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Gerard A. Hauser

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Rhetorical Scholar of the Public Sphere

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Introduction

The eighth issue of the *PA Scholars Series* is devoted to an outstanding scholar and teacher, Gerard A. Hauser. Dr. Hauser is the author/editor of six books and the recipient of the following awards and honors: the James A. Winans and Herbert A. Wichelns Memorial Award for Distinguished Scholarship in Rhetoric and Public Address from NCA in 2013, the Rhetoric Society of America Distinguished Book Award in 2013, the James A. Jaksa Scholar-in-Residence from Duquesne University in 2012, the honor of being elected in 2005 to be a Distinguished Scholar of the National Communication Association, the George E. Yoos Distinguished Service Award from the Rhetoric Society of America in 2004, and the Charles Kneupper Article Award, in 2000, from the Rhetoric Society of America. He is known for scholarship, administration, and service to the discipline. His work is impressive in its volume and its ongoing influence upon the field of communication. Hauser's scholarship has been groundbreaking.

This volume brings together four essays from scholars who have worked and studied with Hauser in numerous capacities: "Gerard A. Hauser: Scholar, Teacher, and Academic Leader" by Thomas W. Benson; "Gerard Hauser's Explorations of the Extraordinary Ordinary" by Christine Garlough; "In the Spirit of the Moral Vernacular" by erin daina mcclellan; and "Propaedeutics to Action: Vernacular Rhetorical Citizenship—Reflections on and of the Work of Gerard A. Hauser" by Lisa S. Villadsen. Concluding the volume, Hauser offers a postscript in which he responds to each essay. We find in this volume scholarship offered by distinguished colleagues, responded to by an extraordinary contributor to the field.

I am thankful to the authors and to Hauser for their participation in this project and end this brief note with the following reflection: Gerry Hauser has engaged a significant career, has influenced many, and has remained unceasingly committed in his scholarship and professional life to excellence and the pursuit of human freedom through his insightful contributions to the discipline.

Ronald C. Arnett
Duquesne University
December 2015

Gerard A. Hauser: Scholar, Teacher, and Academic Leader

Thomas W. Benson, Penn State University (Emeritus)

Gerard A. Hauser is a complete professor—an accomplished teacher in large lectures and advanced seminars, an advisor whose students have themselves gone on to major achievements, an academic leader in department and university councils and in our national associations, and a scholar whose early promise has been brilliantly fulfilled in a still deepening and maturing series of major books and articles.

Jerry Hauser and I have been friends since I came to Penn State University in 1971; he had arrived in 1969, just as he was finishing up his PhD at the University of Wisconsin, where his advisor was Lloyd Bitzer. I already knew of Jerry's work, from his first solo article, based on his Wisconsin MA thesis—"The Example in Aristotle's Rhetoric: Bifurcation or Contradiction?"[1] Jerry and I had not met but had probably crossed paths when we were both in Buffalo in the early sixties. Jerry grew up in Buffalo and went to Canisius College in the city, where he came under the influence of Donald Cushman. Jerry graduated from Canisius in 1965 and went on to Wisconsin, where he moved through the MA and PhD programs briskly and brilliantly on an NDEA fellowship. I had come to SUNY Buffalo in 1963 from graduate school at Cornell and taught at Buffalo until I came to Penn State in 1971 (with a one-year visiting stop at UC Berkeley in 1969–70).

Hauser's 1968 *Philosophy and Rhetoric* essay on the example in Aristotle is impressive for a young scholar just three years out of college—or for any scholar. The essay is still an important part of our academic literature, and it is especially interesting, perhaps, in the context of the present inquiry into Jerry Hauser's development as a rhetorical scholar and teacher. Hauser begins by calling attention to an apparent difficulty in interpreting Aristotle's notion of example, which is described somewhat differently in Book I and Book II of *The Rhetoric*. Following the W. Rhys Roberts translation, Hauser quotes Aristotle from Book I, where example appears to share equal footing in logical argument with the enthymeme—induction on the one hand and syllogism on the other. Quoting Aristotle: "I call the enthymeme a rhetorical syllogism, and the example a rhetorical induction. Everyone who effects persuasion through proof does in fact use either enthymemes or examples: there is no other way."[2] But Hauser then writes, "In Book II, however, Aristotle presents what appears to be an altered view, suggesting that either he changed his mind concerning the function of example or he contradicted himself."[3] In Book I, writes Hauser, Aristotle "presents example as an independent mode of proof, as moving from part to part. At swords' points with this is Book II which presents example as merely a source of materials for proof, as subordinate to enthymeme, as moving from part to whole."[4]

Having established what appears to be a problem in interpretation, Hauser seeks a resolution by examining Aristotle's other works about logic to better understand induction "from the perspective of metaphysics and epistemology," and then to return to the question as it applies to rhetoric. The trail is too complicated to trace in detail here, but it still makes thrilling reading as we see a young scholar in command of a range of literatures and technical matters, lucid on every point and generous in tracing his evidence and reasoning for any who might care to argue the point. Hauser concludes that in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, example is "used in two distinct senses. It may function as an independent method of proof or it may function as a support in enthymematic proof."[5] One of the pleasures of Hauser's essay is the way he moves from establishing a problem in the *Rhetoric* to searching for more general understandings of Aristotle's doctrines of logic and knowing for a broader and more detailed picture—and then *returning* to rhetoric as a domain of its own, with its own usages and requirements, enabled now to understand not just proof but *rhetorical* proof. Hauser seeks clarity in Aristotle, but he does not merely domesticate Aristotle into a twentieth-century rhetorical theorist; the imaginative sympathy and interpretive acuity that Hauser brings to the unfamiliar Aristotelian psychology is impressive.

The intellectual virtues of this early essay still shine forth—the technical care, the command of the key literatures, the lucidity and balance of the argument, and, always, the search for the special qualities of rhetoric as a mode of human action. The essay shows early promise of an important career in rhetorical scholarship. How did that work out?

Jerry joined the department at Penn State in 1969; his PhD degree was awarded at Wisconsin in 1970. By the time I arrived in 1971, Jerry was already becoming a key member of Penn State's already very strong department, built under the leadership of Robert T. Oliver and his successors, who brought such rhetoric faculty members as Carroll C. Arnold, Eugene E. White, Ilene Fife, Richard Gregg, and Herman Cohen to Penn State, along with a group of young social scientists, including George Borden and Kenneth Frandsen, as well as the faculty in radio and television, and a remnant in speech science and audiology who had stayed with the department when most of the group in "speech pathology," what is now usually called Communication Disorders, left to form their own separate department. The field of "speech" was reconfiguring in those years, with the departure of Theatre and Drama and of speech pathology and audiology. We had one colleague in Oral Interpretation and another who developed Penn State's program in English as a Second Language. At the same time, growing from the tradition of historical-critical-theoretical work in rhetoric, "speech" was increasingly being studied by young social scientists—those who would now call their subfield communication science. The Penn State department, which by the time I arrived had renamed itself the Department of Speech Communication, was committed to studying speech by both rhetorical and empirical approaches—a commitment to which Carroll Arnold was strongly loyal. I had come from a department, at Buffalo, in which slightly senior social scientists purged the department of its rhetoric faculty. An attraction of Penn State was its strong professional ethic of mutual respect and support. It was a happy department, mostly, though not without the occasional eruption of rivalries and eccentric bad behavior that can happen in any group of smart, creative people.

At the beginning of the 1970s, Penn State was growing, prospering in widespread support for higher education and a growing college population, first from the generation of the GI Bill and then the sons and daughters of the Baby Boom, general public agreement on the responsibility of the state governments and the federal government to support public higher education, spurred in addition by the panic over Sputnik—the Russians got to space before the United States, leading to big federal investments in higher education. By 1969, of course, when Jerry arrived at Penn State, the Vietnam War was raging, and going to college was, for young men, the best way to avoid being swept up in the draft and sent abroad to die in an unpopular war. Graduate programs were booming and academic jobs were available to those with promise.

At the time, Penn State's department maintained a large and important doctoral program. The discipline was just beginning to enter a period of intense specialization that eventually became the norm in the leading schools. In the 1970s, students, even at the doctoral level, often crossed back and forth between rhetoric and the social sciences. Carroll Arnold had inherited from his own teachers and from the changing circumstances through which the discipline evolved during his career at Iowa, Cornell, and Penn State, the view that there were essential differences between written and spoken rhetoric, thus justifying the split in 1914 of Speech from English, and that despite their differing research methods, rhetorical scholars and social scientists in Speech departments were developing a common theory. One of the core divisions of today's National Communication Association, Rhetorical and Communication Theory, owes its origin largely to Carroll and to his sense that the future of the discipline depended on both cooperation and mutual theorizing between rhetorical scholars and social scientists. On the other hand, argued Carroll, spoken and written rhetoric, though they shared common ground, were talking about importantly different subjects.[6]

Carroll Arnold was by no means hostile to interdisciplinarity or to English, but he did live within a history and a territorial context that almost certainly influenced his work. Arnold and Henry Johnstone of Penn State's Philosophy Department created in 1968 the journal *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, now edited by Jerry Hauser, which has been a major instrument for the mutual work of philosophers and of rhetorical scholars in Speech and English.

Jerry Hauser inherited much of this tradition, and yet his own experience and judgment led him to become an early leader in the current scholarly and institutional re-connection of "speech rhetoric" and "English rhetoric." Jerry Hauser has been one of the leaders of a coming together of rhetorical scholars from many disciplines, especially from departments of Speech, Communication, English, and Philosophy. He has been a force in the development of the Rhetoric Society of America, helping to bring about a level of intellectual interaction that would have been unthinkable, or at the very least would have seemed very unlikely, in 1969.

In his scholarship, Hauser's early work on the example in Aristotelian rhetoric might seem to have predicted a career of distinguished but largely technical and theoretical interpretation. After all, Jerry had gone to college and graduate school in the 1960s, a time of intense political and social turmoil, and at a place, the University of Wisconsin, where civil rights and antiwar activism must have been everywhere present. Was he not interested? Would his scholarship remain at a safe distance from the present? It certainly seemed possible, perhaps likely.

And yet it did not turn out that way. There has always been a strongly theoretical substance in Hauser's work, drawing especially on classical rhetoric and continental philosophy. But quite soon there entered into the scholarship a robustly empirical curiosity, perhaps rightly understood as broadly political, but with the reservation that the politics were the political ideals implied by a rhetorical view of the world. The theoretical work continued, to be sure, but there soon appeared as well an evident concern to address matters of contemporary public interest.

As early as 1973, Jerry Hauser collaborated with Richard B. Gregg on an article about Richard M. Nixon's April 30, 1970, address on Cambodia, contributing to what was already a debate in the discipline about Nixon's Vietnam War rhetoric.[7] In 1989 Hauser wrote a long chapter on the attempted management of public opinion in American presidential rhetoric about the Iranian hostage crisis.[8] In these and other essays Hauser was beginning to raise questions that later matured in two important books, growing out of his interests in "publics theory," the moral dimensions of public argument, and rhetoric by and about prisoners of conscience.

Jerry Hauser had been teaching a seminar, first at Penn State from the late 1970s and then at the University of Colorado, on "publics theory" from a rhetorical perspective. This work resulted in a number of papers, chapters, and articles, and came to maturity with the publication in 1999 of *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*.[9] In this comprehensive and energetic book, Hauser argues that contemporary media have encouraged us to think of "the public" as an aggregate of polling data. Hauser offers a contrasting vision of the public, recovered from the rhetorical tradition, which conceives of public opinion as emergent in democratic discourse and properly found in that discourse. Hauser describes vernacular public discourse not only as expressing but also as constantly creating, regulating, and fine tuning public opinion through a process in which we cultivate and maintain a sense of ourselves in dialogue. Through this vernacular discourse, we create public opinion about particular issues and at the same time, in a side effect not merely incidental, we create and sustain our conceptions of identity and community. Hauser serves as our critical guide through the history and theory of how discourse is related to public opinion from Athens to the present. In his early chapters, Hauser sets forth in historical context a critical examination of the theory of publics and public discourse. In these chapters, working as both a critical historian of rhetorical theory and as an original rhetorical theorist in his own right, Hauser surveys and analyzes the theory of the public and introduces his own depiction of a plurality of publics that come into being in a variety of places in what Hauser calls a reticulate public sphere, in which participants are engaged in multiple, local, interactive webs of meaning and commitment that arise through discourse. In this reticulate public sphere, competing with powerful notions of expert knowledge and universal ideals, vernacular rhetorics engage strangers in mutual talk to develop public opinion.

In a series of case studies, Hauser tests his theory of publics against the empirical detail of complex historical events. In these chapters, we explore the contrasting rhetorical experiences of post-communist Poland and Yugoslavia, the report of the Meese commission on pornography as both a theory of the public and an attempt to influence public opinion, the Carter administration's attempt to conceive and shape public opinion in the Iranian hostage crisis, and the public's letters to Franklin Delano Roosevelt about his speeches during his campaign for a third term in 1940.

In this lucid and comprehensive book, Jerry Hauser fundamentally redirected our thinking about rhetoric and publics and provided a model of how to create a dialogue between rhetorical theory and rhetorical criticism. The book was a critical success, and it has been widely cited in the work of scholars stimulated by Jerry Hauser to work on similar problems.

Jerry immediately took up his work on another major project, meanwhile showing us hints of what was to come in chapters, papers, and articles, all while winning teaching awards and serving in important administrative and editorial posts.

In 2012, the University of South Carolina Press published Jerry Hauser's *Prisoners of Conscience: Moral Vernaculars of Political Agency*.[10] Hauser's study in *Prisoners of Conscience* of what he terms the "thick moral vernacular of human rights" is a work of erudition, scrupulous theoretical reasoning, patient critical analysis, and profound moral seriousness.

At the core of *Prisoners of Conscience* are five case studies. At Robben Island in apartheid South Africa, Nelson Mandela and his fellow political prisoners were subjected to intimidation and abuse; their response was to enact a practice of what Hauser, adapting the term from Foucault, terms *parrhesia*, a rhetorical figure of speaking the truth with frankness. The prisoners found ways to maintain and represent their humanity, and thereby their sense of self and solidarity, against a regime of total control and degradation. Next Hauser tells the story of Irina Ratushinskaya, condemned to a Soviet prison camp, in the "small zone" set aside for women prisoners, describing the enactment of a rhetoric of indirection in which prisoners performed a silent self control in the face of indignities and reprisals—winning over their fellow prisoners to a shared sense of human agency and dignity.

In his account of the hunger strike of Provisional IRA prisoners at Maze prison in Belfast, Northern Island, Hauser describes a regime of physical punishment that is met by the prisoner's inversion of and resistance to the system by "self-induced performances of bodily pain"—passive aggression as vernacular moral rhetoric.

Hauser returns his account to Robben Island for an analysis of a memoir by Indres Naidoo, *Island in Chains*, written after his release from a ten-year sentence, in which he depicts how even the body in pain can undermine the authority of the state and affirm an individual human identity.

In a final case study, Hauser examines the circulation of images of prisoner abuse by United States military guards at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, arguing that despite energetic efforts at dissociation, the images came to frame and define the neoconservative supremacy of executive power. In casting blame for Abu Ghraib on a few low-ranking soldiers, the administration attempted to dissociate itself and the high command from the shame. And yet Hauser does not permit his own reader the easy response of self-purification by dissociating from the neo-cons, which would amount to feeding our sense of moral superiority by an act of pity or blame. Hauser's nuanced and complex moral reasoning leaves us with no easy answers, but he does bring illumination and balance to a central challenge to human understanding.

Critical responses to these two most recent books have been admiring, even grateful, acknowledgments of these works of scholarship the reviewers appreciate as mature, balanced, and ethically ambitious.[11] The reviews, despite their nearly universal admiration for the books, did sometimes offer extended critical engagements and, in the words of one critic, "frustrations." Still, the reception was enthusiastic, and the books have in their turn spurred other scholars to engage and extend their findings.

Jerry retired from the University of Colorado, where he now holds the rank of professor emeritus, in 2012. He continues his active career as a scholar, serves as executive secretary of the Rhetoric Society of America, of which he is also a fellow and former president, and continues his role as editor of *Philosophy and Rhetoric*. This is the career and the life of a complete professor, and luckily for us, Jerry Hauser is still teaching us all.

NOTES

[1] Gerard A. Hauser, "The Example in Aristotle's Rhetoric: Bifurcation or Contradiction?" *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 1, no. 2 (1968): 78–90.

[2] Ibid., 78.

[3] Ibid., 79.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., 88.

[6] Carroll's views on these subjects are partly suggested by his book *Criticism of Oral Rhetoric* (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1974); and by Carroll C. Arnold and John Waite Bowers, eds., *Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1984); Carroll C.

Arnold, "Oral Rhetoric, Rhetoric, and Literature," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 40 (2007): 170–187; Carroll C. Arnold, "Rhetorical and Communication Studies: Two Worlds or One?" *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 36 (1972): 75–81; Carroll C. Arnold, "The Case Against Speech: An Examination of Critical Viewpoints," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 40 (1954): 165–169. Carroll Arnold came to Penn State in 1963 from Cornell, whereupon he proposed to add to the curriculum a course in rhetorical criticism. As I was told the story, the Department of English objected, claiming that rhetoric properly belonged to English. Carroll's course was re-named, and for many years he taught the undergraduate-graduate course in speech criticism. But I never knew Arnold to advocate restrictive views of intellectual work; he drew freely and with generous acknowledgment from allied disciplines and encouraged students and colleagues to do the same.

[7] Richard B. Gregg and Gerard A. Hauser, "Richard Nixon's April 30, 1970 Address on Cambodia: The 'Ceremony' of Confrontation," *Speech Monographs* 40, no. 3 (August 1973): 167–81. See also Robert P. Newman, "Under the Veneer: Nixon's Vietnam Speech of November 3, 1969," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56 (1970): 168–178; Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "An Exercise in the Rhetoric of Mythic America," in *Critiques of Contemporary Rhetoric*, ed. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1972), 50–58; Hermann G. Stelzner, "The Quest Story and Nixon's November 3, 1969 Address," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 57 (1971): 163–172; Forbes Hill, "Conventional Wisdom—Traditional Form—The President's Message of November 3, 1969," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 58 (1972): 373–386; Thomas W. Benson, *Posters for Peace: Visual Rhetoric and Civic Action* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2015).

[8] Gerard A. Hauser, "Administrative Rhetoric and Public Opinion: Discussing the Iranian Hostages in the Public Sphere," in *American Rhetoric: Context and Criticism*, ed. Thomas W. Benson (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), 323–383.

[9] Gerard A. Hauser, *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999). An earlier version of my remarks here on *Vernacular Voices* appeared as the series editor's preface to the 1999 University of South Carolina publication.

[10] Gerard A. Hauser, *Prisoners of Conscience: Moral Vernaculars of Political Agency* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2012). An earlier version of my remarks here on *Prisoners of Conscience* appeared as the series editor's preface to the 2012 University of South Carolina publication.

[11] See, for example, Raymie McKerrow, review of *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 87, no. 1 (2001): 113–14; Kelly M. McDonald and Joy L. Hart, review of *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*, *Southern Communication Journal* 66, no. 4 (2001): 347; Trish Roberts-Miller, review of *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*, *RSQ: Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (2000): 123–25; Kendall R. Phillips, review of *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*, *Argumentation & Advocacy* 38, no. 1 (2001): 56; Catherine Helen Palczewski, review of *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*, *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 3, no. 4 (2000): 682–84; Bryan J. McCann, review of *Prisoners of Conscience: Moral Vernaculars of Political Agency*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 100, no. 4 (2014): 488–92; Michael Warren Tumolo, review of *Prisoners of Conscience: Moral Vernaculars of Political Agency*, *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 16, no. 3 (2013): 591–94; Michael P. Vicaro and Barbara A. Biesecker, review of *Prisoners of Conscience: Moral Vernaculars of Political Agency*, *MediaTropes* 5, no. 1 (2015): 140–45.

Gerard Hauser's Explorations of the Extraordinary Ordinary

Christine Garlough, University of Wisconsin-Madison

In the first chilly days of October, as the leaves slowly begin to change on Madison's Isthmus, it is always a pleasure to travel south where those last throes of summer still linger. Columbia, South Carolina, provides just this type of slow turn. It is in this landscape, at the University of South Carolina's Rhetorical Theory conference, that I first met Jerry Hauser. This event, devoted to the exploration of rhetorical theory from an interdisciplinary and critical perspective, draws scholars from a variety of fields, arriving from leading domestic and international institutions. For three days, a group of approximately forty scholars are immersed in reading groundbreaking literature, presenting original research, and discussing innovative perspectives that expand understandings of rhetorical theory. The conference offers an increasingly unique opportunity to carve out meaningful time together and inquire into rhetorical life from performative, conceptual, ontological, and ethical vantage points.

As an associate professor approaching rhetoric from a decidedly interdisciplinary perspective, I found that this conference provided a unique opportunity to gather with senior colleagues who shared my interest in connecting fields and developing innovative theory. In contrast to the hurry and hordes of people at annual conferences like NCA, time at South Carolina's Rhetorical Theory conference unfolded gently. The pace afforded opportunities to linger over interesting topics of discussion. There was space for casual introductions that opened into thought-provoking conversations at meals and conference socials. In this context, colleagues like Hauser provided models that seem increasingly unlikely elsewhere. In listening carefully to the ways he crafted research presentations and framed his intellectual contributions, I gained confidence in expressing my own perspectives. Moreover, I developed a deep appreciation for the high standards he set for professional behavior; he insisted that academic forums should be rigorous and, at the same time, consciously civil. Most importantly, I observed the value of generosity in academic contexts-—that small acts of acknowledgment can, in unexpected ways, influence the course of a career.

For these reasons, I feel truly privileged to write this essay in Hauser's honor. The scope of Hauser's work reflects his intellectual drive and innovation, sustaining a vibrant research agenda that spans the breadth of his career. It is theoretically integrative and argumentative and goes beyond merely improving upon existing rhetorical theory. Rather, it breaks new ground and provides a nuanced approach to our understanding of the public sphere and vernacular rhetoric. Hauser's research is highly programmatic and sophisticated. His contributions build across his scholarly output; each piece informs the others and yet makes a unique impact. For these reasons, it has certainly influenced my thinking about vernacular rhetoric, particularly the role of conversation, conscience, witnessing, and everyday practices that inform the political agendas of marginalized and disenfranchised people (Garlough, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2012a, 2013).

However, what I admire most in his scholarship is his clearly articulated belief in the best of what rhetorical studies can offer. Certainly, as a feminist ethnographer, I appreciate his refusal to let his love of theory obfuscate the very experiences and observations that inspire his initial inquiries. Yet, more importantly, and simply put, I read his words and I am hopeful. And, to be clear, this is not hope growing from naïve idealism. His understanding of vernacular rhetoric in the public sphere echoes, in noteworthy ways, what I have learned in the field for the past twenty years while working with diverse groups of feminist grassroots activists in India and the South Asian diaspora. These activists struggle daily in local communities with the effects of disenfranchisement. They are quite aware of the limits of liberatory political discourse, especially when it does not take into account systems of oppression and the complexities of intersectional identities that include class, caste, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, ability, and other axes of identity. Yet, they are hopeful that—as they work from the ground up on a shoestring budget—change is possible if we listen to each other, acknowledge inequities and hardships, and communicate with each other despite difference. As Hauser (2004) notes,

> The quality of communities is not a given; the reality of democratic life is one of tenuous relationships at best. The commonness that binds us together usually is greater than the differences that divide, but without a sense of how to productively encounter others in a community of strangers, this may be difficult to grasp. Communicating across the divide is perhaps the central issue confronting the current discussion about civic engagement, and Rhetoric Studies has a great deal to contribute to it. (p. 13)

Far from musings from an ivory tower, Hauser's research provides a serious and thoughtful response to the pressing problems of communication that ordinary people confront every day as they seek to build better lives for themselves and those in their communities.

Hauser's journey to becoming a leading scholar of rhetoric began at Canisius College where he earned a BA in English. Following this, he pursued an MA and PhD at University of Wisconsin-Madison in Speech, where he was trained by arguably some of the leading scholars in the field of rhetoric, among them Lloyd Bitzer. During the course of his career, he was faculty at Penn State University for twenty-four years. After this, he joined University of Colorado-Boulder's Department of Communication and participating faculty in Comparative Literature. At this institution, he earned the title of College Professor of Distinction and acted as chair of the Communication Department from 1993 until 2001.

In charting the course of his career, it also is important to recognize the significant contributions that Hauser has made to teaching and mentorship. He provided invaluable "faculty mentorship" to new faculty in the Social Sciences through the Faculty Teaching Excellence Program from 1997 until 2003. His commitment to developing thoughtful and effective teaching practices is attested to by the excellence of the students he has produced and faculty he has advised. More specifically, in terms of developing rhetorical studies' role in civic education, throughout his career Hauser has conceptualized teaching "the art of effective speaking and writing" as an interventionist practice that must include a serious consideration of ethics. In "Teaching Rhetoric: Or Why Rhetoric Isn't Just Another Kind of Philosophy or Literary Criticism," Hauser argues that rhetoric is fundamental to public life, and that our teaching should encompass much more than conveying skills or information. Rather, it should inspire reflection, action, and excellence, and demonstrate tangible effects. Acknowledging the work of Goodman, Hauser (2004) writes,

> Speaking and writing reaches out into the world. It enters business, politics, community affairs, the ongoing process of creating community among people with differences and tolerance among those who think and look alike for those who are unlike them. When students study rhetoric they learn to appear before an audience, earn their attention, assemble arguments and appeals that are worth tending to, and risk the unpredictable outcomes of public expression. (p. 43)

In terms of recognition within the discipline, Hauser has been honored as a Distinguished Scholar of the National Communication Association and a Fellow of the Rhetoric Society of America. He was a member of the RSA Board of Directors for a decade and President in 2002 and 2003. He was awarded RSA's George E. Yoos Distinguished Service Award for his lifetime of work. Perhaps most important, Hauser has overseen the growth of *Philosophy and Rhetoric*. As he notes in "Philosophy and Rhetoric: An Abbreviated History of an Evolving Identity," the journal does not have a sponsoring society. Rather,

> [i]ts survival has [rested] and continues to rest on maintaining a level of intellectual excellence that attracts sufficient subscribers to make it viable. That creates an imperative to publish articles that both sustain a dialogue among an international audience with a focused set of concerns and engage intellectual issues that emerge from a dialogue among scholars who find the relationship between philosophy and rhetoric mutually informing. The intersections, new roads, and cul-de-sacs along the way have been discoveries among authors who often travel in different disciplinary company and write mainly to different disciplinary audiences, but who share in common the view that they cannot fully understand their disciplinary issues without taking their sometimes irreconcilable differences and/or their reciprocal inflections into account. (2007, p. 1)

Hauser's extensive contributions to this enterprise—working in some sort of an editorial position since its second year of publication—and his commitment to reaching across disciplinary divides has ensured that the journal consistently provides cutting-edge research for its scholarly audience across the globe.

It is fitting, then, that someone who has shown such attention and care in nurturing a field space should receive a recognition like this. The remainder of this essay seeks to provide specific insight into Hauser's innovative scholarly work exploring vernacular rhetoric in the public sphere. More specifically, this essay will attempt to chart three significant areas of importance: First, I hope to highlight the meaningful contributions Hauser has made toward exploring the interaction between formal and vernacular rhetoric in the public sphere and conceptualizing this discourse as a perpetual dialogue that interrogates official manifestations of power and impacts public understanding and action. Second, I reflect upon Hauser's (2012) scholarly monograph, *Prisoners of Conscience: Moral Vernaculars of Political Agency*. This book provides an intriguing analysis of prisoners of conscience (POC) and the inventive modes of resistance they employ through moral vernacular discourse. Hauser examines this discourse, grounded in ordinary virtues and vices, through five case studies, from Nelson Mandela's imprisonment at Robben Island to Irina Ratushinskaya's incarceration at a Soviet prison camp. Finally, I consider the future trajectory of the study of vernacular rhetoric and Hauser's remarkable contribution to making this a robust site for study that reaches across disciplines and productively engages colleagues in other fields. To do so, I provide a summary of a work in progress—"Public mourning and South Asian American acts of acknowledgment"—that grows out of my research with South Asian American activists and the Smithsonian *Beyond Bollywood* exhibit. In it, I provide an analysis of *Raising Our Voices*, a documentary that features vernacular rhetoric from South Asian American communities addressing hate crimes and post-9/11 rhetoric.

Expressing the Vernacular

Taken as a whole, Hauser's evolving research agenda taps into one encompassing concern—the function of discourse in a democracy. From "The example in Aristotle's Rhetoric: Bifurcation or contradiction" (1968) to "Vernacular dialogue and the rhetoricality of public opinion" (1998) and on to "Vernacular discourse and the epistemic dimension of public opinion" (2007), his work on the public sphere advances a complex understanding of rhetorical discourse as simultaneously aesthetic, ethical, and political. A healthy democracy depends on this rhetorical discourse, as well as on individuals' sense that their opinions about issues will be taken into consideration. Indeed, Hauser's (1999) scholarly monograph, *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*, advances the view that "A democracy is based on the premise that public opinion should matter in deciding the course of society. Yet what counts as such an opinion, how we learn its content, and how it gets represented are anything but certain" (1999, p. 1).

Drawing upon Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981) work on the dialogizing of the word, Hauser explores the richness of many types of rhetorical discourse, including conversations in the public sphere that emerge as encounters that are characterized by gender, age, class, religion, education, family status, and physical and mental ability. In *Prisoners of Conscience: Moral Vernaculars of Political*

Agency, Hauser (2012) notes that this focus on the vernacular stands in stark contrast to more traditional rhetorical studies research:

> Until the middle of the twentieth century, critical work in rhetoric was tied to traditional views of text, most commonly a speech, essay, or debate that was bounded by time and situation and presented in a public forum. With notable exception of those who sought political inclusion and rights, critics also focused on the rhetoric of the empowered, such as presidents, legislative assemblies, and political and religious leaders. (p. 41)

However, in the mid-twentieth century, there was a movement toward "big rhetoric" or what Edward Schiappa describes as "a conception of rhetorical studies no longer bound to the traditional paradigm of public address" (2001). Sketching the history of the field after the First World War, Hauser (2012) explains its struggles with providing a rhetorical account of how social influence occurs through language and the transformation this provokes. Drawing connections through the work of Bronislaw Malinowski (*Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, 1922), I. A. Richards (*Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 1936*)*, C. K. Ogden (*The Meaning of Meaning*, 1946/1923), Kenneth Burke (*Counter-Statement*, 1953/1931; *A Rhetoric of Motives*, 1969/1950), and, of course, Mikhail Bakhtin (*The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, 1981), he traces their insights and advocates an approach that takes into account the vernacular:

> The extension of rhetoric's scope to consider the sources of influence in all human uses of symbols includes the ordinary exchanges of the everyday—a *vernacular rhetoric* of interaction within a discourse community that depends on local knowledge, concerns, meanings, modes of arguments, values, schemes, logics, tradition, and the like shared among ordinary people who neither act in any official civic capacity nor have an elite status that is an entrée to established power. It is a rhetoric rooted in their indigenous language. The vernacular of ordinary people is important because it has a particular rhetorical salience. (pp. 41–43)

This expanded scope of rhetoric necessitates careful consideration of aspects of cultural practices such as autobiographical writing, digital media, theater performance, and religious rituals. It also allows for new investigation into "the body" such as Hauser's "Incongruous bodies: Arguments for personal sufficiency and public insufficiency" (1999) and "Body rhetoric: Conflicted reporting of bodies in pain" (2000). Simply put, this shift advanced the perspective that, at its core, rhetoric is symbolic. That is, culture is not simply expressed in language; rather, the social is performed in language and the body. As Klump and Hollihan (1989) note, "With a rhetoric of symbolic form, inquiry shifted from the referential relationship of rhetoric to reality and the stylistic elements of expression, toward an understanding of rhetorical forms and their interpretation within social behavior" (p. 88). Vernacular discourse is one that grows and functions within specific communities. It is part of local culture: music, painting, dance, and architecture, as well as everyday discourse in mass media, independent films, and conversations at home or on the street.

This shift had important consequences. To some, expanding the scope of rhetoric to include everyday cultural forms threatened a necessary separation of the public and private spheres that needed to be maintained for the discipline to survive the "rhetorical turn" in anthropology, English, and folklore departments (Bitzer & Black, 1971). In contrast, other rhetoric scholars argued that "what is significant about the rhetorical turn is not that 'everything is rhetoric' but that a rhetorical perspective and vocabulary can be used to understand and describe a wide range of phenomenon" (Schiappa, 2001, p. 268). To be sure, it is commonly noted that scholars interested in the "vernacular" built upon the research of rhetoric scholars concerned with post-60s protest rhetoric studies, and "rhetorics of the oppressed" that addressed issues related to systematically marginalized people in diverse Latino/a, Asian American, Native American, Lesbian, Gay, and feminist communities, to name but a few (Ono and Sloop, 1995). What are not as frequently commented upon are the important contributions intercultural rhetoricians made to developing this area of study (Blake, 1979; Bordenaue, 1979; Oliver, 1971; Starosta, 1979), especially in non-Western contexts. As Raka Shome, one of the early scholars to theorize the connection between postcolonial and rhetorical theory (1996), states,

> Public address has been a realm where imperial voices were primarily heard and imperial policies were articulated. The colonized did not always have access to a public realm, or if they did, their speeches were not always recorded in mainstream documents, since the means of production rested with the imperial subject. All this means that we have built a lot of our understanding of rhetoric by focusing on (and often celebrating) imperial voices. (p. 599)

For scholars like myself, this body of research opened possibilities for exploring both rhetoric in everyday life and everyday rhetorical forms in heightened performance contexts. Indeed, in recent years scholars from rhetorical studies, folklore studies, anthropology, and performance studies have begun to understand just how much common ground they share with regard to concerns for testimony, witnessing, oral history, community building, and social transformation (Abrahams, 1968, 2005; Bauman, 1977, 1983, 1986, 1992; Bauman and Briggs, 1990; Garlough, 2007, 2013, 2014; Howard, 2005, 2008; Oring, 2008). From many disciplinary corners, there is a growing appreciation of the ways that people can construct and participate in public life through personal narratives embedded within cultural performances. Very often, this common ground appears in the "everyday" or the vernacular, in rituals, on Web pages, during festivals, or on the stage (Garlough, 2012a).

For example, my research concerns the ways local folk traditions can function as important modes of political discourse when embedded within progressive community performances, such as feminist street theater. That is, I study how traditional cultural forms may be critically appropriated by marginalized groups and engaged as rhetorical tools to advance deliberation and debate, increase understanding, advance particular social identities, and deepen political engagement" (Garlough 2013). Scholarship within the disciplines of women's studies, folklore, rhetoric, philosophy, performance studies, and South Asian Studies informs this work, structuring my study of the ways vernacular cultural performances address exigencies through reasoned argument, ethical appeals, aesthetic form, and emotional appeals. My research consists of three major streams. First, I consider how grassroots feminist collectives in Gujarat, India, strategically appropriate women's folk traditions to deliberate about issues such as sex-selection abortion, rape, and communal violence. Second, I explore the ways diasporic South Asian American groups transform cultural traditions for the purpose of local and national democratic engagement—in particular, deliberation over hate crimes, sexual violence, and domestic abuse. Third, I focus upon grassroots activism and performance in the Midwest by women of different generations who strategically transform vernacular culture to address local exigencies.

This work grows out of extensive fieldwork, in both India and the U.S., over the past twenty years. While conducting ethnographic research, I have observed the ways activists often contextualize issues in street plays by referencing incidents publicized in the media, referencing local storytelling traditions, or framing issues through personal stories gathered from community interviews. Important issues also may be explored in ongoing outreach discussions and information-gathering groups where scriptwriters engage with other community members, listen to their experiences, and deepen their understanding of what is at stake. Indeed, as Hauser and McClellan (2009) argue, vernacular rhetoric grows out of memories and histories unique to particular communities. It is highly contextual and

> depends on local knowledge, concerns, meanings, modes of argument, value schemes, logics, traditions, etc. shared by ordinary people who neither act in any official civic capacity nor have elite status that is an entrée to established power. It is a rhetoric rooted in their indigenous language. The vernacular of ordinary people is important because it has particular rhetorical salience. Those who speak it share identity as a community, whether they are neighbors, a class, or any other signifying group. Its everyday use is their primary mode of symbolic influence, forming bonds of identification, fostering communal coordination and concerted action, and constituting a communal world that ascribes meaning and value to persons and events. (2012, p. 42)

As such, a focus on the vernacular provides an alternative way of considering how our publics form and the ways individuals discuss their opinions.

Yet, we do not simply encounter vernacular rhetoric in our local communities. Consequently, in *Vernacular Voices*, Hauser (1999) makes the important point that our politics occurs in a plurality of public spheres. "Ours is a politics of emergent publics that express public opinions in oratorical and non-oratorical forms, and that have massive power to influence social action. Unlike a politics confined to oral and written media, electronic media is dispersed across society and the globe, making it possible for previously unheard voices to be active participants in public discourse." Hauser builds on this argument from *Vernacular* Voices in *Prisoners of Conscience* to better explore the interaction between formal and vernacular rhetorics in the public sphere.

Prisoners of Conscience

At its core, *Prisoners of Conscience* (2012) explores fundamental philosophical questions. What does it mean to be human? What does freedom entail? How is compassion possible in inhuman conditions? In a series of case studies—from Nelson Mandela's imprisonment at Robben Island to Irina Ratushinskaya's incarceration at a Soviet prison camp—Hauser traces the importance of vernacular discourse for political agency, particularly as a primary resource for culturally grounded appeals. These political prisoners are positioned in a unique way in that they are not convicted criminals who are imprisoned because they seek to make a profit or behave in threatening or irresponsible ways. Rather, "POCs are incarcerated for the threat of their ideas" (p. 5). We have much to learn from these individuals, Hauser argues.

> They have faced starvation, torture, prison, and physical and psychological mistreatment, have often been reduced to an animal's existence, the threat of extermination, and still kept records, wrote diaries, smuggled information into, within, and out of prison, persisted in resisting when all hope seemed lost, and accepted brutalization and even death rather than sacrifice their conscience. (p. xi)

In these conditions of bare life, POCs depend upon communication channels external to the official political public sphere. Drawing upon Asen and Brower's (2001) work on counterpublic spheres, Hauser argues that in order to remain a viable political force, POCs require a space to sustain dissident discourse (Hauser, 2012, p. 6). Consequently, in *Prisoners of Conscience*, Hauser sets out three core objectives. First, he seeks to illustrate how POC discourses of resistance constitute a "thick moral vernacular" of human rights. Second, he hopes to explain the ways POC acts of resistance use "rhetorical mechanisms" to unmask the state's vulnerability. Finally, he provides compelling case studies that demonstrate how "thick moral vernacular" in POCs' expressions of conscience accomplish these tasks without explicitly discussing human rights discourses. Instead, they address audiences through practices that disrupt and demand attention and ascribe moral connotations to how their audience responds (p. xii). This project, rich in detail and scrupulously researched, is timely for its attention to the struggles of those who have been punished—often in ways that are difficult to comprehend—for speaking against the powers that be and refusing to surrender their consciences. As Hauser notes, at this time there are political prisoners incarcerated on every continent. This is an indication of the "depth to which political power will sink in order to protect and sustain itself and the equally strong thirst of oppressed people for political agency" (p. xi).

To better unpack this resistive vernacular rhetoric, Hauser draws upon theory devoted to notions of *parrhesia*, *bearing witness*, and *hospitality*, among others. These are concepts that have been and continue to be important to my own research on vernacular rhetoric, acknowledgment, and testimony in South Asian feminist activist performances, as well as South Asian American rhetoric in speeches, documentaries, and museum exhibits post-9/11 (Garlough, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2013, 2015).

Public Mourning and South Asian American Acts of Acknowledgment

This final section responds to the editor's request to articulate a connection between Hauser's research and my own. This brief segment grows out of two decades of fieldwork in South Asian American communities and recent research with the Smithsonian's *Beyond Bollywood* exhibit that showcases, among other things, contentious moments in the history of the Indian diaspora, from the Bellingham riots of 1907 to the vernacular rhetoric that addresses post-9/11 violence.

In *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Susan Sontag (2003) asks, "What does it mean to protest suffering, as distinct from acknowledging it?" while exploring the iconography of suffering in war photography. As she describes photographs of Palestinian civilians torn apart by tanks, Armenian children starved to emaciation, and conscientious objectors hanged for their dissent, she wonders about the ethical limits of publicly displaying such representations of human misery. As we gaze upon the horror of another's pain preserved on film, what are we doing? What potential lies in these representations beyond voyeurism? In this article "in preparation," I explore such questions about the viability of representation of suffering and connect those representations to literature on testimony in order to explore relationships between memory and public mourning, dissent, and acknowledgment, in a post 9/11 documentary created by South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT). Based in Washington, DC, SAALT is a national nonprofit organization serving South Asian Americans. Their aim is "to address political, social justice, and quality-of-life issues facing South Asian Americans, especially the disadvantaged and marginalized segments of the community." Moreover, they are "dedicated to fostering an environment in which all South Asians in America can participate fully in civic and political life, and have influence over policies that affect them" (SAALT website, 2008). Their influential political work has been recognized in the Smithsonian's *Beyond Bollywood* exhibit as crucial for the development and documentation of South Asian American communities.

Their documentary *Raising Our Voices: South Asian Americans Address Hate* brought to light the increasing level of hate crimes against South Asian Americans, especially after 9/11, and tied it into a history of violence that is often left unaddressed in mainstream discourse. Used to engender dialogue about hate crimes, ethnic identities, and immigration policy in community centers, school settings, and other public venues, this documentary—comprised of publically shared memories, testimonies, and expert interviews—is a part of the vernacular rhetoric that both preserves memories of this difficult time and looks to the future. This is crucial work, as Hauser (1999) notes, because such rhetorical praxis, "can shift social understandings, reorder society's sense of priority and imperative, and redirect social energies into new channels of relationship and action" (p. 114).

Specifically, I consider the manner in which representations of suffering find their way into the public sphere and reflect upon how they may move us to action and renew our sense of collective responsibility for the lives of others, especially those who may be viewed as "foreigners." Questions about the viability of such representations also lead to a concern with the limits of understanding and acknowledgment. If I cannot know the pain of the other, what is it to relate to such suffering? (Garlough 2013). Does our personal experience of traumatic images and stories encourage acts of identification or illuminate encounters with ourselves? What would it mean to endure the suffering of others—to hold them in our minds and remain open to the suffering—to let them haunt us and move us toward compassion toward the other? All of these questions relate, on some level, to Sontag's broader question about the possibility of acknowledging other people's suffering.

In answering this question, much turns on Sontag's quote above and her approach to the word acknowledgment. Her question suggests a sense of "mere" acknowledgment in which something or someone is given only passing notice. However, I would like to suggest a more substantive sense of acknowledgment, one that opens up both space and time for others and allows opportunity for critical discussion (Garlough, 2013). As Michael Hyde (2006) argues in *A Life Giving Gift of Acknowledgment*:

> Acknowledgment is a moral act, it functions to transform space and time, to *create* openings wherein people can dwell, deliberate, and know together what is right, good, just, and truthful. Acknowledgment thereby grants people *hope*, the opportunity for new beginning, a second chance, whereby they might improve their lot in life. (p. 7)

Although different from public acts of "recognition" (Markell, 2003; Povinelli, 2002; Ricoeur, 2005; Taylor, 1992), acknowledgment is a gift with political potential (Garlough, 2012b, 2013). As such, it functions rhetorically to create moments where we give attention to others. This provides opportunities for people to disclose their concerns, as well as express lived truths (*parrhesia*) (Hauser, 2012). This sense of acknowledgement is especially important in light of the marginalization and "alienation" that many South Asian Americans have experienced in the United States.

In this article, I explore these intersections between acknowledgment and vernacular rhetoric through a critical reading of SAALT's documentary *Raising Our Voices*. This documentary, addressing the rise of hate crimes against South Asian Americans in the last four decades, was initially completed just days before the tragic events of 9/11. However, immediately following the disaster—as a plethora of media images and stories directed our gaze and listening ear toward a devastated lower Manhattan, the bodies of victims, the testimony of witnesses, and the grief of those who lost loved ones—hate crimes against South Asian Americans soared (Reports and Publications, 2015). Across the United States, individuals were misrecognized as "terrorists," harassed verbally with racial epithets, frightened by death threats, and attacked in their places of work and worship (Garlough and Shah, 2012). "Not surprisingly, given the 'rally around the flag' phenomenon that characterized mainstream discourse, representations of such suffering were not prevalent in the public sphere and were generally unacknowledged by the wider American population, even by many South Asian Americans" (Garlough and Shah, 2012). Recognizing their importance, SAALT cataloged these hate crimes in the aftermath of 9/11 and collected testimonies from many of the victims, some for use in a re-edited video and others for inclusion in an online archive. For this reason, SAALT made the decision to delay the release of *Raising Our Voices*, to add up-to-the minute footage and to edit it to reflect the ways that hate crimes, like the "dot-busting" murders in the late 1980s, were related to the hate speech painted on the walls of mosques after 9/11.

Documenting the Aftermath of 9/11 for South Asians

Many in the South Asian American community struggled with how to understand and then voice their opinions about the backlash that stemmed from 9/11 and its aftermath, particularly the impact it had on their own sense of belonging as American citizens, as well as the ways in which these experiences were folded into their ongoing everyday relationships. When *Raising Our Voices* was finally released in January 2002, the twenty-six minute documentary, featuring first-hand testimony of recent hate crime victims, became an important grassroots advocacy tool for South Asian Americans across the country (Garlough and Shah, 2012). In recent years, this award-winning documentary has been viewed by community groups, students, educators, government officials, and business employees. Audience members have been diverse, ranging widely in terms of age, class, ethnicity, race, religion, and gender. Following screenings, there are opportunities for audiences to participate in group discussions of the film, the issues it raised, and the questions it posed. Through this process, the documentary seeks to facilitate the building of ethical relations within community contexts by encouraging audience members to listen, speak together about the exigencies at hand, and acknowledge the violence and discrimination that South Asian Americans have experienced.

The testimony expressed in *Raising Our Voices* highlights tensions between resemblance, recognition, and misrecognition, tensions that are exacerbated by the violence of 9/11. At different moments within the documentary, individuals from diverse backgrounds, ranging from Indo-Caribbean Hindus to Pakistani Sikhs, provide personal testimony about the ways that their skin color or their wearing a turban (*dastaar*) converted their "otherness" into the category of "terrorist" or "Muslim religious fanatic." In order to counter the reduction of South Asian Americans into simplistic, inaccurate representations, the documentary offers personal testimony and statistics providing evidence of cultural, regional, and religious difference within the South Asian community. Refusing to make essentialized claims about recognition, the documentary is effective not by telling people what to think, but by asking them *to* think and then initiate a conversation about their reflections in the discussions that follow. However, in undertaking this strategy, the documentary runs the risk of seeming to distance non-Muslim South Asians from Muslim South Asians in a way that undermines the ability for South Asian Americans to speak as a coalition. As Hauser (1999) notes, playing close attention to the nuances of these conversations is important; such "rhetorical exchanges provide more than data; their narratives of common meaning, web of associations, and historicity each reveal the reference world of meaning they are co-constructing and provide the context for understanding their specific judgments" (p. 279).

The individuals featured in these documentaries act as *parrhesiastes*—at great risk, they speak the truth of their experience, opening their minds and hearts to others through their discourse (Hauser, 2012). The work of such *parrhesiastes* bears witness to contested ideas, and it occurs in front of audiences where power relations are unbalanced and the threat of retribution is quite real. In doing so, they disclose something of themselves and the truth of what they believe (Foucault, 2001).

The Testimony of Attar Singh Bhatia

This becomes clear in the documentary through the first piece of testimony, which was provided by Attar Singh Bhatia, a Sikh man who was viciously attacked shortly after 9/11. His testimony is initially framed by images of everyday life in his neighborhood place of worship—the Gurdwara Sikh Cultural Society of New York. He appears before the camera in his traditional turban, a well-trimmed white beard, and a Tommy Hilfiger sweater; his pained and anxious demeanor punctuating his verbal recollection of the events.

> It was the 11th of September, Tuesday. My family went to Gurdwara for pray to god for the victims (pause). And when I was coming back to my home on the crossing of 118 and 95th Avenue two white came out from the car (pause)…. They pushed me from my back and I fell down. My… fell down (pause), my specs fell down (pause), and other boy from the second car came and he beat me with the baseball bat which has nails…the baseball bat. [The film shows him rolling up his sleeves so that he can show the audience the multiple scars from the nails that pierced him]. When they were beating me they were saying "Go back to your country. Go back to your country." (*Raising Our Voices*, 2002)

As his testimony continues, Bhatia struggles to reconcile the uncanny experience of this vicious attack within the mundane landscape of his everyday life. As Das (2007) aptly notes, hate crimes are not only a violence experienced by one's body but also the feeling that one's way of entering into a context has disappeared or been taken away. This recognition of social fragility creates a sense of violation. Above all, Bhatia repeatedly expresses astonishment that he was attacked on his way home from worship to pray for victims of the World Trade Center attack and in doing so, he invokes what Hauser (2012) would likely characterize as universal appeals to human dignity. His testimony then dissolves into an informational slide that reads "Sikhs have been in the United States for over 100 years." This is followed by footage of a candlelit peace march—with whites, blacks, and South Asians in attendance—featuring Sikh Americans solemnly waving American flags.

As Hartman (2006, p. 254) writes, personal testimonies from victims like Bhatia provide "histories from below," filling in the gaps of mainstream discourse in the public sphere. Not only does such testimony provide accounts of violence, but it attempts to put us in the individual's place, or at least in their presence, drawing the listener in to the experience of hatred and violence. In this way, these testimonies are personal, even while they are shared (Garlough 2013; Hauser, 2012). This sentiment is expressed by Derrida when he links testimony and autobiography: "In essence a testimony is always autobiographical, it tells in the first person, the sharable and unsharable secret of what happened to me, to me, to me alone, the absolute secret of what I was in a position to live, see, hear, touch, sense, and feel" (Derrida, 2000). This is the testimony of the *parrhesia*—the offering up of the singular and unrepeatable "I." At the same time, as Hauser (2012) notes, the singular nature of the experience of violence actually connects us all. The deeply personal character of these life stories allows them to "touch heart as well as mind [appealing] to a human commonality that does not imply uniformity" (Hartman, 2006, p. 254). This is the crux of their rhetorical power.

Final Thoughts

Without question, my continuing exploration of SAALT's *Raising Our Voices* is deeply informed by the corpus of Hauser's research, most particularly his work on vernacular rhetoric, witnessing, and *parrhesia*. His award-winning scholarship—recognized widely for its rigor and innovation—provides an affirmation that the discipline of rhetoric has moved well beyond the study of platform rhetoric. Due, in part, to Hauser's valuable contributions, the significance of documentaries like *Raising Our Voices*—characterized by ethical appeals through vernacular modes—is not simply recognized. Rather, such work is considered an important part of our disciplinary approach to the study of rhetorical communication in local and global contexts. For this, I will always be deeply grateful to Jerry Hauser.

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In the Spirit of the Moral Vernacular

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> *Resistance may breed disaffection, but disaffection without the remedy of leading dissident voices often succumbs to the toxicity of cynicism, itself a form of display, albeit unlikely to captivate public understanding or overpower the existing order's claim to legitimacy.*[1]

The complexity of rhetoric is most apparent when someone positions her or his interpretation of it as *the* universal and correct approximation of what is important, interesting, and/or significant about it. While complex rhetorics are appealing to study, they are often avoided because deciding how to study them is equally as complex and thus often controversial in how approaches to their study are (de)legitimized in scholarship. Given multiple ways that an object may be interpreted and judged by others, analysis that reflexively accounts for one's own position in relation to those others is often uncomfortable and avoided given present expectations of the field. Adopting a polysemic view of rhetoric does not mean that there are not better- and worse-articulated positions, interpretations, and judgments; it does mean that any singular interpretation is only partial and any judgment is always informed by a particular set of epistemological, ontological, and axiological orientations to the world. While this may seem to stop at simply embracing "multiplicity," tolerance of others' ideas as the best way to live in a pluralistic world inherently fails. If we feel passionately that western medicine is what made the birth of a healthy child and the prolonged life of her mother possible, it is not likely that we will feel complacent about logics or rationales that advocate for avoiding all western medicine lest we interrupt God's plan. Or if we grew up on government-supplemented food programs that left us a limited budget to buy groceries, it is unlikely that when people rail against the childhood obesity epidemic that we will agree that the problem is simply "eating more fruits and vegetables" when we know it is also about the price difference between apples and applesauce, between broccoli and boxed macaroni, and the time and tools it takes to cook one over the other. Thus, it has always struck me that in the midst of controversy we discover the significance of the particulars—especially when they contradict the decrees of the general.

It is thus in discovering *how* the particulars intersect with larger political, ideological, and/or practical positions that we are able to justify—and influence—transforming meanings that are taken for granted knowledge *and* ways of coming to know that knowledge. We are constantly—as both rhetoricians and people in everyday life—attempting to come to know the world in ways that require us to see it both conceptually *and* tangibly, both generally *and* specifically, in both the short-term *and* the long-term. It is when such tensions preclude an easily agreed upon (re)action that further discussion is often abandoned. Our inner-cynic replies "We'll never agree. It's just too complicated. It will always be that way regardless of what we do or say, so why should we continue to talk about it, think about, or even try to change it?" And perhaps even more challenging is the temptation as expert scholars to sensationalize the complexity from arm's length with little interest in reflexively connecting to it. In his 2012 book on the moral vernacular,[2] Gerard Hauser addresses the inner-cynic in all of us: *we should never give up on attending to the particular—especially the taken for granted or veiled particulars—because altering norms requires first shifting thoughts and actions of particular people in particular places.*

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[1] Gerard A. Hauser, *Prisoners of Conscience: Moral Vernaculars of Political Agency* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2012), 6.

While "the speed of history is very fast [and] the speed of progress is slow,"[3] rhetorical approaches can provide complex insights without dismissing the particulars or claiming that some particulars are more worthy of study than others. In this way, judgment is embedded in rhetorical work. Rhetorical study has its own morality—the kind that requires us as scholars to reach judgment not as an act of conclusive declaration but as an act of consequence, influence, and significance to someone(s) in particular ways. Rather than thwart our motivation to study the particular because it is not a widely recognizable, cross-culturally significant text that can be easily understood by a broad audience, Hauser reminds us that ongoing struggles, like those advocating for human rights, require something beyond expertise. In his concept of the "moral vernacular," Hauser draws attention to the benefits of interpreting rhetoric as always connected to larger frames of understanding and not always easily translatable. As he shows in his discussion of prisoners of conscience,[4] we must transform existing understandings of "prisoner" and "conscience" in order to understand any of the particular examples in his book with the complexity they deserve. This can require more or less time, particular subject positionality(s), and/or certain types of education and experience. The most compelling part of this, to me, lies in the notion that we have a moral obligation to be transformed before we can come to know the texts in the way he would like us to understand them: as complex, historically-situated, dynamic, and power-laden instances of rhetoric "in action." For me, this has emerged in my work with (and in) the public squares and plazas of four distinct cities.

The rhetorics of a city are similarly multifaceted, often controversial, and inevitably multi-perspectival. Thus, they require that we think of them as more than built environments or outcomes of planning, construction, and/or flow and instead as *living* texts that experientially engage the people who make sense of them in myriad ways. In this idea of texts, they are positioned as formative processes that can be experienced as well as displayed, altering both what "counts" as texts and how we, as rhetoricians, relate to them. I will attempt here to look at how Hauser's notion of vernacular rhetoric has inspired a trajectory of scholarship that has extended both what we analyze *as* rhetoric and *how* we are able to envision exploring these complex, interconnected understandings in relation to larger discursive, material, embodied, and experiential elements. In particular, Hauser's most recent focus on morality presents a unique opportunity to (re)consider how such studies can envision new possibilities for the disciplinary field of rhetoric *and* the world constituted by them.

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[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., 242.

[4] Ibid.

Moral Vernaculars and Living Texts

Hauser's work on the vernacular is grounded in two particular essays that have influenced my own interest in rhetoric and the city. First, Richard Sennett's addressing of the consequences associated with what he terms the "fall of the public man" [*sic*][5] prioritizes exploration of the social aspects of meaning making. By articulating how social relations are rich foci of exploration that affect both how we come to know a particular city and how we constitute more general expectations of city life, Sennett treats cities as complex, multi-faceted, and dynamic performances of meaning embedded in the social fabric of the city. In this view, individual performances not only (re)create meaning in the city but also serve as evocations of what is understood to be (im)possible for a city's future. Second, Lawrence Rosenfield's analysis of Central Park treats the public park as having embedded rhetoricity that constitutes how we understand and experience symbolic inducement through natural and built environments.[6] In explaining how the promotion of personal hygiene at this time was both an individual and social practice, Rosenfield skillfully connects the impetus for creating a park at the intersection of neighborhood class divides with the introduction of public sanitation systems (like indoor plumbing) and a desire by some to shift the larger cultural norms of the city to encourage their use. Rosenfield's work draws attention to how expanding our notions of text to include the dynamic components of use can simultaneously expose the limitations of treating something like a park as only (re)presentational rather than also experiential.

By expanding rhetorical analysis to include rhetorical displays, Hauser and others have encouraged the exploration of performances as influential sense-making processes particularly situated in vernacular forms and functions, and frequently enacted in subtle, taken for granted ways. For example, we might place money into a person's outstretched hand when we pass her on the street or we may cross to the other side of the street to avoid her altogether without much premeditation. Both of these "auto-pilot" (re)actions may very well be void of any explicit connections to our positions on homelessness, class, economic (dis)advantage, or social support systems, but they are inherently—and deeply—related. Since it is highly likely that we choose particular rhetorical texts to study because we see them to be intimately related to much larger public problems that are in need of (re)thinking, (re)addressing, and/or (re)solving, increased reflexivity in how we study living texts has the potential to transform notions of (im)possibility that are constituted in the process. Thus, attending to the embedded power relations in displays of meaning-making from a particular subject position further requires a notion of morality. In the study of complex rhetorics and living texts, the role of judgment is held to an additional expectation: it must account for myriad connections between display, meaning, discursive framing, materiality, embodiment, reflexivity, and performance.

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[5] Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Knopf, 1977).

[6] Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "Central Park and the Celebration of Civic Virtue" in *American Rhetoric: Context & Criticism*, ed. Thomas W. Benson (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), 221–266.

In the Spirit of the Moral Vernacular

Hauser's discussion of rhetoric has long been rooted in the social. In his book *Introduction to Rhetorical Theory*, he explains, "Rhetoric is a form of social action."[7] In this way, rhetoric is not just an object to be studied but a force capable of imploring movement. This explanation of the (potential) of rhetoric to engender change is most poignantly addressed in his various works on vernacular rhetoric.[8] In his book *Vernacular Voices*, Hauser explains "I use *rhetoric* broadly to mean *the symbolic inducement of social cooperation*."[9] In other words, the rhetorical force of social action is most visible and directly experienced in the way it is used to relate to others. Particularly in the study of rhetoric in public spheres, there is a tendency to focus on official policy, dictates, and/or statements strategically performed by governmental or organizational officials like city mayors, members of Congress, CEOs, public relations executives, and the like. While such public rhetorics are socially constitutive of the world just like their vernacular counterparts, we often look past everyday ways of coming to know "official" texts even though vernacular forms resonate "on the ground" in much different ways. For example, what happens when a new expanded carry policy results in the ability of college students to carry guns on campus? Are there real consequences for faculty who must choose between intimidation and grades? How much money should a university be required to spend out of its own tight budget to accommodate legislative demand for extra security measures like expensive metal detectors at all sports, music, and medical facilities that are exceptions to the new expanded carry law? The more specific and localized conversations that emerge about these formal policy and enforcement decisions are often more persuasive than the policy itself.

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[7] Gerard A. Hauser, *Introduction to Rhetorical Theory* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 2002), 10.

[8] Gerard A. Hauser, "Attending the Vernacular: A Plea for Ethnographical Rhetoric," in *The Rhetorical Emergence of Culture*, ed. Felix Girke and Christian Meyer, Rhetoric Culture Series, vol. IV, 157–72 (Oxford: Berghan Books, 2011); Gerard A. Hauser and erin daina mcclellan, "Vernacular Rhetoric and Social Movements: Performances of Resistance in the Rhetoric of the Everyday," in *Active Voices: Composing a Rhetoric for Social Movements*, ed. Patricia Malesh and Sharon Stevens (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009), 23–46; Gerard A. Hauser, "Vernacular Discourse and the Epistemic Dimension of Public Opinion," *Communication* Theory 17, no. 4 (2007): 333–39; Gerard A. Hauser, *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999); Gerard A. Hauser, "Vernacular Dialogue and the Rhetoricality of Public Opinion," *Communication Monographs* 65, no. 2 (1998): 83–107

[9] Hauser, *Vernacular Voices*, 14.

The above example highlights the complexity of public and private lives that increasingly present a fluid dynamic of persona, identity, and cultural performance. But, as Hauser points out, this fluidity brings with it an increased need for a clear ethical imperative requiring individuals to think beyond their own situations: "The public/private distinction created the conditions of possibility for a world of agency in which individuals might act rather than merely behave."[10] Since a distinction is grounded in the discernment between an "act" and a "behavior," the role of the individual in *relation* to a larger society positions intent, experience, and sense-making as inherently social endeavors that are constrained by the individuals participating. In this way, vernacular rhetoric—"our individual perceptions and experiences of current affairs [that] invite personal verdicts on their meaning and significance"[11]—is capable of advancing both understanding *and* judgment. However, a moral imperative to treat such invitations as inherently consequential for those caught in the crossfires of dissonance between policy and practice is often overlooked. While much of the focus of vernacular rhetorical scholarship remains on rhetoric that functions within the public realm, many analyses of marginalized rhetorics and rhetorics of marginalized peoples have not utilized the frames of vernacular rhetoric with as much frequency. Rather, the lack of a clear theory of power in Hauser's work, in particular, lends itself to a recurring critique: a theory of vernacular rhetoric still allows for elite people to analyze the rhetorics of the marginalized as an inherently colonial endeavor. While it certainly aims to expand the field of rhetorical studies to legitimize a variety of voices that are not often associated with traditional historical studies of rhetoric, the possibility for a theory of vernacular rhetoric to be expanded in a way that infuses its study with a moral imperative for reflexivity emerges. Hauser writes: "The dialogizing of another's discourse creates contact between the material forces of alien languages within [a] culture, creates the possibility for alternative suppositions and renditions of reality [that] affect understanding and change."[12] By recognizing and valuing opportunities for alternative sense-making, social change is possible as both an outcome and a transformational experience embedded in everyday life.

Embracing vernacular rhetoric as one way to gain insight into complex issues, topics, and/or events "in the world" is only partially helpful; creating a shift in possibility for the field requires a more robust understanding of power. Grounded in Habermasian ideals of deliberative democracy and equal (re)presentation and access to deliberation, public sphere theory has come under fire for good reasons.[13] While an increase in scholarship addressing the ways texts are understood to be significant parts of an ever-changing rhetorical landscape have emerged in the last decade, the same cannot be said about the connection between public sphere theory and the aims of critical theory. Referring to Griffin's work critiquing public sphere scholarship for reinforcing the stereotypical distinction between women's association with domestic/private space and men's association with non-domestic/public space, Chávez (2015) writes: "the reliance on and celebration of the public sphere not only reifies this essentialist distinction, but also suggests that the very operations of democratic communication reify it."[14] In this spirit, Hauser's most recent work—while not addressing this challenge directly—provides an opportunity to add to what Chávez refers to as "alternative" and "transformative" contributions to history. In other words, by seeing morality as embedded in both the rhetoric we study and the methods by which we study it, new perspectives can introduce and champion approaches to the study of complex, dynamic texts in ways that constitute altogether new possibilities. Particularly, opportunities to advance approaches that adopt critical orientations to power in rhetorical study emerge alongside Hauser's call for the insertion of morality into the study of rhetoric.

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[10] Ibid., 268.
[11] Ibid., 94.
[12] Ibid., 100.
[13] For example, see *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, ed. Seyla Benhabib (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

What Hauser calls a "thick moral vernacular" extends the notion of "interaction within a discourse community that depends on local knowledge, concerns, meanings, modes of arguments, value schemes, logics, traditions, and the like shared among ordinary people"[15] to simultaneously attend to "*antivernacular* representations of power … the discourses that function within the hierarchy of an overarching system of power … formal addresses and policy statements, bureaucratic rules and directives, or even the presentation of self that is a display of public authority."[16] This tension highlights how morality is embedded in public interactions, not merely an influence on their form or function. Rather than appropriating the term "moral" as a religiously- or philosophically-inspired vocabulary for passing judgment, the term arises in Hauser's work as an active component of obligation. In the case of studying rhetoric, the rhetorical scholar must treat vernacular rhetoric as woven into its situating discourses and material surroundings but also itself capable of producing (im)moral consequences. In his book, Hauser illustrates how moral vernaculars constitute both what we know about cases of prisoners of conscience and how that knowledge affects people living in the world in emotionally raw ways. While the relationship between rhetorical scholars and their lived experiences continues to be a source of conversation in the field, I will focus here on the opportunities created when studies of rhetoric—particularly those that study complex living texts that attend to displays of embodied performances as symbolic action and materiality as itself persuasive—are injected with a moral obligation to infuse such studies with reflexivity and practice.

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[14] Karma R. Chávez, "Beyond Inclusion: Rethinking Rhetoric's Historical Narrative," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 101, no. 1 (2015): 162–72.

[15] Hauser, *Prisoners of Conscience*, 41.

[16] Ibid., 43.

Possibility

Hauser focuses on what he calls "demonstrative possibilities inherent to display rhetoric"[17] as a way to account for the embodied performances of everyday life. I propose extending this demonstrative frame of interpretation to account for what I call *interpretive possibility*, which is associated with exploring these rhetorical displays in alternative ways. The notion of interpretive possibility adds to Hauser's call for demonstrative frames by adding an expectation of self-reflexivity for the rhetorician, infusing how she or he accesses a particular rhetoric with the specific approach adopted to analyze it. Such a focus on the critic's relationship to both the texts being analyzed and the larger world in which these texts function connects the rhetorician's unique subject positionality to what she or he studies. This reflexivity can reveal how complex layers of collective "social" rhetorics are connected to particular understandings of the (re)presentations and nuances of a text itself. Since living texts are dynamically altered by the often taken for granted ways a critic experiences the facets of public life that ground them, moving beyond Hauser's focus on "demonstrative" frames lends itself to exploring aspects of rhetoric beyond the visible, knowable displays of public-ness that are more commonly recognizable. Focusing on the addition of interpretive frames alongside the more commonly used demonstrative frames of analysis in rhetorical scholarship can help us to examine the sometimes less visible ways that public-ness is enacted—or resisted—in an equally robust manner. Combining demonstrative frames of analysis with the notion of interpretive possibility requires examining rhetoric as constitutive and allows us to see (im)possibility as both evident and taken for granted. While perspective is intertwined with subject positionality, experience, and/or ideological orientations, studying vernacular rhetoric both as something collectively recognizable and as individually resonant allows the study of living rhetoric to be capable of transforming both what we know and how we come to know it in more explicit ways. Examining rhetoric as embedded in the taken for granted ways that we understand and enact our own, and others', understandings of everyday life positions rhetorical studies as inherently consequential. In expanding taken for granted understandings, a sense of history, choice, and possibility can also be altered. Thus, using demonstrative and interpretive frames of analysis together can encourage previously unimagined (or hegemonically delegitimized) histories and futures to be evoked in novel ways.

Further, by seeing analysis itself as capable of transforming existing understandings, a more direct interrogation of power relations that underlie and influence the specific understandings, experiences, and possibilities for living texts should also be engaged. This particular possibility has inspired my own study of the rhetorics of public squares. Generally, I am interested in the ways that rhetoric—in its various forms—constitutes our understanding of public place and space in both abstract and tangible ways. In this way, the terms "public," "place and space," and "rhetoric," to name a few, are understood by me as a scholar *and* by the people (re)producing such rhetorics. I make sense of what I "see" and experience in the square in relation to my own *a priori* understandings while simultaneously displaying those understandings to others both consciously and subconsciously (interpretively). Both people and their material surroundings collectively (re)produce a "living text" that constitute various—and often conflicting—ways of understanding and (re)presenting it (demonstratively). In this way, what we know and experience as city life is inextricably linked to the way in which a city's public life in particular places is known. Studying the rhetoric of the city as it is (re)presented in public life requires interpreting both its constitutive relations from the specific positionality of the rhetorician *and* its demonstrative displays that continually construct the (im)possibility of imagining a future.

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[17] Ibid., 180.

Positionality

Hauser's notion of morality provides an opportunity to develop a notion of interpretive possibility by connecting the moral act of rhetorical study with specific consequences of studying complex, dynamic, living texts in particular ways. Charles E. Morris has called for increased rhetorical *reflexivity* that more explicitly intertwines a rhetorical scholar's positionality with the rhetoric that she or he studies.[18] Utilizing both interpretive and demonstrative frames to analyze rhetoric can allow rhetorical scholarship to move beyond analyzing a singular text from the position of "expert-spectator"[19] and towards more nuanced descriptions of rhetoric as dynamic formations functioning in a world with particular people in particular places and spaces with consequences for particular (kinds of) people. However, recognizing that these particulars simultaneously constitute larger, more generalizable social and cultural norms allows a study of particulars to add to a long-term change in status quo—even if incrementally. Rosenfield demonstrated in his metaphoric analysis of Central Park that understanding the body as a complex amalgamation of both form and function helps us see a city park as a complex (re)presentation of the larger urban fabric with(in) which it is woven. More recently, Rai used ethnographic methods to explore rhetorics of neo-liberalism as they were enacted in and around a particular contention about affordable housing in a specific Chicago neighborhood.[20] Both of these analyses of city life treat rhetoric as connected to understandings embedded in particular power relations that legitimize or delegitimize, and particular positionalities that privilege some understandings and condemn others. In these ways, and others, meaning is constituted in dynamic *processes* ingrained in rhetoric as both form and function and always operating "in the world."

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[18] Charles E. Morris III, "Performing/Rhetorical Studies: Differential Belonging across Intradisciplinary Borders," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (2014): 104–107.

[19] Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "The Anatomy of Critical Discourse," *Speech Monographs* 35 (1968): 50–69.

Potentiality

Traditional accounts of the history of rhetorical study do not necessarily contradict the notion that the study of rhetoric need adapt in its evolution of development. Hauser demonstrates in his most recent work that a Habermasian approach to public rhetoric seeks to expose its deliberative potential to reach legitimation;[21] however, as others have suggested,[22] such an approach fails to consider the dangers of equating rational assent and rational consensus. By treating rhetoric as primarily rational, its affective influences become subsequently under-valued. As Hauser and others have shown, the affective dimension of rhetoric is not so easily subsumed under its rational counterpart in all situations. Consequently, by holding morality beneath logic, some ways of understanding rhetoric over others become more or less visible to those who are (dis)advantaged when some ways of knowing are understood as "better" than others. Thus, analyzing rhetoric through *both* interpretive and demonstrative frames of analysis can invite new possibilities for rhetorical scholarship writ large.

As Farrell wrote, "Rhetoric does not see the sudden discovery of radical variation . . . as proof that 'the end is near,' but rather as evidence that its own constructive possibilities are far from over."[23] In this way, he reminds us that while "it remains to be seen whether our classically grounded understandings of tradition offer a vocabulary of explanation sufficiently rich and responsive to capture the inventional possibilities for practice in contemporary life,"[24] it is indeed the responsibility of rhetorical studies to connect (and expose the disconnects) between "variable and disputable conceptions of social problems, definitions of the public good, even norms for the attribution of responsibility and judgment."[25] While Farrell compellingly points to the relationship between rhetoric and its constitutive nature as influencing change, the (im)possibility for change to be engendered altogether is embedded in his discussion. While he does not directly discuss the ways in which rhetoric fails to be treated as constitutive, critical rhetoricians have aimed to discuss the relationship between power and rhetoric's constitutive nature, most notably around the notion of resistance.

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[20] Candice Rai, "Positive Loitering and Public Goods: The Ambivalence of Civic Participation and Community Policing in the Neoliberal City," *Ethnography* 12, no. 1 (2011): 65–88.

[21] Hauser, *Prisoners of Conscience*.

[22] E.g., Seyla Benhabib, Iris Marion Young, and Nancy Fraser in Seyla Benhabib, ed., *Democracy and Difference*.

[23] Thomas B. Farrell, "Practicing the Arts of Rhetoric: Tradition and Invention," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 24, no. 3 (1991): 183–212, 95.

[24] Ibid., 80.

[25] Ibid., 86.

While John Sloop and Kent Ono refer to the often overlooked influence of "the logic of the out-law's discourse community," in (re)presenting definitions of "good,"[26] they clearly remind us that often *public* good is determined by those who are privileged enough to have their perspective align with the majority. In other words, while "good" is something that we often attempt to define and judge across cultures, time, and/or ideological worldviews, our understanding of the term inevitably changes over time and across life's direct experiences. While what we understand as "good" need not change radically, it is inevitably influenced by the "vernacular judgments and the material needs of everyday life"[27] and capable of being infused with the "material fabric of culture."[28] While Farrell discussed rhetoric's influence as (re)creating the "(im)possible," Sloop and Ono focused on its role as (re)creating the "social imaginary." Both remind us of the need to move any singular understanding toward a more comprehensive and reflexive account of significance and consequence of moral action.

While one way of attending to moral action involves universally defining its parameters, the spirit of the moral vernacular asks that we instead attend to the lived experiences of morality that we encounter in our work as rhetorical scholars. Dana Cloud makes direct connections between the hegemonic influences that separate the moral aptitude of entire races and classes of people from the depiction of universal possibility of success embedded in the master American Dream narrative.[29] But even these connections between disempowered groups and the larger structures within which they function have been called out as in need of reconsideration for half a century. Rather than exposing these rhetorics as problematic, attention to the spirit of the moral vernacular asks us to go further to explore the specific rhetorical constructions as they emerge. For example, Franklyn Haiman called attention to the need to study the "rhetoric of the streets" in order to better understand the 1960s civil rights resistance efforts in the United States.[30] In fact, even in 1967, Haiman had the foresight to charge his peers to "avoid the blithe presumption that the channels of rational communication are open to any and all who wish to make use of them."[31]

Thus, when discussing *public* life found in central city squares or plazas, the study of rhetoric provided by an expert-driven analysis of already produced text is limited in its ability to provide insight into the more complex dynamics of meaning embedded in its living texts. A more explicitly reflexive approach to studying the rhetorics of public-ness can bring to light otherwise invisible connections. By highlighting the reflexive processes of meaning-making that occur in particular places and spaces and in particular moments of time, otherwise veiled aspects of rhetoric can be accounted for via both interpretive and demonstrative frames of analysis. Whether an outcome of disability, capability, or accountability, the cynicism referred to at the start of this essay is all too often associated with a lack of transformation from existing status quo understandings to new futures constituted not just as imaginary but possible. By focusing on how utilizing both interpretive *and* demonstrative frames of analysis can produce more complex understandings of a particular set of rhetorics in and about Savannah, Georgia's Johnson Square, I hope to illustrate how broader thinking about how novel futures can transform specific instantiations of public-ness in any number of other as-yet unimagined ways.

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[26] John M. Sloop and Kent A. Ono, "Outlaw Discourse: The Critical Politics of Material Judgment," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 30, no. 1 (1997): 50–69, 52.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., 57.

[29] Dana L. Cloud, "Hegemony or Concordance? The Rhetoric of Tokenism in 'Oprah' Winfrey's Rags-to-Riches Biography," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 13 (1996): 115–137.

[30] Franklyn S. Haiman, "The Rhetoric of the Streets: Some Legal and Ethical Considerations," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 53, no. 2 (1967): 99–114, 99.

[31] Ibid., 114.

Johnson Square

As part of a five-year project that explored the rhetoric of four different central public squares in the Northwest, Southwest, Southeast, and Northeast regions of the United States, my work in Savannah, Georgia, focuses on Johnson Square as a living text. City officials, architects, landscape designers, and planners make decisions that affect the ways in which everyday people experience Johnson Square in their everyday lives were formally interviewed, and everyday ways that people spoke, wrote about, and performed understandings of Johnson Square were included. Combining qualitative approaches to fieldwork and rhetorical approaches to analysis, I engaged in three weeks of intense participant-observation (approximately 150 hours) and approximately 35 interviews, not only with people "officially" associated with the square (e.g., management, event coordinators, heads of security, heads of janitorial/maintenance staff, permitted vendors, people who grant or deny permits for events held in the squares, and historians) but also with people who "unofficially" use this square for a variety of activities (e.g., eating lunch, meeting people, attending events, "hanging out," people-watching, drinking coffee, reading books or newspapers, taking breaks from work, visiting as a tourist, and living in it as a temporary "home"). I will attempt in the remainder of this essay to articulate how my reflexive positionality worked to bolster the application of both interpretive and demonstrative frames of analysis to call forth interpretive possibilities for understanding Johnson Square, the city of Savannah, and the people who engage both.

Who Will Save My Soul?

I arrived in Savannah at the height of summer, dropped my stuff at a tiny apartment within walking distance to downtown where I would be staying for the next three weeks, and wiped the sweat off my brow before heading to check out the square in which I had planned on spending the next month of my life. Johnson Square, the original banker's square of the Savannah business district, was accessible by a short walk from the apartment that I had rented. I walked one block past a busy intersection that appeared to be a thoroughfare for traffic and into a seemingly faraway place. The traffic seemed far away and the vehicles that traveled on the streets immediately surrounding the square were few (although there was a construction project on one side that provided a loud reminder about its urban home). Besides these few traces of the urban environment and modern technology, the square seemed frozen in another era. Towering oak trees lined the perimeter of the square and their Spanish moss provided a shady respite from the oven-like heat of the Deep South. Still surrounded by several functioning financial institutions, the square was also immediately flanked by a Church, a coffee shop, and a series of arterial streets that connected to life on either side of the square. Apart from these initial observations, however, my "participation" in this square was not as easily explainable. You see, my role as a rhetorician, studying the emergent rhetorics that lived in various cultural manifestations of Johnson Square, was quite different than my role as rhetor, participating in the square's cultural life. It was much easier to position myself as a "studier" of culture than it was to position myself as an authentic "participant" in that culture, as I more frequently than not felt that I didn't "belong."

As soon as I opened my mouth, I announced my outsider, Yankee identity. I had no trace of a Southern drawl; in the best-case scenario, I would be dismissed as a tourist . . . in the worst-case scenario, I would be suspiciously regarded as an unwanted implant into their cultural existence. I wore t-shirt and jeans—something I wore in all of my public square visits—which appeared as a far departure from the gendered cultural norm of (re)presenting oneself as a "lady" in public. I have straight-as-an-arrow hair that gets air-dried and brushed once a day, I don't regularly wear eye make-up or lipstick, and my Chaco sandals are a far cry from the fashionable high-heels that clicked across the bricks each day. I also find myself appearing too old to be confused with an up-and-coming art student at the nearby Savannah College of Art & Design (I'm not nearly as groovy as most of them either). I was also alone; most other women who entered the square were accompanied by one or more companions. A woman like me, "hanging about" by myself in the square, did not appear to be "normal." Other types of people, however, appeared to be quite adept at "hanging about"—no one closely resembled me.

While my embodied position was a central part of my ability to access particular kinds of texts and "see" particular aspects of context, these appropriations of normal would be overgeneralized at best (and stereotypical tokenizing at worst) if they were based solely on my observations. My more active role of participating in the square enabled me to verify my initial observations and my quantifiable counting of people and things. As I talked with people in (un)solicited ways, became part of their performances in the square (both formally and informally), and otherwise inserted myself as a participant in a world I was previously unfamiliar with, my role as participant was often more immediately challenging than my role as a scholar of rhetoric. My participant role was markedly tested the day I found myself sharing a bench with a character I encountered almost every day during my time in Savannah.

Steve was a white man who appeared to be in his late 50s or early 60s. He wore a three-piece light-blue pin-striped suit every day.[32] When he sat on a bench and crossed his legs, the wear pattern on the bottom of his brown leather shoes was readily apparent. He often wore a fedora-like hat with a black ribbon running around its base just above the brim. He always carried a sign that read: "You're Going to Hell." One day about two weeks into my daily excursions into the square, Steve sat down on the other side of the bench where I was busily scribbling notes. I looked up casually and made eye contact. Inside, my mind was racing. Should I attempt to talk to him? Should I wait for him to talk to me? What if he was critical of me for what I represented (someone *un*like himself)? What if he was not mentally stable? What if I needed an exit strategy to detach from the conversation if it didn't produce an easy ending? What if he wanted to argue with me? What if…?

I spoke first: "Hello." "Hello to you, Ma'am," he tipped his hat with his right hand in my direction still holding the sign firmly in his left hand and avoiding direct eye contact. The 1x4 piece of wood that served as the handle for his sign supported a piece of white posterboard with the 4-inch tall red block letters that I had read almost every day for the last two weeks from wherever I was in the square. "Do you come here often?" I asked. "As often as you do," he winked at me. Was that a sign of friendliness? Or a sign that this was creepy? I smiled, unsure of whether the gesture exposed my uncomfortableness. "I'm doing a project on public squares," I took the plunge, "Would you be willing to talk to me about what you think about Johnson Square?" He glanced sideways at the piece of paper I held in my hand (the human subjects protection form that required his signature) and the small voice recorder that sat on my lap, visible as I lifted the piece of paper into the air. After he "blessed" my forms by explaining that God would approve them, the preaching started, and I spent the next 30 minutes recording an interview I had no idea whether I would be able to use or not.

Those Institutional Review Board forms were *not* what made this interview possible; my consistent presence in Johnson Square for two weeks did. Steve was naturally suspicious of me (and probably rightly so); I do not believe he would have ever talked with me if he saw me as anything other than a somewhat regular visitor over the previous few weeks. In engaging the square in a particular way—first as an observer with my nose in a notebook and only later as a more assertive participant who asked to talk to people "on the record"—I was practicing my own role in the square. I was a rhetor, practicing rhetoric both implicitly in my personal performances of observation and explicitly in my outward performances of seeking insight about the square from others. But I was always a rhetorician—studying the rhetoric that emerged, that I stumbled upon, and that I sought out. It is on this latter role that I will now focus.

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[32] All first names used are pseudonyms.

Interpretive Frames of Analysis

"Interpretive" frames of analysis highlight reflective articulations of what a rhetorician sees as an individual educated in the field of rhetoric *and* as a person intertwined with her or his collective experiences in the world. An interpretive frame of analysis requires utilizing the learned knowledge of rhetorical forms, functions, tropes, and processes of invention associated with education in rhetoric; it also requires the experiential knowledge that allows the identification of salient rhetorics we see as worthy of study. In other words, what we "see" in the world is often understood as primarily rhetorical because of our education; and our education—and other life experiences—primarily affect how we approach our subsequent scholarly explorations. They are indeed not easily separable perspectives, and an interpretive frame of analysis would not claim that they should be. Rather, in the spirit of Morris's "rhetorical reflexivity," an interpretive frame of analysis is capable of reflecting a rhetorician's analysis as advocating for particular understandings without undermining the (potential) consequences of such advocacy for the people affected by the legitimation of some understandings over others.

Interpretive meanings inherent in "living" rhetorics were (re)presented to me over a specific time period and amidst the cultural backdrop of the Deep South, thus leading to the treatment of Johnson Square as dynamic and complex rather than as a "flattened" symbol best read through my expert eye. Instead, the various rhetorical texts of the square work together to create a rich and complex tapestry of meaning. An interpretive frame of analysis asks that the (re)presentational rhetorics be observed and engaged as an embedded part of my own subject positionality. Whereas we could attempt to pull the tapestry apart thread by thread, an interpretive frame of analysis highlights the ways that the weaving appears from the past and simultaneously how it is understood as meaningful in the present. In the case of the square, although its history situated its understanding in the present, the way that people performed was an indication of their own (lack of) understanding of that history *and* their present (lack of) understanding of me as someone in the square alongside them. When others were aware of my presence, they (sub)consciously participated in the life of the square in particular ways (and not in others). Simultaneously, I (re)presented something to all of the people I encountered in that they (re)presented something to me. I appeared to them to be a tourist, an outsider, or a stranger, leaving me to subsequently confirm or violate others' expectations of me in each of those roles.

An ethic of self-reflexivity both in that moment on the bench with Steve *and* in my role as a rhetorical scholar attempting to recount, (re)present, and connect meaning together (re)direct conversations about the meaning and experience of public-ness in Johnson Square. The multiple levels of meaning are exposed *because* rhetorical texts are treated as dynamic and living. I, as rhetorician *and* rhetor, can access particular rhetorical texts and not others, can "see" those rhetorical texts in some ways and not others, and can explain those texts as consequential in particular ways. In this brief illustration of my time in Johnson Square, the way in which my (admittedly often "safer") status as unobtrusive observer of the square was inherently connected to my (admittedly more anxiety-filled) status as participant in coming to know others' understandings through direct face-to-face interaction. In other words, observing the square from different vantage points, at different times of the day, reflecting on my own appearance in the larger landscape of the square (both materially and culturally) and within the confines of my own subject positionality, all lend themselves to a particular articulation of meaning. My interpreting of Johnson Square as a living text embodied in the people who use it, shaped by the discourses about it, and made sense of by relating different understandings of it treats meaning as a dynamic process rather than a conclusive outcome. Demonstrative frames of analysis can thus provide further insight into some parts of this process in particular.

Demonstrative Frames of Analysis

Demonstrative frames guide the analysis of rhetoric by highlighting how the material and embodied performances of living texts are meaningful in relation to one another. A demonstrative frame of analysis requires treating bodies, materials, and performances in and about a complex object of study like a city's public square as interconnected and mutually constitutive. In other words, while the trained rhetorician may be more adept at identifying symbolic (re)presentations of meaning in the form of static and/or dynamic texts than the layperson, the treatment of such texts as severed from their larger body of discursive, material, and situational elements is less useful.

In the case of Johnson Square, displays of meaning can be identified aspects of rhetoric in a variety of ways. I will focus on the roles of symbol, body, and performance. The square itself is symbolic not just culturally of the southeastern region of the United States but also as a (re)presentation of the larger planned City of Savannah. Originally broken up into "wards" that placed the public square at their center, each *quartier* possessed two sites reserved for public buildings (including churches, schools, or governmental institutions) that were called "trust lots" and twenty sites called "tithing lots" that were divided down the middle by a lane for passage. Like each of the Savannah squares, Johnson Square has its own unique history in addition to a shared purpose in Savannah life. Johnson Square is sometimes referred to as "Banker's Square" because two of its three trust lots host banks. Johnson Square was constructed as the center of "Derby Ward," which was designed to help people access the "public stores" of what they needed in daily life. The original square hosted two public brick ovens that enabled residents to bake their bread communally during the initial brick shortage that prevented them from building such ovens in their own homes. While the brick ovens no longer exist, two fountains mark where they originally stood. Johnson Square also hosts a sundial that was originally used as a centralized mechanism for Savannah residents to tell time. While the present square's fountains, updated sundial, and centuries-old oak trees host a variety of formally sponsored events and provide respite to any number of residents and visitors seeking reprieve from the hot, sticky Savanna sun, the present version of the square symbolizes both what was and what is important to Savannah. These symbols are not static indications of the past and conclusive predictions of the future but rather dynamic (re)presentations of how the materiality of Johnson Square "lives" in and through the people who use it.

In this way, Steve's body, my body, and any number of other bodies move through Johnson Square at any given moment in time. Rather than prioritizing which of these bodies is more important, more significant, or more valuable to discuss, Johnson Square provides particular examples of importance, significance, and/or value in how these bodies (dis)engage each other. While my embodied experiences in the square are unique to me, the idea that bodies are always symbolically connecting particular experiences, meanings, and values in the way they display particular attributes like dress, gender, attitude, intimacy, interaction, and avoidance, provide an opportunity for rhetoricians to analyze meaning-making—not just meaning. In the case of Steve, his actions, dress, and purpose for being in the square all called attention to his presence very explicitly in his performances in the square. My interaction with him, however, occurred only when he took a break from his public performance and engaged in a slightly different performance. By discussing with me on a meta-level why he chose Johnson Square and what he did when he was there, Steve's embodied performances can be understood only as distinct embodied rhetorical displays that were performed both "to" and "for" me as another embodied performer participating in the construction of meaning. Thus, performances, although displays of meaning, are inherently also affected by a participating rhetorician's subject positionality, presence, and (re)presentations of self.

The Interpretive-Demonstrative Frame

Combining the material symbolicity of Johnson Square with the symbolic meaning created through Steve's embodied performances creates a particular (and new) understanding of both. By intertwining an interpretive frame of analysis with a demonstrative frame, particular displays of meaning can be accounted for in dynamic ways, producing unique analysis that more comprehensively accounts for both the particulars of place and the relational contingencies of people involved in collective meaning-making. Using an interpretive-demonstrative frame of analysis, the historical significance of Johnson Square as a place for people to communally gather to get what they "need" (via the public stores) becomes intertwined with Steve's performances in the square in ways that may be more connected than at first glance. By preaching his evangelical beliefs to everyone who entered, Steve was, in fact, upholding the historical purpose of Johnson Square: he was giving people what he thought they needed. In my specific case, this required me to reflect on my own non-Evangelical Christian beliefs that allowed me to engage in conversation with Steve in a much more detached manner than if I, too, held similar beliefs that my role in life involved convincing my fellow human beings that their soul is in "need" of saving.

The Morality of Studying Rhetoric

How we come to know something (our epistemological assumptions) and our ontological aptitude (what we know) combine to form a unique perspective of the world that may or may not align with the majority of others with whom we interact. When our understandings align, we are often able to look to logic, formal reasoning, and strategies of persuasion that resonate with "good" ways of judging a situation and the people in it. When our understandings do not align, however, we are often forced to engage in negotiations that do not always lend themselves to a collaborative spirit and more often than not result in compromise that leaves the marginalized somewhat less disempowered than before while the status quo is only slightly altered. In such cases, "good" is simply a generalizable—and simultaneously individually resonant—term utilized to assess the worthiness of people, actions, and outcomes. By infusing rhetorical analysis with the spirit of morality that Hauser devises, we can begin to move past arguing about the "better" conception of "good" and begin to explore new possibilities of engaging in critical discussion about dynamic, living texts that can transform—rather than just add to—existing understandings of the status quo.

My role as rhetorician (coming to know this square through the multi-dimensional rhetorics I access through a particular subject positionality) was inherently connected to my role as rhetor (able to converse with Steve in a particular way). In the spirit of Morris's call for increased reflexivity, I needed to reconcile my internal dialogue (representing my subject positionality) with my external dialogue (representing myself as an "other" perceived by the person with whom I was dialoguing) but also prepare myself to consider the difference between including Steve's interview as a rhetorical text (that meets the standards set by the IRB) and including the interaction with Steve as a background experience that for any number of reasons would be unethical to include (most explicitly if he appeared to be mentally unstable in any way). One of the great challenges—and rewards—of studying a public is the inherent mystery of who is part of it; illogical does not equal mentally unsound nor does disadvantaged mean incapable of providing insight. By rejecting these often subconsciously applied associations, and embracing Hauser's spirit of morality as embedded in the very rhetorics we access and analyze, we have the ability to open opportunities for radically new interpretations of dynamic rhetoric to emerge that can constitute both our histories and our futures in truly novel ways.

Propaedeutics to Action: Vernacular Rhetorical Citizenship—Reflections on and of the Work of Gerard A. Hauser

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Jerry Hauser's professional accomplishments are numerous and diverse. In one 40-plus year career he has been able to consistently achieve—and mix—excellence as a teacher, a scholar, and an academic serviceman and leader. His impact on rhetorical studies in the US is indisputable and it reaches beyond national borders. Rhetoric scholars around the world have invited him to give lectures, and his writings are classics in undergraduate and graduate education in the US and beyond. "Distinction" seems an appropriate descriptor.

In the vast field of communication studies, rhetoric can be difficult to define and demarcate; rhetoric shares interests with fields such as discourse analysis and media studies, and with philosophy and political science, yet it has an historical orientation of its own. The word "rhetoric" refers at once to an academic discipline with a critical vocabulary and to a praxis. Rhetoric denies the dualism of form and content, and it thinks of itself as both analytic and normative. One of the characteristics of Jerry Hauser as an academic that gives his work wide appeal is his effortless integration of these multiple strands in the disciplinary self-understanding. A rich example of this is Hauser's several revisits to the Xenophon narrative about the aftermath of a sea battle at Arginusae, an ancient text that in Hauser's readings becomes a prism for issues in contemporary rhetorical theory and its links to political theory and philosophy. Rhetoric is at the heart of one of the most celebrated ideas of the Western tradition: democracy.

In this chapter, I will focus on what I see as a tenor in Hauser's work, namely rhetoric's place in the basic schisms characteristic of democratic societies: how to bring together in responsible ways the sometimes conflicting appeals from reason and passion, and how to practice the rule of "the people" when in fact there are major power differences and often a perceived gap in interest, knowledge, and evaluation of issues between the majority and the elite minority. In Hauser's own words, there are questions to be raised, "questions about the ways that participation is manifested, how opinion is expressed, how we may come to know it" ("Rhetorical Democracy and Civic Engagement" 7). In what follows, we shall track some of Hauser's own answers to these questions.

The Xenophon Narrative:
A Prism for Understanding Rhetoric

A recurring topos in Hauser's work is Xenophon's narrative of the tumultuous political and judicial aftermath of the naval battle at Arginusae in 406 BCE. Xenophon tells the story of how an agitated Athenian assembly in the first jubilant victory celebration wanted to bestow the highest honor on the generals returning from battle, only to be swayed (by ostentatious displays of sorrow by relatives of soldiers who had not returned) to decide to execute them for failing to rescue their compatriots who had been stranded in enemy territory and later drowned in a storm. However, the assembly later regretted this decision as too rash and vindictive. Wanting to change the verdict but finding that it was too late because the commanders had already been put to death, the citizens turned to blame those who had incited the soldiers to the first, angry decision to convict them of deception (*Hellenica*, Book I, chapter VI).

In a series of publications, Hauser has used this narrative as a prism to separate out a spectrum of rhetoric's key characteristics that are all central to his understanding of the discipline. The inspiration he finds in the account is telling of his own, historically grounded, theoretically nuanced, and socially committed view of rhetoric: First, rhetoric's roots are in ancient Greece and these roots are still a source of conceptual nourishment. Secondly, the episode is emblematic of how the community's life is tightly knotted with rhetorical exchanges—both in terms of survival as an independent city-state and in terms of civic and juridical culture. Third and most importantly, the episode thematizes rhetoric's double-edged nature: Persuasion may as well be used to inflame passions and cloud judgment as it may speak to reason and justice. With rhetoric there is always the threat of deterioration into deception and manipulation, but it is accompanied with the possibility of insisting on sound reasoning and relevant emotional and moral appeals. Hauser's own commitments have for decades inspired him to discover and explain ways in which rhetoric emerges as a socially responsible and moral resource in public life. The fact that this "optimistic" approach is accompanied by the awareness that the opposite—pandering, manipulative and misleading rhetoric—is equally possible makes Hauser's take on rhetoric all the more robust. Hauser reminds us that we cannot appreciate the constructive potential of rhetoric without bearing in mind that rhetoric—that plasma of social coexistence—requires constant attention and an active effort.

In the article "Aristotle on Epideictic: The Formation of Public Morality," it is primarily the historical setting of the Xenophon account that is in focus. In 406 BCE the Athenian democracy struggled with competing influences from different groups: the established elite who preferred power-alliances with their peers and political newcomers who with their eloquence had more popular appeal. The result, according to Hauser, was political rhetoric more influenced by self-serving factions than reasonable exchanges of arguments, resulting in unstable politics based on deliberations weakened by a lack of guidance in how to weigh conflicting concerns and assess their relative relevance. The point is not that emotions should have no place in democratic decisions but that there needs to be a common understanding of how to make responsible decisions even in times of great emotional turmoil. Hauser thus uses the story to contextualize and illustrate the relevance of Aristotle's ideas of the perfect orator, the *phronimos*.

The phronimos leads by example in making sound judgments, and he teaches the populace about how to decide issues of common concern in concrete situations. Epideictic rhetoric is one important avenue for these teachings. In epideictic rhetoric, Hauser's argument goes, we witness rhetoric's dual aspects as a technê and a dynamis working together: The successful public speech of praise or blame not only represents technical skill in composition and wording but it also brings the moral truths and values of the community into play as the subject of the speech is lauded (or the opposite). Hereby epideictic can "set the tone for civic community" and "the encomiast serves an equally unique role as a teacher of civic virtue" (14). I shall return to this link between epideictic and the nurturing of community values below in connection with my own thinking on rhetoric's role in shaping civic norms as this happens in official apologies presented, for example, by state leaders.

In 2004 Hauser revisited the narrative in his introduction to the volume *Discursive Practices of Civic Engagement*. Here, the Arginusae story is used to capture the similarities between ancient Greek democratic tumult and contemporary political conditions in the US, but also to highlight the differences between the small, direct Athenian democracy and the heterogeneity of postmodern democracies' systems of representation. Again the public's susceptibility to the emotional manipulation that is often associated with rhetoric is highlighted. A classic tension in Western democracies is between the educated elite as the de facto rulers and the impressionable masses that are suspected of being too susceptible to emotional appeals and who, in virtue of their numbers, consider themselves bearers of the public opinion. Hauser points to the problematic notion of public opinion as the authorizing principle underlying democratic rule and underscores the need to study communication practices that inform political and social decision making and action in civil society ("Rhetorical Democracy and Civic Engagement"). Hauser has dedicated much of his work to exposing the weaknesses of opinion polls as expressions of public opinion, and likewise to the promise of vernacular discourse as a more authentic source. I shall return to both. He ends the discussion by emphasizing the role teachers of rhetoric can play in the fostering of rhetorical democracy. This role we shall return to as well in the discussion of propaedeutic rhetorical citizenship.

Finally, in the introduction to the special issue of *Philosophy & Rhetoric* on rhetorical agency, Hauser, in his role as editor of the issue, returns to Xenophon's story to illustrate this classic key question about rhetoric: What are we to think of a force that so blatantly manipulates us ("Editor's Introduction")? Does the story of the mind-changing Ecclesia demonstrate rhetoric's essentially "flawed agency" that leaves people powerless under the influence of its seductive powers, or does it, rather, speak to "rhetoric's constitutive agency performed through the uncertainties of meaning and conduct established through the circulation of discourse" (182–83)? In other words, is the story a somber reminder that at the end of the day, rhetoric boils down to a manipulative force against which even those committed to making sound judgments are defenseless, or does the story exemplify how rhetoric is part and parcel of the contingency of truth, meaning, and ideas of the good? Harking back to the disagreement between the ancient sophists and philosophers, the question is if rhetoric is to be embraced or contained. Either way, agency and choice are inextricably connected, and the anecdote calls on us to consider the implications its interpretations have on how we understand rhetoric's role in public discourse. Because issues of agency have implications for matters of voice and power, it befalls rhetoricians to study its emergence, enactment, and reception across cultures and continents (186).

From the Bottom Up:
Vernacular Rhetoric and the Shaping of Society

The commitment to rhetoric's many facets that Jerry Hauser's iterations of the Xenophon narrative have demonstrated speaks to his expansive and dynamic view of the field, and if there is one core question to be extracted from these discussions, it is the question of rhetoric's function in democracy, and the challenges and opportunities that lie in a system where the will and opinions of the many and the elite few meet and compete. From my perspective, Jerry Hauser's most important contributions to rhetorical theory and criticism converge in his focus on the role of ordinary people in the discursive creation and development of democratic societies. In this section I trace specific ways in which Hauser's thinking has inspired the ideas about rhetorical citizenship that my colleague Christian Kock and I have presented. I follow this up with a cursory case study of what I call *propaedeutic rhetorical citizenship*.

Hauser's award-winning 1999 book *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres* stands as a highlight of his publishing career. To many rhetorical critics, it heralded an authoritative and well-supported change of focus (or added focus) for rhetorical criticism and theory. This reorientation consisted in directing attention to the discursive interactions among the ordinary people that make up "the public" instead of looking to elite rhetors as the primary source of political and social meaning formation. Hauser describes his project as exploring "the prospects for recovering awareness of our own discursive practices and their possibilities for shaping our public lives as citizens, neighbors, and cultural agents" (11). The book's valorization of all kinds of discursive interactions at the level of the "lay" citizen came as a timely impulse for rhetoric scholars whose interests transcended the tradition of public address and who were drawn to informal and quotidian rhetorical phenomena that, in form and content, had little in common with the rhetorical formats that scholars traditionally had studied. A focus on vernacular rhetoric prompted critics to direct attention away from elite rhetors and instead toward "spheres of interaction in a society where publics form and express opinions that bear on the course of society" (24) and to how "collective participation in rhetorical processes constitutes individuals as a public" (34). Hauser's work contributed to an understanding of more mundane rhetorical exchanges as significant by studying them as a way in which "publics make their presences known" in what he calls the "reticulate" (network-like, interlaced) public sphere and recognizing them as "integral to civil society's continuous activity of self-regulation" (11).

These ideas about vernacular rhetoric also became part of an important rhetorically based response to the growing academic interest in deliberative democracy. It did so by offering an alternative to a common assumption that public deliberation aims at finding enough common ground to bring about consensus. In contrast, a rhetorical conception of democratic practice takes as a given that consensus—albeit an attractive ideal—is almost impossible to achieve in a vibrant democracy and should not be the key criterion of success. Instead, dissensus is embraced as a natural state, and compromise a robust ground for decisions on how to act.

The theoretical basis for this overall point rested on a series of conceptual analyses concerned with the nature of the public (Hauser argues that there is a plurality of publics) and of public opinion (Hauser argues that opinion polls are both inadequate and unsuited to reflect this) in the public sphere (Hauser argues that there is not a single cohesive public sphere but rather a "reticulate" one that particular publics weave in and out of). These assumptions allow for a fuller understanding of the complicated relation between these multiple publics and the political elites in contemporary democracies. I'll focus on how Hauser's ideas have inspired and been integrated in my own thinking on rhetoric and in my collaborative work with Christian Kock on rhetorical citizenship. Under that covering concept, we, like Hauser, try to identify the ways in which society is discursively constituted and maintained, and we suggest a normative frame for such conceptualization.

Rhetoric that Builds Communities

Hauser's continuous effort to explain and theorize the rhetorical dimensions of current ideas of deliberative democracy has been a major source of inspiration in my own understanding of rhetoric's role in civic society, and later the idea of rhetorical citizenship, but my first interest in his work was more traditionally oriented. For my dissertation, I had done some work in genre criticism, and this, together with an interest in rhetorical agency, led me to the study of official apologies (such as national leaders sometimes present on behalf of the nation or of the government). Instead of conceptualizing and evaluating these apologies from a standpoint of speech act theory, might they, I wondered, in some way be more usefully understood as possessing traits traditionally associated with epideictic rhetoric. In holding past policies out for criticism, they lay out for the public why these policies were wrong and in this way contribute to a public discussion of the norms that undergird the community. At the same time, such apologies also partake in the traditional genre of deliberative rhetoric by directly or indirectly suggesting revised values and attitudes to inform future policies. In this context, Hauser's claim that a significant function of the epideictic genre is to create a frame of understanding for the interpretation of reality became key. By stressing the pedagogical and thereby socially significant aspect of Aristotle's treatment of epideictic rhetoric, Hauser found that, "epideictic occupies a unique place in celebrating the deeds of exemplars who set the tone for civic community and the encomiast serves an equally unique role as a teacher of civic virtue" ("Aristotle" 14). The presence of this didactic element is what makes epideictic significant as a genre on par with forensic and deliberative rhetoric, and thus conceived, I argued, official apologies might in fact be good examples of how epideictic rhetoric contributes to constituting individuals as citizens with shared ideas of how civic virtues translate into responsible policies—and when they do not ("Speaking on Behalf of Others"). Hauser's emphasis on Aristotle's focus on rhetoric as not only a technê but also a dynamis—a capacity to translate precepts into action by crafting arguments that engage the public—was important to my thinking of official apologies as sites of active moral re-orientation for a community. This public discussion of collective norms is one way for a community to start to re-invent itself and formulate new and better ways of being together.

This theme of the continuous rhetorical co-forming of society saw a much more expansive treatment in Hauser's book *Vernacular Voices*, this time with the attention on the role of non-elites and how their informal and often very context-bound symbolic public interactions offer rich insight into the values and beliefs of the population. Accordingly, these interactions should be understood as constitutive of publics and as instrumental in the development of democratic societies. The striking thing about Hauser's definition of publics is that it places discursive behavior at the center. Hauser thus contends that "publics are emergences manifested through vernacular rhetoric" and suggests that "the rhetorical antecedents of publics influence the manner in which communicative acts occur, the relationships among public actors including those who are disempowered by institutional authority, the relationships between and among rhetors and their audiences, and the state of being shared by social actors who are co-creating meaning" (14). In other words, by studying how rhetorical communities, or publics, come into being as a result of discursive interactions, we stand to gain a better understanding of how communication works in a particular setting, what norms inform it, what constraints participants have to negotiate, what common ideas or goals propel it, and possibly how it redefines some of these aspects of the rhetorical community.

Opinion Polls:
Where Not to Look for Public Opinion

Integral to Hauser's theorizing on the nature of public opinion in contemporary civic society are the challenges that arise from the fact that modern democracies are characterized by enormous diversity and distance in space as well as in terms of values and beliefs. Hence the problem with public opinion and how to gauge it—let alone define it. An important premise for Hauser's work on the rhetoric of publics and public spaces lies in his critique of the idea that opinion polls can be taken as an expression of public opinion. Again and again, Hauser has written critically on the role of opinion polls in contemporary democracies. This criticism has many nuances, but Hauser's fundamental point is that opinion polls more often than not are presented as the will of the people, as "public opinion," whereas in fact, they represent statistical outcomes on individuals' isolated and perhaps less than thoroughly contemplated responses to sweeping questions about their views. Polls are not expressive of anything resembling a *public* opinion because there is no collective opinion formation involved in polls. When left by themselves to answer carefully sequenced questions, citizens have no possibility of sharing their understanding of the question, seeking information about the facts involved, or discussing and aligning viewpoints with other citizens on the issue at hand. Therefore, they are limited to stating their personal preferences.

Hauser likes to refer to this as a "Hobbesean hell of all against all" because it blocks access to issues of wider and more collective concerns (e.g., "Rhetorical Democracy and Civic Engagement" 9). This, Hauser points out, "is at cross-purposes to the discursive dimension of democracy on which rationalizing the relationship of state actions to the will of the people depends" ("Reflections on Rhetoric" 263–264). Hauser's primary purpose for identifying the problem—that opinion polls are relied on as credible sources for insight into public opinion—is to alert us to the way reliance on them seems to replace or make redundant the communication among citizens about their views and preferences. Public issues are in effect reduced to static, individual views. Instead we should insist that collective issues be assessed or discussed in common ("Rhetorical Democracy and Civic Engagement" 7). Opinion polling runs counter to the very idea of democracy where the assembly via public deliberation reaches decisions for the community. Rhetoric, understood as skillful expression and the sustained to-and-fro of argumentation, is supposed to be an inextricable part of this. This position of centrality is, Hauser reminds us, "rhetoric's birthright" (12).

Rhetorical Citizenship

By understanding society as basically rhetorically constituted, Hauser enjoins us to pay attention to the way our democracies work. This implies increased attention to those individuals and groups who do not enjoy privileged positions from which to make their views known but who struggle for influence. It also opens up opportunities for scholarly efforts to identify ways to support emerging publics and to improve existing rhetorical forms as they bear on the life of the community and its politics.

These ideas formed a significant impetus to Christian Kock's and my work on rhetorical citizenship. With this concept, we follow the lead of Jerry Hauser (among others, e.g. Rob Asen, "Discourse Theory") in understanding citizenship as in large part rhetorically constituted and enacted and democracy as best understood from the perspective of the rhetorical tradition with its commitment to the competition of opinions and the bending of views toward each other in making decisions about which action to take. It is in discursive exchanges that decisions are made, but more fundamental elements such as communal norms and social knowledge also emerge and are shaped in the rhetorical interactions between citizens ("Rhetorical Citizenship as a Conceptual Frame").

The question is, however, if Hauser at times places too much confidence in the notion of vernacular rhetoric. Just as a fundamental problem with opinion polls is not only that they assume that the informants actually know about the topics they are asked about but also that the opinions (or preferences) reported are expressions of convictions rooted in personal interests (and therefore assumed to be set and unchangeable), we might ask if people in general really are as ready and willing to engage each other on matters of civic importance as the description of vernacular rhetoric at times would seem to suggest. The focus in Christian Kock's and my work in rhetorical citizenship on the individual's "entry conditions," (i.e., skills and means for engaging public debate, be it as an anonymous listener or viewer, an interlocutor in a social or semi-public conversation, or a speaker to an audience) may seem myopic or disconnected from the fora where social change is happening. Yet it is a logical place to start.

As also Hauser and Benoit-Barné have pointed out, the scholarly focus of recent decades has been on how deliberation in democracies should function, but has done little in the way of helping us understand how it actually works or might work better ("Reflections on Rhetoric"). With the concept of rhetorical citizenship, we bring together two strands of thinking that are each in conversation with aspects of Jerry Hauser's ideas, namely the notion of rhetorical agency and the notion of public deliberation from the point of view of the citizen (*Rhetorical Citizenship and Public Deliberation*). Both pivot on the individual and his or her possibilities for engaging in the discursive life of the community, and they are united in their critical efforts to identify better and more robust ways for ordinary citizens to feel a part of public opinion and be motivated to share their views with others, be it via informal conversations, traditional formats such as letters to the editor, or in what Wayne Booth called "listening rhetoric" (*The Rhetoric of Rhetoric*).

Rhetorical Citizenship as an Acquired Skill

When discussing rhetorical citizenship at the level of the citizen, Christian Kock's and my understanding of the individual's discursive performativity is designed to cover as broad a range of rhetorical encounters as possible. We therefore think not only of outward performativity, such as the expression of ideas in public, but also of citizens' roles as "recipients" of public discourse. We do so because it is as a listener, a viewer, or a reader of others' deliberative contributions that most of us mostly take part in the discursive aspects of public life. In that role, we have to make careful judgments on the trustworthiness of the messages politicians and pundits are offering us. A basic understanding of how argumentation works and how to apply more general skills in critical thinking are crucial in assessing the claims we hear made and the appeals made to us to support this or that policy. Citizens need to understand the role of rhetoric in the shaping of public life and civic norms, and they need practical training in engaging in civic rhetoric, whether spoken or written. This is an area where rhetoricians can come into their own both as critics and teachers. Under the aegis of rhetorical citizenship, we must offer programs to teach the skills required to participate in public life as independent and critical thinkers. A similar pedagogical impulse also runs through Hauser's understanding of rhetoric's place in democracy (see e.g., "Teaching rhetoric") and has most recently served as inspiration for a collectivity of authors calling for rhetorically inflected educational programs essential to the health of democracy (William Keith and Roxanne Mountford, et al., "Mt. Oread Manifesto"). Institutional programs are an effective way of educating the young in rhetorical citizenship, but what about citizens who have left school? How do they even get started?

Getting to Talk with the Strangers Who Are Our Fellow Citizens

With the fragmentation of contemporary society, citizens have few opportunities and perhaps insufficient incentive to bridge the many differences in pursuit of a common good. With Maria T. Hegbloom, Hauser identifies as the greatest challenge to achieving "coordinated social action" the fact that the individuals and groups who would be its agents are, in many respects, "strangers" ("Rhetoric and Critical Theory" 481). Surveying two academic traditions, the two authors find common ground between critical theory and rhetoric in their attempt to conceptualize possibilities for public deliberation. They find that three issues are central to both disciplines' ideas of how to establish viable conditions for public deliberation: building trust in the form of mutual accountability; recognizing the necessity of rhetorical competence among ordinary citizens; and valorizing deliberative processes rather than focusing on outcome (491–492). In the next section, I turn to an example of what I shall call *propaedeutic rhetorical citizenship*. As a rhetorical praxis, it aligns with the three principles outlined except that it is only indirectly concerned with deliberation as immediately tied to the world of politics. Instead, it takes its point of departure in formats staged to invite individuals into conversations with other people in ways that bracket the differences that might otherwise cloud perception or stand in the way of willingness to share one's thoughts. It thus represents a creative approach to the issue of fostering trust between strangers entering into dialogue with one another.

Civic Desire: A Social Laboratory

Founded by Nadja Pass, an independent publicist and consultant (and a rhetorician by training) and anthropologist Andreas Lloyd in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2010, "Civic Desire" [Borgerlyst] is an informal and voluntary, non-profit, non-political, open-source community. Created as a social laboratory, Civic Desire experiments with ways to bring citizens together and discover ways to foster and strengthen the appetite for community involvement independent of formal organizations or political parties. Its name is meant to turn the more common notion of "civic duty" on its head and highlight the voluntary and pleasurable element of grassroots engagement. With a public presence made up of a webpage and a Facebook account, the network has arranged numerous meetings and events around the country and as far as Finland and the Faroe Islands, has been featured several times at "The people's meeting" [Folkemødet] (a large open air festival dedicated to political life and democracy in Denmark attracting approximately 100,000 participants over four days), has published a book, and has been invited to be exhibitors at the Danish Architectural Center's 2015 exhibition "Co-create/Community Your City" [Fællesskab din by, untranslatable pun, LSV] where they hosted a workshop for developing ideas on how to improve urban spaces. The two co-founders have appeared in more than twenty interviews in the main Danish national newspapers and broadcast institutions, most recently in a newspaper article about citizen activism and whether it is part of the welfare state or a sign of its disintegration (Rasmussen).

While Civic Desire clearly is a project aimed at creating social innovation with an eye to action and change, my focus here will be on two particular initiatives whose function is something prior to civic action: "The Conversation Salon" [Samtalesalon] and "The People's Election/Choice" [Folkets valg. Untranslatable pun: the Danish word for election also means 'choice', LSV.]

A Conversation Salon is a free event, open to anyone, and organized by a host who decides the theme of the salon. Conversation salons are held in public or semi-public spaces (public squares, parks and cafés, and occasionally in private homes) and typically last two hours. The host is responsible for facilitating various conversation "exercises" where participants, in various constellations, are paired and offered different formats for addressing the theme. Such formats include "The Stance Barometer," where participants are presented with a statement related to the theme of the salon and asked to arrange themselves along an invisible spectrum with "completely agree" at one end and "completely disagree" at the other. Once in place, random participants are asked to explain why they took the position they did. Other participants are free to change their position as they listen to these rationales and find reason to review their own initial stance. They may be asked to share their reasons for this change of mind. Another format is the "Conversation Menu"—a card with six or seven questions circling around the theme of the salon. The instructions are that two conversation partners are free to pick and choose among the questions as if ordering à la carte and thus create the menu they prefer. They are also encouraged to take the menu with them and engage someone who did not participate in the salon in a conversation at a later time.

The rationale behind having a host who picks the theme and introduces a series of formats is that it allows participants to focus on the designated theme (and hereby escape falling back on typical small talk stock topics such as vacation plans, children, or work). Second, the fact that each conversation lasts only 5 to 20 minutes and is meant to respond to the prompts given by the host relieves participants of certain social responsibilities and anxieties (such as how to keep the conversation with a stranger going) and thus allows them to just focus on the conversation they are in. Finally, the very structured format creates a "zone" where the conversation theme is the meeting point and participants' political and socio-economic status can be bracketed for the sake of talking about topics that transcend some of the differences that can create distance in citizens' everyday lives.

The second example from Civic Desire links the vernacular conversations more directly to civic life and politics. When the Danish prime minister called for a general election [folketingsvalg] in August 2011, Civic Desire launched "The People's Election/Choice" [Folkets valg] to run parallel with the election campaign (which in Denmark typically is 3–4 weeks). Election campaigns in Denmark resemble those in other Western democracies in being characterized by massive media coverage of party leaders "dueling" with statistics and political technicalities that most people have no way of understanding or assessing. Since the ordinary voter cannot know if one statistic is more accurate than the other, or whether a particular anecdote is indeed representative of a widespread political problem or not, election campaigns rarely foster political reflection, let alone informed discussion, among voters. In "The People's Election/Choice" project Civic Desire sent subscribers a text message on their telephone every day at 11 a.m. The message was a question to prompt reflection and lunch-time conversations with co-workers, friends, or others about politics, democracy, and the choices and actions citizens perform in their everyday lives and how these choices relate to the one choice voters make on election day. The questions functioned as an invitation to set one's own agenda; it could be political and eventually tie into questions of which party or candidate to vote for, but it could also remain at a more basic level of reflection about one's place and participation in society. For those who were more interested, Nadja Pass and Andreas Lloyd blogged about their own musings over the topics, and it was possible to comment and exchange ideas on Civic Desire's Facebook account.

As with the conversation salons, the questions were formulated in an open-ended manner. Some were more metaphorical than others, allowing interlocutors to enter the conversation at the level they were comfortable with (although the questions were personal in that they centered on one's own life, they were still general enough to not force private divulging). Instead, by means of metaphor and generality, they offered a segue from small talk into issues of societal import where everyone could participate without knowing about BNP statistics or unemployment rates. Examples of questions were: "Why don't you get more involved?"; "How present are you really?" (about being in the moment, resisting pressure to ever increase effectiveness); "What possibilities have you ruled out?"; "What do you form an opinion on?"; "When did you get so picky?" (about holding on to old opinions, shirking from talking with people with different views); "Which constitutions do you live by?" (about personal principles); "How close do you have to be to feel responsibility?"; and "What are you willing to renounce on?" (about political prioritization of welfare services)(*Borgerlyst*). This campaign in a sense decentralized the concept of the conversation salon even further; if just one person at the lunch table at work had received a question or had seen it on Facebook, there was the basis for a spontaneous civically oriented interaction with others.

Civic Desire as Propaedeutic Rhetorical Citizenship

The Civic Desire initiatives I have mentioned may seem too small-scale or too un-committal to warrant our attention when compared to other more visible and international manifestations of vernacular rhetoric such as the Occupy Movement or social-media-borne interactions between citizens on current affairs. Hauser defines a public as "the interdependent members of society who hold different opinions about a mutual problem and who seek to influence its resolution through discourse" (*Vernacular Voices* 32). Civic Desire hardly lives up to this definition. It is not focused on getting influence on a particular political issue but rather on discussing a more diffuse idea, value, or behavior. Participants do not show up to solve a problem but to reflect on their views, assumptions, and habits in the meeting with others. There is no goal of influencing others' thinking but rather to allow one's own thinking to be influenced. Yet Hauser also underscores that publics are not pre-given but rather *emerge* through the discursive processes of those who participate as interlocutors in a wide range of informal expressions of their views on common issues (33; emphasis original). And if a public sphere can also be defined, as Hauser does, as "a discursive space in which individuals and groups associate to discuss matters of mutual interest and, where possible, to reach a common judgment about them" and as a "locus of emergence of rhetorically salient meanings" (61), it seems that Civic Desire—albeit an intermittent, event-based community with no declared agenda—may be considered some kind of a public sphere. In theorizing the linkages between civic conversation as rhetorical and the nature of any discursive arena, Hauser maintains that we need rhetorically inflected norms by which to evaluate a public sphere (76–80). To the extent that Civic Desire lives up to Hauser's criteria for evaluating a public sphere, I want to suggest that it can serve as an example of a vernacular public sphere and that it represents a form of preparatory rhetorical citizenship.

The basic criterion for a rhetorically inflected vernacular public sphere is that it has permeable boundaries. This criterion is at once clearly met and yet primarily a potential quality in Civic Desire. Its founding principle is that differences in approach and background will enhance the conversation and foster more creative ideas. Yet while Civic Desire systematically encourages participants to invite people who are different from themselves to attend conversation salons and to seek out opportunities to speak with strangers, the diversity among salon participants hardly matches the diversity of society. Even though the preferred communication platforms, the web and Facebook, are media with a wide and reticulate spread, Civic Desire remains a primarily urban, educated, "creative" middleclass phenomenon. But while it may not have participation profiles reflecting the entire make-up of the population, there is nothing in the concept that prevents this diversity.

Hauser's second criterion is activity. Citizens must actively engage each other and preferably across differences of opinion. This defines the core idea of Civic Desire; its existence is event-driven and only comes into being via the active participation of citizens interested in hearing what others have to say.

The criterion of contextual language requires that issues be framed in ways that are accessible to citizens, not buried in technical jargon or impenetrable statistics. Civic Desire's activities do not require specific knowledge or experience. In order to steer clear of the political terminology from the news (with a topic such as "distribution of wealth") or to discipline the conversation with regard to technical or overburdened language (with a topic such as "stress"), themes for salons are often quite abstract (such as "patterns," "age," "tradition," and "apprenticeship") and sometimes metaphorical (such as "fertilizer," "sketches," "constitutions," "tactics," and "home"). The generality of these themes allow participants to enter the conversation at a comfortable level, perhaps their own personal experience, but by virtue of the formulation of the ensuing questions and conversation formats, they also invite interlocutors to "zoom out" and consider the issue as an aspect of their lives as citizens. For the conversation menus, questions are either phrased as direct questions such as "When are you open to changing your habits?" or in general terms such as "Why is enthusiasm contagious?" In this way, the conversations touch on basic questions central to civic life: how people understand their own place in society, how they define their community, what their values are, how they would like to prioritize time, values, public funds, etc.

By constantly emphasizing its experimental and exploratory nature, Civic Desire consistently presents itself in invitational terms, making it clear that the focus is on the participants and how they would like to become more active citizens. There is no set agenda or goal, but on the website there is ample inspiration for social innovation in practice as well as more theoretical reflections. In this way, the criterion of a believable appearance is met as a social laboratory with no "right" answers but a strong impetus to fostering ideas.

To be truly rhetorical, a public sphere must be tolerant of difference. Civic Desire offers the opportunity to meet and have exchanges with other citizens who differ from oneself in terms of age, gender, education, employment, interests, values, etc. This sharing of experiences, values, and beliefs with people who do or do not share one's own beliefs and values is an effective way of training tolerance. Conversation partners may not agree, but with no pressure to reach a conclusion or come up with a suggestion, the format allows them to focus more on learning about each other's situation or understanding each other's viewpoints than on waiting for a chance to try to change their minds. Such experience can foster a desire to enter into more action or change-oriented community activities and to provide important input to political life.

All in all, Civic Desire may fairly be said to build on communicative norms consonant with traditional rhetorical principles. Still, with topics such as "habits" and "potluck," it is not obvious how it can serve the central function Hauser ascribes to a public sphere "to provide critical evaluation and direction" for social action (*Vernacular Voices* 60). I want to argue, however, that Civic Desire as such and the two particular formats I have described, the Conversation Salon and The People's Election/Choice, merit our attention precisely because of their bracketed scope: By proving an explorative and non-committal setting for individuals to share, test, and possibly revise their personal, social, and political thoughts and perceptions, Civic Desire's Conversation Salons and the People's Election/Choice serve a double propaedeutic purpose from the point of view of rhetorical citizenship.

The first is to serve as a training ground for speaking with strangers. Providing a non-intimidating arena for speaking to fellow citizens about common topics, Civic Desire offers a way for individuals to gain experience with expressing themselves in interaction with strangers. In this way it represents a kind of training ground for rhetorical competence—to speak and to listen—in an informal setting. The second function is to foster a proto-public in the sense that the participants in a conversation salon become involved in formulating values and forming opinions in a public setting (cf. Eberly, "From Writers, Audiences, and Communities to Publics"). Such exchanges foster what Hauser calls "thick moral vernaculars," and they represent a richer and more democratic public opinion than percentages in opinion polls because such "[r]hetorical praxis can shift social understandings, reorder society's sense of priority and imperative, and redirect social energies into new channels of relationship and action" ("The Moral Vernacular," *Vernacular Voices* 114). This speaks to the dynamic aspect of rhetoric: By reflecting on one's own and others' experiences with everyday phenomena, participants are engaged in social meaning-making essential for community-building.

Although Hauser and Benoit-Barné's *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* article pre-dates Civic Desire, they might well have been writing about Conversation Salons when saying that internal and emergent public sphere are

> arenas in which members enact horizontal relations of equality and develop deliberative competencies through consideration of issues that have internal and external significance for their association and the networks in which they are involved. These arenas are rhetorical constructions; they emerge from member practices by which they develop not only the voice necessary to participate in deliberative democracy but the social capital to participate in such deliberations with a trustworthy voice. (272)

It is at this prefatory level that I see Civic Desire as an example of rhetorical citizenship in the making.

Building Democracy: Trust, Agency, and Rhetoric

A central theme in Xenophon's narrative of the ecclesia changing its mind under the influence of rhetoric is the inherent challenge of democracy: How do the voices of the majority come to interact meaningfully with the rule by the elite few? Hauser has pointed to vernacular public spheres as "construction sites" for public opinion where rhetoric's inventional potential manifests itself as citizens can exchange thoughts on ideas, relationships, and values that are novel and potentially transformative. As rhetorical scholars, we may gravitate toward discursive acts that are pointed and purposeful. Hauser's work on vernacular rhetoric was a major impetus in redirecting attention to the less formal and more open-ended public discursive phenomena. In my own work with rhetorical citizenship, I have been particularly interested in issues of rhetorical agency: how rhetors come to have, hold, and sometimes lose their speaking position and, once held, how they use it. Hauser's *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* article was significant for me in the articulation of the relation between agency and rhetorical citizenship. The conversational interactions of civil society are an arena for meeting citizens with different views and values. Such meetings are characterized by a certain measure of social risk, but by learning how to engage a stranger in ways that build on mutual trust, one can gain the social capital necessary to have both vernacular and institutionalized dialogue. Trust can grow from experience with interactions in civil society. The rhetorical character of such encounters in turn fosters social capital, and together, this may result in rhetorical agency understood as a synthesis of inhabiting a trustworthy speaking position, having a voice, *and* possessing the communicative skills to make one's ideas matter to others.

Civic Desire offers an avenue for citizens who might normally shy away from protest marches or serving on committees in social or political organizations to nevertheless discover themselves as citizens in the meeting with others. Several times in this text I have underscored the deliberate absence of expectations of participants in terms of prior knowledge, experience with public speaking, or concrete ideas about how to start a community project, and the delicate balance between the existential nature of some of the questions combined with meandering and non-extended forms of conversation. While this might open the salons to criticism of being just a different kind of social pastime, I attribute significance to these traits because I see here a real option for inclusion and involvement, not only because the setting is made as unintimidating as possible but also because it functions as a training ground for rhetorical citizenship for participants. It invites them to think of themselves as citizens and not only as private individuals. This has less to do with the themes chosen than with the experience of speaking with strangers. The conversation salons thus address both aspects of rhetorical agency: the discursive skills required when making arguments and the opportunity to address others, all in all a small-scale speaking position. Such experience with rhetorical interaction can be what some people need before they venture into community projects.

For others it may not lead to specific action, but rather fertilizes their sense of belonging and commitment to the community and makes them more prone to share their views in other settings, thus contributing to an ongoing strengthening of the rhetorical culture of the civic community.

In Closing

We often associate knowledge with the sense of sight: We get a better overview standing on the shoulders of giants. Scholars argue their views and we see their point. When we come to understand, we feel enlightened. Good scholarship does not only serve as a beacon marking new insights and helping others to find their way in the field. It is also complex and yet coherent enough to function like a prism in optics. The prism refracts light and disperses it so that the various wavelengths become visible in their multicolored splendor. Strong scholarship when regarded closer—as if through a prism—allows us to appreciate its individual elements and their separate qualities better. A volume like the present one is at once such a prism, suited to bring out the multifarious strands of thought in Jerry Hauser's oeuvre, and it is also like a kaleidoscope we can point to Hauser's work to consider the many new ideas it has sparked in the minds of his readers.

I have presented two initiatives by Civic Desire as examples of rhetorical citizenship in the making. One thing that qualifies them above more traditional experiments in deliberative democracy is that they are grassroots-driven and bring together people who are interested in becoming more civically savvy. In this way, they might serve as inspiration for other initiatives aiming to break down the barrier between the people and the government for a better democratic future. This would be in Jerry Hauser's spirit.

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Postscript

I am deeply touched by this collection, for the honor instigated by Ron Arnett, by the articles that engage my scholarship, and by my inclusion in the company of prior Pennsylvania Scholars such as Kathleen Jamieson, my colleague from graduate school days, and Carroll Arnold, Gerry Phillips, Dick Greg, and, of course, Henry Johnstone, my former colleagues at Penn State during the first half of my career. They are giants in the discipline and, in the case of the Penn Staters, huge in shaping me as a teacher and scholar. And I am moved by the way scholars whose company I have been privileged to share and whose individual work I respect chose to involve my work with theirs.

Tom Benson was my colleague for more than twenty years and, more than that, the sort of friend a junior faculty member would desire to count among his senior colleagues—an honest intellect who helps you grow a larger perspective on the work of others, one that places your own efforts in a context of shared enterprise and mutual respect.

Christine Garlough has been my intellectual companion not only at conferences but also in my reading of her work. Her research on the subjugation of women in South Asia is a theoretically sophisticated and subtle melding of performance and politics. Her analysis of vernacular theatre in *Desi Divas* shows how emotional engagement brings an audience into dialogue with social issues grounded in practices and cultural constructions of gender identity. Its rich intersection of performance and rhetoric expands our thinking on recognition and acknowledgement and understanding of vernacular possibilities.

erin mcclellan was the first of my mentees to go into the field. She has now achieved her own identity as an emerging voice in rhetorical fieldwork, both in its theoretical/methodological considerations and also in her empirical work on public squares. With eyes and ears exquisitely attuned to the nuances of the struggle between official and vernacular appropriations of public space, she unfailingly captures the dance between discipline and resistance, and the mark her own presence makes on the research site as contributing to the moment-by-moment rhetorical constitution of community.

Lisa Villadsen's work with Christian Kock on *Rhetorical Citizenship* has been a significant addition to the ongoing discussion of rhetoric and democracy. She has positioned the idea of vernacular rhetoric and rhetorical democracy in the schisms of society where citizens are interacting on the terrain of difference. I admire her deft sensibility for the perils and promise of democratic life that make rhetorical citizenship particularly salient at this time of mounting intolerance.

In retirement, I have come to better understand how deeply the rhythms of my intellectual life have been monastic. Away from daily engagement of students in class, colleagues on campus, and advisees in my office, I find myself at my desk editing *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, working on

Rhetoric Society of America business, putting finishing touches on manuscripts. It is, in a way, a retreat from the relatively public life of a university professor engaged in educating students and participating in the university's life, but in keeping with the relative obscurity of most academics, certainly this academic, in the larger civic arena of public life. So it comes as a surprise to read comments by others on how my work has influenced their own thoughts, especially since they find things in my writing that reflect they have read me closely. It isn't that I do not want readers to pay close attention to what I write, but it is rather humbling when they find insights to build on from the effort.

Ronald C. Arnett very graciously invited me to write comments at the end of this collection. I will be brief because the essays in this collection have caught what I have tried to do: marry classical and contemporary thought, intersect rhetorical theory with political theory, bring traditional rhetoric into conversation with postmodern thought, decenter the podium for greater inclusion of and sensitivity to vernacular discourse, tend to quotidian exchanges of everyday rhetoric as they occur in lived experience, position rhetoric at the heart of democracy, be concerned for the moral implications of how we argue and what we study. In conversation about what it means to pursue an academic career, Tom Benson once remarked that although our efforts likely will not result in fame or fortune, there is dignity in the work we do. Educating students, critiquing the discourses that shape our society, developing lines of thought for better understanding humans as creatures shaped by their rhetoric, working at the craft of clear and cogent expression, and more, are sustaining of the human effort to understand and improve the human condition. Tom's comment on the dignity of our work has been a sustaining observation across my career, and it is reflected in the spirit and execution of the articles in this collection. I am honored and humbled by their thoughtful engagement and take this opportunity to say thank you.

Gerard A. Hauser

Contributors

Thomas W. Benson is Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of Rhetoric Emeritus at the Pennsylvania State University. He is the former editor of *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Communication Quarterly*, CRTNET, and *The Review of Communication*, and he is the author of *Posters for Peace: Visual Rhetoric and Civic Action; Michael Moore and the Rhetoric of Documentary; American Rhetoric in the New Deal Era, 1932-1945; Writing JFK: Presidential Rhetoric and the Press in the Bay of Pigs Crisis; Reality Fictions: The Films of Frederick Wiseman*; and other works. He is editor of the series in Rhetoric and Communication of the University of South Carolina Press, and he has been a recipient of the Distinguished Scholar Award of the National Communication Association.

Lisa Villadsen holds a PhD in Communication Studies from Northwestern University. She is Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Head of the Section of Rhetoric at the Department of Media, Cognition and Communication at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

Her research interests are in contemporary rhetorical criticism and theory, particularly issues of rhetorical agency and rhetorical citizenship. Recent publications have focused on issues of rhetorical agency in connection with public debate on terrorism. Villadsen is the co-editor of two volumes on rhetorical citizenship: *Rhetorical Citizenship and Public Deliberation* (Penn State University Press, 2012) and *Contemporary Rhetorical Citizenship: Purposes, Practices, and Perspectives* (Leiden University Press, 2014) and co-author of the entry on "Citizenship Discourse" in *The International Encyclopedia of Language and Social Interaction* (Wiley, 2015).

Another major line of her research concerns the role of official apologies (given by state leaders or others who speak on behalf of a community) for the civic community surrounding them. She approaches this topic from theoretical perspectives of memory and rhetorical citizenship. Her most recent publications on this topic include: "More than a nice ritual: Official apologies as a rhetorical act in need of theoretical re- conceptualization," in *Let's talk politics: New essays on deliberative rhetoric*, ed. Hilde Van Belle, et al. (John Benjamins, 2014).

erin daina mcclellan earned her PhD from the University of Colorado at Boulder and now serves as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at Boise State University. Erin's work focuses on rhetorical constructions of urban life, identity, and culture in public life. She is most interested in how vernacular and official rhetorics together create particular understandings of and consequences for public places and spaces. Her recent work focuses on these aspects in public squares and plazas in four distinct regions of the United States and how vernacular rhetorics inform official studies, projects, and visions of urban sustainability.

Christine Garlough is Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Gender and Women's Studies, Director for the Center for South Asia (2015-16), and affiliate of the Department of Comparative Literature and Folklore, Interdisciplinary Theater Studies, and the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures. Her research constellates around issues of art and activism. Her work centers on how feminist groups, both in India and the South Asian diaspora, use street plays, poster work, performance art, and oral narratives to address social and political exigencies. As part of this work, she has developed the South Asian Feminist Activism Archive (SAFAA) (http://safaa.womenstudies.wisc.edu/), which digitizes and catalogs rare Indian feminist posters. Her research appears in journals such as *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Journal of American Folklore*, *Women's Studies in Communication*, and *Western Folklore*, as well as edited volumes and her recently published scholarly monograph, *Desi Devas: Activism in South Asian American Cultural Performance* (2013). Her new book project, *The Danger of Safe Space*, takes up questions of restricting discourse to shared political or social viewpoints and the relation of this to the ethics of care, activism, and acknowledgment in a range of contexts.

Gerard A. Hauser is Professor Emeritus of Communication and College Professor Emeritus of Distinction in Rhetoric at the University of Colorado Boulder. His research focuses on the history of rhetorical theory, the role of rhetoric in a democracy, and the interaction between formal and vernacular rhetorics in the public sphere. During his career he directed 40 doctoral dissertations and numerous Master's and undergraduate honors theses.

Prior to joining the faculty at the University of Colorado, he served on the faculty of Penn State University for 24 years. In addition to his work in the Speech Communication Department, he served as Director of the University Scholars Program (now the Schreyer Honors College) from 1987-1993. While at Penn State he received the College of the Liberal Arts Distinguished Teaching Award. The university honored his work with the Scholars Program by establishing the university-wide Gerard A. Hauser Prize for undergraduate research.

He is author of more than 60 scholarly articles and chapters, editor of three volumes, and guest editor of four special issues of scholarly journals. His book publications include *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres* (recipient of NCA's Nichols Award in Public Address), *Prisoners of Conscience: Moral Vernaculars of Political Agency* (recipient of NCA's Winans-Wichelns Award for Distinguished Research in Rhetoric and Public Address, and also RSA's Distinguished Book Award), and *Introduction to Rhetorical Theory*. He is an NCA Distinguished Scholar and an RSA Fellow. Currently he edits *Philosophy and Rhetoric*.

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Ronald C. Arnett (Ph.D., Ohio University, 1978) is chair and professor of the Department of Communication & Rhetorical Studies, The Patricia Doherty Yoder and Ronald Wolfe Endowed Chair in Communication Ethics at

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