Matt Richardson, “Trump’s Boy Scout Jamboree Speech Calls for Health Care Action, ‘More Loyalty’ in DC,” Fox News, July 24, 2017. <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2017/07/24/trumps-boy-scout-jamboree-speech-calls-for-health-care-action-more-loyalty-in-dc.html>. For criticisms of the speech, see Blinder and Smith, “After Trump”; Chris Cillizza, “The 29 Most Cringe-Worthy Lines from Donald Trump’s Hyper-Political Speech to the Boy Scouts,” CNN, July 27, 2017. <http://phaet.org/29-criinge-worthy-lines-donald-trumps-hyper-political-speech-boy-scouts/> *Guardian* Staff, “Trump’s Speech to Boy Scouts: Fake News, Crowd Size, and New York’s Hottest People,” *Guardian*, July 25, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jul/25/donald-trump-speech-boy-scouts-jamboree>; Katie Melter and Derek Hawkins, “Trump’s Boy Scouts Speech Broke with 80 Years of Tradition,” *Washington Post*, July 25, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/07/25/trumps-boy-scouts-speech-broke-with-80-years-of-presidential-tradition/?utm_term=.f369a12f8bc7