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A Rhetorical Examination of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address

A man stands facing a crowd of defeated and demoralized individuals. This man has been preparing himself for this moment since the day he was elected for a position to the most prestigious executive office of one of the world's longest lasting democratic governments in history. This man knows the suffering of these people, he knows how desperately they want to be freed from the entrapment of the Great Depression, and he has the plan that will free them. There is one detail standing between this man and the enactment of his great plan: the speech that will set the plan in motion, the speech that will introduce his ideals, the speech that will outline his intentions. This man, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the soon-to-be thirty-second President of the United States of America, is ready to lead these people, the citizens of the United States of America¹. But before he can take the office as President of the United States, he must deliver his inaugural address. FDR's first inaugural address ("address") demonstrates the power of understanding, devotion and motivation that was necessary for him to successfully unite the citizens of the United States during the Great Depression. His address demonstrates the eloquence of a man who had been successful in academia, society and politics, and wants to continue to succeed as leader of the "free world."

DESCRIPTION OF ARTIFACT

¹ The copy of FDR's first inaugural address used in this study is found in *The Complete Book of Presidential Inaugural Speeches from George Washington to Barack Obama* compiled and with notes by Ian Randall Strock. The copy of FDR's address printed in this book has been compared to and closely matches three original copies of the address and therefore will be referred to in the remainder of the study.

Biography. According to Conrad Black, author of the biography, *Franklin Delano Roosevelt* informs: Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) was the only child of Sara Delano Roosevelt and James Roosevelt and was born on January 30, 1882 (3). The family was affluent, and Franklin grew up at Springwood, the family estate, located on the Hudson River (3-4). The family's affluence also contributed to the education FDR received. Private tutors educated young FDR in his home until he turned fourteen. In 1896, FDR was enrolled at Groton Preparatory School in Massachusetts (22). He graduated Groton in 1900 and went on to attend Harvard University.

FDR attended Harvard from 1900-1903 where he pursued a degree in history (Black 27-32). During his time at Harvard, FDR became interested in Theodore Roosevelt (TR), the progressive and Republican president. TR was also FDR's fifth cousin and mentor. At Harvard, FDR worked at the *Crimson*, a student-run publication, as well as dabbled in various social events. These social endeavors led to the courtship of his future wife, Eleanor Roosevelt, TR's niece. FDR and Eleanor had known each other since childhood, but pursued their romantic interests more heavily during FDR's final years at Harvard and beginning years at Columbia, when the couple decided to marry in 1905 (Black 43).

FDR graduated Harvard in 1903 (Black 43). He went on to pursue a law degree at Columbia University. He spent four years at Columbia but did not graduate with a degree, and instead chose to take the bar exam. He passed his bar exam in 1907 and went on to join the law firm of Carter, Ledyard and Milburn, where he worked unenthusiastically as a lawyer ("Franklin D. Roosevelt"). He became increasingly interested in politics during his time at the firm.

FDR's interest in politics was further stimulated in the coming years, and in 1910, encouraged by his cousin, TR, he had the opportunity to run as a progressive Democratic candidate for a position in the New York Senate. Black comments that even though FDR was not

avored to win, as Republicans had held the seat for many years, he won the election (56-57). He served in the New York Senate for two terms. He was reelected in 1912 despite a bout with typhoid fever that left him unable to make public appearances during the campaign. According to Black, FDR's success in this election could be attributed to his wife Eleanor and Louis Howe, who helped increase his popularity by campaigning for him (63-64). Both Howe and Eleanor would continue to support FDR throughout the rest of his career in politics.

1912 also marked the year Woodrow Wilson, whom FDR supported as Democratic presidential candidate, was elected president. Because of FDR's support of Wilson, Wilson appointed FDR to the position of Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1913. He changed the customs and the face of the navy and continued as Assistant Secretary of the Navy upon the United States' entrance into World War I in 1917 ("Franklin D. Roosevelt"). FDR's success in the New York Senate, as well as his position as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, helped pave the way to his presidency.

FDR's journey to the presidency was filled with both struggles and triumphs. He began his journey in 1920. During this election, FDR was nominated as the Democratic vice presidential candidate. He and the presidential candidate, James Cox, lost to Republicans Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge ("Franklin D. Roosevelt"). Black states that following FDR and Cox's loss, FDR became vice president of the Fidelity and Deposit Company of Maryland (134). During this break from politics and a year into his time at Fidelity, FDR's health took a turn for the worse.

According to Black, in August of 1921, FDR and his family were on vacation when he contracted poliomyelitis, a disease that left him ill and unable to recover the full usage of his legs for the rest of his life (138). Although his illness proved a challenge, FDR decided to run as

governor of New York in 1928 (“Franklin D. Roosevelt”). FDR won the election and was reelected as New York’s governor in 1930. During his second term, he worked to improve the conditions of the state of New York which faced hardships due to the Great Depression. He pushed for government aid for unemployed citizens in an attempt to boost the economy (“Franklin D. Roosevelt”). His accomplishments as governor lead FDR to campaign as the Democratic presidential candidate in the election of 1932.

FDR received the Democratic nomination for president and defeated his competitor John Garner, the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Garner, however, received the vice presidential nomination. According to Black, upon FDR’s presidential nomination, he himself accepted the honor, and foreshadowing his address stated “I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people...” (239). His promises of a new deal and aid to the hurting economic times of the Depression continued throughout his campaign. The campaign was a success, as the American people, seemingly tired of President Herbert Hoover and his failed attempts to bring the country out of the Depression, voted FDR into office.

In both his campaign and address, FDR promised great things to the citizens of the United States. He set out to create programs to better the economy. The first one hundred days of his presidency have been argued as the most significant and controversial days. FDR began by calling Congress into a special session for a period of three months. According to Dubofsky and Burwood, part of his reasoning for this was his desire to start implementing the New Deal, his plan to unify the country as well as help lift the United States out of the Great Depression (106). His goal was to start off strong in order to improve the economy and society of America. The New Deal involved the creation of fifteen major bills and their passage through Congress. These bills initiated the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Civil Works Administration, the

Works Progress Administration, the Public Works Administration, and the Civilian Conservation Corps—all of which worked to create jobs for the American people. Other bills included the creation of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, a program that protected bank accounts, the Tennessee Valley Authority, a program that boosted regional development, the Emergency Banking Act, the Farm Credit Act and the National Industrial Recovery Act. Kenneth Walsh, author of the article, “The First 100 Days: Franklin Roosevelt Pioneered the 100-Day Concept,” states that FDR’s first one hundred days were instrumental in his first-term success. The New Deal and its programs proved successful during the first part of his first term. The country, however, was still facing tough economic times and high unemployment rates.

The poor state of the economy in 1935 led to FDR’s creation of the Second New Deal. The Second New Deal created programs such as the Social Security Act, an act that provided benefits to the retired, the Works Progress Administration, an administration that created jobs, and the Wagner Act, an act that dealt with issues surrounding labor (“Franklin D. Roosevelt”). The success of the first and second New Deals lead FDR to run for a second term.

FDR was reelected in 1936, defeating the Republican incumbent Alfred Landon. Much of his second term was spent carrying out promises of the New Deals and creating more programs that would help lift the United States out of the Great Depression. He faced his first major defeat in the rejection of a bill that would “pack” the Supreme Court in his favor. Another triumph-turned-challenge that FDR saw in his second term was the recovery of the Nation’s economy. In 1937, the nation had recovered significantly, but faced another recession when FDR cut off government spending. The issue was solved when FDR was persuaded to again increase government spending. This conflict also led to the end of both of the New Deals as Republicans had gained numbers in both the House of Representatives and Senate in the election of 1938. The

next years of FDR's presidency were marked by the external affairs of war rather than the internal affairs of the Great Depression ("Franklin D. Roosevelt").

FDR's second term drew to a close with the outbreak of World War II in 1939 in Europe. Following the start of the war, FDR sent aid to the British army, as the Neutrality Act prevented the United States from becoming directly involved. The war and FDR's willing generosity provided a solid basis for the campaign of what would be his third presidential election.

Black claims much of FDR's third campaign was spent touring arms and munitions factories as well as army bases, although he made promises to stay out of the war (579). He faced an increasing amount of competition as Wendell Willkie, the Republican incumbent, gained popularity among citizens. According to Black, although FDR's third campaign was controversial and seemingly hypocritical, FDR was reelected to a third term, making history (600). During this term, FDR created the Lend-Lease Act, further supporting Britain in the war by trading ships for non-monetary goods. Also during his third term, FDR limited the amount of exports sent to Japan, in order to limit Japan's ability to create war-related goods. This in turn infuriated Japan, and was one of the main causes of the attack on Pearl Harbor. FDR dealt with this attack by declaring war on Japan on December 8, 1941. Three days later, on December 11, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States and the United States aligned with the allied powers. ("Franklin D. Roosevelt"). Among these powers were Britain and the Soviet Union. As war raged, the United States, pulled out of the Depression by both the New Deals and the war, was fully engaged in combat. FDR, determined to see the United States through the war, ran for an unprecedented fourth term ("Franklin D. Roosevelt").

FDR was elected to his fourth and final term in 1944, despite a campaign marked by his poor health. His fourth term included the Yalta conference, the conclusion of the war and

ultimately his death. His trip to the Yalta conference, according to Edward Gruver, put a great strain on his already-depleted health; however, this trip marked the achievement of one of his life's goals. During the Yalta conference, Gruver contends that FDR worked to gain support for the United Nations, a concept that had not yet been implemented. He also needed support from the Soviet Union in order to continue to fight the war on the Pacific front. Feeling he had succeeded, FDR worked further to create the United Nations. A little over two months after the Yalta conference, on April 12, 1945, FDR died of a massive cerebral hemorrhage (Gruver).

Although he did not complete his fourth term, FDR served an unprecedented ten years as president of the United States. He also succeeded in leading the country through both a depression and a war. Part of this success was due to the fact that he had an aggressive approach to government and set out to prove that he had earned his position as the leader of the United States. His address served as his presidential introduction.

Inaugural Address. According to Ian Randall Strock, author of *The Complete Book of Presidential Inaugural Speeches from George Washington to Barack Obama*, FDR delivered his address on the East Portico of the Capitol of the United States in Washington, District of Columbia on Saturday the fourth of March, 1933 at approximately one o'clock in the afternoon (251; Krock "100,000"). The president-elect, according to Arthur Krock, former writer for *The New York Times*, delivered his address to approximately 100,000 people gathered around the Capitol building ("100,000"). Among these people were his predecessor Herbert Hoover, members of the United States House of Representatives, members of the United States Senate, members of FDR's cabinet, several governors from various states, members of FDR's family, members of the United States Supreme Court, as well as several thousand United States citizens ("Roosevelt Busy"). United States citizens and people of other nations witnessed this historic

event both in person and via radio (Orrin). Thus, the inaugural was marked as a significant event in United States history and can be examined to reveal insight into how FDR intended to introduce himself as president of the United States.

ARTIFACT JUSTIFICATION

FDR's address served as more than a mere ceremonial obligation; the address served as the introduction of FDR as president, as well as an outline for the first piece of legislation FDR sought to enact. FDR set out to be a proactive leader, willing and able to improve the state of the country. He established himself as leader of the United States by using rhetorical maneuvers to loosely outlining some of his first pieces of legislation, alluding to the policies that would later become known as the "New Deal," and the "good neighbor policy" (Rosenman 16). The context in which FDR employed rhetorical strategies FDR to outline his policies can be examined in terms of Lloyd Bitzer's "Rhetorical Situation."

METHOD DESCRIPTION

Rhetorical Situation. Lloyd Bitzer characterizes a rhetorical situation as any situation in which discourse is necessary to rectify the problem presented in the situation. According to Bitzer, this discourse must also naturally fit with the situation and must provide some solution to the problem or imperfection identified in the situation. Bitzer also explains that any situation that does not require discourse cannot be characterized as rhetorical (6). When any discourse is created or presented, there must be three components that are recognized.

Bitzer outlines the three necessary components that precede a "rhetorical situation." These three components include *exigence*, *audience* and *constraints* that are alterable through discourse. Bitzer defines *exigence* as "an imperfection marked by urgency", "a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" that can be

altered through discourse (6). Bitzer defines the second component, *audience*, as “[consisting] only of those persons who are capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change” (8). Bitzer also notes that it is important to distinguish a rhetorical audience from “mere hearers” of a piece of discourse (8). The third component Bitzer includes is *constraint*. Constraints are “made up of persons, events, objects and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence (8).” These three precursors to discourse can be identified prior to the analysis of style.

Style. Stylistic devices are used by an orator to make a piece of discourse more memorable. More specifically, Edward Corbett and Robert Connors, authors of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, contend that an orator uses stylistic devices in accordance with ethos, appeals to credibility; pathos, appeals to emotion; and logos, appeals to logic, in order to resonate with the audience (378). Corbett and Connors further suggest that stylistic devices can “exert a powerful ethical appeal” in that they “elicit admiration for the eloquence of the speaker or writer” Secondly, Corbett and Connors contend that stylistic devices can be appeals to emotion (pathos) because they “stir emotional responses” and thus “carry truth” (378). Lastly, Corbett and Connors argue that stylistic devices can be appeals to logic because “they can render our thoughts vividly concrete” and because they help “to communicate with our audience clearly and effectively” (378). Stylistic devices perform three basic functions, with two main groups and several different types.

Corbett and Connors contend that every stylistic device can be classified as either a scheme or a trope. A scheme, defined by Corbett and Connors, “involves a deviation from the ordinary pattern or arrangement of words” while a trope “involves a deviation from the ordinary and principle signification of a word” (379). The schemes listed by Corbett and Connors are

parallelism, isocolon, antithesis, anastrophe, parenthesis, anastrophe, apposition, ellipsis, asyndeton, polysyndeton, alliteration, assonance, anaphora, epistrophe, epanalepsis, anadiplosis, climax, antimetabole, chiasmus, and polyptoton. The tropes include metaphor, simile, synecdoche, metonymy, antanaclasis, paronomasis, syllepsis, anthimeria, periphrasis, personification, hyperbole, litotes, rhetorical question, irony, onomatopoeia, oxymoron and paradox. Each of the preceding schemes and tropes feature specific patterns or meaning of terms. Each deviation is meant to create an effect on the audience.

Schemes and tropes, their definitions, and their functions as parts of a piece of discourse, can be analyzed and dissected in order to further identify the specific appeal an orator wishes to impart on the audience. For the purpose of this study, each scheme and trope used in the address of FDR was identified. The field was then narrowed to include three stylistic devices used with the most gusto by FDR. As a result, one scheme and two tropes were selected.

Parallelism, the “similarity of structure in a pair or series of related words, phrases and clauses” was the scheme selected (Corbett and Connors 409). The tropes, personification, “investing abstractions for inanimate objects with human qualities or abilities” and metaphor, an “implied comparison between two things of unlike nature,” were further analyzed in terms of effectiveness in appealing to emotion, logic or credibility (Corbett and Connors 410-411). Not only were Corbett and Connors’s stylistic devices identified in FDR’s address, but Campbell and Jamieson’s and Dudash’s requirements for genre were identified and analyzed as well.

Genre. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, argue that presidential inaugurals are a type of Aristotle’s epideictic speech (14). Based on these four characteristics, Campbell and Jamieson contend that presidential inaugurals can be classified as epideictic speech because they are “delivered on ceremonial occasions,” promote the ideals of the newly appointed executive

office, invite audience members to remember “traditional values” established in the early years of the country, “employ elegant, literary language,” and work to “[reaffirm] what is already known and believed” (15). Campbell and Jamieson have established that presidential inaugurals are epideictic in nature; however, they contend that the inaugurals can be categorized into their own subgenre of epideictic speech.

In order for a presidential inaugural to fit in the subgenre suggested by Campbell and Jamieson, the inaugural is based on five requirements. These five requirements must function to create a sense of unity within audience members by identifying them as “the people” of the United States; reinforce previously established, communal values; identify the political practices that will be used by the administration; and specify that the president acknowledges and is in agreement with the limitations of his position (15). Campbell and Jamieson use the fifth function of presidential inaugural addresses as a summary. They summarize that the first four functions must be performed “through means appropriate to epideictic address” (15). More specifically, the fifth principle outlined by Campbell and Jamieson suggests that the inaugural address is set in the “eternal present,” because epideictic address functions as a timeless piece of discourse. Elizabeth Dudash, author of “International Appeal in the Presidential Inaugural: An Update on Genre and an Expansion of Argument” adds an additional requirement the presidential inaugural must meet.

Dudash contends that a presidential inaugural address is obligated to “consider the international community” (47). Dudash concludes that in an inaugural, the president addresses the international community by reassuring allies and warning enemies. Therefore, Campbell and Jamieson’s five requirements, as well as Dudash’s additional requirement of inaugural addresses, can be applied to FDR’s address, and a determination can be made whether or not the inaugural

fits each requirement. Campbell and Jamieson's and Dudash's genre requirements are interconnected with Bitzer's "rhetorical situation" and Corbett and Connors's stylistic devices.

METHOD JUSTIFICATION

Bitzer's "rhetorical situation" identifies the exigence, audience and constraints that surround a piece of discourse. Essentially, the "rhetorical situation" provides a context on which Corbett and Connors's description of style, and Campbell and Jamieson's and Dudash's genre requirements rest. Corbett and Connors's identification of style focuses on the analysis of the textual elements of a document; however, a president uses stylistic devices to encourage the altering of the exigence, appeal to the audience and to address constraints. The genre requirements outlined by Campbell and Jamieson and Dudash directly address the exigence, audience and constraints. Furthermore, the genre requirements demand that the president identify and unify his audience, elaborate upon the constraints faced by the president and address and provide a valuable solution for the exigence. The means to accomplish these requirements is often found in the use of stylistic devices defined by Corbett and Connors. Bitzer's "rhetorical situation," Corbett and Connors' identification of stylistic devices, and Campbell, Jamieson and Dudash's genre requirements are all interconnected and aid in the rhetorical examination of a piece of discourse. In order to better understand how the three methods are interconnected, the analysis each must be examined, starting with Bitzer's "rhetorical situation."

ANALYSES

Rhetorical Situation. The "rhetorical situation" and the three components Bitzer outlines were identified prior to further textual analysis of FDR's address. The following conclusions were made in regard to exigence, audience and constraints.

Based on Bitzer's definition of exigence, the exigence of FDR's first inaugural is the United States citizens and their need to believe that the United States' government would be able to successfully intervene in their lives. Evidence for this exigence is found in both an article in the *New York Times* and in a note appended to the copy of FDR's address printed in *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*. In the *New York Times* article "Suggest Roosevelt Acts on Banks Now," Arthur Krock suggests "some emergency statement should be made, or legislation be evolved by the president and president-elect before March 4." Krock illustrates the urgency of the situation, claiming that FDR should have taken on presidential duties prior to delivering his address and officially becoming president. He also called for some discourse that could provide relief to citizens during the Great Depression. Although unwilling to make a statement prior to his address, FDR also recognized the need for such discourse in the note appended to his first inaugural in which he wrote, "For many months the people had looked to Government to help, but Government had looked away" (Rosenmen 16). FDR recognized the necessity of an inaugural that would help restore the confidence of the people of the United States. Both the citizens and FDR himself recognized the urgency of the situation they faced; however, according to Bitzer's definition of audience, the only individuals or groups that could act to change the exigence would be members of the audience.

FDR's cabinet, members of Congress and the Supreme Court justices were all considered part of his audience. FDR's cabinet would help him make important decisions regarding the type of legislation needed to improve the state of the Nation (Krock "Roosevelt Plans Secret"), but ultimately, Congress would make the legislation into law. Members of Congress were capable of implementing change in regard to the selection of bills and laws that FDR proposed. Congress had the power to pass or veto the bills they thought unconstitutional, inadequate, or unnecessary

for the country. Supreme Court justices were also members of the audience in that they would allow the laws put into place by Congress and FDR to be challenged and ruled as either constitutional or unconstitutional. Along with Congress and the Supreme Court, leaders of financial institutions were also an important part of FDR's audience.

FDR directly addressed financial leaders in his inaugural because they had misused the money that been entrusted them. FDR called for an improvement in the behavior of these leaders so that banks could reopen, and ultimately citizens of the United States could trust banks with their money again (Krock, "100,000 At Inauguration"). Not only were financial leaders members of the audience but the citizens of the United States were members of the audience as well.

American citizens, desperately hoping for relief, were members of FDR's first inaugural audience. Adult American citizens capable of working could alter the exigence by taking advantage of the programs provided for them by FDR's New Deal. FDR's audience was made up of governing bodies, as well as citizens of the United States. The constraints, however, include a smaller number of individuals, events and relationships.

Bitzer defines constraints as: "persons, events, objects, and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence" (6). Three of the main constraints of FDR's address included the Stock Market Crash of 1929 that led to the Great Depression, Herbert Hoover's lack of action, and the strained relationship between Herbert Hoover and FDR.

The Stock Market Crash of 1929 constrained decision and action in that the crash pushed the country into a severe recession that ultimately led to the Great Depression. The Depression continued to worsen into the 1930s due to the failure of banks, the high unemployment rate and the failure of government to take action to improve the economic status of the country ("Herbert

Hoover”). The American people started to blame President Hoover, for the worsening depression because of his lack of intervention in the lives and businesses of the people of the United States. President Hoover, in turn, blamed foreign affairs for the worsening state of the nation (“Herbert Hoover”).

Not only was Hoover deemed a failure in respect to the handling of the Depression, but his relationship with FDR was also a failure. Hoover publicly voiced his dislike for FDR’s political philosophy, going so far as to claim that FDR would lead the country further into the Depression if elected (“Herbert Hoover”; Cohen). This could be considered a positive constraint in that the poor relationship between the president and president-elect could have motivated FDR to learn from Hoover’s mistakes and implement action in a different manner. The Stock Market Crash of 1929 and his relationship with Hoover empowered FDR to rebuild the country. He took the opportunity to look over and analyze important pieces of legislation. This opportunity, according to Elliot Roosevelt, author of *FDR: His Personal Letters*, allowed FDR to “[work] feverishly behind the scenes to assemble the team and prepare the legislation” that he would put into place upon officially becoming the President of the United States (317). Although FDR worked to create legislation, he refused to provide the emergency statement mentioned by Krock (“Suggest”). His drive to begin work as president before he was sworn in to office could be considered a positive constraint in that it allowed him to gain control of the current situation.

The exigence, audience and constraints of FDR’s address involved the events and actions taken prior to him delivering the speech. These elements provide insight into the “rhetorical situation” FDR faced when delivering his address, and provide a base on which further analysis can rest. Examination of the “rhetorical situation” reveals the purpose of the address, the setting in which the address took place, and the events, actions or attitudes which hindered the

effectiveness of the address. Unlike the analysis of the “rhetorical situation,” the analysis of style is heavily reliant on the text of the address.

Style. FDR uses the stylistic devices outlined by Corbett and Connors to emotionally reassure the audience and logically order his intentions as president. More specifically, FDR employs the scheme parallelism and the tropes personification, metaphor to create a more intimate sense of understanding between himself and his audience.

FDR uses parallelism to describe the plans he has for the country, providing a method for introducing sets of action, as well as to order his thoughts in a memorable manner. He describes possible ways to accomplish the “task” of creating a better use for natural resources found in the United States. He states:

It [a better use of the Nation’s natural resources] can be helped by insistence that the Federal, State, and local governments act forthwith on the demand that their cost be drastically reduced. It can be helped by the unifying of relief activities which today are often scattered, uneconomical, and unequal. It can be helped by national planning for and supervision of all forms of transportation and of communications and other utilities which have a definitely public character (253-254, paragraph 11).

FDR uses the impersonal “it” to underemphasize the “task,” and highlight the action that needs to be taken to accomplish the “task” of finding a more efficient usage of the Nation’s natural resources. Although the parallelism is imperfect in that FDR continually uses the impersonal “it” to refer to a specific task, he effectively uses the phrase to introduce the actions he would like taken. He uses the phrase, “it can be helped,” in triplet in order to emphasize the three specific actions that would enable the United States to use natural resources more efficiently. Not only

does FDR use parallelism to outline the importance of these actions, but he also uses parallelism to outline a specific plan of action for the banking crisis.

FDR outlines three solutions to the banking crisis. He explains that “there must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits and investments; there must be an end to speculation with other peoples’ money, and there must be provision for an adequate but sound currency” (254, paragraph 12). He reiterates the words “there must be” in order to stress the importance of the actions that have to be taken before banks and bankers will be allowed to be entrusted with citizens’ money. FDR again states his expectations in triplet so that the audience is likely to remember his expectations for the banking institutions. The repetition and organizational structure of this parallelism help to make it effective. Parallelism helps structure FDR’s calls for action, and emphasizes the action while personification helps FDR emotionally appeal to the audience.

In employing personification, FDR appeals to the emotions of the United States citizens who were facing the depths of the Great Depression. In one passage he specifically personifies an emotion, and in another he personifies a feeling using humanistic qualities. He is better able to identify with the audience by personifying emotions and feelings.

FDR specifically personifies fear in the opening paragraph. He claims that “... the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance” (252, paragraph 1). According to FDR, fear has a humanistic “self,” which he characterizes as “nameless,” “unreasoning,” and “unjustified.” This emotion is much like a bully capable of producing a paralyzing effect. FDR uses this personification to explain that fear, much like a bully, can be overcome. He also personifies confidence as a feeling.

In personifying “confidence,” FDR attributes human-like characteristics to a specific feeling. He states: “small wonder that confidence languishes, for it thrives only on honesty, on honor, on the sacredness of obligations, on faithful protection, on unselfish performance; without them it cannot live” (253, paragraph 8). FDR treats “confidence” as though the feeling were a living person, unable to enjoy life to the fullest due to recent hardship and disappointment. This personification of confidence as a discouraged individual accurately describes the feelings of audience members during this point in time, enabling him to relate to audience members and rationalize their lack of confidence. FDR effectively uses personification as well as metaphor to connect with his audience.

FDR uses metaphor, much like he does personification, to reassure his audience. However, his use of metaphor does not involve the rationalization of feelings or emotions, but rather appeals to the logic of his audience in that he illustrates situations facing audience members. More specifically, FDR uses metaphor to explain the untimely and unsavory exit of bankers from their positions as financial leaders. According to FDR, “the money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization” (FDR, 253, paragraph 6). The tenor of this metaphor is the “money changers” or bankers, and the vehicle is the “high seats” they possessed “in the temple of our civilization.” The vehicle of this metaphor implies that bankers were considered nobility because they had the power to control the money of investors. Bankers, however, renounced this noble status when they foolishly spent money that was not theirs and abandoned their positions. Furthermore, FDR uses this metaphor to claim that although bankers have failed and are no longer respected, hope is not lost because he is going to restore the banking system to its previous status. This metaphor effectively characterizes FDR’s sentiments

regarding bankers and the banking system, while not directly placing blame on any one individual.

FDR also reassures the audience through metaphor by claiming “these dark days will be worth all they cost us if they teach us that our true destiny is not to be ministered unto but to minister to ourselves and to our fellow-men” (253, paragraph 7). The tenor used by FDR in this metaphor is the “days,” while the vehicles are both the characterization of days as “dark” and the “cost” of the days. Through these vehicles, FDR attributes days as being “dark,” or days filled with little hope but that did have worth. He characterizes days as “dark,” recognizing that the audience has faced hardship—both financially and emotionally. Furthermore, he contends that the days have had a significant cost to the lives of audience members. Although both vehicles are seemingly negative, at the end of the metaphor he claims that there is hope, and that with struggle comes gain. FDR uses both personification and metaphor to rationalize and explain feelings. He also uses parallelism to outline a plan of action to rectify the state of the country.

The analysis of FDR’s use of the stylistic devices parallelism, personification and metaphor revealed key insight into the content of FDR’s address. However, Campbell and Jamieson’s and Dudash’s genre requirements provide insight into the classification of the inaugural in relation to other presidential inaugural addresses.

Genre. Campbell and Jamieson’s five requirements for genre, as well as Dudash’s additional requirement, can be applied to FDR’s address².

² Campbell and Jamieson have already examined FDR’s first inaugural address and concluded that it meets all of their requirements; however, this study will use different examples from his address to illustrate the five requirements outlined by Campbell and Jamieson.

FDR sought to unify his audience in the opening paragraph of his address. Campbell and Jamieson suggest that the “unification of the audience” must take place “before the citizenry or their representatives can witness and ratify an ascent to power” (16). Thus, Campbell and Jamieson contest that the unification of the audience is accomplished through the identification of United States citizens as “the people” (16). Although FDR does not directly state “the people,” in the opening lines of his address he does state: “I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction to the presidency, I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our Nation impels” (252, paragraph 1). FDR employs the phrase “my fellow Americans” to unify the audience as being part of the group that is made up of “Americans” (16). FDR immediately unifies the audience in order to declare that he is being inducted into the role of president, and will take on full responsibility as the president. Because he unites the citizens of the country with the phrase, “my fellow Americans,” FDR was successful in stating that he was being inducted into the presidency. By Campbell and Jamieson’s standards, the citizens were unified as a group of “Americans” and were able to “witness and ratify to the ascent to power.” According to Campbell and Jamieson, because FDR performed the function of unifying the audience, he was able to “rehearse communal values.”

Campbell and Jamieson further build on the first principle, unification, in that the affirmation of traditional values ought to “be selected and framed in ways that unify the audience” (19). Campbell and Jamieson also suggest that FDR, in his affirmation of traditional values, is obligated to acknowledge and uphold the traditions established by his predecessors while ensuring these traditions will survive (19). FDR follows through with this obligation when he explains: “the joy and moral stimulation of work no longer must be forgotten in the mad chase of evanescent profits. These dark days will be worth all they cost us if they teach us that our true

destiny is not to be ministered unto but to minister to ourselves and our fellow-men” (253, paragraph 7). In this statement, FDR constructs unity through his use of the terms “us” and “our.” He further reaffirms the traditional value of work, and how citizens of the United States seem to have forgotten the satisfaction that comes with working. He then reminds citizens that they have valued work in the past and should continue to value work in the future. Campbell and Jamieson argue the unification of the audience and the reaffirmation of traditional values build on one another; however the third requirement is a separate entity.

The third requirement of a presidential inaugural, as discussed by Campbell and Jamieson, is the establishment of the “principles that will guide the new administration” (21). These principles are imbedded in the president’s “[enunciation] of a political philosophy” (21). FDR clearly articulates his political strategy by claiming: “hand in hand with this we must frankly recognize the overbalance of population in our industrial centers and, by engaging on a national scale in a redistribution, endeavor to provide a better use of the land for those best fit for the land” (253, paragraph 11). FDR again unites the audience using the terms “we” and “our.” He also discusses his political stance on industrial practices versus agricultural practices. Furthermore, in accordance with Campbell and Jamieson’s argument that the enunciation of a president’s political philosophy is meant for contemplation rather than action, FDR does not directly command that action be taken. Campbell and Jamieson also suggest that the president respect the limitations of the presidency.

Campbell and Jamieson’s fourth requirement of a presidential inaugural demands that the president acknowledges and verbalizes his respect for “the requirements and limitations of the executive in our system of government” (23). Having identified FDR as acting within his limitations, Campbell and Jamieson suggest: “Franklin Roosevelt’s first inaugural address

dramatically asserted presidential leadership and the special importance of executive action” (24). Although they argue that FDR indeed recognized his executive limitations, Campbell and Jamieson further state “Roosevelt was aware that he was pressing the limits of executive power” when he claimed: “it is hoped that the normal balance of executive and legislative authority may be wholly adequate to meet the unprecedented task before us. But it may be that an unprecedented demand and need for undelayed action may call for temporary departure from the normal balance of public procedure” (24; 255, paragraph 21). Campbell and Jamieson contend that FDR stayed within his constitutional limitations and recognize that he did so in an unconventional, “*risqué*” manner. FDR barely meets Campbell and Jamieson’s fourth requirement but he conscientiously meets Campbell and Jamieson’s fifth requirement.

Campbell and Jamieson’s fifth and final requirement states that the inaugural must focus on an “eternal present.” This “eternal present” is based on the “timeless” nature of a presidential inaugural because “the address is about an institution and a form of government fashioned to transcend any given historical moment” (27). FDR’s inaugural meets this requirement by claiming:

We face the arduous days that lie before us in the warm courage of the national unity; with the clear consciousness of seeking old and precious moral values; with the clean satisfaction that comes from stern performance of duty old and young alike. We aim at the assurance of a rounded and permanent national life (255, paragraph 25).

FDR refers to the “arduous days” the citizens face because of the Great Depression, but could also be referring to the aftermath of days following any national tragedy. FDR further exploits the “eternal present” by reaffirming traditional values held by prior generations. Finally, FDR

refers to the transcendent power of the United States government by reaffirming the goal of “a rounded and permanent national life” (255, paragraph 25). Successfully meeting this final requirement, as well as the preceding four requirements described by Campbell and Jamieson, he also addresses the international presence described by Dudash.

FDR addresses Dudash’s international presence by using this metaphoric comparison:

In the field of world policy, I would dedicate this Nation as to the policy of the good neighbor—the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others—the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with world neighbors (254, paragraph 17).

FDR describes the relationship he will maintain with allies by naming the United States the “good neighbor” or a neighbor that will come to the aide of allies when necessary. He also maintains that if the United States citizens and governing bodies respect themselves, they will not let enemies attack the integrity of their country. Based on the application of Bitzer’s, Corbett and Connors’s, Campbell and Jamieson’s, and Dudash’s methods, several conclusions can be drawn.

FINDINGS FOR ARTIFACT

Rhetorical Situation. The identification of the three components of the “rhetorical situation,” the exigence, audience and constraints, provides key insight into the piece of discourse delivered by FDR. FDR himself identifies the exigence which allowed him the opportunity to tailor his speech more narrowly to better meet the needs of the audience. He correctly identified the exigence prior to delivering his speech, realizing that the government needed to intervene in the lives of citizens (Rosenmen 16). Although he recognized the necessity of discourse, FDR refused to give

any sort of statement prior to his inaugural speech (Krock “Suggest”). This lack of action constrained action that could have been implemented immediately. Furthermore, many members of the audience would be the ones to take action to implement FDR’s legislation. Bitzer’s “rhetorical situation” served as a useful tool to discover the problem faced by FDR, the actions, relations, and attitudes constraining the implementation of a solution, and the groups and individuals that were capable of altering the problem. Although Bitzer’s “rhetorical situation” was useful in identifying the context in which FDR delivered his address, Corbett and Connors’s analysis of stylistic devices served as a useful textual analysis.

Style. Through Corbett and Connors’s analysis of style, several conclusions can be drawn. FDR used stylistic devices to create a lasting, memorable effect on the audience. He employs stylistic devices in two different manners: to describe negative aspects of the Great Depression, and to identify the plan he will use to combat the Great Depression. He uses the trope, personification, to give life to the enemy-like emotions citizens were experiencing due to the Great Depression. He identifies the “enemy” or the feelings that were holding citizens back from believing in a new government. He also uses metaphor to characterize the enemy. FDR’s metaphors, however, often target a specific group of people, rather than an emotion or feeling. Personification and metaphor are used to portray the dark side of the Great Depression; however, FDR combats the dark side by offering hope in the form of parallelism.

Parallelism is used to logically describe to the audience his plan of action. He identifies specific actions that need to be taken, but does not explicitly identify the people or groups of people that are capable of accomplishing the action. Therefore he implies that the audience members ought to put forth their best efforts to aid the United States in the recovery process. The manner in which these stylistic devices are applied demonstrates FDR’s use of language and

intended meaning; however, the inaugural was analyzed more broadly in terms of genre and specific topics addressed in the inaugural.

Genre. Although Campbell and Jamieson have concluded that FDR meets all five requirements for his inaugural to be classified as part of the subgenre that is presidential inaugurals, the argument can be made that FDR narrowly meets the fourth requirement, which states the president ought to respect the limitations set up by the constitution. FDR narrowly evades sounding like a dictator when he states: “but it may be that an unprecedented demand and need for undelayed action may call for temporary departure from that normal balance of public procedure” (255, paragraph 21). He redeems himself in the next paragraph and therefore can be qualified as recognizing his constitutional limitations when he states “I am prepared under my constitutional duty...” (255, paragraph 22). FDR also meets Dudash’s final requirement.

Dudash argues that the more presidential inaugurals have an obligation to focus on international affairs. She states that he does address foreign affairs but does not go in-depth, as the United States was currently in a compromised state without the consideration of foreign affairs. All in all, FDR’s first inaugural meets the requirements set up by Campbell and Jamieson and Dudash, and thus can be classified as fitting into the subgenre of epideictic address that binds all presidential addresses. Through the application of Bitzer’s, Corbett and Connors’s, Campbell and Jamieson’s, and Dudash’s methods, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the methods themselves.

FINDINGS FOR METHOD

Rhetorical Situation. The analysis of Bitzer’s *exigence*, *audience* and *constraints*, all of which make up the “rhetorical situation”, provided insight into the conditions in which FDR delivered his address. Bitzer’s definition of exigence helps identify the imperfection or “problem” FDR

faced when delivering his address. The identification of the constraints also provides some historical information regarding the situation faced by FDR.

Style. Corbett and Connors provided the basis of the identification of stylistic devices. The authors specifically labeled, defined and gave examples of each scheme and trope. But the method could have been more effective if the definitions of each scheme and trope were more comprehensive. Furthermore, the authors could have included more relevant and up-to-date examples of each stylistic device. With few alterations, the framework provided by Corbett and Connors could have been more understandable and useful to the researcher. Corbett and Connors provided a sufficient framework on which to develop further research, as did Campbell and Jamieson.

Genre. In their study, Campbell and Jamieson concluded that FDR had fulfilled all of the requirements they outlined for a presidential inaugural address. For the purpose of this study, different passages of FDR's address were examined, resulting in the conclusion that FDR's address aligns with Campbell and Jamieson's views. Furthermore, the examination of different passages of FDR's address proved that Campbell and Jamieson's five requirements could be applied to the same address multiple times with varying data and resulting in the same claim. The application of Campbell and Jamieson's genre requirements helped reaffirm the views held by the researchers; however, Dudash's additional genre requirement allowed for the identification of previously unknown information.

Dudash had not previously identified FDR as meeting her international requirement, and therefore her final requirement provided insight into FDR's address. This requirement states that the president "[reassure] allies and warn enemies" (53) but could be more broadly defined to state that the president merely mentions international affairs and provides a statement regarding

such affairs. This amendment would allow Dudash to study other, older inaugurals. Dudash's final requirement provided useful insight into the genre of inaugural addresses.

CONCLUSION

The same man stands in front of the same audience. Something has changed, however. The audience, at first sober and demure, is now filled with hope and the promise of a better tomorrow. The man is no longer just a man; he is the president of the United States. He has fulfilled his first obligation as president: he has delivered his first inaugural address. As the nation was struggling to hold onto hope, he reassured them that he would re-construct their lives and he would not continue to use methods that failed to work in the past. FDR used powerful, inclusive language to identify with his audience, establish himself as leader, and leave a lasting impression on the citizens. His first inaugural address provided a fitting response to a nation in desperate need of revival from the Great Depression, and will be remembered as rhetorical literature unique to the time period of his presidency. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's first inaugural address created a sense of understanding between himself, the man in the executive position, and the citizens of the United States.

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