FINDING OPPORTUNITIES: A REEVALUATION OF NARRATIVE

THEORY AND PRAXIS IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES

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CHAPTER ONE

THE NEED FOR A REEVALUATION OF NARRATIVE

RHETORICAL THEORY

"…[I]n stating what has been said, one has to re-state what has never been said."

--Michel Foucault (1994, p. xvi)

The Texas University Interscholastic League each year provides academic contest materials to elementary, junior high, and high schools across the state. One of the competitions for eight- and nine-year-olds is simply called "storytelling." Participants listen to a story, and each student retells it to a judge who has not heard the original account. The judge then ranks the contestants' performances from first to last in each round. My observation of this activity has led me to contemplate several questions. Can a student relate a compelling narrative that has little in common with the original story? Will a student with perfect recall actually *lose* the contest because she does not embellish the story? How does a judge know who has *won* in a contest that has no referential context? If a student stands out by telling a completely different but extremely moving story, will the judge accept as true that story above the others?

These same fundamental issues surround humans each day on many levels, from family relations to international diplomacy, as we attempt to construct meaning through narratives. White (1981) underscores the ontological role that narrative takes in our lives:

To raise the question of the nature of narrative is to invite reflection on the very nature of culture and, possibly, even on the nature of humanity itself. So natural is the impulse to narrate, so inevitable is the form of narrative for any report of the way things really happened, that narrativity could appear problematical only in a culture in which it was absent—absent, or, as in some domains of contemporary Western intellectual and artistic culture, programmatically refused. (p. 1)

Narratives are strings of symbols that humans use to create meaning. Indeed, *narrative* is derived from the Latin *gnarus* which means "to know."[1] Standard English usage even gives us a euphemism for this function. When audience members think a narrator has given incomplete or inaccurate information, they do not necessarily say, "She's lying." Rather, they say, "She doesn't *know* what she's talking about." The modern definition of *narrative* itself implies a dualistic construct disseminating information from one who knows to one who does not know: "a telling of some true or fictitious event or connected sequence of events, recounted by a narrator to a narratee...in which the events are selected and arranged in a particular order (the plot)" (Narrative, 1996).

Narratives "have two parts: story and discourse" (Prince, 2003, p. 59). Story is essentially the content outlining the standard form of a narrative: characters, plot, setting, and temporal issues. Discourse involves "the 'how' of a narrative": its medium, tone, point of view, context, and other signals of meaning (Prince, 2003, p. 21). Humans, then, can create narratives from disparate "story" features and radically change their meaning through the discursive practices that we attach to a narrative. For example, if we have

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[1]See Narration (2007): "from O.Fr. *narration* 'a relating, recounting, narrating,' from L. *narrationem* (nom. *narratio*), from *narrare* 'to tell, relate, recount, explain,' lit. 'to make acquainted with,' from *gnarus* "knowing," from PIE suffixed zero-grade *gne-ro-, from base *gno- 'to know'."

"The man jumped into the hole" as part of a story, the discursive meaning would be radically different if he were repairing a water main versus digging his own grave. By their very nature, humans arrange their existence in the form of stories to create knowledge, and they select stories that either support or reject that knowledge as they create their own versions of reality. Nevertheless, we are still left with the issue of whether a story does (or *should*, or *can*) lead to some objective truth. In other words, does it make any difference whether or not a story has an objective basis if the entire purpose of narrative is to create knowledge?

In his discussion of tragedy in the *Poetics* (trans. 1987), Aristotle established a framework for much narrative theory with the idea that every story has a beginning, middle, and end. This formalist approach to narrative theory has led scholars in fields such as psychology, literary criticism, anthropology, linguistics, and sociology to focus their work on themes, characters, plots, and points of view in their search to ascribe meaning to human (inter)action. In the field of communication studies, Walter Fisher (1984; 1985a; 1985b; 1987a) advocates that we allow room in human argumentation for the narrative, not as a simple embellishment or as a tool of attorneys or as an apparatus of the media, but as the very rubric by which we experience all discourse. However, Fisher's work and structural studies of narrative still trap us in the false dichotomies faced by the judge in the storytelling contest: the inherent tensions created between the individual narrator and the audience; the hierarchical, positivistic structure of the contest versus the unquantifiable, ephemeral nature of the stories; and the stress of the narrator versus the audience in changing a policy by using divergent criteria to measure the quality of the narratives. Furthermore, many of these issues inherently describe issues of

power within social relationships. Narratives assist humans in *quid pro quo* whether it is, for example, a material issue (the best narrative wins the ribbon—or the presidency) or an interpersonal issue (the best narrative acquires a better quality friendship). In order to begin determining how humans control power through narrative, I survey the movement of narrative theory from its structural beginnings to its post-structural dilemmas. Furthermore, I lay the foundation for a reevaluation of Fisher's narrative paradigm by examining power as a tool for appraising the purpose of rhetoric.

A Review of Structural and Post-Structural Narrative Theory

Aristotle

Aristotle is the earliest thinker on record to attempt to describe the complications surrounding narrative. In both the *Poetics* (trans. 1987) and the *Rhetoric* (trans. 2004), he moves away from Plato's metaphysics in an attempt to unite language usage with what some scholars refer to as an objective stance (Allan, 2004). However, he never shows the relationship between narrative and rhetoric other than to point out in the *Rhetoric* that narrative is a potent form of forensic argument (Barr, 1998). A passage in *On Interpretation* (trans. 1962), does point to a description of proto-semiotics: "Now those that are in vocal sound are signs of passions in the soul, and those that are written are signs of those in vocal sound" (p. 23). While this passage is far from a complete theory of meaning, it does clearly make a claim that some structuralists have used to validate their theories (e.g., Gyekye, 1974; Kretzmann, 1974). Aristotle's initial observation enables him to develop his "correspondence theory" of truth in the *Metaphysics*: the idea that inserting *not* into a statement corresponds to a similar attitude in reality (Blackburn, 1996). The theory, at its simplest level, permits us in part to define a cat by saying that it

is *not* a dog. Obviously, this calls into question the epistemological issues surrounding

the definition of both *cat* and *dog*, as well as the experiential problem of having seen a cat

and a dog.

Saussure, Structuralism, and Semiotics

The formal study of structuralism—and narrative—begins with Ferdinand de

Saussure, a Swiss professor of philology working in the late nineteenth century.

Saussure's students gathered their class notes and published his *Cours de linguistique*

generale in 1916 after his death. Saussure's first major contribution was his definition of

a sign, which is a link "between a concept and a sound pattern." (Saussure, 1983, p. 66).

Cobley (2006) notes that this idea is an elaboration of Aristotle's work: "…Saussure is

not pursuing the relation between a thing in the world and the way that it is designated,

but a psychological entity that amounts to signhood" (p. 757-758, see also Turner, 2000,

p. 71). This psychological turn adds another layer of knowledge necessary to "know"

something and actually moves the theory back toward Plato's *numen* as an ontological

foundation. One also has to be familiar with the "-ness" of an object as well as the

symbol that the person uses to communicate knowledge of the object.

Saussure (1983) described this "signhood" as the relation between the *signifiant*

(signifier) and *signifié* (what is signified). The two entities are inseparable and, according

to Saussure, the signifier's relationship to what it signifies is relatively indiscriminate.

For example, it does not make any difference that *cat* and *gato* are different words that

represent the same animal. Saussure (1983) underscores this attempt at objectivity in his

structural theory when he asserts that "…the main object of study in semiology will none

the less be the class of systems based upon the arbitrary nature of the sign" (p. 68; cited

in Cobley, 2006, p. 758). He also admits with a shrug that words/signs are standardized

by societies (1983, p. 73). Saussure emphasizes instead that *signifiants* are both temporal

and auditory (Cobley, 2006). At this point, the linear quality of the signs ought to allow

linguistic tracing to some sort of common sign—an etymological exercise based on the

systematic study of signs.

Instead, Saussure (1983) describes *langue*, the fact that contextual differences

occur between each sign in a string of signs, so that what identifies signs is not their

similarities but their differences. He theorized that *langue* could be studied as a closed

system in a culture and that the differences in each sign could be weighed within a

context to gain meaning from its structural relationships among the other signs (Harris,

1997; 2001). Saussure stresses that ''in a sign, what matters more than any idea or sound

associated with it is what other signs surround it'' (1983, p. 118). Cobley (2006) calls

this concept the "crux" of Saussure's entire argument. Key here is the notion that a

philologist could make a "science" of studying language/meaning by isolating its

constituent parts, comparing (or, in this case, contrasting) them, and controlling any

mitigating factors.

New Criticism

Saussure's work in semiotics manifests itself in departments of English and

rhetoric in the form of the New Criticism from the 1920s through the 1960s. To New

Critics, literature is autotelic. The text is an ontological whole that critics can scrutinize

without regard to the context of the author's life or the implications of the published work

on any culture. Critics studied the artifact as "an object with its own inherent structure,

which invited rigorous scrutiny. They encouraged an awareness of verbal nuance and thematic organization" (New Criticism, 2006).

An early proponent of New Criticism, I.A. Richards (1956) was greatly influenced by his study of symbols in communication, including the "semiotic triangle" which proposed that objects and their symbols are inherently linked in a discernible, measurable manner (see Ogden & Richards, 1949/1923, p. 11). Other New Critics took similar paths. In *The Well-Wrought Urn*, Brooks (1947) made a landmark close reading of several poems using structural analysis. Conner (1976) notes that "Though Brooks made no direct commitment on the point [that literary analysis must have a fixed structure], it was evident that he had felt the influence of the time-honored realist belief that without fixed natures for terms to refer to there can be only confusion" (p. 6).

Booth (1961) attempts to move away from the study of literature in a completely-closed system by reintroducing the author as communicator: "And nothing the writer does can be finally understood in isolation from his effort to make it all accessible to someone else—his peers, himself as imagined reader, his audience" (p. 454). Furthermore, Booth dwells on the interaction between the author/narrator and the reader/audience, laying the basis for later reader-response theory. Lodge (1962) observes: "It is with the relationships existing between this 'implied author,' the narrator…, the characters and the action, and the reader's relationship to all of these, that *The Rhetoric of Fiction* is essentially concerned…" (p. 580-81). However, Booth does not recognize that the reader/audience brings individual and communal experiences to the text. He ultimately still sees the author/narrator as producing *closed* discourse for a single, unnamed reader (See Currie, 1998, p. 23).

Narratology

Narratology, first coined by Tzvetan Todorov in 1969, marked the acceleration of structuralist study of narrative with virtually every part of a story analyzed for its effects within the text (Genette, 1988). Eco (1979) explores formal relationships among character archetypes, nations, and values in his study of Ian Fleming's James Bond novels. Barthes (1975) adds the romantic/psychoanalytic meanderings of reader-response that occur as he interacts with a text. He asserts that all ideology is dominant, that no use exists to separate ideological forms. Conversely, Said (1978) begins a study that will become post-colonialism with a structural analysis of historical discourse that reveals the ideological clash between the East and the West. Bakhtin (1984), in a new translation of his 1929 book on Dostoevsky, maintains chapters on "The Hero in Dostoevsky's Art" and "Characteristics of Genre and Plot Composition in Dostoevsky's Work." Cohan and Shires (1988) move back to Saussure as a theoretical base for narrative literary analysis. Narratology in literary analysis continues to be a fruitful field well into the first decade of the twenty-first century. Mushin (2001) uses a structuralist foundation to explore subjectivity, cognitive issues, and the intent of the narrator in recent literature. Toolan (2001) gives us essentially a structuralist textbook of literary analysis except for a single chapter on narrative as political discourse.[2]

Narrative in Other Academic Fields

In the past 30 years, narrative structural theory also spread through several other academic areas, owing to the early research of Labov and Waltezky (1967) who provide a rubric that researchers can use to measure and analyze personal narratives "by ordering a

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[2] For a thorough survey of narrative theory—much of it literary and historical—to the end of the twentieth century, see McQuillan (2000).

structural representation of the sequence of narrative clauses and higher order units such as orientation, complication and result" (Thornborrow, 2005). In cognitive narrative analysis, researchers analyze the production and processing of narratives in the brain through cross-disciplinary study in areas such as neuroscience, psychology, and linguistics (Abbott, 2001; Bamberg, 1997; Semino & Culpepper, 2002). In narrative interaction and conversation analysis, much empirical research has focused on oral language and its effects on the structural analysis of narratives and their epistemological transfer from adults to children (Cherry, 1979; Corsaro, 1977; Kern & Quasthoff, 2005; Ochs, 1991). Studies have also produced qualitative and quantitative evidence of global (universal) concepts in language acquisition and narrative use (Hogan, 2003; Mink, 1978; Prince, 1973).[3]

Barthes: From Structuralism to Post-Structuralism

Barthes (1967, 1973) extends Saussure's semiotics in two ways that ultimately affect narrative theory. First, Barthes coins *la langue*, "language without speech" (1967, p. 14-15). Then, Barthes (1973) advances the idea that two levels of language exist simultaneously. First, myth in a society creates a "language-object" (p. 115) that does not necessarily have a corresponding "sign" as Saussure suggests. Rather, the "signifier" is the symbol and the "signified" is a conception created by the individual:

> A *language* is therefore, so to speak, language minus speech: it is at the same time a social institution and a system of values. As a social institution, it is by no means an act, and it is not subject to any premeditation. It is the social part of language, the individual cannot by himself either create or modify it; it is

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[3] Barry (1990) provides an excellent overview of the expansion of narrative theory into other fields and in literary analysis in the 1980s. Bamberg (2007) gives an extensive survey of contemporary narrative theory, most based on quantitative, interdisciplinary studies.

essentially a collective contract which one must accept in its entirety if one wishes

to communicate. (Barthes, 1967, p. 3)

Language, then, creates two very different entities for Barthes as compared to Saussure: the idea of the creation of individual meaning within the society and the idea that understandable, measurable signs can exist in places other than Saussure's *language*.

Barthes saw the recurrence of signs in a culture as the controlling factor of how culture incorporates the signs (see Barthes, 1967, p. 3). This in itself is the basis of much cognitive narrative analysis (Boster, 1985; Mink, 1978; Semino & Culpepper, 2002), Burkean cluster criticism, (Berthold, 1976; Burke, 1969; Heinz & Lee, 1998; Moore, 1996), and qualitative analysis using personal narrative (Garro, 2000; Holland and Valsiner, 1988; Labov & Waletsky, 1967). Yet, in his analyses of popular culture artifacts such as the Roman haircuts in a movie version of *Julius Caesar* and the sartorial choices of a Catholic priest, he extends this concept to show that a field-dependent group in a culture could assert power through signs other than oral language (see Barthes, 1973). Since each group vies for control of large swaths of a culture, this observation becomes the basis for many of the power/ideological issues that I address below.

Barthes' second level is "metalanguage," which describes the connotative interrelationship between the signifier and the signified. Since this interrelationship must still contain denotative signs from the myth-bound language-object, it still exists closely with Saussure's *parole*, the level of language that "consisted for him merely of the heterogeneous and unpredictable ways in which individuals, differentiated by motivation and temperament, actualized or 'executed' that system across a wide range of circumstances" (Blaine & O'Donnell, 2003, p. 62).

Post-Structuralism and Deconstruction: The Need for a Narrative Praxis

Though structuralist scholars have made many useful and important contributions to the understanding of the human condition, each advance in narrative theory is still hobbled by Saussure's original observation that we can only view language as the difference between and among signs. Even at their broadest levels, structuralist narrative studies can only describe cognitive relationships attached to units of meaning. This analysis leaves no space to incorporate a humanistic direction to scholarship. Barthes (1973), in the beginnings of post-structural narrative theory, admits that something immeasurable exists in language, whether we view it as a Saussurean closed system or one that encompasses the *mythos* of Barthes. While Saussure (1983) argues that linguists as scientists should study the differences among signs in narratives, he provides no quantifiable method. Barthes (1967; 1973) suggests that such a study is impossible because signs permeate culture rather than rely on speech acts to create them. This remark leaves no room for critics to move outside the (con)text to analyze language/culture from an objective viewpoint. In fact, it does not allow narrators to separate themselves from their texts at all (see also, Stafford, 1998, p. 71).

Furthermore, Derrida's (1976) statement, "*Il n'y a pas de-hors texte*" (commonly translated as "There is nothing outside the text" or "There is no outside text") contains the interplay of two distinct meanings that are germane to this review. First, humans must exist in a world of symbols which are our only means to knowledge. Second, critics cannot study any text by "centering" it on a structuralist frame because this hinders the possibility of certain meanings by presenting a false dichotomy of inside-outside reality (objectivity). As a proponent of deconstruction, the theory that humans can never find

the objective meaning of any communication artifact (symbol), Derrida (1976) leaves us

with the nihilistic dilemma of never being able to assign meaning to any sign (whether

Barthian or Saussurean). Consequently, we are trapped between Saussure's closed,

dichotomous linguistic system (semiotics) that only describes language and Derrida's

entirely open system of signs (deconstruction) that never enable us to find a practical

position for humans to take in their acquisition and application of knowledge to human

existence (see also Currie, 1998, p. 76-83). If this is the case, then we must reassess

Aristotle's idea of argument as a truth-finding activity. I propose that we look toward the

movement of power in society to assist in redefining the meaning of narrative as rhetoric.

The Critical Combination of Narrative and Power

Scholars theorize that persons who (re)create and (re)interpret signs through

discourse hold substantial power over others in a society (Althusser, 1977; Bachrach &

Baratz, 1962; Dahl, 1963; Foucault, 1980; Hawkes, 1996; Lukes, 1974; Von Hendy,

2001; Wrong, 1979).[4] Foucault (1980) asserts that "there are manifold relations of power

that permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power

cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production,

accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse" (p. 93). I argue that narrative

as discourse holds a similar place in the circulation of power in society.

Because of the synchronically- and diachronically-complicated associations in

narratives, humans tend to view them as "natural." This observation in itself may be

correct if we believe that human cognition permits us inherently to understand narrative

(see Chomsky, 1986; Hogan, 2003). However, a great difference exists between the

universal ability to recognize stories and the capacity to use those stories to change

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[4] Haugaard & Lentner (2006) offer a thorough theoretical discussion of the continuum of power in society.

society. Important in this discussion is the idea that humans conflate ontology and epistemology by creating stories that they justify by calling these narratives "natural" (see Moore, 1976). Examples include Hitler's narrative of the Aryan race and the narrative of the American Dream. These and other narratives serve to preserve and promote specific ideological stances.

Scholars working in the New Historicism, a field of literary criticism, have extensively explored the interrelationships among criticism, literature, and power (Greenblatt, 1988, 1990; Lehan, 1990; Lentricchia, 1980; Miller, 1981; Veeser, 1989, 1994). Though advocates of the New Historicism have resisted producing a set of theoretical guidelines, Veeser (1994) lays out some fundamental intersections in their research:

> [New Historicism] really does assume: 1) that every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices; 2) that every act of unmasking, critique, and opposition uses the tools it condemns and risks falling prey to the practice it exposes; 3) that literary and non-literary "texts" circulate inseparably; 4) that no discourse, imaginative or archival, gives access to unchanging truths or expresses unalterable human nature; and 5) that a critical method and a language adequate to describe culture under capitalism participate in the economy they describe. (p. 2)

Specifically, the first four assumptions are fully applicable to narrative theory in light of the post-structural complications that I describe above. In relation to the fifth criterion, though I agree that much culture is "under capitalism," some issues—interpersonal (con)texts, for example—cannot rely on a Marxist reading in narrative theory. While

New Historicists have worked at analyzing literature and the cultural texts that intertwine with that literature, I assert that rhetorical critics should use the same techniques to examine the narrative interplay of contemporary artifacts.

Brenneman (1997) observes: "The self-conscious, metacritical concern with the nature of signifying and validating systems in the sciences and humanities is reaching a crescendo—what Thomas S. Kuhn described as a 'paradigm shift'" (p. 151). This thesis reconfigures narrative theory to identify a method that will more effectively view narrative constructs as post-structural rhetorical artifacts. In this endeavor, I assist in the "shift" of Fisher's narrative paradigm. Informed by New Historicist and Foucauldian theory, this reconstruction will circumvent the Saussurean dilemma that humans encounter when they scrutinize only the linguistic relations among signs. Furthermore, it avoids the futility that rhetorical critics encounter when they attempt to apply deconstructive theory to policy actions. I advocate that communication studies scholars look specifically at narrative's ability to identify spaces in society to create resistance against power and assist in shifting that power from the control of one social institution (and/or person) to another.

In Chapter Three, I use the method created in the second chapter to examine narratives linked to the sanctuary cities movement in the United States. Through various documents from city government entities, cities in the movement have adopted quasi-formal policies that outline a "don't ask, don't tell" attitude toward persons whom they may suspect of being illegal immigrants. Artifacts include police operations manuals, mayoral proclamations, city council reports, city council resolutions, political action

committee websites, congressional bills, and news articles.[5] Through the analysis of these artifacts, I create a narrative of the movement, revealing the arrangements of power that solidify and strengthen political positions through use of the term "sanctuary cities." Moreover, I suggest rhetorical spaces that will allow various characters in the narrative to resist and transfer power to create a more satisfying existence for all parties.

This thesis argues that the structural view of narrative theory established by Aristotle and elaborated by Saussure confines itself to a dualism no different than abstract logic. In attempting to make the study of narrative into a science, theorists neglected several aspects of intrinsic symbol usage that enable storytelling to create many voices and shades of meaning. These points of view give rhetorical critics many more tools of cultural analysis than Cartesian logic. Furthermore, this thesis asserts that all narratives are intertwined. This complicated state produces, disseminates, and transfers knowledge and power among social entities. Additionally, I argue that the rhetorical critic should act as an audience member and as a mediator among several different levels of narrative. The critic is part of the story of the academy and the production of knowledge. However, the critic is also a storyteller taking disparate artifacts and revealing connections among them to create a new narrative. This recursive, continuous process then forms another level from which to critique the power relationships among persons, institutions, and cultures.

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[5] See, e.g., Accountability (2007), Brown-Waite (2007), Ohio (2007), Sifuentes (2007), Vlahos (2007).

CHAPTER TWO

FROM *HOMO NARRANS* TO *HOMO ATTENDENS*: A REVISION OF

THE NARRATIVE PARADIGM

Since Walter Fisher published "Narration as Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument" in 1984, communication studies scholars have used narrative theory as a framework for rhetorical criticism. Indeed, authors have cited this article at least 100 times in the past two decades.[6] Fisher elaborated and clarified his narrative paradigm often in the decade following his original thesis (Fisher, 1985a; 1985b; 1987a; 1987b; 1988; 1989; 1992; 1994).[7] By emphasizing narrative, Fisher argues that "human communication should be viewed as historical as well as situational, as stories competing with other stories" (p. 2). Most important, though, may be Fisher's (1987a) argument that narrative "*challenges* [italics added] the notions that human communication—if it is to be considered rhetorical—must be an argumentative form, …and that the norms of evaluation of rhetorical communication must be rational standards taken essentially from informal or formal logic" (p. 2). Fisher (1987a) suggests that narrative argument can compete and coexist with what he terms the "rational-world paradigm," the traditional form of argument that humans have used since classical times

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[6] See EBSCO (2007).

[7] Fisher (1987a) gathers and contextualizes his work on the narrative paradigm from 1984 to 1987. I will refer for the most part to this text rather than his articles from those years.

which emphasizes "subject-matter knowledge," inductive and deductive reasoning, and specific fields in which rhetors may advance specific arguments (p. 59).

I assert that Fisher, by granting that the narrative paradigm and the rational-world paradigm can coexist on the same plane of argumentation, substantially weakens the ability of narrative to create new knowledge. In this chapter, I will first argue that Fisher's use of traditional concepts of reasoning to evaluate narratives limits the prospects of using narrative theory in rhetorical criticism. Next, I will point to places in Fisher's elaboration of the narrative paradigm that suggest a postmodern perspective on narrative theory. Finally, I will suggest a different emphasis to describe how humans should use and understand narratives: humans are *homo attendens*—"ones who consider stories"—rather than *homo narrans*—"ones who tell stories." In elaborating this notion, I will use Derrida's (1982) theory of iterability to argue that rhetorical critics and audience members who simultaneously attend to many stories and fragments of stories should work to uncover and/or create alternative narratives rather than accept or reject competing narratives. This theoretical shift will reconcile narrative theory with post-structuralism and broaden the narrative paradigm to allow the constant critique that postmodernism demands. Additionally, this process will expose spaces in which persons may create the resistance to power that Foucault (1980) advocates.

Postmodern Implications of the Narrative Paradigm

In advocating his version of the narrative paradigm, Fisher (1987a) admits that he is consolidating, distilling and extending the work of scholars in other fields, including sociology, political science, history, and literature. Specifically, he cites MacIntyre's

(1981) observation that a human is "essentially a storytelling animal" (MacIntyre, p. 201; cited in Fisher, 1987a, p. 58). Fisher's "presuppositions" of the narrative paradigm are:

> (1) Humans are essentially storytellers. (2) The paradigmatic mode of human decision making and communication is "good reasons," which vary in form among situation, genres, and media of communication. (3) The production and practice of good reasons are ruled by matters of history, biography, culture, and character…. (4) Rationality is determined by the nature of persons as narrative beings—their inherent awareness of narrative probability, what constitutes a coherent story, and the constant habit of testing narrative fidelity, whether or not the stories they experience ring true with the stories they know to be true in their lives…. (5) The world as we know it is a set of stories that must be chosen among in order for us to live life in a process of continual re-creation. In short, good reasons are the stuff of stories, the means by which humans realize their nature as reasoning-valuing animals. (Fisher, 1987a, p. 64-65)

In recognition of the ontological status of such a statement, Fisher (1987a) uses the phrase *homo narrans* to describe the inseparable relationship between humans and their stories (p. 62). In fact, Fisher (1984) asserts that "the narrative paradigm, like other paradigms in the human sciences, does not so much deny what has gone before as it subsumes it" (p. 3). Accordingly, Fisher asserts that virtually all rhetorical criticism should be able to create a set of standards for measuring the quality of narrative in a fashion similar to traditional argumentation.

Though he never denies the modernist position, by treating the narrative paradigm as an alternative to traditional rationality, Fisher (1987a) suggests postmodern

implications in his theory: "[T]he paradigm is a ground for resolving the dualisms of modernism: fact-value, intellect-tradition, reason-emotion, and so on" (p. 68); it "impl[ies] a praxis consonant with an ideal egalitarian society" (p. 64); it "can provide a radical democratic ground for social-political critique" (p. 67). Fisher (1987a) surveys structuralism, post-structuralism, and semiotics in an attempt to define theoretical ground for the narrative paradigm within these frameworks. However, he rejects much of a relationship between the narrative paradigm and these theories: "Contrary to structuralist thinking, [the narrative paradigm] holds that meaning is a matter of history, culture, and character as well as of linguistic convention and interanimation" (p. 90). He accepts that this position is logocentric and thus problematic for post-structuralism. Moreover, he claims that Foucault's archaeology/genealogy suffers from a lack of humanism because it is does not ground history in a theory of human progress: "…I applaud the demystification of practices that oppress or repress persons, but I cannot endorse subversion without affirmation" (p. 97). Furthermore, as I argue in the next section, Fisher's (1987a) view of narrative "as a mode of social influence" (p. 90) does not eliminate some of the modernist stigmas associated with having stories themselves competing for an objective truth.

<div align="center">**Modernist Limitations of the Narrative Paradigm**</div>

As the title of Fisher's original narrative-theory article (1987a) underscores, Fisher wants to guide audiences in understanding "public moral argument…which has clear-cut inferential structures, according to the rational world paradigm, and to "good reasons," according to the narrative paradigm" (p. 72). However, public moral argument, when viewed through the rational-world paradigm or narrative paradigm, still advocates

winners and losers. In choosing one competing story over others to reflect a diachronic and/or synchronic "truth," Fisher still adheres closely to a modernist perspective: a winner is *not* a loser; a loser is *not* a winner. In Fisher's terms, a story is probable or not probable; a story has fidelity or does not. This language gives a sense of closure to a narrative that modernism expects and that postmodernism denies. As I will argue, Fisher's applications of the narrative paradigm do not reflect the recursive and delimiting quality of narratives. While Fisher's advocacy may allow the audience to make evaluations of the quality of a narrative, it does not necessarily allow them to *create* alternatives to extant narratives. Moreover, Fisher's applications depend heavily on the narrator as a source of credibility for the story, which returns to the rational-world paradigm of acceptance or rejection of an argument based on the qualifications of the proponent.

Detractors of Fisher's theory have pointed out what they see as inadequacies of the narrative paradigm. The thrust of their arguments rests on two premises. First, some arguments cannot fit into the narrative paradigm because they are missing one or more of the key components that create a narrative (Gronbeck, 1987; Megill, 1987; Rowland, 1987, 1989). Rowland (1989), in attempting to apply the narrative paradigm to David Bollinger's *Liberty and Justice for Some*, questions the use of narrative theory when no narrative structure is apparent: "How can one test the coherence of the plot and characterization when there is no plot or characterization?" (p. 45). Second, Fisher's logic of good reasons still lacks a standard by which to measure the validity of the argument (Ehrenhaus, 1988; McGee & Nelson, 1985; Warnick, 1987;). Warnick (1987) argues that Hitler's storytelling, which the German people found possessed enough narrative fidelity

to annihilate Jews, proves an inherent flaw in the narrative paradigm. Thus, "narrative probability, taken alone, is inadequate for the criticism of rhetorical discourse" (Warnick, 1987, p. 177).

In the next sections, I extend this line of thought by arguing that Fisher's second presupposition of the narrative paradigm—that it supports argumentation that reinforces values—presents substantial difficulties. I will discuss the following three ideas in independent sections below. First, Fisher's version of the narrative paradigm cannot suggest a standard by which audiences or rhetorical critics can measure competing values. Fisher advocates that a standard is necessary to measure competing values at the point where the logic of good reasons has provided all the warrants possible. The argument then must move to a contextual debate about competing value hierarchies, yet these hierarchies are still loaded with ideological stances that interfere with finding an objective truth. Second, narratives can actually provide rhetors the opportunity to produce arguments with dubious values that may not assist in promoting right actions thus negating any purpose in relying on a narrator as a credible source. And third, Fisher's audience consists of persons who may not agree with any of the choices that their traditional storytellers give them, but who have no other recourse than to accept one of the competing stories—even when it does not provide for a more fulfilling existence.

The Bad Side of "Good Reasons"

Much of the narrative paradigm rests on a relatively traditional notion: an "ethical" rhetor appeals to an audience's value system by telling a story that the audience believes. The second "presupposition" of the narrative paradigm, that quality narratives support good reasons, is based on Fisher's earlier research on traditional argumentation

(see Fisher, 1978). While these observations substantiate the narrative paradigm in general, they complicate the critical application of the paradigm.

Good reasons are ones that ultimately provide the soundest warrants. And the soundest warrants are ones that most closely support a value or values with which the audience can most closely identify.[8] Fisher's fourth "presupposition" of the narrative paradigm is that audiences should look to narrative "probability (coherence) and fidelity (truthfulness and reliability)" to determine whether or not a story is rational (1987a, p. 47). One of the salient features of narrative probability is "characterological coherence"—whether the narrator and/or character(s) in the narrative reflect the values of the audience (p. 47).

First, Fisher argues that the audience should look to values in the argumentation to decide which competing narrative should "win" the argument. He offers a description that he hopes will illuminate the situation: "…[A] good reason is a warrant for a belief, attitude, or action and the value of a value lies in its relevance, consistency, and consequence, and the extent to which it is grounded on the highest possible values" (Fisher, 1987a, p. 111). This argument implies that humans can/should somehow discover and agree on "the highest possible values." Yet Fisher (1987a) states that we can not/should not provide a hierarchy for competing values:

Humans are not identical with one another, nor are their valuings. Whether

through perversity, divine inspiration, or genetic programming, people make their

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[8] "The purpose of a logic of good reasons is to offer a scheme that can generate a sense of what is good as well as what is reasonable, to ensure that people are conscious of the values they adhere to and would promote in rhetorical transactions, and to inform their consciousness without dictating what they should believe" (Fisher, 1987a, p. 113).

choices freely, and their choices will not be bound by ideal or "perfect" value

systems—except of their own making. (p. 114)

Furthermore, when he *does* suggest an utmost value, he recommends "love" and suggests

that it should replace "justice" with no further explanation. This leaves the final decision

of whether to believe the story to the context of the exigency and, ultimately, to the

suasory powers of a rhetor who may or may not be ethical.

While not advocating a value system may move the narrative paradigm away

from the rational world paradigm, it does not necessarily move it closer to useful

applications of narrativity to rhetoric. For example, when Fisher attempts to reconcile

competing values for and against the death penalty, he essentially gives up: "'Well, I

guess we'll just have to agree to disagree. I see no way to resolve our differences'"

(1987a, p. 116). Thus, even if rhetors formulate a narrative that supports each side in the

capital punishment debate, the audience members find themselves in the same

irreconcilable situation. Both sides value human life—one side wants to protect future

human life while the other side refuses to kill in retribution. Furthermore, the narrative

paradigm offers no strategy for resolving this ethical dilemma, even within a certain

context. Fisher wants to treat an ultimate value as a standard for winning an argument.

However, he argues that finding and agreeing on a value is a relatively impossible task.

Moreover, the logic of good reasons is an extension of Toulmin's (1958) argument

model—one that is firmly entrenched in the rational-world paradigm. Attempting to

apply this theory to rhetorical criticism still advocates winning and losing arguments.

The Absence of Values

Fisher's (1987a) analysis of the arguments surrounding Jonathan Schell's book, *The Fate of the Earth,* which advocates a nuclear freeze in the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union, provides an unbalanced method of narrative rhetorical criticism. Rather than viewing competing narratives to see if Schell's story is more compelling than his detractors', Fisher looks at how members of the privileged political (rational-world paradigm) class attack Schell's argument and attempt to dispel it by suggesting that he has no credibility as a storyteller—that they, as experts, know what is best for the country:

> The tactics are obvious: juxtapose Schell's reasoning with what is right-headed, what is approved by the administration, or what is "realistic." […] The effects were to discredit Schell as an arguer and to dismiss his argument as unfounded. Public moral argument was thus overwhelmed by privileged argument. (Fisher, 1987a, p. 71)

While Fisher makes his point that the rational world paradigm bullies its way into the arena of public moral argument, he neglects most of his own presuppositions of the narrative paradigm.

First, Fisher does not use his theory of good reasons to evaluate competing stories. Fisher argues that "In the presence of experts—those best qualified to argue, according to the rational-world paradigm—the public has no compelling reason to believe one expert over the other" (1987a, p. 72). Instead, he suggests that we should look to the narrative paradigm's emphasis on values to find the correct side to take in the nuclear-freeze debate: "When the *full* range of good reasons for responses is taken into

consideration, experts and laypersons meet on the common ground of their shared, human interests" (p. 73, italics in original). Yet Fisher omits any analysis of what those "good reasons" are. Values, the very backbone of good reasons, are themselves missing completely from Fisher's analysis. Instead, Fisher observes that "distrust" is the compelling reason for any nuclear buildup or nuclear freeze.

Also conspicuously absent from Fisher's argument is any discussion of Soviet warrants for continued nuclear buildup—the Soviet narrative. Thus, Fisher's reader receives an incomplete narrative analysis based on Fisher's narrative paradigm—one without values and without competing narratives. Furthermore, as I have already discussed, even if Fisher gave his audience the Soviet narrative and/or a clear value analysis, the members are still left with two unsatisfying, options: (1) choosing between two competing narratives, either of which may not reflect their own value systems and (2) looking at competing values that have no standard by which to measure them.

Ronald Reagan: The Ethically-Challenged Narrator

Fisher (1987a) claims that "History records no community, uncivilized or civilized, without key storymakers/storytellers, whether sanctioned by God, a 'gift,' heritage, power, intelligence, or election" (p. 67). Narrative fidelity is also supported by a powerful storyteller advocating values relevant to the audience and the rhetorical context. A troubling example of the use of values in an application of the narrative paradigm is Fisher's (1987a) criticism of Ronald Reagan's rhetorical style during the presidential election of 1980. Though Fisher (1987a) admits that "Reagan's presidential discourse…fails the tests of the narrative paradigm insofar as the tests of fidelity to fact, soundness of argumentative form, and relevance are applied" (p. 145), Fisher still asserts

that he can use the narrative paradigm to describe Reagan's relative success in winning

the presidency. According to Fisher (1987a), we should look to Reagan's (mis)use of

values to understand Reagan's audience appeal. Fisher claims that Reagan produced a

mythical persona, the heroic, individualistic, storytelling "man's man" who wanted to

reclaim the supremacy of the United States' past in a present filled with international

turmoil. Fisher constructs Jimmy Carter's conventional style of argument as Reagan's

polar opposite: "weak," willing to compromise, moving carefully into an "uncertain

future" (p. 147). Reagan appealed to the mythical American Dream: "the materialistic

myth of individual success and the moralistic myth of brotherhood" (p. 149) lived out

with little government intervention and many heroes. Fisher's (1987a) analysis leads to

an unsettling observation:

> Whereas the image of "goodness" appeals to conscience, to one's sense of ethical
>
> being, the image of hero appeals to ego, to one's conviction that one can face
>
> hazards or hardships and prevail. The "ethical person" is; the "hero" does.
>
> Conscience is not always a source of joy or pride. At worst, ethical principles
>
> brought to consciousness make one feel guilty; at best, ethics creates self-
>
> examination and perhaps self-doubt. The "hero," on the other hand, is led to feel
>
> good about himself or herself no matter the adversity. (p. 155)

Ultimately, Reagan's narrative style "won" against Carter's more traditional, rational-

world paradigm, not because of the qualities of the narrative paradigm or the ability of an

audience (like Aristotle's audience) to sense what is "true and just" (Fisher, 1987a, p. 67)

but because of a narrator's appeal to widely-acknowledged mythology that reflects an

incomplete vision of society—the vision of each American as a hero in the war against

Soviet aggression. In creating/furthering this narrative, Reagan effectively suppresses the domestic needs of the American people and refocuses their values toward military superiority. Fisher (1987a) contends that the narrative paradigm "is meant to be a philosophy of reason, value and action" (p. 47, 59). However, as Fisher's analysis of Reagan's narrative strategy concludes, narrative argument does not necessarily make for correct actions as a basis for this communication. Fisher says as much: "…[A]ny…political rhetoric…will remain viable as long as historical circumstances permit, as long as there is not an equally compelling story and character to confront it and to show its ultimate lack of coherence and fidelity" (p. 156). What Fisher implies, though, is that audiences do not possess the inherent ability to decide or create what is "true and just" by using his construction of narrative rationality. The audience must passively wait for a more compelling story to come along.

A Postmodern Narrative Method of Rhetorical Criticism

Fisher (1987a) suggests that Burke's (1957) "unending conversation" supports the ontological qualities of the narrative paradigm. I assert that by focusing on the *process* of creation of narratives rather than the confrontational positions of narratives, audiences and rhetorical critics alike may benefit. In this section I argue that this *process* warrants a complication of Fisher's (1987a) categorical description of humans as relatively discrete "storytellers" and "audiences."

Fisher, in his analysis of Reagan's storytelling abilities and in his admission of the power of storytellers in every culture, reveals two distinct problems with *Homo Narrans*. First, the narrator serves to gather power into a specific ideological stance: "[the narrative paradigm] does not deny the legitimacy (the inevitability) of hierarchy" (Fisher,1987a, p.

67). Foucault (1979/1984) agrees: "As a result, we could say that in a civilization like our own there are a certain number of discourses that are endowed with the 'author function,' while others are deprived of it" (p. 107). Second, the audience must depend on narrative rationality and probability, which does not guarantee an accurate, "truthful" analysis. Fisher himself reveals these shortcomings: "the narrative paradigm does not deny that the 'people' can be wrong…so can elites, especially when a decision is social or political" (1987a, p. 67). Thus, as envisioned in Fisher's theory, people's abilities are hindered in creating their own epistemological vision by relying on a dubious narrator, inaccessible narrative rationality or a rational-world paradigm that gives unintelligible and/or incorrect "expert" decisions. Even if stories ring true to some members of the audience, they still should have access to—and thus the ability to create—additional narratives.

However, I do find in the logic of good reasons a foundational shift of perspective. Fisher (1987a) implies that

> The purpose of a logic of good reasons is to offer a scheme that can generate a sense of what is good as well as what is reasonable, to ensure that people are conscious of the values they adhere to and would promote in rhetorical transactions, and to inform their consciousness *without dictating what they should believe*. (p. 113)

Thus, Fisher leaves the ultimate decision, not in the hands of the *storyteller*, but in the hands of the *audience*. Yet, as I will show in the next two sections, Fisher's attempts at using the narrative paradigm for rhetorical criticism limits the audience's power to move past the modernist qualities of the rational world paradigm that Fisher hoped the narrative paradigm would diminish.

In this section, I will reevaluate the narrative paradigm and describe a method of rhetorical criticism that emphasizes humans as story gatherers—ones who unite disparate narrative elements to form new narratives. The method will work from the assumptions that: (1) storytellers produce an infinite number of narratives; one storyteller is no more credible than another; (2) audiences construct their own versions of stories from many rhetorical components available from many different sources, some of which exist outside of the traditional narrative structure; (3) rather than finding an objective "truth" in one of a series of competing narratives, audiences should look for the "truth" that Foucault (1980) advocates:

> a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements. "Truth" is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it. (p. 133)

While on face this may seem as if the audience is turning into yet another storyteller, the description of power instead authorizes audience members to criticize rhetoric by giving them the ability to create alternative narratives through incorporating some (or all, or none) of the same narrative components that a storyteller uses into new narratives. This action substantially decreases the role of ideological positioning through creating an infinite number of narrative perspectives. Audience members become much more than storytellers or auditors. They become active participants in the recursive and unending process of narrative discourse.

I choose to call this paradigmatic shift *homo attendens*, from the Latin *attendere*. The English translation is the verb "to attend," which has several subtle meanings that

support it usefulness. The transitive version of the word not only means "to be present at" and "to listen to; heed," but also "to take charge of" (Attend, 2007). The intransitive version means "to pay attention," "to take care," and "to remain ready to serve" (Attend, 2007). The root of *attendere* is *tendere*, which means "to stretch" (Attend, 2007). Accordingly, members of an audience must act in several important ways besides simply listening to a narrator and deciding whether the story is credible using Fisher's criteria. They must act to control their auditing. They must be ready to take action to control their own destinies in ways beyond which Fisher's paradigm suggests. And they must accommodate (stretch, make room for) their own experiences and those of other narratives. As I argue in the next section, this emphasis on the role of the audience can only come at the expense of modifying the role of the narrator.

Eliminating the Authoritarian Narrator

Scholars have employed various terms (often interchangeably) to describe the person who communicates: rhetor, speaker, writer, storyteller, sender, narrator, and author. For the purposes of this section, I choose to use "narrator" in the broadest sense to refer to all of the terms referring to the sender of a narrative in all forms of media. This action does not mean that I conflate the different meanings of narrator attributed by diverse narratologists. In fact, much has been written on the roles of the author/narrator, especially in discussion of fictional narratives. Several scholars problematize the narrator's position (Bal, 1981; Booth, 1961; Chatman, 1978; Genette, 1988; Prince, 1982). Barthes (1977) and Derrida (1982) assert that an author/narrator is never a stable source of information; the "I" only acts as a perspective "shifter" who represents a single moment of the narrative. Foucault (1979/1984) specifically argues that "An author's

name serves to characterize a certain mode of being of discourse. …[It] must receive a certain status" (Foucault, 1979/1984, p. 107). Thus, the narrator acts as the voice of an ideological construct and/or a single perspective of a multi-faceted narrative. Either position deteriorates Fisher's role of the narrator as a standard to measure the quality of a narrative.

As an ideological voice, a narrator serves to unify a position by counterbalancing "contradictions" through omission or rationalization (Foucault, 1979/1984, p. 111). For example, President Reagan, in his discourse of the mythology of the Western hero as a model for future United States foreign policy actions, excludes/suppresses the narrative of the genocide of the American Indian and the narrative of the Soviets in their support for nuclear proliferation. Thus, "One can say that the author is an ideological product…, [an] ideological figure by which one marks the manner in which we fear the proliferation of meaning" (Foucault, 1979/1984, p. 119). Foucault (1979/1984) elaborates:

> …[T]he author is not an indefinite source of significations which fill a work; the author does not precede the works; he is a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by which one *impedes* the free circulation, and free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction. (p. 118-119, italics added)

Derrida (1982) concurs: "Communication, hence, vehiculates a representation as an ideal content (which will be called meaning)…" (p. 314). Accordingly, concentrating on the narrator as a sole source of the narrative hinders rather than assists in the creation of knowledge by focusing on a specific ideological stance, a specific meaning that limits the role of other narratives.

Syntagmatically Reconstituting Narratives

As I note in Chapter One, post-structural analysis does not permit an audience to find a "centered," objective meaning for any sign. The single (often-privileged) narrator cannot hope to produce a particular truth any more than an audience can look to a single narrator to provide that objectivity (Blair & Cooper, 1987, p. 155). Foucault (1979/1984) calls for radical revision of Fisher's view of the narrator:

> …[W]e must entirely reverse the traditional idea of the author. We are accustomed…to saying that the author is the genial creator of a work in which he deposits…an inexhaustible world of significations. We are used to thinking that the author is so different from all other men, and so transcendent with regard to all languages that, as soon as he speaks, meaning begins to proliferate, to proliferate indefinitely. (p. 118)

As Barthes (1977) remarks in "Death of the Author," audiences should instead look toward the "proliferation" of signs produced by many narrators rather than to the codified, accreted view of a single narrator. Narrative, with its relatively few components, provides a structure that allows for an infinite combination of signs to create infinite amounts of knowledge. When audiences view narratives as syntactic entities, they can take apart and reform the syntagmas—elements of the stories—into other stories. By using parts of different stories—for example, a protagonist from one, an antagonist from another, a setting from a third, a motivation from a fourth— audiences can create their own narratives. Furthermore, when extant narratives are missing one or more components, audience members must create those components with their own contextual

and experiential knowledge. Narratives themselves can also function syntagmatically, embedding themselves into other narratives to function as (meta)diegetic components.

To inform this method, I cite the intersection of Derrida and Foucault's post-structural linguistic theories. I acknowledge a broad reading of both theorists in that both view discourse as an ontologically-appropriate way to manipulate knowledge. Derrida's uncertainty of each utterance, I argue, is inherently linked to the contextual relativity of Foucault's discursive formations. Currie (1998) asserts: "Both Foucault and Derrida…reject the idea that history is knowable through any single narrative account which would inevitably reduce an irreducible difference to a single centre" (p. 87). The semantic debate about whether Foucault's use of terms such as "institution" and "architecture" constitutes pre-discursive, non-discursive, or discursive entities is beyond the scope of this thesis.[9]

Derrida's (1982) remarks on the nature of grammar give audiences much latitude to produce knowledge from narratives. In extending Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, Derrida asserts that studying "the absence of the signified…opens the phenomenon of the crisis of meaning" (1982, p. 319). He gives the example of "green is or" as a phrase that carries meaning to each person who understands English. Foucault suggests that this innate ability of humans to understand language use allows humans to "create[…] a possibility for something other than their discourse, yet something belonging to what they founded" (1979/1984, p. 114). Consequently, even if the phrase is grammatically specious, the string of words still carries some sort of meaning. Derrida elaborates: "Every sign, linguistic or nonlinguistic, spoken or written…, as a small or large unity, can

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[9] See Olssen (1999) p. 39-47 for an analysis of the differences between Foucault and Derrida. See also Boyne (1990).

be *cited*, put between quotation marks; thereby it can break with every given context, and engender infinitely new contexts in an absolutely nonsaturable fashion" (1982, p. 320, italics in original). Derrida uses the term "iterability" to describe the ability of a sign to be "cited" with some sort of similar meaning within the descriptors of both presences and absences and the ability to be altered (what he calls "alterity") in a way that produces infinite narratives.

Foucault (1979/1984) demonstrates that this unlimited ability for an audience to create narratives answers the dilemma at the end of Fisher's Reagan analysis. Looking at the "iterability" of a narrative "…is not to give it a formal generality that it would not have permitted at the outset, but rather to open it up to a certain number of possible applications" (Foucault, 1979/1984, p. 115-116). Derrida extends this idea:

> This structural possibility of being severed from its referent or signified (and therefore from communication and its context) seems to me to be to make of every mark, even if oral, a grapheme in general, that is, as we have seen, the nonpresent *remaining* of a differential mark cut off from its alleged "production" or origin. And I will extend this law even to all "experience" in general, if it is granted that there is no experience of pure presence, but only chains of differential marks. (1982, p. 318)

These "chains of differential marks," which Derrida calls "syntagma," can be constantly and consistently "lifted" and reamalgamated into other narratives.[10] Goldberg (1982) further explains:

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[10] "Turning now to the semiotic and internal context, there is no less a force of breaking by virtue of its essential iterability; one can always lift a…syntagma from the interlocking chain in which it is caught or given without making it lose every possibility of functioning, if not every possibility of 'communicating,'

Neither "the facts" nor our "experience" come to us in discrete and disconnected

packets which simply await the appropriate moral principle to be applied. Rather,

they stand in need of some narrative which can bind the facts of our experience

together into a coherent pattern and it is thus in virtue of that narrative that our

abstracted rules, principles, and notions gain their full intelligibility. (p. 242)

Accordingly, audience members can and should create an alternative narrative—a place

where they can examine "alterity"—different narratives (and parts of narratives) to create

other narratives. This act is a telos in itself. Even if the act is "inferior, dangerous, or

critical," it still "opens the phenomenon of the crisis of meaning" (Derrida, 1982, p. 319)

and grants "a continuous, homogenous modification of presence in representation"

(Derrida, 1982, p. 313).[11]

Fisher (1988) suggests a related approach to narrative in his answer to Gronbeck's

(1987) and Megill's (1987) questioning of the use of narrative in historiography. Citing

Barzun and Graff (1970), White (1978), and Ricoeur (1988), Fisher advocates

emplotment as a necessary part of writing history to "frame," "contextualize," and

"ground" stories. Emplotment gathers together elements of a narrative from disparate

sources "that must be selected, marshaled, linked together, and given a voice" (Barzun &

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precisely. Eventually, one may recognize other such possibilities in it by inscribing or grafting it into other chains. No context can enclose it" (Derrida, 1982, p. 317).

[11] "In the different possibilities that [the dispersion of the points of choice] opens of reanimating already existing themes, of arousing opposed strategies, of giving way to irreconcilable interests, of making it possible, with a particular set of concepts, to play different games? Rather than seeking the permanence of themes, images, and opinions through time, rather than retracing the dialectic of their conflicts in order to individualize groups of statements, could one not rather mark out the dispersion of the points of choice, and define prior to any option, to any thematic preference, a field of strategic possibilities?" (Foucault, 1972, p. 36-37; see also Blair & Cooper, 1987, p. 155).

Graff, 1970, p. xvi; cited in Fisher, 1988, p. 50).[12] Yet Fisher (1988) admits the problem

of the historian's ideological sway, even in the midst of some sort of neutral reading of

the elements of emplotment. Fisher argues that Gronbeck and Megill's essays are still

"stories which commend themselves insofar as they 'hang together' and are truthful,

desirable guides to belief and action" (1988, p. 51). Consequently, Fisher is still caught in

the dilemma of giving his narrative audience no standard to measure the value system

intrinsic to "good reasons" or an objective way to measure "truth" or find the correct

"action" to take. Furthermore, the narrator/historian still acts as an ideological force, and

Fisher leaves the narrative audience no recourse to resist this power.

Describing Power in Narratives: An Alternative to "Good Reasons"

Foucault (1980) envisions power as an intertwined set of shifting discursive

relations among people that confine their actions and reactions in some way: "…[P]ower

is essentially that which represses. Power represses nature, the instincts, a class,

individuals….It has become almost automatic in the parlance of the time to define power

as the organ of repression" (p. 90-91). Through discourse, hierarchies of power

constantly form and reform. In this view, all narratives reflect the socio-political

structures in place at the moment (*epistemes*), normalizing persons in *bio-power* (1980).

Narrators and audiences are also caught in the web of power so that narrative fidelity and

narrative probability cannot guarantee an objective truth. Moreover, ultimate values,

because of their relative nature, are impossible to discover. Narrative discourse (in

Fisher's view), as does rational-world argumentation, serves to reify the dominant socio-

political power structures through the authoritarian position of the narrator (see Danaher,

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[12] White (1981) uses a comparable notion to provide perspective on the historical analysis of the *Annals of Saint Gall* when he suggests that a duty of a historian may be to fill in missing parts of a narrative to the best of her ability.

Schirato, & Webb, 2000, p. 8). Foucault's (1972) "governing rules" also describe the narrator's ideological role in producing social structures that control the dissemination and formation of narratives. Persons can approach certain topics only if they have specific qualifications, they use certain settings, and they make appropriate gestures (especially linguistic choices). Each narrative contains these strictures, and each one contains the elements to describe the uses, abuses, creation, stagnation and/or consolidation of power in society. Power that accumulates turns persons and institutions into monolithic, rigid entities that reify themselves to support oppression of other persons and institutions.

Since the power structure itself always skews the understanding of signs, finding truth through the examination of value systems in argumentation—using either the narrative paradigm or the rational-world paradigm—becomes an unreachable goal. Instead, I propose that critics (as audience members)—with the admission that they, too, are ideologically motivated—describe movements of power in narratives by creating new narratives to uncover spaces of resistance that will allow for the unimpeded circulation of power. No risk of hierarchy or ideological oppression exists because any audience member who creates a new story may (or may not) use components of the other audience members' narratives. This gives each audience member equal voice and equal ability to contribute in a marketplace of ideas. The telos of the critical analysis, instead of aiming to gather power into a new place, acts only to keep power circulating through narrative discourse.

I agree with Fisher (1987a) that narratives can allow marginalized voices to be heard and to critique the status quo. However, rather than attempting to measure the

relative truth of their stories, audiences—and rhetorical critics as audience members—should identify modes of shifting, gaining, and retaining power in a constant critique of discursive formations (McKerrow, 1989). I also agree with Fisher that narrative rhetorical analysis is not limited to skilled professionals as it is in the rational world paradigm. Rather, my extension of the narrative paradigm creates two possible levels of application: one from the members of the audience and one from the rhetorical critic—the "'specific' intellectual" in the audience that Foucault (1980) describes as "not the jurist or notable, but the savant or expert" (p. 128)… "whose specificity is linked, in a society like ours, to the general functioning of an apparatus of truth" (p. 132). Foucault emphasizes that

> It would be a dangerous error to discount [the 'specific' intellectual] politically in his specific relation to a local form of power, either on the grounds that this is a specialist matter which doesn't concern the masses (which is doubly wrong; they are already aware of it, and in any case implicated in it), or that the specific intellectual serves the interest of State or Capital (which is true, but at the same time shows the strategic position he occupies), or, again, on the grounds that he propagates a scientific ideology (which isn't always true, and is anyway certainly a secondary matter compared with the fundamental point: the effects proper to true discourses. (1980, p. 131)

I maintain that both the audience and the rhetorical critic as an audience member "can operate and struggle at the general level of that régime of truth which is so essential to the structure and functioning of our society." (Foucault, 1980, p. 132). The "'specific' intellectual" may bring a deeper understanding of narrative construction or a more-complete analysis of power depiction because of research skills or clarity of analysis.

However, my method invites *all* audience members to use the ontological foundations of the narrative paradigm to participate more completely in a narrative criticism that can increase their conception of a truth which can actively change their lives at the individual level by exposing the power structures implicit in society.

Foucault contends that this action is key to understanding the role of discourse in relation to power and knowledge:

> Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance for the concept's complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it. (1980, p. 100-101; cited in McKerrow, 1989, p. 98)

Here Foucault describes a role for audiences and rhetorical critics, one that still gives them a definite *prescriptive* purpose: to uncover the places where discourse "transmits," "exposes," and "renders fragile" power.

More important, though, is Foucault's choice of the term *thwart*. Ultimately, critics should work to resist the totalization of power. However, "Foucault is not seeking a particular normative structure—critique is not about the business of moving us toward perfection" (McKerrow, 1989, p. 97). Rather, critics must consciously continue to push against the inherent powers that control audiences. Consequently, the "truth" at which an audience can arrive (with or without the assistance of the rhetorical critic) is in the daily action of understanding the ever-changing human condition—the constant

reconfiguration of power—through the constant examination of ever-changing narratives. Derrida (1982) supports this assertion: The amalgamation of syntagmas creates new knowledge in the form of a new narrative "which also corresponds to whatever always has resisted the…organization of forces, which always has constituted the *remainder* irreducible to the dominant force which organized the…logocentric hierarchy" (p. 329-330, italics in original). An audience's intensive examination of these issues can only lead to more creative and constructive forms of resistance (Biesecker, 1992). Moreover, Phillips (2002) contends that the "spaces for emergence" of resistance are also "spaces of invention" that allow a resolution among power, knowledge, and the subjectivity (context) in which Foucauldian theory demands the narrator and audience work (p. 332). These "spaces of invention" are the areas necessary to continue the (re)formation of narratives.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have elaborated a method of narrative rhetorical criticism that emphasizes audience participation in the construction and understanding of narratives rather than focusing on more traditional, narrator-centered stories. First, the critic as an audience member locates and identifies a symbol (phrase, term, object, sign) that consistently appears in different narratives or narrative fragments (iterations). Next, the critic uses the recurrences of the symbol to create/reveal a narrative that ostensibly dominates other narratives. Then the critic constructs one or more alternative narratives that open spaces for resistance to the dominant narrative. Finally, the critic describes the relationship between this dominant narrative and the stagnation or movement of power caused by this story.

Through the shift in emphasis from *homo narrans* to *homo attendens*, audiences and rhetorical critics can critique aspects of that society and enhance it epistemologically in a self-reflexive, autonomous exercise that emphasizes their cognitive being. Derrida (1982) notes: "…[T]his operation of supplementation is not exhibited as a break in presence, but rather as a reparation and a continuous, homogenous modification of presence in representation" (p. 313). When audiences and critics acknowledge that no one can escape the power structure, they can begin to use Foucauldian analysis in various ways to create a more dynamic society. They can spend fruitful time finding the actual sources of power and uncovering the relationships among the various sources of this power. Since no one "authoritative discourse" exists, critics must describe as many narratives as possible to enlighten other members of the society (Danaher, Schirato, & Webb, 2000, p. 77). Audiences must constantly search for innovative ways to resist power. In heeding the messages of narrators and rhetorical critics, they can resist power and create shifts in the power structures in society.

In Chapter Three, I will act as an audience member and rhetorical critic to discover, create, and explore narratives surrounding sanctuary cities in the United States. Through these stories, I will reveal the nature of power in regard to immigration issues and offer observations about where this power exists and how characters in the narratives act to accumulate and/or transfer this power.

CHAPTER THREE

THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN THE "SANCTUARY CITIES" MOVEMENT

"If one wants to look for a non-disciplinary form of power, or rather, to struggle against disciplines and disciplinary power, it is not towards the ancient rights of sovereignty that one should turn, but towards the possibility of a new form of right, one which must indeed be anti-disciplinarian, but at the same time liberated from the principle of sovereignty."

   --Michel Foucault, 1980, p. 108

Republican candidates for the U.S. presidency in the autumn of 2007 began to use the term *sanctuary cities* as a focal point for their various positions on illegal immigration. In its broadest sense, a sanctuary city is one that has made an overt discursive statement in the form of a policy or a resolution that may assist illegal immigrants. In a St. Petersburg, Florida, Republican candidate debate hosted by CNN and YouTube.com on November 28, former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney accused former New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani of making New York a sanctuary city for illegal immigrants in a 1993 mayoral proclamation (Cooper & Santora, 2007, p. A1). Giuliani retorted that, because Romney used a landscaping firm that hired illegal immigrants to work for the state of Massachusetts while he was governor, Romney was running a "sanctuary mansion" (Cooper & Santora, 2007, p. A1). Hendler (2007)

proposes that the first use of the term by a Republican presidential candidate occurred in August, 2007 when Representative Tom Tancredo, whose platform leaned heavily on tightening illegal immigration, stated: "The fact that Newark, New Jersey [sic] is a sanctuary city for illegal aliens is well known […]. Their policies are a violation of federal law." With an estimated 12 million illegal immigrants in the United States (Wucker, 2007)—an increase of four million since the 2000 census (Seghetti, Vina, & Ester, 2006, p. 29)—Congress also began to discuss the suitability of sanctuary cities in relation to federal immigration policies. House Resolution 3531 advocated withholding "up to 50 percent" of anti-terrorism funding to jurisdictions that had declared themselves sanctuaries for illegal immigrants and allocated one billion dollars to pay for state and local detention of illegal immigrants (Sifuentes, 2007).[13]

Though sanctuary cities have suddenly come to the forefront in the discourse of policymakers and the media, they have existed since at least the mid-1980s. In 1985, Los Angeles was the first city to use the term *sanctuary city*. The city council appropriated the term from the Sanctuary movement, "a network of people…based on the ancient Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition of providing sanctuary for refugees" (Wuthnow & Evans, 2002, p. 368). The movement in the United States began as an act of civil disobedience at a Presbyterian Church in Tuscon, Arizona, when, after listening to harrowing tales of torture and escape from Salvadorans, Pastor John Fife addressed his congregation: "Your government says these people are illegal aliens. It is your civic duty when you know about their status to turn them in to the INS. What do you think the faith requires of you?" (Hollyday & Wallis, 1985, p. 17; cited in Tooley, 1987, p. 121).

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[13] The legislation failed.

The L.A. city council moved the protest from church to state in a resolution to lend its support to the refugees from Guatemala and El Salvador who were escaping civil wars in their home countries. The council's Intergovernmental Affairs Committee declared that "an individual's immigration or citizenship status should not be a consideration in whether to provide public services" (Merina, 1985a, p. A9). The committee also limited the power of the police in turning over illegal immigrants to "federal authorities" (Merina, 1985a, p. A9). The resolution only served to underscore the status quo Los Angeles Police Department policy (Merina, 1985a, p. A9). Both before and after the resolution, the police could "notify the immigration service only if an immigrant suspect has been booked for multiple misdemeanors, a high-grade misdemeanor, such as some forms of drunk driving or prostitution, or a felony offense" (Merina, 1985b). In an interesting mix of local, national, and international political positioning, the city council's action was meant to send a message to the Reagan administration that it was mishandling U.S. political asylum policy, though the council's resolution did not appear to contradict federal immigration law (Merina, 1985b, p. C1).

Discursive Power: The Iterability of *Sanctuary Cities*

Haberman (2007) observes that "[2007] is the year when 'sanctuary' became a dirty word. It used to sound so lovely, didn't it?" (p. B1). Haberman spends few words telling his readers the story of the transition from positive to negative connotation in the public arena. Yet his words *do* imply that Americans now see (or *should* see) sanctuary cities as somehow un-American. Neither policymakers nor journalists have made the effort to define the differences among the rhetorical uses of *sanctuary cities* or describe the discursive patterns that have suddenly launched the term from relative linguistic

obscurity to national prominence (Luo, Bennett, & Kirkpatrick, 2007). In narrative parlance, the audience receives an incomplete story. Moreover, much of the discourse surrounding sanctuary cities arises from the Derridean "iterability" of the term. Everyone who has used the term *sanctuary cities* since its origination in the discourse of the Los Angeles City Council has syntagmatically lifted it and inserted it into different narratives. Behind each of these discursive turns lies an attempt to keep, create, or shift power. In this chapter, I frame the narratives and narrative components of presidential candidates, the media, and the United States government as instruments of power. Specifically, I will use Foucauldian implications in regard to sovereignty.

My role as a critic of narrative discourse lies in producing a narrative analysis of power that I outlined in Chapter Two. In doing so, I hope to affirm Foucault's general role of the intellectual not "to criticize the ideological contents supposedly linked to science, or to ensure that his own…practice is accompanied by a correct ideology…", but to "ascertain[…] the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth" (1980, p. 132-133). Specifically, I will scrutinize the discursive use of the term *sanctuary cities* in extant narratives and create a new narrative that assists audiences in understanding power and creating resistance to that power through discourse in hopes of finding a "new politics of truth."

I examined over 200 artifacts, including articles from the *Boston Globe*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Times*, and the *Los Angeles Times* from July to December 2007. I selected these newspapers based on two criteria: first, they are national in scope and readership; second, they exist in jurisdictions that have declared themselves sanctuary cities. I also examined Associated Press Wire Reports from the same time

period because many local and regional newspapers use this service for their national

pages. I also viewed 72 resolutions, proclamations, and policy announcements from

jurisdictions in the United States that have named themselves sanctuary cities, counties,

or states or have policies that would identify them as jurisdictions with tendencies toward

sanctuary status. This included 61 cities, six counties, four states, and the District of

Columbia. Finally, I used a snapshot of the first ten hits of a Google search for "sanctuary

cit*" from December 2007 to analyze a selection of websites and blogs that use the term.

Through these artifacts, I identified iterations of the term *sanctuary cities* and used these

as narrative components to reveal a dominant narrative.[14] I then constructed an

alternative narrative using the same or similar artifacts.

<div align="center">**Narratives Using** *Sanctuary Cities*</div>

The Dominant Narrative: Disciplining Sanctuary Cities

   The dominant narrative told in the mainstream media by journalists and

Republican presidential candidates is the story of the conflict between sanctuary cities

and the United States government. Walker (2007) observes:

> This seemingly benign term has become a lightning rod in the debate. To
>
> supporters of immigration, it implies accepting immigrants with open arms. To
>
> opponents, it smacks of endorsing porous borders and ignoring laws. There is
>
> apparently no acceptable middle between these extremes.

The story is a melodrama in which the personified characters of *sanctuary cities* and

federal government are clearly delineated ("bad" and "good," respectively) and relatively

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[14] McQuillin (2000) calls a dominant narrative a "movement towards an imaginary closure…through editing out narrative material" (p. 22). I as a critic do not create a dominant narrative. It exists in the public forum through numerous iterations.

flat. Any identifying features of the cities are removed to make the melodrama effective. The setting is literally the entire country, since cities throughout the United States have declared their positions through proclamations and policies. The plot is simple: the antagonistic sanctuary cities harbor illegal immigrants who somehow harm the United States as a whole.

The local-federal legislative conflict is supported by various definitions that the media provide for sanctuary cities. Fundamentally, these cities assist persons who reside in the United States illegally. Sanctuary cities "forgo strict enforcement of immigration laws, instructing police and other governmental agencies not to inquire about a person's immigration status when providing services" ("Romney campaign," 2007). Farrington (2007a) reports that sanctuary cities are ones in which "city employees are not required to report illegal immigrants to federal authorities." In a rewrite of the same story several hours later, Farrington (2007b) rephrases the definition to reflect an earlier definition provided by another Associated Press article: sanctuary cities have policies "where city workers are *barred* [italics added] from reporting suspected illegal immigrants who enroll their children in school or seek hospital treatment" (see also "Thompson vows crackdown," 2007).

What is missing from the dominant narrative may be as telling as what is present. The narrative does not give the harms, the motivation, or the transfer of "goods and wealth" to create the sanctuary cities' role as the antagonist and to force their oppression by the federal government. If sovereignty protects material interests, the audience ought to hear narrative components that describe the fiscal impacts of illegal immigrants in the context of sanctuary cities. Yet no Republican candidate or article about a candidate's

platform discusses economic issues surrounding sanctuary cities. Moreover, no article mentions increased terrorism threats due to cities' refusals to report illegal immigrants to federal authorities. Though that seems to be the motive behind legislation to take away anti-terrorism funding from sanctuary cities, no news article makes that narrative link. Instead, the audience hears more stories from the campaign trail alluding to increases in crime caused by illegal immigrants. For example, in a feature article on Tancredo, Barabak (2007) recounts an Iowa interview with voters who are concerned about illegal immigration:

 "All over Iowa you see pockets of these changes and that makes people nervous," said Steve Grubbs, a GOP pollster and former chairman of the Iowa Republican Party.

Or as Goldford put it, "People say, 'I grew up in this town. Why do I see Spanish signs everywhere?'"

Crime and drug abuse are nothing new in rural Iowa. But the problem has become worse in some places, and that has fueled the immigration debate.

"I knew when they started coming here we were in for trouble," Diane Watson of Altoona said of the growing Latino population. She left California more than 30 years ago after seeing "what happens when they move in five and six families in one home."

A vote for Tancredo is one way for Watson to register her upset. He won her over with his tough-but-amiable talk at the Quality Inn. "I think he's an honest man," she said. "He wants to protect our country." (p. A10)

Accordingly, the end of the article leaves the audience still wondering about what the country needs protection from, yet the implication exists that increased numbers of illegal immigrants will increase criminal activity in an area. Barabak and the interviewees never establish a link between increases in "crime and drug abuse" and illegal immigration, though they imply it.

Furthermore, neither Barabak nor the interviewees connects sanctuary cities with the harms associated with the illegal immigration scenario they describe, though Tancredo does support the role of sanctuary cities as antagonists by stating that he would "bring criminal cases—aiding and abetting—against mayors and city council members who establish 'sanctuary cities' that prevent city employees from cooperating with federal immigration agents" (Barabak, 2007, p. A10). Another correlation to cast sanctuary cities in an antagonistic light occurs in the *Washington Times* when Tancredo links the alleged killing of three young adults in Newark, New Jersey, by an illegal immigrant with the city's sanctuary status:

> Jose Carranza, the man charged with the three execution-style murders, is a career violent criminal, who was only on the streets because he was out on bail for sexually abusing a 5-year old.

> But of course, Carranza was a criminal before he was ever charged with rape or murder. He's an illegal alien, drawn to this community because of Mr. Booker's policy of declaring Newark a "sanctuary city," in which illegal immigrants will never be identified or prosecuted—that is, in which federal laws will not be enforced. (Tancredo, 2007)

A Google search for "sanctuary cit*" takes the audience to websites that ostensibly narrate the harms of illegal immigration.[15] The Ohio Jobs & Justice Political Action Committee, the first hit in the Google search, gives links to stories that show that illegal immigrants kill U.S. citizens, burn U.S. flags, addict U.S. citizens to illicit substances, drive under the influence of alcohol, and steal identities (Ohio). The omission of any harms other than crime, though, tells part of the story. The website provides no links to prove any economic harms of illegal immigration, and this notion assists in completing the description of "sanctuary cities" and/or illegal immigrants as characters. Though anti-illegal immigration candidates and websites may imply economic harms (see, e.g., Cramer & Paige, 2007), only conflicting evidence exists (Alsalam & Smith, 2005).[16] The audience, then, is left to add a narrative component syntagmatically in the dominant narrative —a city scheming to break federal mandates and harbor violent criminals.

An Alternative Narrative: Sanctuary Cities as Spaces for Resistance

City policies in reference to illegal immigration issues reflect a dialogic narrative (see Bakhtin, 1981, 1984) in which the polyphonic narration of the texts reveal the cities as protagonists in conflict against the antagonistic federal Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).[17] Dialogic narrative is "characterized by the interaction of several voices, consciousnesses, or world views none of which is superior to (has more authority than) the others" (Prince, 2003, p. 18). This narrative tells the audience that

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[15] See Appendix.

[16] New illegal immigrants displace other foreign-born immigrants in low-skilled and low-paying jobs in a cycle that is as old as the United States (Alsalam & Smith, 2005).

[17] The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the U.S. Customs Service were merged under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) shortly after the attacks of September 11, 2001 (Seghetti, Vina, & Ester, 2006).

using city resources for the control of illegal immigration takes the power for crime

control (a city issue) from the cities and cedes that power to the federal government for

the detention and deportation of illegal immigration (a federal issue). Through this power

shift, crime increases because illegal immigrants who are victims and witnesses to crime

do not cooperate with the local police for fear of deportation.

A resolution by the city of Boston serves to introduce the first part of this

narrative:

> The Boston City Council opposes any efforts to transfer federal immigration
>
> responsibility to state and local officials, since these proposals might damage
>
> relationships with immigrant communities. Asking local law enforcement to
>
> check immigration status would tax our already overburdened police department
>
> and might also make immigrants more fearful of cooperating with law
>
> enforcement and reporting crime…. (City of Boston, 2006)

Embedded in this narrative of "damaged relationships" is the story of raids by the ICE to

round up and deport illegal immigrants. Eight sanctuary policies and resolutions—

Richmond, Virginia, St. Paul, Minnesota, the state of Montana, Highstown and Trenton,

New Jersey, the State of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and New York City—

mandate that police departments separate themselves or refuse to participate in these raids

(National Immigration Law Center, 2007). Richmond, Virginia's, resolution specifically

> calls for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers conducting
>
> any future official business in Richmond to clearly and specifically identify
>
> themselves as federal immigration officers and to proactively and clearly state

that they are not officers of the Richmond Police Department…. (City of

Richmond, 2007).

A narrative from a suburb of Boston serves to illustrate the narrative link between raids

and sanctuary cities:

Two months after becoming a "sanctuary city" last June, Chelsea was the

site of two federal raids on illegal immigrants accused of criminal activity in

connection with a street gang and three identity fraud rings.

Local advocates for immigrants, despite their support for raids against

criminals, argued that federal officials chose Chelsea to send a message against

sanctuary cities, even though US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE,

officials stated that both raids were part of ongoing investigations. […] In August,

when ICE enforcement officials arrested 27 Brazilian nationals connected to three

identity-fraud rings in the parking lot of a Chelsea supermarket, …some residents

panicked after hearing rumors that immigration officials were rounding up anyone

who entered the supermarket. (Conti, 2007)

Though they do not necessarily mention ICE raids explicitly, other policies have the same

narrative intent. An executive order from the City of Chicago states:

no city agent or agency shall request information about or otherwise investigate or

assist in the investigation of the citizenship or residency status of any person,

unless such inquiry or investigation is required by statute, ordinance, federal

regulation, or court decision….("Municipal Code," 1989).

The conditionality of this statement ("unless such inquiry or investigation is required by

statute, ordinance, federal regulation, or court decision") leads again to the question of

motivation in the narrative. The audience needs to have the satisfaction of understanding

the intent of the antagonistic federal government in forcing cities to comply with federal

law that *decreases* the ability of the cities to control crime. In other words, why would a

city pass an ordinance that, *prima facie*, supports federal law and yet be categorized in

the dominant narrative as a sanctuary city?

The answer lies in the fact that no comprehensive federal legislation exists to

empower state and local police to arrest illegal immigrants. Sanctuary cities policies are

an attempt to keep the power to stop any and all crime (as opposed to civil

misdemeanors) in the jurisdiction of state and local authorities. The Immigration and

Nationality Act (INA) legislates that "Mere illegal presence in the U.S. is a *civil*, not

criminal, violation…" (Seghetti, Vina, & Ester, 2006, p. 5; italics in original). The INA is

supported by U.S. Presidential administrations from 1978 to 1996 who reiterated that

civil arrests for immigration violations were a matter for federal authorities only

(Seghetti, Vina, & Ester, 2006). Furthermore, though it has the Constitutional power to

legislate that state and local police arrest illegal aliens, Congress has not done so.[18]

Instead, audiences must turn to another narrative to find the motivation for

oppression from the federal level—the story of the United States shortly after the 9/11

attacks. In an attempt to decrease the risk of further attacks, government officials looked

to control the entire illegal immigrant population. However, rather than encouraging

Congressional legislation, the federal government worked through the United States

Department of Justice to increase its control of state and local law enforcement to assist

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[18] Members of Congress with large numbers of illegal immigrants in their districts do not support
legislation to decrease illegal immigration (Gilot, 2006).

in the endeavor. Attorney General John Ashcroft released a new opinion from the

Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel stating that

> When federal, state and local law enforcement officers encounter an *alien of*
>
> *national security concern* who has been listed on the NCIC [the Federal Bureau of
>
> Investigation's National Criminal Information Center] for violating immigration
>
> law, federal law permits them to arrest that person and transfer him to the custody
>
> of the INS. The Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel has concluded that
>
> this narrow, limited mission that we are asking state and local police to undertake
>
> voluntarily — arresting aliens who have violated criminal provisions of the
>
> Immigration and Nationality Act or *civil provisions* [italics added] that render an
>
> alien deportable, and who are listed on the NCIC — is within the inherent
>
> authority of states. (Federal News Service, 2002; cited in Seghetti, Vina, & Ester,
>
> 2006, p. 8).[19]

The first key phrase in this passage is "alien of national security concern," which is

intended to describe persons like the ones implicated in the 9/11 attacks. The second key

phrase is "civil provisions," which then conflates civil and criminal provision of the

Immigration and Nationality Act through reference to the Absconder Apprehension

Initiative—a move aimed specifically at "several thousand" illegal immigrants "from

countries in which there has been Al Qaeda terrorist presence or activity" and who,

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[19] "Section 372 of IIRIRA [Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996] amended INA §103(a) to allow the AG to call upon state and local police in an immigration emergency (8 U.S.C. §1103(a)). […] Thus, under 8 U.S.C. §1103(a)(8), state and local officers may exercise the civil or criminal arrest powers of federal immigration officers (1) when expressly authorized by the AG; (2) when given consent by the head of the state or local law enforcement agency; and (3) upon the AG's determination of an emergency due to a mass influx of aliens. Any authority given by the AG to state law enforcement officers under this provision can only be exercised during the emergency situation" (Seghetti, Vina, & Ester, 2006, p. 15).

during the course of deportation proceedings, have not reported to their dispositional

hearings (see Office of the Deputy Attorney General, 2002). However, the ICE raids do

not reflect the roundup of "terrorists" in an emergency situation. Rather they reflect the

federal government acting to control illegal immigrants through coercive fear tactics

aimed at local police authorities.

<center>**Analysis: Resistance to Sovereign Power**</center>

When I view the dominant narrative of *sanctuary cities* through the Foucauldian

theory of power, I find the United States federal government as the sovereign protagonist

who must punish the sanctuary cities or risk further harm. Foucault (1980) asserts:

> The theory of sovereignty is something which refers to the displacement and
>
> appropriation on the part of power, not of time and labour, but of goods and
>
> wealth. It allows discontinuous obligations distributed over time to be given legal
>
> expression …. (p. 104)

"Discontinuous obligations" in the context of the *sanctuary cities* discourse are the

implied mandates of federalism that compel states to create and enforce policies to

support federal policies. A clear description of these "discontinuous obligations" comes

from almost every artifact describing the dominant narrative. The "unlawful" sanctuary

cities act against the will of the sovereign power represented by federal immigration law.

In this position of adhering to (what the audience supposes is) the letter of the law, the

cities are *obliged* to follow federal policies.

With this move of the federal government, *all* illegal immigrants are caught up in

the web of power that has no relation to "goods and wealth" since its construction neither

supports nor degrades the material (economic) existence of either the illegal immigrants or U.S. citizens. Instead, federal policies are

> a mechanism of power which permits time and labour…to be extracted from bodies. It is a type of power which is constantly exercised by means of surveillance rather than in a discontinuous manner by means of a system of levies or obligations distributed over time. It presupposes a tightly knit grid of material coercions rather than the physical existence of a sovereign. It is ultimately dependent upon the principle, which introduces a genuinely new economy of power, that one must be able simultaneously both to increase the subjected forces and to improve the force and efficacy of that which subjects them. (Foucault, 1980, p. 104)

The federal government uses the "time and labour" of state and local police forces to provide surveillance for anti-terrorist activities under the guise of enforcing immigration law. The "material coercions" take the form of the punitive federal policies that would eliminate funding to sanctuary cities for anti-terrorist activities rather than sending actual federal personnel to enforce federal immigration law.

Moreover, the power that the presidential candidates and other federal authorities want to gain over sanctuary cities is sovereignty meant to discipline those cities within the norms established at the federal level, presumably to provide U.S. citizens protection from crime. Foucault (1980) contends: "The juridical systems…have enabled sovereignty to be democratized through the constitution of a public right articulated upon collective sovereignty, while at the same time the democratization of sovereignty was fundamentally determined by and grounded in mechanisms of disciplinary coercion" (p.

105). At the dominant narrative level, the sole reason for oppressing sanctuary cities, then, is to keep their inhabitants in subjugation to the sovereign federal system of government of the United States.

Conclusion

I have shown, as an audience member and as a rhetorical critic, that an alternative to the dominant narrative of sanctuary cities exists—a narrative that uses Derridean iterability and Foucauldian analysis of the movement of power to reveal sanctuary cities as modes of physical and discursive resistance to federal domination of state and local policing issues. In creating this alternative, I do not assume that it "competes" with the dominant narrative. Indeed, I have taken components from several other alternative narratives that diegetically exist within both the dominant narrative and the alternative narrative. I agree with McQuillin (2000) in that

> A resisting narrative strand is not necessarily in opposition to a dominant
> narrative strand, only the illusion of the figure of closure makes it appear so. The
> semantic value-judgment implied in the relation of "resistance" and "power" is
> not necessarily a condition of the virtual means of narrative production, although
> the process of dominant and excluded force relations certainly is. It is only when
> the production of narrative is enacted by real others that the ethically determined
> weight of this vocabulary is applicable. Of course, this means that it is applicable
> to every instance of narrative production, because such production can never be
> exterior to the real others of an inter-subjective life-praxis. (p.27)

Through this "production of narrative" that "is enacted by real others," we, as story gatherers, must sift through narratives and create our own versions of stories using

elements of artifacts—syntagmas— that themselves may not have narrative form. Key to the creation of these new stories is iterability—the repetitive use of symbols that hold narrative meaning. Ontologically, this narrativity provides a structure that creates new knowledge through the (re)use and (re)amalgamation of symbols. Thus, by constructing a narrative of sanctuary cities using artifacts from city policymakers, we can see the capillarity of federal power that reaches from Washington, D.C., to towns and cities throughout the country. Moreover, we can see how narratives like this one can work to open spaces of resistance to federal coercion and shift the power to manage crime back into the hands of local authorities.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPLICATIONS OF SHIFTING THE NARRATIVE PARADIGM

In this thesis I extend Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm and recontextualize narrative theory in relation to post-structural rhetorical analysis. In the first chapter, I reviewed narrative theory from Aristotle through post-structuralism and accepted the tenets of New Historicism, which advocates the (re)telling of stories using literature as a foundation to describe the circulation of power in specific historical periods. New Historicism critics create new stories about the form and function of literary production by examining non-literary documents within the context of a literary artifact. Often they use the power theory of Michel Foucault to frame their analyses.

In Chapter Two, I challenged two assumptions in Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm in order to establish a new approach to narrative rhetorical theory. First, although Fisher claims his "logic of good reasons" can reach an objective truth, it cannot because of the relative nature of value hierarchies. Second, a narrator-driven theory such as Fisher's invites ideological domination and no recourse for an audience other than acceptance or rejection of a narrative. I then proposed a shift in emphasis in the narrative paradigm from the narrator to the audience, empowering audience members to take the dominant narrative and create their own stories using both narrative components and other signs that may not be viewed as traditional narrative components. This act

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substantially decreases the role of the authoritarian narrator by providing an infinite number of alternative narratives.

Furthermore, I advocated replacing the "logic of good reasons" with Foucault's theory of power. Rather than attempting to find a winning narrative, audience members can describe the movements of power caused by—and revealed by—the various narratives associated with a dominant narrative. This act creates a horizontal rather than a vertical arrangement of narratives and better reflects the foundational position of narrative in human existence. No narrative is necessarily more valuable than another.

In Chapter Three, I applied this method to discourse surrounding the sanctuary cities movement in the United States. By viewing media articles that include the term "sanctuary city" written during the Republican Presidential nomination campaign in the fall of 2007, I constructed two narratives. The dominant narrative construed sanctuary cities as antagonists who sought to break federal immigration laws by harboring illegal immigrants. The alterative narrative revealed the sanctuary cities' police forces as protagonists who could not enforce federal immigration law because that action risked increasing local crime by estranging the illegal immigrant population.

Reconstructing the Narrative Paradigm with Deconstruction

I agree with Fisher on several key points in the narrative paradigm. Viewing human actions in the framework of stories rather than in the traditional rational-world paradigm of deductive and inductive logic provides an ontological structure that infinitely expands the possibilities for the participation of marginalized populations. However, the fact that I still use the term *marginalized populations* suggests an otherization that Fisher does not fully attempt to reconcile.

In extending the application of the narrative paradigm, I argue that rhetorical critics should disregard the presuppositions of narrative fidelity and narrative probability to alleviate the difficulties of the authoritarian narrator. By employing the Derridean theory of iterability, I shift the emphasis of narrative analysis from the narrator to the audience. In allowing audiences to exchange narrative components syntagmatically, I empower members to construct limitless alternative narratives. McQuillin (2000) suggests that "This 'plurality of resistances' merely represents the network of differential relations, which place the singular narrative-mark within the non-saturable communal narrative matrix" (p. 27). This proposal guarantees the multiplicity of narrators and audiences that Fisher (1987a) implies with his statement that the narrative paradigm should reflect "a praxis consonant with an ideal egalitarian society" (p. 64).

Furthermore, I argue that critics should employ Foucauldian analysis of power in narratives to suggest opportunities for resistance to the dominant narrative espoused by any single narrator. Contemporaneously, these new narratives can work to describe discursive instruments of oppression. Foucault (1980) dictates that discursive analysis should be

> concerned with power at its extremities, in its ultimate destination, with those points where it becomes capillary, that is, in its more regional and local forms and institutions. Its paramount concern, in fact, should be with the point where power surmounts the rules of right which organize and delimit it and extends itself beyond them, invests itself in institutions, becomes embodied in techniques, and equips itself with instruments and eventually even violent means of material intervention. (p. 96)

Since the narrative form, as Fisher contends, gives voice to all persons, then the diegetic nature of narrativity becomes an appropriate framework to guide audiences and critics alike in discovering and describing the capillarity of power. This is not to say that we should search for the mythic beginnings of a story to find power. Instead, we should see that the explosion of information that has defined the beginning of this century permits the production of infinitely more stories at the micro-narrative level.

Moreover, this thesis uses narrative to inform postmodern rhetorical theory, to shape it without compromising its ability to decenter and problematize communication acts. Derrida contends that "Deconstruction does not consist in passing from one concept to another, but in overturning and displacing a conceptual order, as well as the nonconceptual order with which the conceptual order is articulated" (1982, p. 329). In acting to overturn/displace "conceptual order," narrative rhetorical theory functions pragmatically to assist humans in changing/improving their lives.

It is in this practical application that narrativity in rhetorical criticism differs substantially from other academic fields. Much of the study of narrative in linguistics, literature, sociology, and anthropology keeps carefully to the deconstructive path. Josselson (2006) notes:

> The practice of narrative research, rooted in postmodernism, is always interpretive, at every stage. From framing the conceptual question through choosing the participants, deciding what to ask them, with what phrasing, transcribing from spoken language to text, understanding the verbal locutions, making sense of the meanings thus encoded, to deciding what to attend to and to highlight — the work is interpretive at every point. (p. 3-4)

Nevertheless, these academic fields focus on the appropriate acquisition of appropriate knowledge, looking for a meta-theory that will conceptualize the millions of pages of narratives they have collected. Josselson (2006) argues that "If we don't do this, we are in danger of drowning in a tsunami of solipsistic studies that we are unable to assimilate" (p. 5). Conversely, narrative rhetorical criticism concentrates on the use of symbols to create/reveal stories and make them usable to audiences within a rhetorical exigency.

Furthermore, other academic fields tend to see narrative as a tool "rooted in interpretive hermeneutics and phenomenology" (Josselson, 2006, p. 3). However, this denies both the essential status that narrative holds and the goal that post-structuralism maintains. Humans as *homo attendens* describes their essential nature. If a meta-theory exists about humans, it is that they tell stories to gain some sort of power over others and attend to stories to shift that power. It is in this description of the human condition that we find the functional use of narrative.

Pedagogical and Methodological Implications

Campbell (1974) outlines two specific goals of rhetorical criticism: the "ephemeral" criticism of "contemporary events" and the "enduring" contributions of scholarly advances in rhetorical theory. In describing the latter, she argues that "What must be specified are the factors that constitute critical excellence and the critical outcomes or objectives that contribute to rhetorical theory. At this level, criticism and theory are indistinguishable" (p. 11). While Fisher's contributions, especially in the area of ontologically-grounding narrative theory, do much to advance rhetorical theory, the narrative paradigm cannot fully achieve Campbell's criterion of "critical excellence" because of the pedagogical and methodological dilemmas the narrative paradigm creates.

Since Fisher never outlines a specific, unifying method of application for the narrative paradigm, he leaves teachers of rhetorical criticism a difficult position to support. By basing so much of their content on Fisher's presuppositions, communication studies professors often limit the approaches that students of rhetorical criticism may follow. Foss (2004), for example, outlines the standard narrative components of setting, characters, plot, and temporal/causal relations. However, she spends the greatest space urging budding rhetorical critics to analyze the narrator: "What kinds of powers are available to the narrator? What kind of authority does the narrator claim? What is the point of view adopted by the narrator?...Is the narrator omniscient…? Is the narrator omnipresent…?" (p. 336). Yet Foss, like Fisher, gives no standards to determine such immeasurable actions. When she approaches the audience, she offers only about 100 words of questions, some of which involve the analysis of the narrator's approach to evaluating the disposition of the audience—a neo-Aristotelian maneuver that does not reflect the relative influence of narrative theory on rhetorical criticism. As this thesis supports, looking to an authoritarian narrator to qualify the disposition of the analysis is a fruitless endeavor.

This observation is not to say that using qualitative analysis to find themes in narratives does not add to the knowledge base. My previous discussion of Josselson (2006) suggests that scholars in various fields, including rhetorical criticism, use narrativity to accomplish this goal. Foss (2004) uses Hollihan and Riley's (2004/1987) analysis of "Toughlove" stories as an example of narrative rhetorical criticism, and the authors methodologically approach some of the same issues that I support in this thesis. For example, "…individual tales [told by interviewees] were interwoven to explain the

'good reasons' for abandoning the predominant rival story—the modern approach to child-rearing" (p. 348). This approach allows the rhetorical critics to syntagmatically create new narratives. However, in creating *unifying* themes from the narratives, they assume the role of an authoritarian narrator searching for a competing story to *replace* the dominant narrative. They use Fisher (1984) to support their assumption that "if a rival story cannot capture people's self-conceptions, it does not matter whether or not it is 'fact'" (Hollihan & Riley, 2004/1987, p. 353). This analysis leads to the same conclusions that I have already made in reference to the Fisher's (1987a) criticism of Ronald Reagan. Accordingly, Hollihan and Riley produce a modernist analysis of winning and losing narratives based on competing value systems ("supportive" versus "unsupportive" parental actions in child rearing).

Other scholars use fragments of Fisher's original presuppositions, creating methods that do not reflect the narrative paradigm at all. For example, Arrington and Goodier (2004) in their analysis of cancer narratives on a television program only use "narrative probability" and "narrative fidelity." They ignore the inclusion of oppressed voices and the appeal to values. In an ironic turn that suggests the fundamental problem with adhering to the message of any single narrator, Bush and Bush (1994) use Fisher's "logic of good reasons" component as a standard to recommend to advertisers which narratives would better sell their products. They suggest that advertising executives should concentrate their audience analysis on finding ways to tell stories that do not conflict with audience values. In other words, their success in applying the narrative paradigm rests on whether they can convince people to buy products they do not need, an ethically dubious action at best.

Paradigmatic Implications

In re-evaluating and extending Fisher's narrative paradigm, we must look to the meaning of *paradigm* itself to assist in describing this contribution to the field of communication studies. Kuhn's (1996) discussion of epistemological advances in science guides my approach to situating both Fisher's and my endeavors. According to Kuhn (1996) a time of crisis ensues after a period of relative stagnation in advancing knowledge. This critical point, and the research and application it causes, assists in promoting a "revolution" that leads to a paradigmatic shift—a development that removes the fundamental inertia within an academic field. Kuhn (1996) suggests two distinct uses of the term *paradigm*. The first is the "exemplar," a specific theoretical discovery such as Newton's gravitational theory or Franklin's theory of the movement of electricity. The second use of *paradigm* is what Kuhn calls the "disciplinary matrix" wherein the academic community uses the theoretical base of the first definition of *paradigm* as a foundation for furthering both the theory and the application of the paradigm.

Fisher's contribution is the first description of *paradigm*, the "exemplar" that occurs in the time of crisis caused by communications scholars adhering to neo-Aristotelian rhetorical criticism for a half-century.[20] Fisher's work calls for a fundamental change—a revolution—in our view of rhetoric and rhetorical criticism. Its position that supports the essentialism of narrativity is the radical change that Fisher gave rhetorical theorists and rhetorical critics. Yet, as I point out in Chapter Two, Fisher's applications of his theory reveals that narrative praxis had not caught up with narrative presumption.

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[20] See Campbell (1974) for a description of that particular crisis of rhetorical criticism.

My work in this thesis falls into Kuhn's second definition of *paradigm*. In discussing the "disciplinary matrix," Kuhn (1996) is quick to point out that "the fact that [scholars] accept [the exemplar] without question and use it as a point at which to introduce logical…manipulation does not of itself imply that they agree at all about such matters as meaning and application" (p. 188). I accept Fisher's exemplar; however, I do not unquestioningly concur with Fisher's entire position. Instead, I hope I have moved narrative rhetorical theory closer to Campbell's (1974) "factors that constitute critical excellence" (p. 11) and that other scholars of rhetorical criticism will continue to advance the narrative paradigm.

APPENDIX

GOOGLE SEARCH FOR "SANCTUARY CIT*," DECEMBER 1, 2007

Sanctuary city, sanctuary, sanctuary city list, Ohio, jobs, OJJPAC ...
Formal sanctuary cities are the easiest to identify since their actions to ... One
justification of creating sanctuary cities is often under the guise of ...
www.ojjpac.org/sanctuary.asp - 32k - Cached - Similar pages

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Critics have argued that a large proportion of violent crimes in some sanctuary cities
result from this policy. 95% of outstanding homicide warrants in Los ...
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But sanctuary cities are in effect creating many different immigration jurisdictions. There
are cities in America where having no legal immigration status ...
www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,92966,00.html - 49k - Cached - Similar pages

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'Sanctuary Cities' Debate Helps Drive Agenda in Republican '08 Primary Race, In a
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With cities like Detroit handing out invitations to illegal immigrants by implementing
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The consequences of "sanctuary cities" may be most obvious in the city that became the
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'Sanctuary' cities for illegals draw ire | csmonitor.com
But dozens of cities say the policy aids police by making it easier for people to report
crimes.
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"If you look at lists compiled on Web sites of sanctuary cities, New York is at ... New York City was the poster child for sanctuary cities in the country. ...
abcnews.go.com/Politics/story?id=3459498&page=1 - Similar pages

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Behind the Bar: US Cities Provide Sanctuary to Illegals, Many American cities refuse to comply with federal immigration laws.
www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,92966,00.html - 49k - Cached - Similar pages

Cambridge immigrant sanctuary policy criticized - The Boston Globe
When Cambridge recently renewed its status as a sanctuary city for all immigrants, including undocumented ones, the news barely caused a stir around here.
www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2006/07/05/citys_sanctuary_status_mocked/ - Similar pages

'Sanctuary Cities Embrace Illegal Immigrants - HUMAN EVENTS
Sanctuary city policies defy guidelines from the 9/11 Commission Report, ... Cockrel also said that he expects the sanctuary city proposal to pass. ...
www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=20547 - 43k - Cached - Similar pages

The Illegal-Alien Crime Wave by Heather Mac Donald, City Journal ...
Why can't our immigration authorities deport the hordes of illegal felons in our cities? City Journal - Winter 2004.
www.city-journal.org/html/14_1_the_illegal_alien.html - 87k - Cached - Similar pages

Rep. Tom Tancredo, July 9, 2003
In a sanctuary city the police would not be allowed to make that call to the center, ... The sanctuary city phenomenon presents an amazing paradox. ...
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Formal sanctuary cities are the easiest to identify since their actions to become a
sanctuary city are public record. Click here to read one city's (Tulsa, ...
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Sanctuary City
A 'sanctuary city' is one whose leaders do not permit police or municipal employees to
inquire about the immigration status of those within the city limits, ...
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"We are a sanctuary city, make no mistake about it. ... The Board of Supervisors first
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[8] City councilor Ron Rice pointed to the city's sanctuary status and suggested that
Newark reconsider its sanctuary city status. ...
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Patterico's Pontifications - 15 hours ago by WLS
GOP CNN/YouTube Debate: Mitt & Rudy's Spat–Sanctuary City or ... - Crooks and
Liars - Nov 28, 2007 by Logan Murphy

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