

# PENNSYLVANIA COMMUNICATION ANNUAL

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**Pennsylvania Communication Association**  
Special Online Issue on  
Undergraduate Research

<b>Letter from the Editor</b> Cem Zeytinoglu.....	8
<b>Interruptions and Gender in TV Political Commentary</b> Allison May DeGerlia .....	11
<b>“So Let Me Introduce to You:” A Cluster Analysis of the Sgt. Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band Album Cover</b> Matti Jo Tyskewicz .....	23
<b>Understanding Displacement in a Restless World: The Phenomenology of Displacement that Intersects Ethnic, Socioeconomic and Cultural Boundaries</b> Erika L Kauffman .....	53
<b>Even The Strongest Have Weaknesses</b> Gretchen Frances Shepard.....	70





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Cem Zeytinoglu, Ph.D.  
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

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Ronald C. Arnett, Ph.D.,  
Executive Director  
Duquesne University,  
600 Forbes Avenue,  
340 College Hall,  
Pittsburgh, PA 15282,  
Phone: 412-396-6446,  
Fax: 412-396-4792,  
[arnett@duq.edu](mailto:arnett@duq.edu)

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*The Pennsylvania Communication Annual, 74.2, 2018*

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*The Pennsylvania Communication Annual* is dedicated to advancing our undertaking of human communication. Manuscripts should be original and should discuss instructional, theoretical, philosophical, and/or practical aspects of any area of communication. Reviews of recent books and/or videotapes in any area of communication are also considered at the editor's discretion. While articles authored by Pennsylvanians and articles covering Pennsylvania topics are especially welcome, manuscripts on all topics and from all regions, including international submissions, are invited and will receive full consideration for publication.

*The Pennsylvania Communication Annual* is a refereed journal of the **Pennsylvania Communication Association**. Manuscripts for the 2019 issue (v.75) are now being received. The acceptance rates for 2017 and 2018 journals were respectively fewer than 24 and 34 percent. Submission should follow the latest APA style sheet. Please format your papers for blind review and remove anything that may give away your identity. *Manuscripts should not exceed 8000 words including references, notes, tables and other citations. Also book reviews should not exceed 2000 words.* Please submit your articles to *The Pennsylvania Communication Annual* at [my.ejmanager.com/pca](http://my.ejmanager.com/pca) website. The submission deadline is May 3, 2019. PCA Annual is indexed by the EBSCO Host's *Communication Source* database. Please visit [www.pcasite.org](http://www.pcasite.org) for more information.

Some important details to follow when submitting your manuscripts, if you use footnotes or endnotes: Endnotes only and without formatting, no footnotes.; no superscript font to indicate an endnote, just regular numbers and we will superscript upon editing; insert tables and illustrations as images only or send separate PDF files of these portions of the documents; formatted hanging indents only on references or no formatting at all; no "return" and "tab" to create the look of a hanging indent.

**Editor:** Cem Zeytinoglu, Ph.D., Professor of Communication Studies, Monroe Hall 320, East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania, East Stroudsburg, PA, 18301-2999. Phone: 570-422-3911. Fax: 570-422-3402. Email: [czeytinoglu@esu.edu](mailto:czeytinoglu@esu.edu)

**The Pennsylvania Communication Association (PCA)** promotes teaching, scholarship, service, and an ongoing commitment to the discipline of human communication. The Association believes in:

**Teaching**

- Advancing and developing communication curricula
- Responding to student and societal needs
- Attending to and caring for the student inside and outside of the communication classroom

**Scholarship**

- Promoting communication scholarship within the Keystone State
- Providing a disciplinary commitment to Pennsylvania scholars, reaching out to the larger discipline
- Being a dwelling place of Pennsylvania communication scholarship history

**Service**

- Connecting the larger community to the communication discipline
- Supporting efforts to professionalize students in communication fields
- Serving our students inside and outside of formal institutional structures

**Commitment to the Discipline**

- Nurturing the grassroots application of communication in the wider community
- Caring for the discipline on the local academic campus
- Supporting the larger discipline at the regional, national, and international levels

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pal59@pitt.edu

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Ronald C. Arnett  
*Duquesne University*  
arnett@duq.edu

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**Editor** Ronald C. Arnett  
*Duquesne University*  
arnett@duq.edu

**PA Communication Annual**

**Editor** Cem Zeytinoglu  
*East Stroudsburg University*  
zeytinoglu@po-box.esu.edu

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Rich Talbert  
*Geneva College*  
rich.talbert@geneva.edu

**Member at Large**

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dsbrown@gcc.edu

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## From the Editor

Cem Zeytinoglu  
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

As a part of the *Pennsylvania Communication Annual's* 74th issue, we are proud to have a Special Online Issue on Undergraduate Student Research. This is a first in the *Pennsylvania Communication Annual's* publication record. So, needless to state, I am very glad to introduce this special issue, as someone who worked very hard to involve his students in academic research and encourage them to participate state and regional conferences.

The theme for PCA 79th convention was "Intersections of History, Communication, and Community." The articles published in this volume again are to parallel our current chosen theme. All the essays in this issue are coming from undergraduate poster session and the undergraduate writing completion at the 2018 Pennsylvania Communication Association Convention.

All the undergraduate students who participated these sessions were invited to submit their work for the *Pennsylvania Communication Annual* and after a rigorous review and editing process the four that are present in this volume were selected for publication.

The first essay is by Allison May DeGerlia from Ursinus College. Her research examines gender differences in interruptions on non-fictional political television programming. Her findings shows that women were more likely to be interrupted and with more disruptive interruptions.

The second article is written by Matti Jo Tyskewicz of University Pittsburgh, at Greensburg. Through studying the key terms of the visual discourse - the bed of flowers, the blue sky, the wax "Fab Four" Beatles, and Sgt. Pepper's Band - Matti argues that the album artwork creates the metaphor of a gravesite to send the message of transition. By contrasting the "Fab Four" performers and Sgt. Pepper's musicians through colors and instruments, the Beatles create distance from their past identities and careers, asking audiences to accept the new artistic identity of the band.



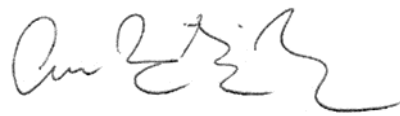
*The Pennsylvania Communication Annual, 74.2, 2018*

The next article is authored by Erika L. Kauffman from Geneva College, and her paper was the winner of the 2018 PCA Undergraduate Writing Competition. She argues that through first identifying the feelings associated with being at home, the general feelings of displacement can be extrapolated from a perspective of phenomenology of home. She means this paper to be as an introduction to the broad topic of home and homelessness and concludes with a series of thought-provoking questions on how we think and interact with others in relation to these topics.

The fourth article in the issue is by Gretchen Frances Shepard of University of Pittsburgh, at Johnstown. In this oral history interview with a Salt-Wasting Adrenal Hyperplasia patient, she demonstrates the importance of direct physician/patient communication with parents as well as with their under-aged children. She argues that there were positive and negative interactions that suggested a need for improved medical communication training.

I hope that you will find the this special issue on undergraduate research of the *Annual* stimulating and interesting, and enjoy reading these promising scholars with the same excitement as I had. I will end my letter as I always do. It is a fact that my job was made much easier with the assistance, guidance and help by marvelous individuals who served as the reviewers and associate editors of the *Annual*. I would like to once more officially thank them. I am undeniably indebted to them. A special thanks goes to the authors and their faculty mentors. I am also very much thankful to my colleagues at the department of communication at East Stroudsburg University for their untiring support. As always, I am thankful to all my mentors, friends, and peers for their encouragement and help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cem Zeytinoglu', with a stylized, flowing script.

Cem Zeytinoglu, PhD  
Professor of Communication



## **Interruptions and Gender in TV Political Commentary**

Allison May DeGerlia  
Ursinus College

*This research extends the work done by West & Zimmerman (1983) and Zhao & Gantz (2003) to examine gender differences in interruptions on non-fictional political television programming. The goal was to find out if the findings of previous research, namely that males interrupt more and more disruptively than females, apply to group cross-sex talk among professionals, as well as to learn if age and political affiliation might be relevant to interruptions. A sample of approximately 40 minutes of cross-sex talk of the HBO TV show Real Time with Bill Maher was recorded from three different episodes and transcribed using Jefferson's transcription method. The findings showed that women were more likely to be interrupted and with more disruptive interruptions. In addition, women were interrupted at a higher frequency and on average talked less. It was also found that the age of the women correlated with the amount of interruptions, the way they were interrupted, and the amount of talk. Implications of these findings are discussed.*

*Keywords:* interruptions, gender, interpersonal communication, political communication, discourse analysis

### **Introduction**

Interruptions are something that everyone has experienced at some point, the person who was interrupted and did the interrupter. While interrupting a person may not seem significant, it is one of easiest ways to devalue another person in a conversation. These disruptions can implicitly suggest the interrupter's subconscious belief that the speaker's thoughts are inferior and of little value. Interruptions can also transfer power to the disruptor by not allowing others to develop or share their point. This is why researching interruptions in cross-sex conversations can show how one sex values another. Some of the first research done on cross-sex conversations and interruptions was West and Zimmerman (1983). They were studying cross-sex interruptions by looking at talk between white university students between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one. Their research showed that men interrupted more than the women. They found that "Forty-six out of forty-eight, or 96% of the interruptions were done by males to female." (West & Zimmerman 1983) They also found that in all

of the conversations recorded that the men interrupted more than the women. Later researchers Zhao and Gantz (2003) sought to find out if these findings held true for fictionalized television programming. Television fiction was used because it often reflects the speaking norms of that time and culture. They further defined interruptions as cooperative and disruptive as to better express the meaning behind the interruption. They also looked at work and social related discussions as well as the power status of each member. One of the most important of their findings was that men were more likely to use disruptive interruptions while women were more likely to use cooperative interruptions. Even when considering how power status and type of discussions affected these conversations this finding still stood. They found that 245 or 56% of the interruptions were done by men and that 81% of the interruptions men made were disruptive (Zhao & Gantz, 2003).

The purpose of this study is to expand on the study of interruptions by examining how they work in cross-sex discussions about politics. This study will look at interruptions in cross-sex conversations in a group setting in non-fiction television programming. The recordings were taken from the political HBO show Real Time with Bill Maher. The reason this is important because it shows live unfiltered talk about politics with people who are all deemed knowledgeable. These people come from all different professions, organizations and political beliefs. This talk can show how in professional group settings and political conversations cross-sex interruptions can devalue participants in the discussion. Another thing this research paper will look at is the age of the women and see if that affects how often they are interrupted. This is important because it could help show how age and gender intersect and how that affects how women are viewed by their peers. This research seeks to address five questions. Do men interrupt more than women when in a group setting in a political talk show setting? Are women more likely to be interrupted than men when in a group setting in a political talk show setting? Does gender affect the type of interruptions a person uses? Does gender affect the type of interruptions used on a person? Does the age of the women correlate with interruptions?

### **Method**

The sample collected was all cross-sex talk from the HBO TV show Real Time with Bill Maher. The cross-sex talk was needed so that the interruption theories could be tested. The talk that was collected was from the core part of the show when it is just the panel and Bill Maher. They discuss a variety of current issues in

*DeGerlia*

politics that differ from episode to episode. Topics discussed during the episodes include the NFL Protests, First Amendment and Nazis, American Institutions, the Democrat and Republican parties, President Trump, climate change, and Russia and Facebook. The talk was transcribed from three different episodes ranging from 12-13 minutes each. The only person that is in all the episodes is Bill Maher. The show itself airs weekly on Friday nights on HBO at 10 pm. The show is aired live so the conversations are not scripted or censored. Also, because the show is on HBO, the content is not censored so they people are able to say whatever they want. The show is filmed in Los Angeles California. I transcribed the parts of the episodes after it originally aired.

The talk is live, uncensored, and unscripted. In conversations like these, a lot of politeness can go out the window and people's true speech habits come out. It is also important that the guests on the show, as well as the host, are people of equal qualifications to be discussing politics. Guests include Tom Morello a 53-year-old musician and activist active in the occupy movements as well as protests against Guantanamo Bay; John Heilemann a 51 year old journalists who has worked for NBC news and MSNBC; April Ryan a 50 year old journalist who has been a White House Correspondent and CNN political analysts; Rick Wilson a 54 year old republican strategist, media consultant, and author; Catherine Rampell a 32 year old opinion journalist who has worked for The Washington Post, CNN, and The New York Times; Martin Short a 67 year old actor, singer, and writer; Salman Rushdie a 70 year old British India novelist and essayist; and Fran Lebowitz a 66 year old. Also, the format of the show is the same even though the people on the episodes are different, all of the excerpts in the samples come from the same setting and context. Lastly, the women in the episodes vary enough in age that it is possible to see how that could have affected the interruptions. I think one criticism of this data would be that because it is for made for TV and entertainment that there could possibly be more disagreement and interruptions that would occur in a private setting to make the show more interesting.

While analyzing the transcripts, I counted all of the interruptions that occurred in the conversations. In conversation, there are rules that people follow. One is the turn taking method. This rule says that in a conversation, only one person should be speaking at a time. This is important because it gives the individual the right to speak or ownership of the conversation. When this conversation switches ownership from one person to another, this is done efficiently when the people in the conversation do it at a place called

a "Transition Relevant Place (TRP)" (West & Zimmerman, 1977; West & Zimmerman, 1983). These are often at the end of sentences when a person finishes a thought or statement. Given this, an interruption is when this rule of turn-taking is not followed and a person starts talking while the other person has not yet reached a place of transition that would make sense in the flow of the conversation. An example of talking in a transitional place is on lines 89-90 on the transcript. In this part of the transcript, April reacts to something Bill said with a "wow." While he was not finished talking. He had just finished a sentence and had a possible transition space where it was appropriate for April to react to the previous statement. This is different from the interruption found on lines 38-39 where John interrupts April right in the middle of her thought.

After all of the interruptions were defined, then I had to go through them and categorize them. In Zhao and Gantz they have the two categories of disruptive and cooperative. The definition of a disruptive interruption is one that disagrees with the previous person's statement, changes the topic, or dismisses the statement. An example of this would be on lines 65-68 Bill continues to interrupt John for a solid 10-15 seconds to say that his statement is "not true". A cooperative interruption is one that the person acknowledges the statement just said in a positive manner or asks a clarifying question about the statement. An example of this can be seen on lines 75-76 where Bill asks the clarifying questions of "Under 30?" to John. Lastly, I decided to add a category of comedy. Because this show is a political comedy show, the people often try and make jokes throughout the episode. These out of context would appear to be disruptive because they could be off topic or putting down a previous statement, but the intention behind that is often different. The intent is that the comment gets laughs not that it puts down the person who was speaking before. An example of this would be on lines 79-80 when April tells Bill that a certain politician is "your kind of guy" because of his extreme and crazy antics, as Bill Maher often likes to incite and invite on his show. After looking at all the interruptions and transcripts, I decided to also analyze how long each person talked during the segment of the show. This was done by counting the number of words each person said and dividing it by the total amount of words said in the episode. Lastly, I identified the political affiliation of the panel members from their jobs and who they worked for as well and their comments and opinions they expressed as well as finding the age of the three females on the show which I did through googling them.

### Results

The first piece of data that was collected was the number of times each person interrupted someone and how many times they were interrupted broken down by episode. The below 3 tables show the breakdowns of the frequencies each person interrupted and was interrupted. These frequencies were used to find data averages. On average, the men interrupted 8 times while women interrupted about 6.5 times. Also, on average men and women were interrupted about the same amount of times at 7.5 and 7.6 times.

Episode 29 Number of Interruptions

	Bill	Tom	John	April	Total
Interrupter	7	7	10	9	33
Was Interrupted	12	8	5	8	33

Table 1

Episode 28 Number of Interruptions

	Bill	Bob	Martin	Catherine	Total
Interrupter	13	6	10	5	34
Was Interrupted	8	5	10	11	34

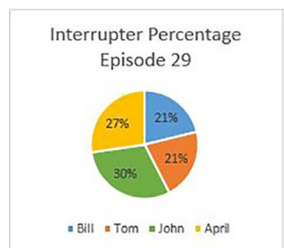
Table 2

Episode 27 Number of Interruptions

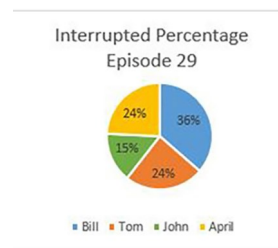
	Bill	Salman	Fran	Total
Interrupter	6	5	6	17
Was Interrupted	10	2	5	17

Table 3

These raw frequencies were then used to calculate the percent each person contributed in a total of all the interruptions. This is done through the use of pie charts. Pie charts 1-2 display the makeup of the interrupter and interrupted percentages for episode 29. Pie charts 3-4 display the makeup of the interrupter and interrupted percentages for episode 28. Lastly, Pie charts 5-6 display the makeup of the interrupter and interrupted percentages for episode 27.

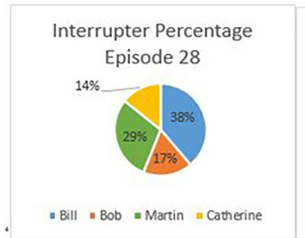


Pie Chart 1

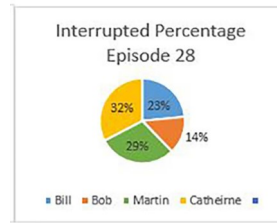


Pie Chart 2

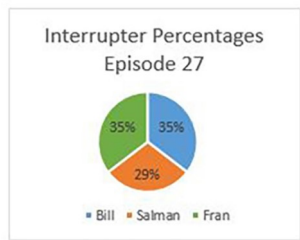
*Interruptions and Gender*



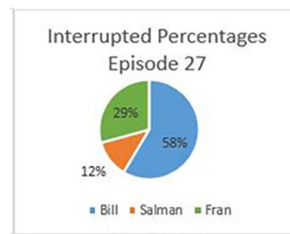
Pie Chart 3



Pie Chart 4



Pie Chart 5



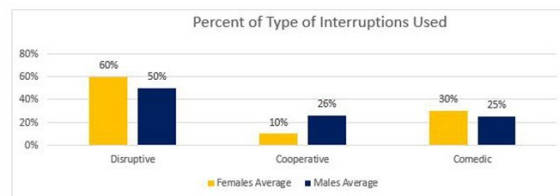
Pie Chart 6

The types of interruption the people used were also looked at. The averages for the males and females were then separated with the women at the bottom to show how they differ. It shows that men and women used about the same around percent of disruptive interruptions and that woman on average used more comedy interruptions and men used more cooperative interruptions. The table of the number of interruptions they used is seen in Table 4. Graph 7 then represents this data in percentage form showing the differences in interruptions used.

Type of Interruptions They Used

	Disruptive	Cooperative	Comedy
Males Average	4	2.5	1
Females Average	4	.66	2
Catherine	3	0	2
April	6	2	1
Fran	3	0	3

Table 4



Graph 7



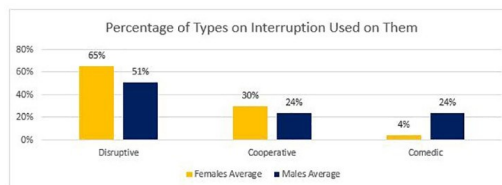
DeGerlia

The same method was used for collecting the types of interruptions used on each group on average as well as for each of the three women. Table 5 shows the number of times the interruptions were used on the women and the average amount of times for the women and the men. It shows that on average women had more disruptive interruptions used on them than men, as well as that man, was more likely to have cooperative interruptions used on them and women were more likely to have comedy interruption on them. When looking at the three women separately the other two besides April had numbers that were about the same while she had more disruptive interruption and comedy interruptions than them. This data was then made into percentages to represent the types of interruptions used on them and each gender average in Graph 8.

Types of Interruption Used on them

	Disruptive	Cooperative	Comedy
Males Average	3.8	1.75	1.8
Females Average	5	2.33	.33
Catherine	6	5	0
April	7	0	1
Fran	2	2	0

Table 5



Graph 8

To understand the findings more, the proportion of talk that was interrupted by the men and women as a whole and the women separately was analyzed. This is done by counting how many turns each person had spoken in the episode and compared that to the number of times they were interrupted. The data collected is represented in Table 6. This data was then used to calculate the percentages of the frequency of interruption which is seen in Graph 9 and Graph 10. By doing this it was found that women were interrupted at a higher rate when they spoke than men were. It was also found that there was a big difference between all three of the women ranging from 61% to 16%.

Lastly, the average amount of time that each gender spoke during the show was looked at as well as for each of the women separately. This was done by counting the number of words said by each person and the number of words that were spoken in the

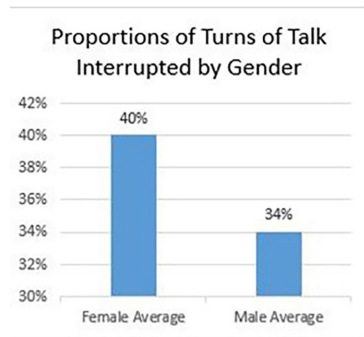
*Interruptions and Gender*

total of the segment and found the percent for how much of the talk they had. This is seen in Table 7. This data was used to find the percentages that are seen in Graph 11 and Graph 12. It found that women talked almost half as much as the men and that there were differences between the women. The ages were looked at for all the women. This was found by googling the women to see how old they are. The results were as follows: Catherine (32), April (50), and Fran (66).

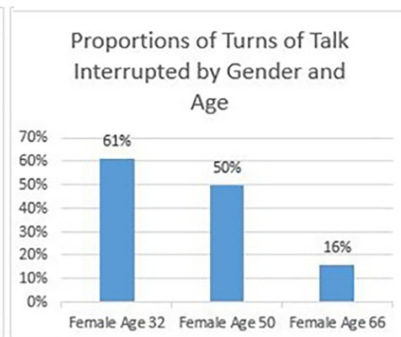
**The Frequency of Being Interrupted**

Males Average	58/166
Females Average	23/58
Catherine	11/18
April	8/16
Fran	4/24

**Table 6**



**Graph 9**



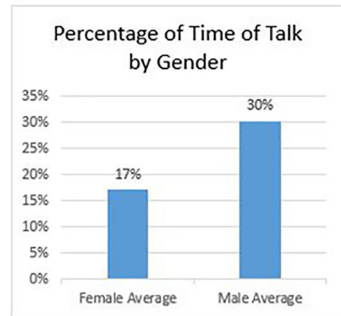
**Graph 10**

In the previous studies, the results expected would be that women were interrupted more than men and that men were more likely to use disruptive interruptions than women.

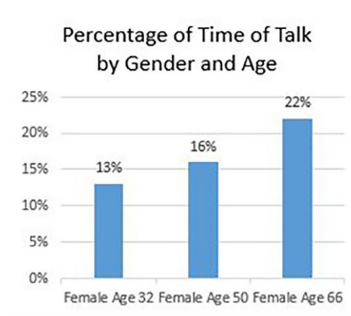
**Time of Talk**

Males Average	615/1986
Females Average	345/1986
Catherine	271/1990
April	368/2175
Fran	398/1795

**Table 7**



Graph 11



Graph 12

### Discussion

Answers for all four research questions were found from the data collected. By looking at all four of these questions together it was able to give a more complete picture of the relationship between gender, interruptions, and TV political commentary. The results showed that there was not a significant difference between men and women when it comes to the average number of times they were interrupted by someone. Men were interrupted on average 7.5 times and women were interrupted on average 7.6 times. It is important to add although that while they on average had around the same number of times they were interrupted, because women had fewer times that they talked, they were interrupted in a higher proportion than men were. This supports previous research that women are interrupted more than men. It is also important to note that men were more likely to use an interruption on someone than women were. Men on average used 8 interruptions while women on average used 6.5. The fact that men are more likely to interrupt shows that they are more likely to believe that their talk is of more value than the person that is speaking.

It is essential to also look at the types of interruptions that were used. The results showed that women were more likely to have disruptive interruptions used on them than men. 65% of the interruptions that were used on women were disruptive compared to that of 51% of interruptions that were used on men. On the other side, women were more likely to use disruptive interruptions than men were. 60% of the interruptions that women used were disruptive compared to that of 50% of men. An explanation for this could be that women have a harder time being able to enter a conversation to make a point and feel they have to use a disruptive interruption to be heard and listened to. The fact that women are more likely to be on the receiving ends of disruptive interrup-

tions is an illuminating result as it shows that their comments are less valued and disregarded more often. The fact that women used more disruptive interruptions than men was not seen in previous research but, previous research showed that women were more likely to have disruptive interruptions used on them.

The age of the women also played a role in the amount of times they were interrupted themselves and the amount of talk they had. When looking at the difference between Catherine (32), April (50) Fran (66) it showed that the older women were less likely to be interrupted than younger women. Throughout the episode, Catherine was interrupted 11 times compared to that of Fran who was only interrupted 5 times. This higher frequency of interruptions meant that 61% of the time that Catherine was speaking she was interrupted compared to 16% of the time Fran was interrupted. This trend is also seen in the amount of time that each of the women talked during their episode. Fran was able to talk for 22% of the episode compared to Catherine who only spoke 13% of the time. This shows that there is a correlation between age of the women and interruptions. I think that this is one of the most revealing data's out of the ones collected. When talking about politics, it is hard enough to be a woman that is taken seriously but as a young woman, they are even less likely to be valued in the conversation. While older women are still not equal to men's place in these conversations, because they are considered to have more experience, they are given more respect and time in the conversation.

While my data did support some previous research regarding women and interruptions, I felt that those numbers alone did not adequately describe the unequal amount of talk and interruptions that women had during this show. That is why I wanted to see how many times when women talked they were interrupted. That data shows that women were interrupted in more of their turns to talk. On average, women were interrupted 40% of the time they were speaking compared to men who were only interrupted 34% of the time. I think it is very telling because it accurately reflects how it seemed like every time a woman was trying to speak, almost half the time she was interrupted in some way. The amount of time during the episode that they were talking was also examined and compared between men and women was also examined. It was found the women talked less than men did. On average, women spoke for 17% of the episode while men on average spoke for 30% of the episode. In these kinds of political conversations, not only were women being interrupted at high frequencies, but they also talked less. One reason they had less time to

*DeGerlia*

talk is that in many of their interruptions they were interrupted near the beginning of their statements instead of the end. The men were able to talk longer before being interrupted compared to the women. An example of this is seen on lines 272-273 where Catherine barely gets 5 words in before being cut off by Bob.

The conversation topic was also analyzed in relation to when each gender was interrupted and interrupted someone else to see if conversation topic played a role in the interruptions. When looking at all 11 different topics discussed between the 3 different episodes, 7/11 or 63% of the interruptions used had less than a 20% difference in the averages between men and women and 6/11 or 54% of the interruptions used on them had less than a 20% difference in averages between men and women. 7 of these differences can be explained through the topic having 3 or less interruptions within the topic. The two that stood out as significantly were when women were interrupted on the topic of Trump and Republicans. With Trump's repeated degrading rhetoric about women and accused sexual assault allegations, it is possible that women were interrupted more in this topic for their perceived bias towards him and letting anger or emotions get in the way of objective reasoning. This is a common stereotype among women that they are too irrational and emotional to be involved in serious issues. This shows that there is a possibility that issues that women are perceived to be more emotional about are more likely to be interrupted when talking about them.

As women are increasingly being represented in politics (whether it's through government or reporting on it) they are going to be in group setting conversations with men. These conversations are essential because they could be involved in the decision making process for our government and can also shape the minds and opinions of the American public. If women are not given the chance to speak or are not taken seriously than how are they supposed to be able to impact these discussions and give new ideas? If women want to be able to make a difference in this realm they have to be aware of what they are up against. It is also imperative for men to understand how they undervalue women through speech directly or indirectly. When more people are sharing ideas and collaborating, there is a higher chance of finding the best solutions for problems. It is in the best interest of our country as a whole to value women's thoughts and ideas when it comes to politics. I think that one thing my study showed was the impact of a women's age on how she was valued in the conversation. If women are not valued in conversations about politics when they younger, it does not give them as many opportunities to grow and

advance and inhibits new ideas and solutions from a younger generation to be heard. It also reveals that women early on that they are not taken seriously in these types of conversations and that their ideas are not valued. This can greatly affect women's professional goals as it can give them less chances to be able to advance in their career early on so that they can be in leadership roles later in life.

This study showed me many of the difficulties that one faces when studying gender/sex communication. Because a lot of the findings are found in sometimes the subtlest ways, it can be easy to overlook something. This means one has to really analyze and find data on the most things as possible as so that one can best understand what the data shows. Also when analyzing conversations for interruptions, while there is a standard definition, there is a lot of personal choices that go into deciding what is an interruption and what type of interruption it is. If I were to make different decisions about what I decided to count and not, it could drastically change my data and I would have completely different findings. This makes it hard to find consistency within the field and makes it hard to prove a certain theory when there are other studies that don't support their own. One weakness of this research is that only one program was analyzed, and the fact that it is a show made for entertainment might have influenced the talk. Although it is possible that some of the disagreements were overdramatized to engage the audience, it is not likely that the gender distribution of interruptions results from this. More research should be done on the cross-section of gender/sex and age and how that affects women in professional and political settings.

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**“So Let Me Introduce to You:” A Cluster Analysis of the Sgt. Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band Album Cover**

Matti Jo Tyskewicz  
University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg

*The Beatles' Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band is noted as one of the most influential and groundbreaking albums of all-time. However, much of literature focuses the study of its influence on merely the music, instead of the album as an entire artwork. The Sgt. Pepper album cover is a vibrant and lively collage that embodies a very different tune to the popular "Fab Four." At an unsettling time in history and the band's career, the Beatles decided to end their world tour performances and become only a studio-recording band through introducing the fictional Sgt. Pepper's Band. The purpose of this paper is to use cluster criticism in order to determine how the Sgt. Pepper album cover reveals the band's motive and embodies transition. Through studying the key terms of the visual discourse - the bed of flowers, the blue sky, the wax "Fab Four" Beatles, and Sgt. Pepper's Band - it was determined that the album artwork creates the metaphor of a gravesite to send the message of transition. By contrasting the "Fab Four" performers and Sgt. Pepper's musicians through colors and instruments, the Beatles create distance from their past identities and careers, asking audiences to accept the new artistic identity of the band.*

*Keywords:* the Beatles, Sgt. Pepper's, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, music, artwork, album cover

Do not judge a book by its cover. This warning has been applied to many parts of life, from judging people to actual books. However, what if someone challenged the saying and suggested that it is acceptable to judge a book by its cover, or more specifically, an album cover? The artwork that accompanies music albums is the first thing people see before actually listening. Many listeners may hardly give the artwork a second look, perhaps because they are taught to believe that what is portrayed on the outside does not reflect something deeper. Music is analyzed and defined through its lyrics, vocals, instruments, and arrangements, so why should the cover images be cast aside, instead of representing an important part to the whole? This is why I will discuss the album cover of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, one of the most popular albums of all time. This paper will include a description of my topic, a justification for why the topic is worthy of analy-

sis, a literature review of existing research on the *Sgt. Pepper* album cover, a description and literature review of my chosen method – cluster criticism, along with a detailed analysis, and the resulting findings, evaluation, and conclusion.

### Description of Topic

The artifact I will be studying is the album artwork for *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. The cover photo is from the eighth studio album of the rock band, the Beatles, which consisted of members John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr. The photograph was designed by pop artist Peter Blake and taken by photographer Michael Cooper on March 30, 1967 in London England (Fanelli, 2012). The artwork depicts Lennon, McCartney, Harrison, and Starr as a fictional band, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. They are surrounded by public figures, including Bob Dylan, Marlon Brando, and a set of wax figures of The Beatles themselves. The wax figures are dressed in black suits, visions of the band's original iconic image with mop haircuts. The fictional Sgt. Pepper band stands in contrast to the original band, wearing colorful band uniforms while looking directly into the camera, laying atop a bed of flowers, visually identifying them as the real band, the Beatles. The album's title is located in the middle of the image, scribed on a drum belonging to Ringo Starr's character. The band's decision to end their world tours and become solely studio-recording artists sparked the idea to be portrayed as a fictional band ("Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," 2012, p. 8). In McCartney's 1997 biography, *Many Years From Now* by Barry Miles, he said becoming Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band was a way of transitioning from performers to artists. In his biography, McCartney spoke about this freeing process for the band, using an alter-ego that so that "it won't be us making all that sound, it won't be The Beatles, it'll be this other band, so we'll be able to lose our identities in this" (Miles, 1997, pp. 303-304). While *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* was the Beatles' eighth album, it was their only album cover to be considered a "work of art" as it depicted the transition of the Beatles and has been labeled "the most enduring image of the psychedelic era" ("Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," 2012, p. 8). The album and artwork have been in the spotlight since its release on May 26, 1967, remaining the best-selling studio album ever in the UK and the third biggest selling album of all time (McIntyre, 2018). For these reasons alone, this topic merits its analysis and consideration, but there are also several other reasons why this topic is worthy of attention.



### Topic Justification

Technology and need of convenience have altered the way audiences receive music. Artists communicate through downloads, streams, or exclusive content purchased only on specific fronts. So, why examine an album cover if it functions as a small picture appearing on the background of a phone or on the screen of a car's dashboard? In the midst of the advancements, vinyl records have reemerged, bringing album covers back to the forefront, back as a means of communication. Record shops have reopened, Barnes and Noble has extended the shelves of their music libraries, and younger generations have blown the dust off the vinyl records passed down from family members. As consumers once again drop their needles, The Beatles became among the many artists to take advantage of the new breath of life given to vinyl records and record players. Special rereleased albums not only have remastered versions of songs, but also bonus material once not included in the original compilation. *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* was rereleased as an expanded deluxe edition for its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in May 2017, defining itself as the best-selling vinyl title in the U.K. and one of the top five in the United States (McIntyre, 2018). This success leads to the question – what exactly is the appeal of a vinyl record, if it means purchasing an album twice? It is the equivalent to purchasing a physical copy of a book in a world that allows for an entire digital library at our fingertips. Technology has created an age where everything seems temporary, or perhaps, as if nothing belongs to us. As a means of collecting, individuals build shelves of their favorite works of literature, evidence of something that is their own. The continued rerelease of vinyl records gives consumers the opportunity to add more shelves, to be given something permanent in a world that can so easily be deleted with the click of a mouse.

Much like the gesture of opening a book, opening an album cover invites audiences to experience a realm crafted by the artist that is deserving a visual analysis. Tymon Adamczewski (2018) suggests that a musical image can function as a “portal” or a “gateway to another world” that proves the imagery is a means of displaying an “extension of the musical content,” another layer to the musical experience (p. 185, 187) These images are not hastily thrown together, but often treated as a piece of art, needing true artists and visual designers to assist in developing a monumental image from a mere brainstormed concept. The *Sgt. Pepper* cover creates its own world, one that is meant to survive lifetimes with a thick cardboard sleeve that displays the vivid cover art and the

first use of printed lyrics (Miles, 1997). It invites an interaction with the audience to become more than listeners, to become involved in, what Peter Gabriel would call, a “religious experience” with the sleeve as an essential part “to making the pictures of the magical world you [are] about to enter when the needle [is] lowered into the grooves” (Adamczewski, p. 187, 2018). The purpose of an album cover is not simply for protection, but to view the art in conjunction with the musical record, which is why the visual discourse of the *Sgt. Pepper* cover should be analyzed as thoroughly as its music has been. By allowing the music and cover art to become one experience, audiences become the listeners of music and also the “reader[s] of images” (p. 187). The same way a person’s favorite book sits on a shelf, the *Sgt. Pepper* cover awaits for its owner to rediscover its purpose – to be viewed, to be opened, to become “a cover you can read forever” (Miles, 1997, p. 341).

Through the creation of various worlds, music becomes one of the most universal topics among people, and despite the hundreds of thousands of artists, the Beatles are still one of the most recognizable bands. This album artwork is an important artifact for study because not only is it linked to one of the most influential bands of all time, but also to one of the most groundbreaking and popular albums. The Beatles have been nominated for 23 Grammys and won seven, including a win in 1967 for the *Sgt. Pepper* album cover and a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014 (Recording Academy, n.d.). Over the past 40 plus years since it has been released, no one specific meaning has been attributed to the artwork. This artifact continues to spark the curiosity of men and women, young and old, and its relevance lies in its ability to continue influencing people decades after being released. The album has most notably been named number one in *Rolling Stone’s* 500 Greatest Albums of All Time, proving its resistance to gathering dust long after it was put on shelves.

The album and its artwork not only marked a transition in the music industry, but in the Beatles themselves. It is important to study this piece of artwork that symbolizes this critical transition of the Beatles to better understand how the band accomplished this goal, which could ultimately influence current artists interested in making a similar change. Many people have come to conclusions on the meanings of the *Sgt. Pepper* songs, but analysis of the music must also be reflected on the artwork that accompanies the Beatles’ sound. It is important to look at this cover like it is a piece of art in a gallery to better understand the thought process of the band and what they intended the listeners to not only

*Tyskewicz*

hear, but see. My study will have theoretical significance as it views the cover beyond only a picture. This research will include the context of the album's place in historical time, along with its release during the timeline of the band's career. Grasping where the album was released in time can help to understand how and why it was included among the band's collection of albums. By observing this, current artists may be able to find a way to model their own transitions and strategically plan when and where their transitions will take place. The band and album have remained relevant for decades, allowing for the cover's techniques to transcend culture and time.

Over the decades since the album was released, there has been speculation over the cover's meaning. While blog posts and comments showcase a variety of theories, scholarly research and explanation has run dry. This topic is important to study because my analysis will contribute to a large community of research that particularly focuses on the music of the album, as opposed to the artwork. Although some research has been conducted based on how the cover relates to the psychedelic era, my research adds more to the discussion. Existing research attempts to identify where this album fits into the timeline of history. In order to create a wider perspective, I will be discussing the possible "hows" and "whys" of the album cover's design. While the differing sound of the album's music clearly demonstrates the Beatles' evolution as a band, I want to adjust the lens and focus on the cover in order to determine how it visually represents change. I believe all of the images on the album cover are meaningful and are intentionally utilized to spark a narrative that arouses curiosity and mystery. There is a world of informal comments and speculations on the Beatles' artwork, but I want to apply formal rhetorical strategies and systematic analysis to add a unique conversation to the communication field. As I extend my research and conduct a rhetorical analysis, I will discuss how the album cover represents the death of the band's old sound and brings forth the birth of a new one by answering the following research questions: (1) How do the Beatles reveal their motive through the *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album cover? (2) How is the concept of transition embodied in the visual discourse?

### **Topic Literature Review**

#### **Who is Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band?**

From the opening song, The Beatles establish their alter egos and welcome audiences to the show with "the act you've known for all these years." It's Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, a

vision of the Beatles on the edge of reality. It is not a mystery among research, but rather, a fascination. Born in the mind of Paul McCartney, Sgt. Pepper's Band was imagined as "alter egos" that would "take on the personas of this different band" (Miles, 1998, p. 303). On the album's cover, they embody the messages within the images and sounds contained in the groundbreaking album. Existing literature acknowledges the new identities in the context of both image and sound to study the cultural impact of the album, which lends to my study of the album artwork.

Previous analyses of the *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album prove that there is significant focus on the existence of Sgt. Pepper's Band. Through textual criticism, Womack (1998) notes how The Beatles' albums can be studied like literature. They contain literary characters from the songs "Mean Mr. Mustard" to "Eleanor Rigby," concerning "themselves with the human condition and the dilemmas that confront us within the interpersonal relationships that mark our lives" (Womack, 1998, p. 192). He supports the contemporary rhetoric that seeks to discover the persuasiveness of the messages in specific texts. This signifies the influence of the band's fictional depiction of themselves as a new band. They are new characters, not the "Fab Four" next to them on the cover, or even simply The Beatles. They are Sgt. Pepper's Band. However, the text does not expand on how the artwork can be viewed through more analyses. The band is not only displaying the characters or singing about them, they have embodied Sgt. Pepper's Band for the course of the album. They interact with the characters on the cover around them. If Womack believes that this album has earned The Beatles the right to be studied like literary characters, then further research will benefit from studying the individuals and messages on the album's packaging. The sound of The Beatles changes in this album, but so does the entire concept of the band just from the cover image. My research will crack open the small windows of study that focus on the image of the mop-top "Fab Four" in suits as compared to Sgt. Pepper's Band in vibrant band uniforms. Characters come and go in previous albums, but the artwork of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* suggests a permanence of transition, which makes this album cover all the more important to study.

Some sources use textual analysis to observe the content, structure, and messages embedded within The Beatles album covers (Frey, Botan, Kreps, 1999). Inglis (2001) uses a textual analysis to examine twelve album covers of The Beatles from positions that include insights of the ways album covers invite or allow a

Tyskewicz

consumer to process them. Inglis determines the role of album covers as: (1) Protection for the album itself, (2) an advertisement that retains and attracts an audience's attention, (3) the accompaniment to music that expands the musical experience, (4) and a commodity that audiences purchase for a trophy or collection. By taking these roles of album covers into consideration, Inglis concludes that the Beatles album covers create a link between the visual images and recordings, are highly influential in popular music, and can act as subjects for textual analysis. These perspectives support the analysis of the band's visual discourse, but since Inglis is examining twelve albums, the information on *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* is limited. A small section focuses on Sgt. Pepper's Band, which he notes "confirms new identities" and encourages listeners to "re-evaluate our assumptions about who they are" (Inglis, 2001, p. 88). By acknowledging the appearance of a fresh grave on the cover and comments from Schaffner (1977) in *The Beatles Forever*, which describes it as a "crazy quilt of rock n' roll," Inglis provides further support to the study of this art (p. 81). However, Inglis's (2001) study does not explain how the cover works to confirm the fictional Sgt. Pepper Band so many researchers have approached with fascination. The ideas mentioned by Inglis help me to narrow my perspective and provide information that proves that the variety of images on the front cover should be studied both individually and as a group. Audiences can hear the change from The Beatles to Sgt. Pepper's Band when they listen to the album, but I want to discover how the band visually reveals that change from the packaging alone.

### **When do audiences meet Sgt. Pepper's Band?**

Between *Revolver* (1966) and *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967), in the middle of the Vietnam War and towards the end of the Civil Rights Movement, audiences were introduced to *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. It was a time of cultural unrest for the world and The Beatles. After the 1966 American tour, the band felt a divide, beginning with the haunting Christian view of the band itself. Tension started with John Lennon's comment to journalist Maureen Cleave stating that the band's increasing popularity made them "bigger than Jesus," suggesting that Christianity would end before rock n' roll (Miles, 1998, p. 298). The Beatles were tired of their performances, but they "still went ahead," ignoring the woman who predicted they would die in a plane crash, the death threats from the Ku Klux Klan, and the eleven or twelve year old boy who had, as Paul McCartney said, "been fed that [The Beatles] are the anti-Christ or something" (Miles, 1998,

pp. 298-299). It was not until one poor performance in St. Louis, Missouri in August 1966 that the band had enough, delegating this North American tour as the final one.

Many works of literature surround their studies with the setting of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. Northcutt (2006) focuses his study on the timeline surrounding the album in a chapter from the book, *Reading the Beatles: Cultural Studies, Literary Criticism, and the Fab Four*. The tensions from Beatlemania and Beatle-bashing "presented the group with a crisis of identity, which the Beatles tried to resolve on *Sgt. Pepper*" (Northcutt, 2006, p. 122). Northcutt notes that the *Sgt. Pepper* album acts as a response to their relationship with audiences through, what Ian Macdonald (1994) calls, "revolutions in the head" (p. 34). The basis of the study by Northcutt (2006) emphasizes the importance of unity the songs of *Sgt. Pepper* provide. Through focusing on songs individually, such as "With a Little Help from My Friends," the study explains the intention to "resolve social conflicts and unite Beatles fans while practically distancing them" (Northcutt, 2006, p. 126). The Beatles try to mend the cultural divide, but also distance themselves from their mop-top performer status by becoming a studio-recording band. The study done by Northcutt does not illuminate too much on the record's packaging other than the fact that the printed lyrics on the cardboard sleeve was a first in the industry, leaving space for further research on how the Beatles visually displayed their intentions during a time of social unrest. In his research, Northcutt includes a quote from John Lennon about his annoyance with the rise of celebrities. After the band stopped touring, Lennon said that their performances had nothing to do with their music anymore, that "we could send out four waxwork dummies of ourselves and that would satisfy the crowds" (p. 127). The *Sgt. Pepper* album cover contains both a photograph of the Sgt. Pepper Band and wax dummies of the "Fab Four." While the artwork was yet to exist at the time Lennon said this, it is important to reflect upon evidence that can help define the purpose of the images included in the cover.

Based on the existing literature, the importance of the *Sgt. Pepper* album lies in its attempt to mend divides while creating one between the old and new Beatles. Ben Winsworth's (2014) "Psychic Liberation in Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" continues the conversation on when it was released historically during the Beatles' career. The changing sound that affected live concerts and the controversial comments on Christianity and drugs were reactions against what Winsworth calls a "safe neu-

trality,” an idea that performers like Elvis Presley were able to live with (p. 162). They celebrated the images created for themselves, whereas the Beatles grew tired. Winsworth mentions that musical artists at the time were fascinated by the makings and meanings of art. It is at this point in the study where he notes the “opulent” album cover gives clues to the “self-conscious attempt to turn pop into art” (p. 166). Although the majority of this research revolves around the songs, much like most existing research, it points to the importance of the cover as a significant object of study. Winsworth continues by saying that *Sgt. Pepper* “shows how serious ideas and themes can be accommodated in a popular/pop genre that was generally regarded (at the time) as superficial, temporary, and without any real intellectual weight” (p. 166). As I rhetorically examine the *Sgt. Pepper* album cover, I support the argument that this art is not temporary, as it continues to be relevant through study and even continued record sales. The existing themes within the songs correspond to the image on the cover. The *Sgt. Pepper* concert performance begins with the artwork, creating an environment that “engages directly with the listener in an attempt to liberate his or her perception of the world” (Winsworth, 2014, p. 170). The messages the Beatles create have everything to do with the historical period in which they are created, and this information is depicted on the album cover. By understanding this historical timeline, we can see how the cover challenges the current state of society and the band. How does the artwork “explore new realities” or ask us to “love one another” through its assembly (Hill, 2006, p. 30)? This is a question that I would like to explore in my study. The Beatles were sending a message from a time in history that is still applicable to research today. While past research of the *Sgt. Pepper* album often leaves gaps for the study of the artwork, it is a space I can work to fill in as I conduct this critical analysis of an important visual discourse.

### **Why are audiences introduced to Sgt. Pepper’s Band?**

As previously mentioned, existing literature attempts to answer why the Beatles chose *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* as the theme for their cover, there are explained reasons the band gave for creating distance from live performances. Whether it is a response to cultural indifference, or simply Paul McCartney’s idea for the name of the fake band resulting from his pun on salt and pepper packets, the reasons multiply with each text (Miles, 1998). Though, it is important to go beyond who Sgt. Pepper’s Band is to the Beatles or why they existed at a certain time in space. Research can benefit from examining the album artwork in

order to answer why it is Sgt. Pepper's Band displaying the message of change and transition.

Many researchers find importance in what an artifact is saying, rather than what it displays visually. They have ranked sound over image regarding *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. Frontani's (2007) chapter from *Beatles: Image and the Media* addresses how people saw the Beatles during the time of *Sgt. Pepper*, as opposed to what they heard. *Sgt. Pepper* is an album meant to "destroy" the image of the performance Beatles; they "actively sought to distance themselves from the image that had been part of their phenomenal success" (Frontani, 2007, p. 82). While the album's music changed the industry, its intention did not focus on that entirely, for instance, Frontani includes a quote by John Lennon from 1967:

I don't want people taking things from me that aren't really me. They make you something that they want to make you, that isn't really you. They come and talk and find answers, but they're their answers, not us. We're not Beatles to each other, you know. It's a joke to us. If we're going out the door of the hotel, we say "Right! Beatle John! Beatle George now! Come on, let's go!" We don't put on a false front or anything. But we just know that leaving the door, we turn into Beatles because everybody looking at us sees the Beatles. We're not the Beatles at all. We're just us. (Frontani, 2007, p. 84)

The purpose of *Sgt. Pepper* did not solely revolve around the transition of sound, but in the image, as well. It was a way for the band members to perform as themselves, to be themselves. While the image and sound of Sgt. Pepper's Band seems like it is all a façade, or a strange act, Lennon's quote suggests that perhaps the characters are those of the past, the "Fab Four," the mop tops, the Beatle Johns, Pauls, Georges and Ringos – the characters they no longer want to be. Lennon's quote supports the direction of my research, lending importance to the portrayals of the different versions of the Beatles on the *Sgt. Pepper* cover. Frontani argues that the album is "self-consciously and unapologetically art" (p. 89). Frontani believes that every step in the process of its creation was purposeful, including the songs and the "equally dramatic" packaging (p. 91). Frontani's research dives into the creation of the album's image. He describes the process of creating cardboard and wax individuals, chosen by the band, along with the gatefold sleeve and the lyrics on the inside cover. Similar to a study by Gabriel Lubell (2016), which examined the juxtapositions of the songs, Frontani (2007) notes the common themes in



*Tyskewicz*

the designer, Peter Blake's, works, including the juxtaposition of old and new, the fascination with the fantastic, and a focus on mass media. These themes are central to my study of the visual image. While Frontani does not approach the images of the Beatles the same way I intend to examine in this visual discourse, his research provides a useful starting point in discovering the purpose for this artifact.

Etlinger's (2011) study takes further strides towards the focus of my examination in her article. A more recent and related study to my topic comes from her work, "Beyond the Music: Rethinking Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," where Etlinger expands the discussion beyond the music and looks at the cover in three contexts: Pop Art, photomontage, and the history of the album cover design. Etlinger incorporates some semiotics into her article, determining how the portrayal of the band on the cover can suggest messages of how they will perform in the album itself. Etlinger notes the lack of discussion regarding the album artwork by citing Kenneth Womack and Todd F. Davis's examination of the Beatles and a depiction of their "former mythological selves" and "their remythologized contemporary counterparts" (p. 258). She supports the "mythology," meaning the Beatles were self-aware of their manipulated identities and how Womack and Davis "actively re-framed these identities according to their projects at the time" (p. 258). However, Etlinger believes that while Womack and Davis approach the artifact with the same criticism, they rely too much on the interaction between the music and artwork. Etlinger also describes how Ian Inglis touches on *Sgt. Pepper* as a visual text as he analyzes a collection of Beatles' covers, but he continues to contribute to a field of study that focuses on the image in relation to the music, as opposed to a single-standing artifact. Etlinger (2011) believes that the image on the cover is more than packaging. Etlinger argues that the cover represents a self-reflective critique. This lends support to the quote by John Lennon earlier, that the purpose of the album was not to change the industry, but to reflect upon the Beatles as John, Paul, George, and Ringo. Etlinger's article provides additional support of the significance of studying this artifact, emphasizing that it is not merely thrown together, but rather that it took deep reflection and critical thought to construct.

Etlinger discovers that a key concept of the cover is the placement of Sgt. Pepper's Band. The wax figures stand off to the side, eyes gazing in that direction, whereas Sgt. Pepper's Band is front and center, looking out at the audience, or rather, the people holding the packaging. Etlinger argues that by arranging the two

versions of the band in relation to its audience, the album's cover "presents itself as something to be looked at and observed, a performance, an interaction with the viewers" (Etlinger, 2011, p. 261). Etlinger explains how this specific album cover introduced the importance of photography for music. Since listeners cannot purchase the band, they purchase the photograph of them on the album cover. The most significant part of Etlinger's research is how she notices that there is not an actual photograph of the Beatles on the cover. They are either represented as wax dummies, or disguised as Sgt. Pepper's Band. Her research provides me with useful arguments that focus on the importance of the album's art, rather than only its songs. While the research helps to form a broader view of the importance of the cover, I want to examine how every detail of this cover represents self-reflection. It is noteworthy how Etlinger depicts the cover as a representation of a representation, however, my analysis will engage with even the smallest of images on the cover and their importance. In my own analysis, I hope to analyze how clusters of images send messages, along with the concept of representations of representations, and how this was important to the Beatles.

### **Description of Method**

For my study, I will be analyzing the images on the *Sgt. Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band* album cover, discovering how the messages and representations of the Beatles in the artwork are assembled. Since my goal is to use the variety of images on the cover to determine its purpose and meaning, which will assist in understanding the Beatles' worldview, the best method of study is the rhetorical method of cluster criticism.

Cluster criticism is a useful method because it allows for the examination of discursive and nondiscursive artifacts. Its limitations do not exclude pieces of art, such as the *Sgt. Pepper* album cover, permitting the opportunity for a visual analysis through cluster criticism in order to understand the rhetor's worldview. At the conclusion of the analysis, the worldview will be uncovered through identifying and evaluating key terms in the artifact, along with the cluster terms surrounding them. The goal of cluster criticism is always to uncover the rhetor's worldview, whether it is conscious or not to the rhetors, the Beatles.

Cluster criticism is best described in Sonja Foss's (2009) text *Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice*, which will assist in the application of the rhetorical method. Kenneth Burke, who created this form of criticism, spent his entire life studying identification. Rhetors attempt to create persuasion in communication

Tyskewicz

by identifying with audiences, creating identities through various properties, such as physical objects and beliefs, while forming interrelationships between these objects. Burke argues that while a rhetor is well aware of the act of writing and what they are trying to reinforce, they could not possibly be conscious of the interrelationships within the artifact that lend to its purpose and meaning. That is why a rhetorical critic can discover and analyze these relationships through cluster criticism in order to find a “survey of the hills and valleys” of a rhetor’s mind (p. 66). An artifact, whether discursive or nondiscursive, contains key terms and cluster terms around those key terms, which form the aforementioned potential relationships that result in uncovering underlying meanings of the artifact. My artifact, the *Sgt. Pepper* album cover, is the perfect subject for this criticism, since it is made up of a variety of complex visual images, some more dominant than others. By observing and assembling visual pieces that lead to the underlying meanings of the images, this analysis will result in understanding the Beatles’ worldview and the representations of themselves within it.

In order to uncover a rhetor’s worldview, Foss describes the three steps a critic should follow in doing cluster criticism: Identify key terms in the artifact through frequency or intensity, chart the clusters around the key terms through proximity, conjunctions, or cause-and-effect, and then use the interrelationships to discover an explanation for the artifact. While examining the *Sgt. Pepper* album cover, the method will revolve around key images and cluster images, since the artwork represents visual discourse, rather than a written text. The three steps of cluster criticism will assist me in answering my research questions: (1) How do the Beatles reveal their motive through the *Sgt. Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band* album cover? (2) How is the concept of transition embodied in the visual discourse?

### **Justification of Method**

The “hills and valleys” of the Beatles’ minds are the exact focus of cluster criticism and my study (Foss, 2009, p. 66). While I may be viewing an album cover, I am actually examining a piece of artwork, a collage of images with no one specific meaning, in a time that has impactful meaning for the Beatles’ career. The goals of my study are to understand how the Beatles reveal their motive of the *Sgt. Pepper* album cover and how they embody transition through the visual discourse. Cluster criticism is the method that will allow for the opportunity to achieve these goals by comprehending the terministic screens the Beatles use to alter their reality and reveal their worldview. The album artwork is not

only packaging, it has a purpose, depicting a reflection of who the Beatles intend to be. The images on the cover are assembled to act as a “reflection, selection, and deflection of reality,” creating relationships that reveal how the Beatles view the world and their place in it, whether it is intentional or not (Foss, 2009, p. 64). Cluster criticism is one of Kenneth Burke’s methods that provides insights on the assembly of a rhetor’s identity through their artifact. It is the rhetorical method selected for my study because its process of identifying and interpreting the key terms and cluster terms will result in explanations for the artifact and how it communicates in a transitional period for the Beatles. I will note the function of many images and uncover the purpose for this piece of art, which are essential steps in answering my research questions and seeing beneath the Beatles’ fanciful and colorful cover to reveal the underlying purpose and its reflections, representations of who the Beatles are.

Cluster criticism is also a suitable method for my analysis because it will assist me in studying the concept of simulacra throughout the album artwork. Simulacra was theorized by Jean Baudrillard, who argues that it does not portray an unreal view of the world, but rather, a hyperreal view, representing or simulating the world in a new way that replaces the original, such as Disneyland (Hegarty, 2008). The constant existence of a copy image begins to gain legitimacy over the original image (Jackson & Hogg, 2010). When observing the two versions of the Beatles on the *Sgt. Pepper* cover, the “Fab Four” is challenged by the existence of Sgt. Pepper’s Band. The Beatles are attempting to establish themselves as artists, rather than the performers audiences knew and loved. Sgt. Pepper’s Band stands next to an existing simulacrum, a band that is a replica, an empty copy, a manufactured pop image that is no longer a real or accurate version of John, Paul, George, and Ringo. By studying the image through cluster criticism, the concept of simulacra can be further analyzed through the artwork, as the original image of the Beatles transitions into the creation of *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*. What is the original image of the Beatles? What is the accurate image of the Beatles? What is the image they want us to adopt? These are questions I will investigate while applying the concept of simulacra to the album artwork, weaving its way seamlessly into my critical analysis of this visual discourse.

### **Analysis of Artifact**

The information provided by existing literature on the chosen subject and method will help in applying the three steps of cluster criticism to the album artwork of *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts*

Tyskewicz

*Club Band*. As previously described, the three steps of cluster criticism are to identify the key terms within an artifact, identify the cluster terms that surround the key terms, and interpret the clusters to help uncover the rhetor's worldview. Since the album artwork is a visual discourse, the key terms are images within the artifact. The *Sgt. Pepper* album cover is a collage of carefully chosen images, with varying degrees of sizes and colors. The complexity of the *Sgt. Pepper* album cover offers a variety of elements worth observation, with the visual discourse structuring itself around the key terms - *the bed of flowers*, *blue color*, "*Fab Four*" *wax Beatles*, and *Sgt. Pepper's Band*. In my analysis, each key term will be discussed, along with the terms that cluster around each key term, along with my interpretation of these clusters. This analysis will help answer the research questions: (1) How do the Beatles reveal their motive through the *Sgt. Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band* album cover? (2) How is the concept of transition embodied in the visual discourse?

### **Bed of flowers**

The bed of flowers is chosen as a key term because of its intensity, located at the bottom of the album artwork, defining one-third of the image. The image displays the Beatles' name spelled out with red flowers, visible dirt beneath acting as evidence that suggests the flowers are freshly planted. Beneath the band's name, the flowers also design a yellow three-string guitar and a five-petal flower made up of yellow, purple, and red. Among the bed of flowers are clustering terms, such as a small *television* and figurines that appear to be looking down at the band's name, including *Fukusuke*, a Japanese doll that brings good luck, a *Snow White doll*, and an *anonymous Victorian bust* from John Lennon's house (Gill, 2009 & Loder, 1987). The *Sgt. Pepper title drum* above the bed of flowers and the porcelain *Lakshmi* doll beneath the flowers are also visibly apparent cluster terms. The *drum* is a colorful display of the album's title, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, creating a barrier between the bed of flowers and the depiction of Sgt. Pepper's band. At the base of the flowers, in front of The Beatles' name, stands the goddess of wealth and beauty, *Lakshmi* (Julien, 2008).

The basic, single-layered function of the flowers is to identify that this album belongs to the Beatles. However, the Beatles are one of the most well-known bands of all time, recognizable by even those that have never listened to them. The band could easily omit their name from their album covers, especially since *Sgt. Pepper* features two visual appearances of John, Paul, George, and Ringo. This observation suggests that the bed of flowers

functions beyond simple identification, instead functioning as a representation. Red is the most dominant color in the bed of flowers, spelling out the band's name. It is a color that "steals attention from other colors," often representing either excitement, energy, passion, sexuality, aggression, danger, violence or war (Pan, 2016, para. 4). This is a color of emotion, drawing a viewer's attention to the band's title and where it is located, which is at the bottom of the image. The danger or violence of the color red comes from spilled blood, which often results in death. The bed of flowers uses red to symbolize a death, a burial in the fresh soil, a recent passing. Whose gravesite is it? Their name is written out in red flowers.

The clustering images of the *Victorian bust*, *Snow White doll*, *Fukusuke* all look down on the grave, mementos left behind on the plot, markings of the band's existence. The well-wishes from *Fukusuke* say goodbye to the previously existing Beatles, whereas the *Snow White doll* is evidence of the curse that results from beauty, the unhappiness and displacement the band felt for becoming performers too known for their image, instead of their sound. The *television screen* near the anonymous *Victorian bust* shows that the artists were lost in their performances, their appearances, much like how the stone figure's identity is unidentifiable, lost in history now. Two more significant cluster images are those of the *Sgt. Pepper drum* and *Lakshmi* figurine. *Lakshmi* of wealth and beauty sits at the base of the grave, marking the burial of the "Fab Four" band known for its prosperous career of Beatlemania, consistently portraying the four clean-cut, suit-and-tie clad, mop-top performers. Above the band's name sits the drum, larger than any knick-knack, which is suggested to be the headstone for the grave. The headstone and the flowers indicate different band names, which then raises the issue of reality vs. imaginary, much like Gabriel Lubell's (2016) study on the juxtapositions of the songs from the album. Are the Beatles really dead? Of course not, since they are standing in the center of the image. Did Sgt. Pepper's Band replace the Beatles? In theory, yes, since the Beatles embody Sgt. Pepper's Band for the album, however, they will not dress up in the colorful uniforms for the rest of their careers. Sgt. Pepper's Band is still made up of John, Paul, George, and Ringo. The drum as a headstone does not suggest that the band's name has changed or that there are two different bands. The Beatles' name in flowers and the Sgt. Pepper drum mark the same gravesite, meaning that they are the same band, representing themselves as a new identity – who they are during the course of this album. These new identities are those of a band that no longer goes on performance tours, one that instead

*Tyskewicz*

focuses on its sound, as opposed to how it looks (Miles, 1997). The bed of flowers as a gravesite for The Beatles marks a permanence for this transition, since death is permanent. The band did not literally kill the Beatles, they killed and buried the image that came with the name and introduced the transition of sound that came with a new life.

### **Blue sky**

While most narratives tend to paint blue skies, not all are as vivid or as cloudless as the Sgt. Pepper sky, which has an intensity that causes it to become a key term within the artifact. The blue sky is located at the top of artwork, above the individuals, contrasting the gravesite at the bottom of the image, along with the “marmalade skies” featured in the album’s “Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds.” It does not surround the collage of images, or appear in cracks between cardboard cutouts. Instead, it is positioned to one portion, one designated area of the album art - above everyone and everything else. The color of the sky is closest to the top row of chosen individuals, yet, its clustering terms are not necessarily those specific people. The blue color associates itself with the collage of *famous individuals* – the performers, such as Bob Dylan and Mae West, the intellectuals, such as Sri Yukteswar Giri and Sri Mahavatara Babaji, and the writers and artists, such as Edgar Allan Poe and HC Westermann – that center between a different cluster image, the *color of the jacket* worn by Paul McCartney’s Sgt. Pepper alter-ego. The similar blue color draws attention to the center of the image, the band in question.

Given that the setting is a suggested gravesite, a blue sky opposes the mood often correlated with funerals. A dreary, dark sky would be expected for the environment, but the *Sgt. Pepper* album and its artwork continue to go beyond what is expected. The function of a blue sky in this visual discourse results in a contrasting divide between the death of the “Fab Four” and life of Sgt. Pepper’s Band. Blue is a color often related to intelligence, openness, spirituality, creativity, wisdom, trust, loyalty, or strength (Pan, 2016). It is calming and peaceful. Within the *Sgt. Pepper* album artwork, the blue sky associates itself with *Paul’s jacket*, drawing attention or creating relation between the sky and Sgt. Pepper’s Band. Blue is a color of vitality, a color of life, much unlike the red colored flowers associated with the Beatles. Even though Sgt. Pepper’s Band should appear as outcasts, since they are foreign, the connection to the blue sky causes them to blend in, become normalized, whereas the Beatles’ dark set of wax figures opposes the vibrant colors. Typically, an image uses vibrant colors to draw attention to certain objects. This is not the

case for the *Sgt. Pepper* cover; the luminant colors are established as the standard, with the dark, colorless components contrasting from what is normal. Even the *famous individuals* – the artists and writers, the performers, and the intellectuals – all blend in between the blue sky and *Paul's jacket*, incorporating the vibrant, normalized colors into their images. A viewer's perspective notices the "old" Beatles, the outcasts that do not belong among the collage of individuals. These individuals were chosen by the band to be the imaginary audience that would attend Sgt. Pepper's concert, implying that everyone in the image is there to celebrate the life of Sgt. Pepper's Band, while the wax figures are solely there for mourning (Wirt, 2017). The perception of the band is altered through dissociation, as the message is clear that the *Sgt. Pepper* album does not belong to the "Fab Four" audiences are used to seeing or hearing. The sights of the artwork, the sounds of the album, are the band's attempt at distancing themselves "from the image that had been part of their phenomenal success" (Frontani, 2007, p. 82). It is an attempt to acknowledge the death of what once was, since it is present in the image through the bed of flowers. Though, the association with *Paul's jacket* also creates the message to celebrate and trust the new beginnings that come from tired endings, the transitions of sound that alter the band and the music industry itself.

### **Wax set of Beatles**

The intense, contrasting dark color of the Beatles' set of wax figures causes it to become a key term in the visual discourse of the album artwork. Transported from Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum in London, the "Fab Four" Beatles are positioned at the left of the album artwork, modeled from their traditional image of mop-top haircuts and black suit-and-tie outfits (Loder, 1987). The wax set stands in the front row with George Harrison and John Lennon's models staring off into the distance, while Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr look down, directly at the bed of flowers. Cluster images associated with the set of Beatles appear through proximity. To the left is another wax figure from Madame Tussaud's, American boxer *Sonny Liston*, draped in a white and gold robe. To the right is *Sgt. Pepper's Band*, dressed in striking band uniforms. While the members from the wax Beatles are empty handed, there is one instrument - *the euphonium* - at their feet, along with the *Fukusuke* figure.

The appearance and purpose of the wax figures is for the representation of the "old" Beatles. They are an image of the past, pushed to the side, existing as an element from "before," before Sgt. Pepper's Band, before the transition of sound, before the



Tyskewicz

declaration of artistry. In an interview after the band stopped touring, prior to *Sgt. Pepper*, Lennon said that the performances had nothing to do with the music anymore, that “we could send out four waxwork dummies of ourselves and that would satisfy the crowds” (Northcutt, 2006, p. 127). Here are those waxwork dummies, appearing just as the crowds would expect. The wax figures are sculpted as Madame Tussaud’s artists saw them, a copy of who the industry made them. With these wax figures in the presence of a “new” *Sgt. Pepper’s Band*, the Beatles are acknowledging their existing simulacrum associated with the wax figures. The “Fab Four” figures are not untrue depictions of the band, they appear this way because it was the way they existed in performances. However, through time the band became a manufactured pop image that is a replica of the band, not an accurate depiction of John, Paul, George, or Ringo. Just as *Sonny Liston* is not literally standing next to the “Fab Four,” the wax figures are not actually the band once again dressed in their traditional outfits. The wax figures are yet another replica of the band, an image the Beatles attempted to “destroy” (Frontani, 2007, p. 82). These four men are not the artists the Beatles wanted to be, the evidence is in the fact that none of the wax figures are holding an instrument. The *euphonium* lies at their feet, facing down, unable to make a sound. When the audience views the album artwork, the “Fab Four” exists as an image of four performers, copies and copies continuously printed on millions of album sleeves. As an attempt to destroy the living simulacra, to rid themselves of the characters they are tired of being, the band kills the image of the Beatles, buries and puts them to rest, the only mourners are the wax figures looking on at the grave. This set of Beatles appears not to interact with the audience, but to display that they are upset at the death of the Beatles, or perhaps even the false life gone with them. The existence of the wax figures functions as a before, an old version, a death of who once existed. The album artwork’s purpose is not to define another album by the “Fab Four” Beatles, instead it functions to prepare listeners for Sgt. Pepper’s performance.

### **Sgt. Pepper’s band**

At center stage are John, George, Paul, and Ringo posing as Sgt. Pepper’s Band, dressed in eccentric band uniforms that cause the image to become a key term in this visual discourse. The uniforms are different from what audiences are used to envisioning the Beatles’ wardrobe, with John dressed in bright yellow, Ringo in pink, Paul blue, and George in orange, respectively. The members stand upright, facing forward, with their gazes directly

aimed at the camera. Each member is holding an instrument; Lennon a French horn, Starr a trumpet, McCartney a cor anglais (English horn) and Harrison a flute (“Who Are They?,” n.d.). The fictional band is at the center of the image, in the front row of people, with the clustering image, the Sgt. Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band *title drum*, at their feet. Their position appears to have the band pushed slightly forward, in comparison to the rest of the individuals within the front row, causing them to be associated with and stand closest to *the bed of flowers*, on top of the fresh soil. To the left is another clustering image, *the wax figures* of the “Fab Four” Beatles, with Ringo and Paul’s models closest to Sgt. Pepper’s Band. Paul’s hand is on Ringo’s shoulder, both of their gazes facing downward, directed at the bed of flowers.

The Sgt. Pepper characters are presented as just that – characters. The audience knows that behind the uniforms are the four members of the Beatles, they are not attempting to hide their identities. On many occasions, the Beatles sing from a different point of view or about another individual, which are more characters in their song books, such as “Mean Mr. Mustard” or “Eleanor Rigby.” These are individuals that can be studied like literary characters because they concern “themselves with the human condition and the dilemmas that confront us within the interpersonal relationships that mark our lives” (Womack, 1998, p. 192). Sgt. Pepper’s Band is not only an image on the front cover, the Beatles embody the band for the course of the album, introducing us to them, hoping we enjoy the show, singing “we’re Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band.” If the characters in the music can be studied like those in literature, their physical counterparts can as well, since the band invites us to a show, an alternate reality, with this “new” set of Beatles. It is important to note an observation discovered by Etlinger (2011), which is that this image does not display an actual photograph of the Beatles. They are either shown as the wax figures, or dressed as Sgt. Pepper’s Band. It can be inferred prior to even listening to the album that this is a performance by Sgt. Pepper’s Band, as they are in the center of the artwork, looking ahead, interacting with the viewers. Paul McCartney spoke about the alter-ego in his biography, *Many Years From Now*, saying “it won’t be us making all that sound, it won’t be the Beatles” (Miles, 1997, pp. 303-304). The band does not want the look of this album, the sound of the music, to be associated with the Beatles, since they do not appear on the cover. The gazes of Sgt. Pepper’s Band overlook *the bed of flowers*, the grave, at their feet. They are not concerned with the past, they are an image of the future, placing their *title drum* on the flowers. It is a dominant cluster term that acts as a headstone

*Tyskewicz*

and a barrier between the *bed of flowers* and the band. It protects Sgt. Pepper's Band from the grave or what is associated with it, such as the sound, look, or history of the Beatles. Again, they are creating distance between the before and the after, the old and the new, the death of the Beatles and the life of Sgt. Pepper's Band.

Not only is the band creating distance, but they are displaying contrasts. To the left of Sgt. Pepper's Band stands the cluster image of the "*Fab Four*" *wax figures*, lifeless and empty-handed. Both bands appear as a unit, standing close together with matching outfits, but only one appears as a group of musicians. Each member of Sgt. Pepper's Band holds an instrument, clutching them close to their chests, guarding who they are – musicians. Sgt. Pepper's Band does not smile for the camera, instead they appear with serious expressions, demanding to be taken seriously. Their contrasts, the *wax figures*, appear as a mix of emotions with smiles that were crafted and sculpted by another individual. They are stuck in their typical black suits, looking at the *bed of flowers* that Sgt. Pepper's Band ignores. While there is no actual image of the Beatles, Sgt. Pepper's Band is the closest version of the living band, the version that has survived, since the "Fab Four" figures are made of wax. The appearance of the Sgt. Pepper's Band leads the audience to assume that this album is just another performance, a strange act or facade done by the band. However, the cluster images that provide distance and contrasts from the "old" Beatles cause the viewers to question which band is putting on an act. Is Sgt. Pepper's Band fictional, or are the Beatles using them to create a rhetoric true to how they see the world – a rhetoric true to how they see themselves in the world, as a band that values the notion of being unapologetically, authentically themselves?

### **Analysis Conclusion**

The process of identifying key terms and their cluster images through cluster criticism assisted in uncovering how the band created a discourse meant to represent transition. They may not have intended to show that transition through a suggested gravesite, which uses images of different sizes and colors to send a message. However, their unconscious process developed a visual discourse that manages to embody and reveal a transition in the band's career. The Beatles view their world as a constant performance, one in which they got lost in their image, a presentation constantly altered and copied, which created a living simulacrum inaccurate to the band behind the classic suits and hairdos. This is an image still standing next to Sgt. Pepper's Band, but an identity buried beneath the flowers. The attempt at answering my re-

search questions and thoroughly understanding the Beatles' worldview will benefit through further explanation and evaluation.

### Evaluation

In this final section of my paper, I will use the findings from my analysis to fully uncover the the rhetor's worldview for the visual discourse of the *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album cover. By discussing the discourse's effectiveness, effects, and implications I will also further answer my research questions: (1) How do the Beatles reveal their motive through the *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album cover? (2) How is the concept of transition embodied in the visual discourse?

#### Effectiveness

This striking piece of artwork would not be the topic of discussion if it did not have impressive visual elements that create powerful communication with the audience. The Beatles manage to design a piece of visual discourse that uses layers of colors and images, which is a unique format existing among the band's previous covers and those of music's past. The cluster of images, once described as "cluttered" images in a 1967 *New York Times* review, is the most appealing aspect of the album artwork (Goldstein, 1967, para. 3). Whether that is an appeal for praise or criticism, the artwork still manages to incite curiosity and discussion, which is why the colorful collage design works as a strength for this visual discourse. It is a new take on an album's packing, becoming an image that is engaging and interactive. The design of the image appeals to audiences through its different angles of communication and powerful images that are constructed within each layer. Whether conscious or not, the Beatles establish an image that is representative of a stage in their career, a transition of image and sound, notable and recognizable because of the vivid and dramatic rhetorical elements presented throughout the visual discourse. While visual discourse is not often associated with establishing credibility, the *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album artwork continues to gain strength through its rhetorical appeals of credibility and emotion.

Within the first conceptualization of the *Sgt. Pepper* album artwork, it already became a compelling image simply because the artwork is an image of the Beatles. While the subject is suggested to be Sgt. Pepper's Band, it is still John, Paul, George, and Ringo appearing on the album cover and recording the songs cut into the record. At this point in their careers, the Beatles have already recorded seven albums, been nominated for six Grammys, and

Tyskewicz

had notable performances, including on the *Ed Sullivan Show* and in sports complexes like Washington Sports Arena and Shea Stadium (Recording Academy, n.d. & Wolfle, 2015). The Beatles have been accepted into the music industry and onto record shelves across the globe. Their success and notoriety allows the band the freedom to release albums without fearing for lack of recognition or sales. The band does not need to focus their artistic creation on the artwork or develop an image that contains each band member, since they have already established an affluent career. However, the band decides to appear not once, but twice, within the image, delegating ownership and taking responsibility for the album itself, along with all that may entail. The presence of the band helps to lend credibility to the visual discourse of the *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album artwork. Audiences put their trust in the band because of their already existing ethos, which assists in opening up the communication between the band and their listeners in regards to the message of transition. This trust and openness ultimately creates a stronger identification with the audience.

Along with the two versions of the band, there are a variety of objects and individuals that help to emotionally appeal to audiences on the basis of nostalgia. The album artwork acts as a photomontage, similar to the childhood visual game of "Where's Waldo?" Except instead of searching for Waldo, audiences pick and choose from the cluster of colorful artists, musicians, writers, and intellectuals, identifying and explaining their existence in history and presence on the cover. This nostalgic element is deemed attractive feature of the visual artwork, asking audiences to look beyond one glance, to search for and identify the famous individuals, thus using the design to engage and interact with those who own it. The first album during the Beatles' shift to a studio-recording-only band may suggest that this artwork is a barrier, a way to create space or a divide. However, the band does not want to distance themselves from audiences. In fact, they position Sgt. Pepper's Band to be front and center, looking directly at the person holding the packaging, further engaging with them and acting as a form of interpellation that asks audiences to value the messages the artwork embodies. As viewers take the time to study the image, they recognize the many intricate details of the discourse, an artwork beyond simply an album cover, allowing the Beatles to send their message of transition. The various forms of identification that take place visually result in audiences better understanding the Beatles' underlying desire for change and growth. For so long, audiences have seen the same image of the Beatles, the ordinary album covers designed to portray their ex-

isting simulacra. The same copy of the “Fab Four” that has been plastered on cardboard covers over and over again is still found among the layered image as another piece of nostalgia, another memory of the past. Their existence within the *Sgt. Pepper* cover is required to continue appealing to the audience through identification, to establish the common ground that allows the opportunity for the Beatles to send their message – the concept of transition.

### Effects

While the Beatles may have used the *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* album to end their careers of touring, their careers as musicians continued to be successful. Not only has *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* been rated as number one in *Rolling Stone’s* 500 Greatest Albums of All Time, changing the course of popular music, it also led to five more studio-recorded albums (“Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band,” 2012). That success continued for decades, since after the 50th anniversary of the album’s release, *Sgt. Pepper* earned itself the position of being the best-selling studio-recorded album in the U.K. ever (McIntyre, 2018). The great success of the album and its artwork was represented at the 10th Grammy Awards, with the Beatles winning four Grammys, including: Best Album Packaging, Best Contemporary Album, Best Engineered Recording, and Album of the Year (“The Beatles,” n.d.). Receiving the Grammy for Best Album Packaging is a clear indication that the album artwork had a significant impact on its audience and is a design worth remembering.

After fifteen consecutive weeks at the top of the Billboard 200 chart, it seemed as though *Sgt. Pepper* would never end. In a way, it never did. Many artists reflect on their first time listening to the album in 1967, when it seemed like everyone was listening to the same thing. The Grammy Recording Academy published a feature article to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the *Sgt. Pepper* album, interviewing musicians and producers that felt “united by their reverence and ongoing awe for the achievement of this timeless work” (Zollo, 2017, para. 6). Guitarist Steve Lukather compared listening to the album to the *Wizard of Oz*, a world that went from black-and-white to color, “unlike anything we’d ever heard on this planet, like aliens had landed in the backyard” (para. 7). The album was a change, a successful shift the Beatles attempted to make. Producer Bob Ezrin described it as “the audio equivalent of Walt Disney’s *Fantasia*: a momentous piece of work that pushed the boundaries of composition and technology and that opened people’s ears, minds and hearts to a

Tyskewicz

whole new level of fascination and connection with just sound” (para. 20). The unique aspect of the *Sgt. Pepper* album is how both the music and its artwork created a lasting impression upon audiences that goes hand-in-hand as the sound and image fit perfectly together, causing momentous reflection as the sound and image became instruments of change. While the Beatles did not start the wave of transition in the music industry, *Sgt. Pepper* was the final push, the strong shift in tide that sent everyone drifting toward change.

Even though the cover did not incite as many reactions as the music itself, the artwork was applauded for its originality and is still a recognizable discourse in the music industry due to the album’s legendary status. It is ironic to think that in an original review of the album by Richard Goldstein (1967) of the *New York Times*, the cover was labeled “mind-blowing,” but also “busy, hip, and cluttered,” yet later winning a Grammy for its artwork (para. 3). The album artwork recognizably contributes to the album’s success, being part of a “bold statement” that “legitimized the album as a true art form” (Zollo, 2017, para. 3). It is important to establish the new ground that came along with *Sgt. Pepper* and its packaging. The artwork provided many avenues of inspiration by being imitated on different fronts, including Frank Zappa’s 1968 *We’re Only in it for the Money*, the Simpson’s *Yellow Album*, and *MAD Magazine*, among others (“42 Awesome Takes on the Beatles’ ‘Sgt. Pepper’ cover”, 2017). It is an effective image tied to an album with effective sound. The elaborate artwork had cultural impact in terms of its unique design, but it also “expanded the notion of what was possible,” an idea that centered on “the notion of freedom” (Garcia-Navarro, 2017, para. 4). The album artwork influenced wider audiences than a single concert ever could, presented as an image on the packaging that may scratch or fade, but remaining as a performance that never ends.

### **Implications**

The analysis of the *Sgt. Pepper* album artwork, along with the evaluation of its effectiveness, provide answers for my research questions and offer insights into the Beatles’ worldview. Although the research questions and underlying worldview are not explicitly evident in the visual discourse, careful analysis has helped in uncovering answers to my research questions and the suggested worldview in the artwork. Through discussing the implications in this section of my evaluation, I will clearly answer those research questions and establish the Beatles’ worldview.

*How do the Beatles reveal their motive through the Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band album cover?*

The album artwork for *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* is attached to a time in the Beatles' career in which they decided to end their reign as performers and establish themselves as artists. The band's motive is to prepare their audiences for this shift, to display an image that will become the visual portrayal of their transition. The Beatles accomplish this by asking their audience to see the contrasts between their two identities as the "Fab Four" and Sgt. Pepper's Band. By representing the "Fab Four" Beatles with dark, drab outfits and pushing them to the side, they indicate that this album *belongs* to Sgt. Pepper's Band. Within the album is a collection of music that redefined the sound of the Beatles, that "elevated rock music to an art form" (Reidlander, 2017, para. 3). The sound of the music is Sgt. Pepper's Band, the album artwork is for Sgt. Pepper's Band. The Beatles are asking their audience to accept this new identity, this transition, by creating an environment that is suited towards Sgt. Pepper's Band. Their colorful band uniforms show a sense of belonging and excitement, like a new beginning that should be celebrated. Sgt. Pepper's Band may seem like fiction, but it is the "Fab Four" band that is on the brink of extinction. They are mere wax figures, molded by different hands, visually present only for the purpose of displaying the band's motive of transitioning from performers to artists. The Beatles have demonstrated awareness of the "Fab Four" becoming simulacra, icons that exist as copies of copies with no true original. Much like the lifeless wax figures, the simulacra have been shaped by other people, losing the Beatles and their passion of artistry in the mere representations that are not their true selves. The produced images of John, Paul, George, and Ringo have no authenticity, forcing the band to break free from these molds and construct a new life that uses the rubble of their past selves to become the artists they were born to be. This specific transition is also evident in how the "Fab Four" members are not holding any instruments, yet Sgt. Pepper's Band is, keeping them close to their chests, guarding them and their identities. The band's motive is also revealed through the men standing front and center, facing their audience –the hands that hold the album. By creating these characters that perform the show, that belong on the album, the Beatles suggest that this sound does not come from the "Fab Four." The experimental instruments that shake off the old, familiar sounds belong to the band members who are displayed holding the instruments. "Like a champagne bottle popping out of a cork, they were released from Beatlemania," with one image, one album cover that became artwork (CBS News,



*Tyskewicz*

2017, para. 7). They were released from the spell of simulacra, burying the “Fab Four” and their false identities six feet under.

*How is the concept of transition embodied in the visual discourse?*

The Beatles create powerful visual discourse that embodies the concept of transition through the suggested image of a gravesite. The motive of transition is established through the portrayal of Sgt. Pepper’s Band, but it is further developed using the metaphor of a funeral complete with the bed of flowers so often found at cemeteries. Sgt. Pepper’s Band is not only depicted as the ideal transformation, they are also vibrant, alive, full of future possibility. The bed of flowers, along with its numerous knick-knacks and headstones, belong to the old Beatles, the “Fab Four” who are mere mourners pushed to the side of the image; they are peripheral and unimportant to the story that is going to unfold. Their dark and drab clothing is suited for their funeral, their death, their past career as performers. Sgt. Pepper’s Band stands in vibrant, lively band uniforms on top of the grave, unaffected by the death that surrounds them. The death is recent; the grave has been recently dug as fresh dirt surrounds the flowers, rather than the established grass that grows with the passage of time. The only mourners for the death of the “Fab Four” are, in fact, the suit-wearing mop top-sporting wax figures themselves, which is evidenced by their dark funeral attire. The rest of the individuals in attendance are there for the funeral, but they are not mourners. They are dressed in vibrant colors to match the uniforms of Sgt. Pepper’s Band, acknowledging the death, but also celebrating the glorious transition. These individuals, too, have been victims of simulacra, copies of copies shaped into the sex symbols, heroic athletes, entertainers, or portraits of wisdom that audiences want to believe in, as opposed to who they truly are. Sgt. Pepper’s Band and the individuals surrounding them have a symmetrical relationship through color to indicate their approval of the Beatles’ transition and their desire to do the same. Their eulogy is meant to say goodbye to the Beatles, not in sadness, but rather in the celebration of a new beginning.

*Established worldview.*

The Sgt. Pepper album cover asks the audience to view the world of the Beatles as something quite different than what they are accustomed to, to accept the new Sgt. Pepper’s Band and the transition of sound and image that comes along with them. The band views the “Fab Four” Beatles as an empty portrayal of who they now are. The “Fab Four” members are not living versions of

John, Paul, George, and Ringo; they no longer want to be those people. They have been molded and shaped by the way others see them for so long, desperate to erase the facade. The Beatles establish a worldview that accepts Sgt. Pepper's Band and the notion of being unapologetically themselves, the true artists that were lost in the plastic molded appearances and routine, repetitive performances. Their past existence is viewed as one large performance, so much that the band has created a transition that, once again, is a performance. Except this performance is no longer for those that go to see the Beatles, it is for the people that will take the time to listen to Sgt. Pepper's Band – the true John, Paul, George, and Ringo.

### Conclusion

Do not judge a book by its cover. If the Beatles lived by this philosophy, nothing would have prepared audiences for what was inside the cover, what the rest of their careers would entail. *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* was the Beatles' eighth studio album. It marked the end of the band's live performances and the beginning of their exclusive studio-recording careers. A transition from sight to sound, the *Sgt. Pepper* album and its artwork remain important artifacts of study; the visual discourse embodies a powerful tide of change, a strong shift in the wind, a very different tune to the same band. In an interview with Giles Martin, the son of Beatles producer, George Martin, he was asked, "Did they know at the time that they changed rock history?" (CBS News, 2017, para. 7). Martin did not believe they changed rock history on purpose, that the Beatles did not ask, "How can we change popular music?" Instead, it was something like, "We don't wanna be bored by what we're doing" (CBS News, 2017, para. 8). The Beatles did not know they were changing rock history, but I believe that they knew they were changing their own.

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Tyskewicz

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**Understanding Displacement in a Restless World:  
The Phenomenology of Displacement that Intersects Ethnic,  
Socioeconomic and Cultural Boundaries**

Erika L. Kauffman  
Geneva College

*Home. This word triggers memories both positive and negative, happy and painful. Every person has a connection with the idea of home, yet many are plagued by a restless spirit or a physical rejection of the place they call home. The feeling of displacement transcends physical displacement as it is experienced by people of various socioeconomic classes, ethnicities, and heritages. Displacement is felt through varying degrees of personal feelings of not-belonging, at times despite the external circumstances of an individual. Through first identifying the feelings associated with being at home, the general feelings of displacement will be extrapolated from research done on the phenomenology of home. This paper is meant as an introduction to the broad topic of home and homelessness and concludes with a series of thought-provoking questions on how we think and interact with others in relation to these topics.*

*Keywords:* Home, homelessness, displacement

What does it feel like to be at home? When posed, this evokes a variety of feelings for any individual, regardless of ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, etc. No human being is stranger to the concept of home or the contrasting homelessness. Human beings have an innate need to belong to a place or a people group, whether that be in a large-scale way of a dislocated people group or a small-scale way of a teenager attempting to belong in the popular crowd at school. There is a need in all human beings to know and be known by places and people. Home must be construed as both a physical place made up of geographical and architectural places as well as a social place that includes membership in a community, culture, or form of people group.

While there has been a significant amount of research on the feelings associated with home and belonging, there is a considerably smaller amount in the way of displacement and not-belonging. For this reason, my paper will focus primarily on the phenomenological breakdown of “home” before extrapolating the opposite: what it feels like to be displaced, whether that is physically or socially, visible or internal. This will be done by simply reversing

the feelings of 'home'. This paper is an introduction to the basics of the sensations accompanying home along with the sensations accompanying homelessness in order to pose questions on how we communicate and relate to others. It is important to note that the words "not-belonging" and "homeless" will be used synonymously with the word "displacement" to describe a feeling of detachment from physical place and social place. Likewise, the phrases "sense of belonging" and "sense of home" will be used synonymously with the phrase "sense of place" to describe an overall feeling of attachment with physical and social places.

Another important note is that "displacement" is not viewed in a purely physical way or a purely emotional way. The nine categories of displaced people by Bouma-Prediger and Walsh (2008) will be used as a basis for the sense of displacement. These categories are: homeless—those without a physical house, inadequately housed—"those who had a house but without basic facilities and in ill repair" (p. 42); well-housed homeless—those with material wealth but little genuine community; immigrants—"a person who voluntarily left her native country and took up permanent residence in another country" (p. 42); refugees—"a person who flees to a foreign country to escape danger or persecution but always hopes to return home" (p. 43); exiles—a person who "does not freely choose to leave his or her homeland," but is "banished or expelled [...] and usually has little hope of returning" (p. 43); migrants—those who "move regularly and seasonally during the year, usually in order to find work" (p. 44); perpetual tourists—"someone who freely travels away from home for relatively short times for the purpose of business, education, or pleasure" (p. 44); and postmodern nomads—those characterized by no sense of place and few significant relationships as they seek "personal freedom and professional success" (p. 45). These nine categories of displacement "are different ways of being and feeling displaced, alternative forms of homelessness. [...] All are] excluded from some place and have no remaining connection to it" (p. 45). These categories dictate a framework to ground the study of displacement.

This paper will conclude with an opening to a later conversation about how one can understand a sense of home without first understanding the sense of displacement. The paper will pose questions and responses to this displacement and how a sense of home or belonging might be better communicated to those feeling displaced, whether they are displaced physically or internally from a place. I do not wish to propose political or sociological solutions

*Kauffman*

to physical displacement as there are many systemic and geographical barriers present in that field. Rather, this paper wishes to begin a conversation on how to understand and then rectify the emotional and spiritual states of displaced people through identifying the sensations accompanying “home” in order to identify the gap felt by displaced people, whether through physical displacement or social displacement.

This paper stems from a personal search for an answer to displacement, as well. This is significant to note because, as Greg Madison (2015) asserts in his workshop reflection entitled “‘Home’ Is An Interaction, Not A Place,” “it illustrates how right at the heart of this topic is human experience, not a theoretical concept but a bit of real life” (p. 29). My sense of displacement is unique to my personal life, having moved with my family once across the country, once on my own for a small period of time across the country, and recently making the transition to the tumultuous collegiate lifestyle. My story is different from the stories of others, but every individual has a unique understanding of home, homelessness, or a longing for home. The significance of the personal aspect of this topic is this: We are all connected by similar feelings of belonging or not-belonging, no matter the circumstances. Although I have not been displaced from my country by force and cannot understand the experience of say, an exile or a refugee, I can empathize with them as we share the same general feeling of displacement. This will be developed further as a phenomenological understanding of “displacement” is analyzed, regardless of circumstance.

### **Literature Review**

A series of authors and their research is addressed to further understand ‘home’ as a poetic idea, a physical location set in architecture, a physical location set in geography, and an individual sense of belonging to a social group. Key authors include Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian J. Walsh, who offer substantial work on the reality of different lifestyles related to communities, as well as J. Keeping and Jeannette Hicks, who reflect philosophically and analogously on being on the ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’ of a physical house.

As mentioned, J. Keeping and Jeannette Hicks (2011) reflect on the contrasting spaces of inside and outside, and the related concept of home and homeless, in their essay entitled “Between the Inside and the Outside.” Prompted by a visit to a construction site

in which the barriers between inside space and outside space are literally stripped to their foundation and bared. As a phenomenological piece of work, they do not make any concluding assumptions, but rather dive into a conversation about the poetic differences between the spaces. Their work aligns with the phenomenologically poetic work of Gaston Bachelard (1964) in his book *The Poetics of Space*. Bachelard also refrains from concrete definitions of what makes a house a home or a space a place, but instead studies the phenomena of what the space of a house makes a person feel in a poetic fashion. As he says, “Because of its novelty and its action, the poetic image has an entity and a dynamism of its own; it is referable to a direct *ontology*. This ontology is what I plan to study” (p. xii). Keeping and Hicks, along with Bachelard, study home and consequently homelessness in the sense of physical placement within architectural buildings and outdoor spaces.

Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian J. Walsh (2008), however, approach the phenomenology of home in a less poetic way and in a more definitive way in their book *Beyond Homeless: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement*. Their idea of home is far more encompassing as it studies not just the physical placement of a person within buildings or nature, but also within a culture and a community of other people. Bouma-Prediger and Walsh claim,

Ours is a culture of displacement, exile, and homelessness. Socioeconomic homelessness is growing with many people seeking adequate housing. Ecological homelessness is increasing, with its sense of alienation from a degraded and defiled earth. And a profound spiritual homelessness pervades postmodern culture, so that for an increasing number of people today, the experience of the world as home, as a place where we know the rules and responsibilities of the house, is lost. A nomadic homelessness dominates the contemporary horizon. (p. 40)

Bouma-Prediger and Walsh identify eight characteristics that lead to a better understanding of the phenomenology of home. The authors acknowledge that, while a sense of home can be as subjectively varied as the people experiencing the sensation, the sense of homelessness or displacement can be as well. Although they do not identify phenomenological characteristics of dis-



*Kauffman*

placement, they offer nine scenarios of displaced people. The work of Bouma-Prediger and Walsh will be resourced at large in this paper.

Complementing their work, Joshua W. Clegg (2006) seeks to add research to the vastly under-studied phenomenology of not-belonging, similar to homelessness or displacement, in his research entitled “Phenomenological Investigation of the Experience of Not Belonging.” Clegg does not look at physical placement in buildings or geographical locations at all; rather, he studies the sense of belonging or not-belonging that comes from identifying with people groups and social circles. His research is related more closely with social and psychological theories of belonging as he cites the work of those such as Georg Hegel, Karl Marx, Abraham Maslow, Eric Fromm, and Alexis de Tocqueville. His research of literature reveals a need for the modern man to find and maintain feelings of individualistic belonging, which leads to isolation and social alienation. As Clegg writes, “Fromm, like Marx, saw human existence as alienated and, like Adler and Maslow, he saw the desire to overcome that alienation as a fundamental human need” (p. 56). Others in Clegg’s research, however, seemed to believe that conformism rather than individualism is the problematic cultural appeal leading to alienation and isolation. Clegg uses this literature as a foundation for a series of interviews conducted with eight participants, five female and three male, who have in common feelings of not-belonging, but not necessarily any direct commonality in lifestyles. Clegg uses audio recorded interviews as his sources, which includes physical gestures and body language, not just the transcribed words spoken within said interviews. It is worth noting that Clegg’s interest was in interpersonal relational not-belonging, not necessarily bodily displacement or homelessness.

Greg Madison (2016) compiles the findings of his workshop, “An Exploration of Being-at-Home, Homelessness, and Belonging and the Concept of Existential Migration,” in his essay entitled “‘Home’ Is An Interaction, Not A Place.” As Madison says in his abstract, “One of the outcomes of this research is a reconceptualization of ‘home’ as interaction rather than the usual assumption that home refers to a geographical location, usually one’s origin” (p. 28). In this research, Madison focuses on what he terms the “Existential Migrant,” meaning a person whose “stories of moving across culture were not motivated by economic advancement, educational betterment, political upheaval etc, but instead were instigated by a powerful need to pursue one’s

personal potential by maximizing freedom, independence and choice” (p. 29). Existential Migrants are characterized as restless wanderers who do not feel at home even when in a physical and/or childhood home or when surrounded by members of their family or community. This group of people would rather travel, seeking a sense of home everywhere except the place that would typically be characterized as “home” to most others. Madison’s view of home is one that incorporates both physical placement and community placement in understanding the feeling of displacement amidst both characteristics. Perhaps most significantly, Madison poses this question: “‘Why is home even an issue for humans at all?’ It’s not as if we have known any other planet.... Surely feeling at-home here on earth should be a given, yet for some of us, it is not” (p. 29). His query is a reminder to think beyond the immediate before us and question the larger assumptions of displacement.

More closely related to the former pieces of literature directed towards “home” as a physical place is the work of Winifred Gallagher (1993) in her book *The Power of Place: How Our Surroundings Shape Our Thoughts, Emotions, and Actions*. As she writes in her introduction called “The Science of Place,” “Like those of other living things, our structure, development, and behavior rise from a genetic foundation sunk in an environmental context. Yet while we readily accept that a healthy seed can’t grow into a plant without the right soil, light, and water, and that a feral dog won’t behave like a pet, we resist recognizing the importance of environment in our own lives” (p. 16). Gallagher’s work, though not referenced extensively in this paper, explains the biological, psychological, emotional, and spiritual shaping of ourselves in relation to the natural world around us, varying on the climate, the landscape, and the other geographical features that surround us. Her book begins with a study of how people are directly affected by their surroundings (from the outside in), such as Natives in the extreme climates of Alaska, and is followed by a study of how people express and understand their emotions and thoughts by placing memories and habits in contexts of specific environments (from the inside out), such as how addicts are more likely to be triggered in specific, subjective environments that are associated with their weakness, whatever that may be. Gallagher’s book concludes with a section entitled “Synchrony,” in which the force of the outside environment coming in is caught in a tension with the force of the inside coming to expression through the outside environment.

*Kauffman*

Situated within the large and diverse boundaries of these many perspectives, I will explain the groundwork understanding of home as weaved together through the research of these various authors before extrapolating the groundwork understanding of displacement, primarily using the work of Bouma-Prediger and Walsh.

### **Phenomenology of Home**

A home is construed as both place and community. As Keeping and Hicks (2011) claim, “Place is not simple location, but rather a rich, ambiguous concept which is both more primitive and more primordial than space. Places define the coordinates of our lived existence” (pp. 75-76) and “to be ‘placed’ is to have a sense of connection, loyalty, affection, and identity within a particular context – a location, a house, a community, a nation” (Bouma-Prediger & Walsh, 2008, p. 45). A place includes the geographical location that supplies a place-identity for a person, as affirmed by the work of Gallagher (1993), along with the physical constructed house or form of shelter that protects a person’s bodily well-being as well as their psychological and emotional solitude. Bachelard (1964) writes, “If I were asked to name the chief benefit of the house, I should say: the house shelters day-dreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace” (p. 6). However, a home is also a sense of placement within a community of people, not in just a dutiful way, but in a deeply satisfactory way that implies a dyadic relationship. Madison’s research of existential migrants identifies, “[A] reconceptualization of ‘home’ as *interaction* rather than the usual assumption that home refers to a geographical location, usually one’s origin” (p. 28). A home is about more than a heritage. There are many who lack the sensations of home even in a familiar place with familiar people and cultures, even when their DNA tells them they biologically are connected and bred from that place and people group. Home is realized through a satisfaction in experiential interactions, not just an intellectual knowledge of one’s heritage. This connection—or disconnection—with home is different for every person. In his 2009 article “Belonging to the World Through the Feeling Body,” Matthew Ratcliffe writes, “I maintain that the sense of reality and belonging varies in a range of ways from person to person and time to time, and that there is not a single, normal, constant way of finding oneself in the world” (p. 206). Though outwardly similar situations may occur, every person responds in unique ways that correlate with their unique personality and character traits.

Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian J. Walsh (2008) propose eight characteristics of a phenomenology of home that assists in understanding the general *feelings* of a sense of home as it relates to placement and a sense of belonging. These eight characteristics are: “[1] a place of stability and familiarity, [2] a site of dwelling, [3] a storied place of memory-shaped meaning, [4] a berth of rest and security, [5] a locus of welcome, [6] an abode of embodied inhabitation, [7] a point of orientation, [8] a web of affiliation and belonging” (p. 41). The overarching theme of all of these traits is the notion that “home is a bounded space of identity and security” (Bouma-Prediger & Walsh, 2008, p. 41). As human beings who seek to constantly measure everything—thoughts, emotions, virtues, etc.—it is natural that a home would be a place of measured space, whether through a constructed place or a construed association. The measurement of a home allows a person to understand one’s identity as it fits in and relates to the culture, environment, and materiality that one is surrounded by. The lack of boundaries is recognized by Keeping and Hicks (2011) as they seek to explain homelessness through the metaphor of natural space, “Our grasp of this [outside] space reaches out and out, never coming to an end but dwindling asymptotically toward zero. This can invoke a feeling of freedom, but [...] it can also foster anxiety. Standing in a space without objects to orient us, such as an open field, we feel exposed, lost, not at home” (p. 77). A home must be bounded. However, as will be discussed later, a home must contain metaphorical windows and more importantly, metaphorical *doors*, to best function.

### **Phenomenology of Displacement as Extrapolated from the Phenomenology of Home**

The aforementioned eight characteristics of home by Bouma-Prediger & Walsh will now be expanded upon in order to understand what the contrasting feeling of *homelessness* entails.

The first characteristic of home is as a place of permanence. It is a place of familiarity, in which ownership can be taken. Home is not a place of shelter only, but a place on which one can rely, take possession, and alter in ways both small and large. The feeling of displacement, then, is the feeling of being a stranger, with no power to control or initiate any aspects of the culture or place. Madison (2016) writes of the existential migrant, “this [...] experiential body is no longer congruent enough with any one place to feel like it ‘fits in’. It has developed more intricately than any one

*Kauffman*

culture – no one place can hold the interactions this body now implies. No place feels like home anymore, except in temporary moments. In this sense, for some people at least, ‘home’ becomes a momentary self-world *interaction*, not a set geographical place” (p. 31). Displacement can be associated with a rootlessness, stemming from a lack of power to change outward conditions, the inability to take root in an unwelcoming soil, or the tendency to reject longevity and/or membership.

Secondly, a home is a dwelling place. Not for one person, but for a community of people to dwell together. This characteristic of displacement is closer to Clegg’s research on the phenomenology of not-belonging in social circles. Clegg (2006) contends that the lack of membership in a dwelling place contributes to feelings of displacement,

In a phenomenological investigation of participation, Peter Ashworth (1997) found that the fundamental ground for both participation and non-participation is a kind of emotional and informational attunement to the other members of a group. When an individual is not attuned to the needs, emotional states, and tacit understandings of a group, participation, according to Ashworth, becomes awkward or even impossible. Such a state renders the individual an outsider and may be the initial phenomenal field within which the experience of not belonging is lived. (p. 59)

As evidenced, displacement is identified by a lack of belonging to a communal dwelling place. In this way, displacement is associated with the feelings of invisibility or being uninvited or unwelcome by others.

A third characteristic of home is that it is a “storied place,” meaning personal and historical narratives have shaped a person through a place that has a past, present, and future. Bouma-Prediger and Walsh (2008) cite Walter Brueggemann, who argues, “Place is space which has historical meanings, where some things have happened which are now remembered and which provide continuity and identity across generations” (p. 58). The notion of “storied place” proves the importance of physical place to human beings. We are not meant to wander without an identifying place to map us in this world. There is truth in the fact that memories—“some things”—happen in places that are experi-

enced and handled in different ways depending upon context. There is a lot of weight associated with the name dropping of different places as they pertain to individuals in subjective ways or stereotypes in larger, objective ways. As Keith Martel points out in his work entitled *The Narrative of Place*, “Becoming acquainted with someone, often the first question posed is: where are you from? Far from being a mere nicety, this evidences the deeply rooted significance of place-identification” (p. 66). Martel reveals through personal descriptions how people are characterized, remembered, and ‘placed’ by their geographical, storied locations. Displacement is understood by a lack of a cohesive narrative of place-identity.

A fourth feature of a home is that it is a safe resting place. Bouma-Prediger and Walsh (2008) write, “A home is a place of vulnerability and trust” (p. 60). The opposite of this would be, of course, that a sense of homelessness or displacement would be a feeling of fear and anxiety. Clegg (2006) adds, “[N]ot belonging has also been identified with rejection, ostracism, loneliness, insecurity, marginality, shyness, unpopularity, and limited group membership” (pp. 57-58). Whether this displacement is a physical or an emotional vulnerability, displacement is characterized by fear. It is a feeling of fighting to survive without the luxury of letting one’s guard down to allow oneself to dream and explore ideas or spaces.

A home is also a place of hospitality, the fifth characteristic. This feature extends to a myriad of meanings. A place of hospitality implies that it is a safe place that welcomes others; it also implies that a person has a sense of ownership within a place that allows one to share it with others. Displacement, in contrast to this hospitality, is characterized by a personal unwillingness to share, a physical incapability to share a space, or a social insignificance that restricts one from inviting others into a community. Displacement is a combination of the lack of ownership and membership with the lack of comfortability to share.

Sixth, home is a place of embodied inhabitation. Similar to the third characteristic of a storied place, this sense of home calls for the external place and culture to establish itself within the internal framework of a person. This is reminiscent of Gallagher’s research on the direct affects the outdoor environment has on people, such as the effects of daylight on a person’s psychological well-being and the experience of a person in response to changes of altitude—home is a place where a person willing lets

*Kauffman*

the outside *in*. Not only in an involuntarily biological or psychological way such as with exterior environments, but in a way that embraces and adapts to the outside forces, allowing them to mold a person's sense of self. Bouma-Prediger and Walsh (2008) cite David Orr, "Thus, while residents require only 'cash and a map,' inhabitants 'bear the marks of their places,' and when uprooted get homesick" (p. 61). Displacement is a struggle against definition provided by outside forces.

A seventh characteristic of home is that it is a place of orientation, providing "order and direction to our lives" (Bouma-Prediger & Walsh, 2008, p. 63). This is closely associated with the need for home to have borders and clear definitions. In contrast, displacement is a sense of disorientation, either where borders do not exist or there is a clear border in which a person is restricted from entry. The lack of borders implies that without roots in a certain place, a person has nothing but the "foundationless homogeneity of the global culture" (Clegg, 2006, p. 54). "Without [a house], man would be a dispersed being. It maintains him through the storms of the heavens and through those of life" (Bachelard, 1964, p. 7). The lack of definite boundaries affects the understanding of the self—a interviewed participant in Clegg's research describes the sense of not-belonging in a personal way, stemming from the lack of an inward understanding of the self based on outward forces. Clegg (2006) writes, "The sense of uncertainty and insecurity that came from feeling different also issued in uncertain, self-conscious, tentative, even wary ways of interacting" (p. 66). Clegg (2006) continues to describe how this personal displacement of identity contributes to a person's behavior as they attempt to create an identify for themselves that transcends the associations of rootedness and confidence in 'home',

These strong emotional experiences [of not belonging] extended even into the spatial and embodied experiences of these participants. They felt not only angry or sad or anxious, but also physically exhausted, heavy, and beaten. Susan described such a feeling: 'You really have to mold yourself to be able to fit in with a whole bunch of different situations and it gets kind of exhausting' (pp. 69-70).

As Keeping and Hicks (2011) add, "Whereas the essential attribute of inside space is enclosure, the defining characteristic of out-

side space is its lack of any clearly defined limits. Outside space is bounded by the horizon and the sky, but neither of these is clearly defined” (p. 77). Alternatively, the sense of disorientation within displacement that arises from being on the outskirts of a clear boundary is caused by such a clear contrast between the two. Just as “we feel warm *because* it is cold out-of-doors” (Bachelard, 1964, p. 39), how much colder it feels out-of-doors when contrasted against the warm, cozy light of a safe, warm *inaccessible* home in the distance. “...Indeed everything comes alive when contradictions accumulate” (Bachelard, 1964, p. 39). A placement is found through established boundaries that accentuate what is comfortable and known from what is not.

The eighth and final characteristic of home is that it is a place of affiliation and belonging. Jurgen Moltmann is quoted by Bouma-Prediger and Walsh (2008), “I am ‘at home’ where people know me, and where I find recognition without having to struggle for it” (p. 64). There are two forms of not-belonging that are associated with the phenomenological understanding of displacement. One is the lack of affiliation with a place regardless of whether it makes sense—it is the deeply ingrained, inherent feeling that one does not belong to a culture, a place, or a community. The second lack of belonging is named “isolated belonging” by a participant in Clegg’s study. Isolated belonging is described by Clegg (2006) as “a pattern of social interaction marked by a large number of distant, disconnected relationships” (p. 71). A participant used this term in describing her freshmen year of college as she was introduced to a large set of new social groups. Clegg (2006) writes, “She used this term because she felt like she was accepted, that she belonged, but that it was only in distant, and thus isolating, ways. She moved between different social groups without putting down roots in any particular one” (p. 71). The phrase “putting down roots” is key here, as it is directly correlated to physical placement (or the lack thereof). These roots require time to settle naturally, without forced acceptance. Whether the conversation be about a sense of belonging in a people group or a sense of belonging in a place, *time* to adjust is absolutely necessary and natural. Acquaintanceship with a group or place is not enough to garner feelings of belonging or home; an intentionality on behalf of the displaced person must be involved as displacement is characterized by a lack of recognition by a place as no feeling of belonging is present.



*Kauffman*

### **Understanding Both ‘Home’ and ‘Displacement’ Through the Construction Site**

It is important to understand displacement through identifying the characteristics of home that are lacking. Bouma-Prediger and Walsh (2008) begin their phenomenological discussion with the statement, “Sometimes we know what home is by what it is not” (p. 41). It is possible that we can know what displacement is by what it is not, as well. Why is displacement such a prevalent conversation in today’s day and age? Why does it seem that a large portion of heritage and history is being discarded as many people willingly transplant themselves from what is familiar to what is unknown? What are the benefits and the dangers in doing this? Perhaps our modern era is said to be a “culture of displacement” because “home” is not recognized until it is lost. They are undervalued until they are unattainable. This leads to my wondering, how can a person know they are at home until they have known what it is like to *not* be at home? Must life continually be a cycle between feeling at “home” and feeling “homeless”?

There is a clear distinction in the boundaries between home and homelessness. The article “Between the Inside and the Outside” by Keeping and Hicks provides essential, vivid imagery to understand this separation. Through a visit to a construction site, where the barriers between the “inside” and the “outside” are literally torn down or laid bare, it is easy to visualize more clearly the difference between “inside,” analogous in this paper to ‘home’ or a sense of place or belonging and “outside,” analogous here to ‘displacement’ or homelessness and a sense of not-belonging. Though there are holes in this metaphor, as with any metaphor, the contrast of the measured indoors and the expansive outdoors is of great significance in understanding placement and belonging. This is not to assume that nature cannot maintain qualities that instill feelings of belonging within a person by any means, or that an inside of a building is always homey, but for the sake of poetic understanding and imagery, this metaphor will be maintained.

Keeping and Hicks argue that physical houses disguise dangers within their borders to create a feeling of safety against the unknown space of the outside. For example, the bare structure of a home as it is under construction reveals the suspension of a second, third, or fourth floor as a false sense of ground is created. There are also exposed wires, exposure to outside weather-forces such as rain and heat without walls and rooves, and bared water

pipes. Keeping and Hicks (2011) refer to these built-in dangers as “an instance of the covering-up of the possibility of death perpetrated by the “they,” The “they” (*das Man*) is of course Heidegger’s word for the generalized public self which sets the norms of a particular culture” (p. 79). These dangers—the realities of the natural world, we could say—are laid bare without the protection of the physical house, or, with this metaphor, the protection of the sense of place or home. Without the physical, psychological, emotional protection of walls (physical, emotional, and metaphorical), the bare elements of reality are more evident. The “humanness” of reality is never far from a placed person, but Keeping and Hicks are correct when they assert that the house—the sense of home—disguises these human needs/characteristics such as our bodily exposure to heat/cold, light/darkness, precipitation, wind, etc., as well as loneliness, anxiety, hopelessness, fear, and the list goes on-and-on. A “home”—regardless of its physical or metaphysical features—protects a person from this humanness by providing a place of refuge for one to dream, imagine, hide in corners, place memories, and protect oneself from the outside world. This is an important aspect of home as it is a place of refuge and comfort.

However, “Inside an enclosed space, we have difficulty figuring out where we are with respect to the outside without the aid of a door or a window. The inside of a building is never experienced as quite the same size as the outside. . . sometimes it is smaller, sometimes larger” (Keeping & Hicks, 2011, p. 77). When the sense of home is too protected, too barred off from the rest of the world, not only does it lose its fullest value of home as it lessens in hospitality and communal dwelling, but it disconnects a person from the humanness of understanding the *displacement* of others. Only when the cold out-of-doors is experienced will the interior warmth of a home be valued for its full potential, to use Bachelard’s example. Madison (2016) writes, “Continually encountering unfamiliar cultures is a way to ‘kick myself alive’” (p. 32). He later says, “Heidegger refers to wanderers who have been far from home, in remotes places, as being the ones capable of bringing home the message concerning the origins that have otherwise been forgotten” (p. 34). We must leave our comfortability at times in order to fully understand the importance of maintaining a home by experiencing the contrasting homelessness. Without an understanding of the significance of “home”, it is possible that the mental construct of home will become shallow, flimsy, and easily, willingly discarded like the skin of a snake, leaving the impression that there is always something bet-

ter to be found.

Additionally, such strong contrasts between “home” and “homeless,” makes the one immensely cozier and the other immensely more harrowing. Perhaps if this wall between the two was not quite so impenetrable, there would be less of an extreme separation. Imagine a house with all its modern technology: Air conditioning, heating pipes, running water, electricity, etc. Feel the bodily adjustment one makes when stepping from a cool, 70-degree apartment out into a 90-degree and humid outdoor environment. While the inside temperature is longed for, how much worse this luxury makes the outside temperature feel. Perhaps this can be seen in a similar way to home versus displacement when “our houses are no longer aware of the storms of the outside universe” (Bachelard, 1964, p. 27). In a world of artificial environment conditions such as light and temperature, artificial community through mediated technology, and artificial roots through a disconnect with geographical placement, perhaps it is that much easier to feel displaced at the drop of a hat, with only a minor deviation from the accepted norm to set off a chain reaction of emotional and physical distress. “From having been a refuge, [the home] has become a redoubt” (Bachelard, 1964, p. 46). As Greg Madison (2016) asserts, “Homecoming, then, is not the return home to a geographical and cultural place, but more a fleeing from superficial hominess back into the mystery of the world” (p. 39). Viewed in this way, it is arguable that those who have never before felt displaced may have a deficient understanding and appreciation of home. Though seemingly contradictory, perhaps all people begin in displacement, even though we live in a world for which, as Madison asserts, we were all created. Perhaps ‘home’ is not a foundation that leads to displacement, but perhaps it is reverse: We are all displaced until we fully engage with the ‘mystery of the world’ to find our own boundaries that separate the known from the unknown.

### **Conclusion**

We can therefore begin to understand the phenomenology of displacement through flipping the eight characteristics of home as identified by Bouma-Prediger and Walsh. The eight phenomenological characteristics of displacement, then, are: the lack of control or longevity, not dwelling in community with others, not maintaining a cohesive narrative, a feeling of fear and anxiety, a lack of membership and comfortability to share space, a struggle against outside defining forces, a lack of boundaries or an exclu-

sion from a bounded place, and a lack of natural belonging to a place or people group due to commonality of some kind. Displacement is felt due to many circumstances, but is characterized by these general feelings regardless of how the lack of belonging has been experienced.

This understanding of displacement leads to a questioning of the modern understanding of home. If so many people are in search of a home, longing for a sense of place and belonging, why is it so elusive? Why are many people restless even when in places that seem to have all the ideal qualities of “home” from the outside? Can the feelings of home be reclaimed after having been initially abandoned? Madison (2016) asserts, “The longer one remains away from home the less concrete seems the experience of home” (p. 33). How then can we better understand and communicate a sense of home to people who seem to have all the correct ingredients without the feeling, without forcing them to suffer in homelessness for a time? Is there a way to penetrate the walls—the boundaries—that separate home and homelessness ever so slightly in order to better live with our eyes opened to what we already have? Additionally, how can displaced people—regardless of how they are displaced—be welcomed into a sense of home and encouraged to establish roots in a safe, hospitable, communal, membered place? Knowing what we know about displacement and understanding through a sheer humanness how it can be felt in various circumstances regardless of heritage, culture, or socioeconomic status, how can we better empathize and relate to others who experience displacement, whether we feel at home or lost?

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## **Even The Strongest Have Weaknesses**

Gretchen Frances Shepard  
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown

*This oral history interview with a Salt-Wasting Adrenal Hyperplasia patient demonstrates the importance of direct physician/patient communication with parents as well as with their under-aged children. Throughout the interview, I found that there were positive and negative interactions that suggested a need for improved medical communication training. The most significant was the lack of communication between the patient, who was diagnosed at birth, and the medical professionals. Earlier research shows that most people believe that children are not interested in their medical treatment, but newer studies have found that this is not the case. The patient narrator stated that the doctors would not communicate to him but rather only to his parents, who did not have enough background to understand the medical terminology used. This caused them to leave the appointment confused. Since this was an era before the internet, they were unable to Google any questions or words they did not understand. This left him and his parents in the dark when it came to his medical treatment. Although that was over 40 years ago, I believe this problem still exists in the medical scene today. Although there has been some communication improvement, the evidence uncovered in this interview suggests that medical communication training is needed to improve upon how medical students deal with younger patients.*

*Keywords:* Oral History, Medical Communication

Most little girls place their fathers on the highest pedestals, and as expected, I was no different. My father has always been one of the strongest people in my life. He has been a volunteer firefighter for over 25 years. Growing up, I believed he was a real-life superhero, and he is still my personal hero. I would beam with excitement when I would tell all of my friends and classmates that my dad bravely sprints into burning buildings and saves people. Deep down inside, I knew that his time away from home was well spent, and it ensured that a little girl like me, was able to live another day.

My father was always there to tell me to stand up from a soccer injury and just shake it off. He allowed me to realize that I should never let people know that I am hurting and to always have a

*Shepard*

brave face on. He taught me how to drive a car, a truly dangerous task, which may have caused some of his gray hairs to sprout up. He was my anchor, who brought me back when I floated too far away from reality. In my head, my father is indestructible, but actually, he suffers from Salt-Wasting Adrenal Hyperplasia.

After my personal experience of working at a psychiatric ward, I realized the importance of having good communications between the patients and the doctors. If there was a bad channel of communication between the professional and the patient, this would negatively affect the patients and impede their progress. I became fascinated in this topic due to my interest in clinical settings, more specifically the psychological and social aspect that effect it. To research this effect, I chose to conduct an oral history interview on my father, Scott Shepard, to examine how a doctor would handle communicating with a minor patient suffering from a congenital illness. This serves as a good case study because it raises the question as to what point do providers communicate more directly with the child patient than their caretaker. It also affords the ability to get an in depth understanding of this illness.

### **Who is Scott James Shepard?**

Scott James Shepard is a fifty-one-year-old husband and father. He is married to Cecilia Shepard née Gallagher, for over 26 years and has two children, myself and my younger sister, Grace. They currently reside in Penn Hills, Pennsylvania. He presently serves as the Superintendent of Public Works for the municipality of Penn Hills. This job requires working many overtime hours, especially in the winter season with frequent snow storms. Even with the constant work demands, he remains very active in his children's lives. He attended all of my soccer games throughout my career and volunteered for the other organizations that I belonged to. Growing up, Shepard described his life as pretty average, much like any other child his age. He defines himself as an only child since when he was younger, his sister who was a year and a half younger than him, passed away due to the same congenital disease he was diagnosed with. This is very important to note because of the effect it had on his family. This loss caused his family and himself to be more aware of how to manage his condition. Also, since he was at a young age when he was diagnosed, just like his sister, this was the basis for my inquiry on how medical professionals handle giving new to younger patients.

His mother, Karen Shepard née Shipley, always worked as a secretary and her last job before she retired was administrative assistant to the Vice President of the Union Railroad. His father, James Shepard, on the other hand, worked as a salesman. Shepard grew up in a fairly average family, with both parents happily married and maintaining an occupation and a good family dynamic.

Shepard's hobbies include photography and bike riding. For five years now, Shepard has woken up early to take sunrise photos on his professional camera and he also enjoys video recording his younger daughter's halftime performances and concert band performances. As for bike riding, our family will wake up early on Sunday mornings to go bike riding on a trail that follows the Allegheny River towards the city of Pittsburgh.

### **The Diagnosis**

At first, I felt nervous to interview my father about his diagnosis. He generally likes to keep things private and never complains about his illness. When asked about who all knows of his illness besides our family, he said:

I am a private person, I tell very few people about it. I am not even sure if my best friends would know what it is. Not that I am ashamed of it or anything, I am just not a person to share medical things. Most of my friends probably know I take pills and it is a very complicated diagnosis so many times if somebody asked, I just explain that I take pills.

In addition to that, his younger sister died from the same illness a year and a half after she was born, so the topic has become a very sensitive conversation in his family. From birth, Scott Shepard was diagnosis with Salt-Wasting Adrenal Hyperplasia. He described Salt-Wasting Adrenal Hyperplasia as:

My adrenal glands do not produce enough cortisone to sustain the rest of the glands operating naturally. I lose salt as a diabetic lose [s] sugar. My body is constantly trying to get rid of salt if my medications [is] not regulated... I would die of lack of sodium and water, it would just waste out of me.

After only a few hours after birth, the doctors noticed he was not taking in fluid and keeping food down normally, so they conducted more studies at Albany General. One doctor happened to real-



*Shepard*

ize what the young Shepard might have had and started to treat him. Without this sudden treatment, he would not have survived for much longer.

I assumed that someone with a congenital illness would be pessimistic about these circumstances, but my dad felt the opposite: Since it was a congenital disease, I grew up my whole life taking pills, so that was never a big deal to me. I always [have] been lucky, it's always been, I felt, very simple. Take a couple pills in the morning every day. If I am very sick, especially when I was little, they kept liquid that had to be injected into me. As I grew older, I hadn't had a shot like that in 40+ years. So, I always grew up with it.

He just accepted the fact that he will have to deal with a congenital illness for the rest of his life. He knew that he was considered "lucky" because he could continue to live his life normally, with the exception of taking a few pills every morning.

### **The Treatment**

Currently, Shepard experiences symptoms, even though he has been taking the same medicine for the past 35 years: Prednisone and Fludrocortisone. He has a harder time adjusting to extreme temperature changes, especially heat. He also has to worry about getting sick or becoming seriously injured. If either of these situations were to occur, it would be very complicated and would be more severe for Shepard than it would for the average person. If he is sick and unable to keep his medications down in his system, this can cause serious complications, and he would have to go to the emergency room almost immediately. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, these situations become more severe because the body needs more adrenal hormones during stressful situations (ex. illness or injuries) and his body is not able to make enough of these hormones. Thankfully, this situation has never happened to him, but it does cause him to be more caution before putting himself in traumatic situations.

Another hurdle Shepard has had to jump over was the medicines' side effects affecting his ability to have children. Although, he always expressed not wanting kids, as a teen, it changed when he met his wife, Cecilia. He knew that it was something they wanted to plan for.

He described their process of trying to have children by saying:

When we decided to try to have children we were not successful right away. [We] went on to my wife's doctor who tested us, and her doctor's office gave us the prognosis that I could not have children. At the time... I called [the specialist we were seeing] and told him what was going on and they were not surprised and acted like I should have known that, and they said they just had to adjust my medication. And that is what they did each time we wanted to have a child, I had to go on different higher doses of medication.

But as some medicines do, the higher doses of medication negatively affected his body.

The effects on my body were tough to get through. The higher doses of Prednisone cause you to gain massive amounts of weight, leg cramps, you know just overall muscle cramps and makes it harder to deal with the heat. It was something that... I never cared about doing to have the first child and I never cared about doing to try and have a second child.

Although he had terrible side effects that most people would not want to endure, Shepard experienced this process twice in order to have two children. I believe his response to this medicinal change was a typical response from most adults looking to start a family of their own. Salt-Wasting Adrenal Hyperplasia is a recessive disease, meaning myself and my sister are carriers to this gene.

### **Challenges with Communication**

One of the challenges Shepard experienced with his diagnosis was that he was too young to understand his prognosis. He felt as if the doctors spent most of the time only explaining things to only his parents, who had no medical background.

Growing up when I did, very little was explained to the child at all. Most of what I got was through my parents, I don't know if they always gave me good information or if they fully understood what was going on. My parents never tried to shield me from [the illness] and they also never tried to make an excuse that I was on pills for any reason. The doctors, no, did not explain it very well when I was younger and was probably my late teens, early 20s before I fully realized... what it was.

Traditionally, children do not have much say in medical decisions, but as an article titled "Physician Communication with Children and Parents" states, there are some studies that shows that children are more interested in the information the physician

*Shepard*

are explain and retain the information about their diagnosis better than adults. The study also shows that if the physician talks specifically to the child, there is a higher chance that the child will participate in the treatment. In a study titled "Parent and Child Perspectives on Physician Communication in Pediatric Palliative Care," children reported that they could tell when the physicians did not believe what they were saying. The children emphasized that this was a very important aspect of their relationship with their physician. Out of the 20 children who were interviewed in this study, only 20% stated that the physician was open with child about medical situation while only 10% said that the physician included them in their treatment options. While out of the 20 parents in the same study, only 30% found their physician was open with their child and 5% said that the physician included them in treatment options. After so many years of getting your information vicariously through your parents, one might not fully understand their diagnosis.

A study done by Margaret Hammon and Elspeth McLean, researched how undergraduate medical students are being trained to properly address children's illnesses with their families. The study showed that the internal structure of communication is often overlooked, but this internal structure is more preferred by parents of children with illnesses. In regard to building a relationship between the physician and the patient, more parents wanted the physicians to demonstrate appropriate non-verbal behavior. This includes not standing over patients and trying to view them as equals and accepting the legitimacy of the patient's views and feelings, which means being more empathetic and understanding to the patient and focusing on the patient. The study also stresses that the physicians should be tolerant with parents. Parents are most likely to be exhausted, stressed and filled with anxiety, so they sometimes come across as aggravated. In another study done by Catherine Lewis, Robert Pantell and Lee Sharp, when physicians were told to watch a 15-minute video on child medical communication and read over articles on effective communication, they addressed a higher percentage (50%) of their recommendation to the child or child and parent compared to the physicians in their control study. The adolescent patients in the experimental groups remembered more (77%) recommendations about medication than did control patients. This study shows that it is crucial that medical communication with young patients and their guardians is taught in medical school.

Another problem that can be associated with communication, or the absence of, is the lack of access to online resources to re-search more information. According to *Medical Communication: Defining the Discipline*, about 87% of the population uses the internet and younger users tend to use social media to obtain medical information. Although many people assume that only patients look up information on medical diagnosis, Stockman mentioned that even doctors nowadays use Google to help diagnose rare diseases. Although physicians have been estimated to have over two million facts in their head, this is still not enough to diagnosis rare illnesses. The study mentioned how a doctor diagnosed IPEX syndrome just by entering the symptoms into Google. The study continued to show that out of 26 cases that were looked into, Google only found the correct diagnosis in 15 cases, more than 50% accurate. Another thing that played an important role in the efficiency of the searches was the searchers' knowledge base. That means, someone who specializes in the diagnosis they are searching would have better results than a non-medical person.

I asked my dad how he tried to find more information about his diagnosis when he was growing up.

There was no information on it. As I stated earlier, having a very severe [illness] and being an infant, if I had not been lucky enough to have that doctor present at that hospital who saw and had an inkling what it might have been, I just would have passed away and then never tribute to anything other than childhood mortality. You were never able to find any other information other than the doctors that specialized in that and I never had very many doctors that actually knew what it was to be able to ask them questions until I found my present doctor approximately 25 years ago.

This would pose as a challenge for my father, especially growing up in an era that the internet was not readily accessible. While growing up, if he had any questions about his diagnosis or his medications, he would have to rely on the information given from the doctor. This meant, he must have a strong relationship with his physician.

After reflecting on the communication my sister and I had with our medical professionals, I believe that there has been a slight difference in medical communication with younger patients. Medical staff have more posters and guides filled with photos

*Shepard*

that line the exam rooms. This allows the children to visualize exactly what the provider is trying to explain to them. There is also a lot more research dedicated to fine tuning the relationship between children and their medical professional.

What Should Change in Medical Communication?

When dealing with minor patients, doctors should ensure to talk specifically to the patient, not just the parents. This makes sure that the patient truly pays attention to what the physician is saying, rather than just relying on their parents. Medical students should get experience on how to deal with a minor patient. This means they should be able to change their medical terminology to layman's terms, because using all medical terms will just confuse or scare a child. In addition, doctors should make sure to address any problems that the patients are experiencing. This allows the patients to refrain from searching for all of their information online and to have an open conversation with their doctors and ask questions.

### **Conclusion**

During my interview with my father, Scott Shepard, I was able to learn about his diagnosis, the treatment, and the challenges with communication between himself, his parents, and his doctors. Throughout his medical history, communication has played an important role. In fact, it was the communication between his initial nurses when they first noticed that something was wrong that saved him. If they had not noticed anything, they would not have been able to contact the doctor that knew what his symptoms were. Secondly, his communication with his doctors allowed him to fulfill his dream of having children. If he had not spoken up about his concerns, I would not be here. Although there were positive communication experiences there were also some negative occasions.

Since Shepard was diagnosed as a child, there was a lack of communication between himself and the doctors. This meant that he received almost all of his information from his parents, so he could not be sure that the information was entirely accurate. This experience is typical, especially when both parents have no medical background. In addition to this, when he was growing up, he was unable to just search his condition online. In a society where we utilize Google for many different searches, it is hard to imagine not being able to look up the symptoms that I am experiencing. Without this access, Shepard could only rely on his specific

doctor to get information, especially because his illness is so rare. To fix this issue, doctors should be trained on how to efficiently talk to a minor patient and their parents and be accessible for their patients to ask questions so that the use of Google is not a substitute for communication. This issue can be resolved with more research on what works and what does not and apply that to the medical school curriculum.

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*Shepard*

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