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Public Intellectuals, Rhetorical Style and the Public Sphere: The Politics of Thinking Out Loud

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Public Intellectuals, Rhetorical Style and the Public Sphere: The Politics of Thinking Out Loud

by

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Dedication

To Tim

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Public Intellectuals, Rhetorical Style and the Public Sphere: The Politics of Thinking Out Loud

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Our public culture is rapidly shrinking: our nation is replete with residents instead of citizens. Part of the blame for the impoverishment of public life is the retreat and subsequent almost total isolation of intellectuals, those who put their deep training and experience to work in sociopolitical contexts in a public vernacular. The failure of most traditional intellectuals to reach a public audience is a failure of rhetoric; public intellectuals, on the other hand, mark rhetorical success in connecting the worlds of the public and the intellectual to advance change. This dissertation explores the interconnections between public intellectuals, rhetorical style and the public sphere to understand how and why public intellectuals are able to do what they do such that we may be able to encourage this work from others. Most importantly, this intersection may help explain how we can reclaim an active, democratic public sphere in the United States.

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Chapter 1: An Introduction to the Public Intellectual, Rhetorical Style and the Public Sphere

Before the presidential election in 2004, George W. Bush appeared on *The O'Reilly Factor*, a conservative talk show hosted by Bill O'Reilly on the Fox network. In one interview of the three-part series, O'Reilly asked Bush why so many egghead intellectuals were liberals. Bush responded with a laugh and shrug of his shoulders. Both men continued merrily to berate progressive intellectuals before turning to another, seemingly more "serious," topic of discussion. In this anti-intellectual era of microwave food, soundbites and videogames, the intricate and deliberate nature of intellectual work appears irrelevant.   What the Bush/O'Reilly narrative points to, though, is deeper than pure anti-intellectualism.[1] It represents a dangerous trend: intellectuals are no longer visible to much of the public, and their work, because of its specificity, narrowness and jargon, is inaccessible to much of the public.

A PUBLIC IN CRISIS

The major consequence of this disconnect between intellectual life and the public sphere is "unnoticed and profoundly damaging: the impoverishment of public culture" (Jacoby, 1982, p. ix).   Some may be skeptical of this link between the public activity of intellectuals and the health of society, but consider some examples. Two of the most prominent and successful social movements in the last half century have been led or energized by intellectuals: the Civil Rights movement and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the women's movement championed by Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem and other

feminists. Advances in science such as AZT and other drugs to treat HIV/AIDS, manned

space flight, the Internet, and hybrid automobiles have all been invented and made

available to many via the research and work of intellectuals. Literature and the arts are

enriched through intellectual efforts.

Is public culture really shrinking or is this just a bunch of brouhaha contrived by

social scientists to have something to talk about at dinner parties? Both. Yes, it makes

fascinating dinner conversation to talk about the "good old days" when people were

really involved in their communities. However, there exists striking evidence that a

public culture as we have known it is disappearing quickly. Political communication

scholar Rod Hart's work, *Seducing America: How Television Charms the Modern Voter*

and Robert Putnam's wildly successful *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of the*

American Community address this vanishing as the outcome of the rise of television.

And while I will never be as critical of television as either of the two aforementioned

intellectuals, I will argue that technology plays a role in shrinking our public culture.

For instance, because of the frightening lack of a paper trail with electronic voting

machines and the obvious potential for fraud, many political advocacy groups advise

voting via absentee ballot. So what? Voting is voting, is it not? Technically, yes.

However, when I was growing up, my parents used to take my sister and me down to the

local elementary school, library or other polling place and let us take part in the act of

voting. We saw neighbors and other community members, maybe had a cup of coffee,

talked about the elections with other people, and cast a ballot. There is a striking

difference between this community-sustaining event and filling out a bubble form from

inside the walls of your house by yourself. If my parents had just filled out a form and

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[1] Gitlin, T. (December 8, 2000). The Renaissance of Anti-Intellectualism. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved October 7, 2005 from http://chronicle.com/free/v47/i15/15b00701.htm

mailed it in, I doubt I would have a very strong memory about the importance of voting. And, I doubt I am alone. Other examples of this shrinking vitality of public culture exist in abundance: telecommuting workers who never see colleagues and may never leave the confines of their houses during a given day and feel deeply isolated because of it; people with relationships that exist solely in cyberspace; the feeling that there is so much information and noise that it is easier to ignore most or all of it than to try to dig in and engage; shrinking membership in social and community organizations and therefore, distinctly smaller social networks; garage door openers and ATMS that invite little to no interaction in public space. I could go on, but I think the idea is established. It was once said in music that "people who need people are the luckiest people in the world." It seems we are now an unlucky culture for our impoverishment.

Since colleges and universities are, in the last few decades, some of the only places to find intellectual work, today's "Younger intellectuals…direct themselves to professional colleagues but are inaccessible and unknown to others" (Jacoby, 1982, p. x) meaning the public sphere is increasingly devoid of intellectuals who actually speak a public vernacular. Rather, intellectual life today is almost entirely confounded with academic life. Of course, it stands to reason that intellectuals would be attracted by academic careers where they can interact with the best and the brightest, write and study, and actually get paid for this work. However, the writing and the communication coming out of academe is filtered into incredibly specialized journals read by a small band of elite peers. Not only that, but the more obtuse the subject, the more "hard core" the intellectual, and the more that intellectual can justify his or her "exemption" from public discourse (Berube, 1996). In other words, academics tend to preach to their own choirs which does little to elicit "the vitality of a public culture" (Jacoby, 1982, p. 4).

Ideological Wedges Between Intellectual and Public

Why should it be disconcerting that intellectuals are located almost exclusively in the academy? Certainly it is no stretch to assert that academe and intellectuals make easy bedfellows. However, because a dearth of public intellectuals begets an impoverished public culture, it stands to reason that there are barriers between intellectuals and the public at large worth exploring. There are five main ideological wedges between the public and the intellectual that merit specific attention. The first is the legacy of Socrates and Plato in the history of western academic tradition. After his fellow Athenians condemned him to death by hemlock, Socrates said, "The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways--I to die, and you to live. Which to the better fate is known only to God." Contemporary scholars often rely on the accounts of Plato and Xenophon, both disciples and pupils of Socrates, for the account of his trial, yet both of these philosophers provide narratives painting Socrates in an extremely flattering light. Although the trial and subsequent execution of the corruptor of youth has become synecdoche for free speech martyrdom, one major accusation against the philosopher is often overlooked. Despite, or perhaps because of, Socrates' youth in the democracy and participatory society of Pericles, Socrates was not a democrat nor was he an egalitarian. The excesses of democracy during and after the rule of Pericles are partially at fault--Socrates is not only against democracy, but political participation of any variety. Contrary to most Athenians of the age, Socrates believed that "ordinary" people should not be allowed to participate in political or social leadership because they lacked the virtue that knowledge brings to the philosopher—the masses desperately needed the direction of the wise and were unfit for self-government. To Socrates, education made the man virtuous, and only

the virtuous man should lead. Therefore, the reason Socrates was tried and executed as a corruptor of youth was not as many believe because he encouraged his students to implement what we today think of as radical social action (protest, youth movements, etc.), but precisely the opposite: Socrates was accused of corrupting youth by arguing that they should not participate in civic society or politics, but should recuse themselves to the study of philosophy. Only then would they know virtue.

Perhaps this brief recap of Socrates' trial seems more critical to the historian than the rhetorical scholar, but Socrates' philosophy provides the model for the intellectual in western academic tradition. No longer are the majority of intellectuals rhetoricians that travel, lecture, or hold important political positions, deliberating in public about social issues impacting the citizenry. Generally, the intellectual we know today is often involved in intense self-reflection, gathering knowledge for its own sake, to say nothing of the tenure process in research universities that requires scholars to write essays for small journal readerships comprised almost solely of their own intellectual peers. Knowledge may be a virtue, but it seems no one is sharing. Those who do use their intellectual position to advance social and political causes are regularly admonished for their attempts. A very public case marks this trend: prominent theological scholar Cornel West was fired from his own alma mater, Harvard University, after Harvard's President, Lawrence Summers, decided he was doing too much in the way of public work (he put out a CD, starred in the Matrix series as "Counselor West", and regularly travels the world lecturing and speaking about critical issues in the polity). In her response to Michael Berube's "Cultural Criticism and the Politics of Selling Out," Jamie Daniel reports a similar finding. She states that when she volunteers her desire to write for public contexts as Berube suggests, senior faculty members in her department helpfully

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offer that it "won't count" and may even be the mark of "insufficient intellectual commitment" (1996).[2]

Sorry for that foray into history, but it explains a great deal about how we arrived at the other four barriers between public and intellectual. Mainly it leads into the second wedge: how both scholarly and popular literatures inevitably equate "intellectual" with "academic." Of course, any sensible thinker recognizes that intelligence and expertise are everywhere, not just on the hallowed grounds of college campuses, but much of the time, when people talk about intellectuals, they mean academics, not astronauts or lawyers. Our Platonic leanings also shed light on the third theoretical wedge, what I call the "etic" orientation of the intellectual. By etic, I am extending the distinctions proposed by Kenneth Pike (1954) between emic and etic. Emic refers to intrinsic cultural distinctions meaningful to members of a given society, or the insider's material or ideological perspective. By etic, I mean scientific observation in making objective determinations of fact and "truth", a concept that is privileged over its emic counterpart in Western philosophy and academe. The Frankfurt School, led by Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno, argued that "average" people were sorry dupes of the culture industry—people are powerless against media images depicting the way we are "supposed to be" in order to further the domination of the few over the subjugation of the many. Intellectuals, however, exist above the fray. That is, they are objective observers and critics of the social world rather than biased participants in it. Many in academe seem to hold this Platonic truth to be self-evident, that intellectuals are created superior and "smart people know best" (McGee from http://mcgees.net /fragments/essays/ back%20burner/isocrate.htm).

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[2] Daniel, Jamie. "A Riposte to Michael Berube." Retrieved March 16, 2007 from http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/criticalecologies/cyclical.

The fourth theoretical wedge between public and intellectual is the elevation of the specialized over the general. To put it another way, general interests are redirected and funneled into very specific ones. What this means in terms of ideological wedges is that traditional intellectuals abandon general interests that might lead them to work interdisciplinarily or on issues the span a wide swath of the public for quite specific topics that are more "publishable" in their fields of inquiry. For example, rhetoric scholars may be interested in political rhetoric which would open up the possibility of working with political scientists, sociologists, psychologists, statisticians, anthropologists, professional campaign strategists, journalists and community organizations. But, because of the way traditional intellectuals are trained and because of the ways in which they are published and tenured, an interest in political rhetoric must be radically narrowed to a focus on the rhetoric of Richard Nixon or the use of weblogs by candidates running for U.S. Senate. Intellectuals are not trained to practice their work publicly, and they are certainly not taught how to write or speak in ways that anyone can understand (see any academic journal for proof of this phenomenon!).

The fifth ideological wedge is an extension of the focus on the specific rather than the general and that is the elevation of the individual over the health of the collective. As Cherwitz (2004) asserts, traditional intellectuals are trained in "methods of research and ways of thinking that place a premium on original contribution, lone discovery and disciplinary knowledge" (p. 3). Said another way, western academic tradition loves its stars just as much as sports fans do. Service in the university or broader community is regularly a distant third decision criterion for tenure to research and teaching. So, the rhetorician who spends time working to help a community outreach group craft a more

persuasive message may be viewed by her professional colleagues as wasting her time on non-intellectual (read: frivolous) pursuits.

Institutional Wedges Between Intellectual and Public

In addition to theoretical wedges, there are five major institutional wedges separating public from academic intellectuals (of course, the majority of these apply to intellectuals in the private and public sectors as well). The first, and I believe most significant, is the extraordinary level of bureaucracy in academe. There are so many levels, titles, schools and administrative units that it is a wonder anything gets done. Because of this level of confusion, few outside academe even know where to begin should they want to connect with intellectual work, or connect their own intellectual work with projects being done inside academe. There is no hotline for this sort of thing. Thus, the literal organization of the university is itself an institutional, and seemingly impenetrable, barrier. Because of entrenched bureaucracy, the second wedge comes to the fore: disciplinary and knowledge silos. Imagine if you will an organization where each narrow part resided in its own physical and organizational space with little or no contact between parts. Voila, the university. Scholars in biology speak to scholars in biology; scholars in English speak to scholars in English. As academics, being legitimate requires that they prove "the quality of [their] training and credentials" to gain "the approval or admiration of specialists in their chosen fields" (Brouwer & Squires, 2003, p. 210). This prevalent attitude keeps specialists interacting with specialists of the same variety. If intellectuals within the same organization do not cross paths or seek to work interdisciplinarily, how are they to work with publics outside the university at all?

This question brings us to the third and fourth institutional wedges: tenure and the dissertation. Tenure is a topic of hot debate among educators in all levels, in every school. For scholars in academe, the tenure process often is supported because it prevents disciplinary action against intellectuals, even if they advance more "radical" agendas—it promotes freedom of thought, say its proponents. Opponents of tenure argue it is a system that allows people to slack off once they have earned tenure—since job security is practically iron clad, scholars no longer have to work to prove their value to their fields or their universities, except to boost their own egos. This is an unfair and limited argument, though. I believe the reason tenure is an institutional wedge is that it advocates that scholars to write solely for discipline-specific journals that are read by a handful of specialist peers. In fact, the demands of tenure are so high in addition to teaching loads that young scholars find it virtually if not entirely impossible to do meaningful work in the public. The dissertation is also an odd credentialing assignment for the same reason. If we really care to encourage intellectuals to become engaged scholars, and we turn around and suggest the way they will do that is to go off by themselves for a year or so, lock themselves up and write a book-length document, it is no wonder so many faculty members are accused of having done too much dope in the sixties and seventies. Lone discovery is prized, but it seems the wrong avenue for engaged, citizen scholars.

The final institutional wedge I want to mention is the perception both inside and outside academe that universities and colleges are "their own little worlds." Here I mean the physical use of space, and the perception of that space, as an institutional wedge between intellectual and public. I attended Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee for my undergraduate degree. I absolutely adored my four years there for the ideas I

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encountered and the people I befriended. However, it was not until I graduated and was

employed in Nashville that I actually knew anything about the city: who lived there, its

history, its culture. Simply by being "walled-off" on a campus, people on campus get the

sense that that is their place in the community—student, faculty, administrator, staff, but

not citizen or member. Similarly, people not connected to the university campus might

feel intimidated or unwelcome by it. Within the campus itself, the biologists who only

speak to other biologists also reside together in a few floors of one building. The only

way they encounter people outside biology is if they seek out those people of their own

volition. Nothing about the physical space, and the perception of it, of a traditional

campus invites community or interdisciplinary engagement.

Intellectuals: What are they Good For?

What we seem to have is an ironic dilemma: because of the difficulty of being a

public intellectual given each of the theoretical and institutional wedges just described,

many intellectuals flocked to the "private" space of academe for consistent, salaried and

tenured work. However, the very difficulty of dissent, deliberation and contestation that

marks the public sphere makes it a natural fit with intellectual endeavor. Yet there are

few intellectuals continuing to engage disciplinary or interdisciplinary issues and work in

public. Certainly, the public intellectual's lot is difficult since "the public sphere is less a

free market of ideas than a market" where "the public sphere is hardly neutral; it responds

to money or power or drama, not to quiet talent or creative work" (Jacoby, 1982, p. 5).

But, the private, academic intellectual contributes relatively little, if anything, to public

deliberation. Instead, the privatization of intellectual life in academe results in insulating

intellectuals even more; no one knows who they are, what they do, or why it matters. In

turn, public culture suffers for the loss. When public intellectual Michael Eric Dyson

appeared on ABC's *Nightline* to defend black rap lyrics against racist attacks in a debate

with Bob Dole, his intellectual colleagues admonished him for lowering himself and

selling out by appearing on television. Dyson retorted rightly that public intellectuals

should fight racism wherever it occurs, be it his pulpit in Harlem, at a Marxist literary

conference or on network television (Berube, 1998). So, rather than solid, articulate

social movements led by intellectual activists, we see fragmented groups vying for scarce

resources. Rather than tapping into scientific possibilities, neoconservativism dictates the

abdication of scientific pursuit and data in favor of faith-based initiatives. Rather than

more artists like Toni Morrison and Tori Amos who make classical training accessible to

a larger audience, we endure Danielle Steele and Jessica Simpson. While not all of this

can be empirically laid at the feet of the lack of public intellectuals, the simultaneous

sheltering of intellectuals in academe and a shrinking public culture could be more than

an interesting coincidence.

What does the intellectual bring to public life that would otherwise be missing?

Or more simply, why do we need intellectuals at all? As Russell Jacoby (1982) states,

"the greatest minds from Galileo to Freud have not been content with private discoveries;

they sought, and found a public" (1982, p. 6).   Intellectual involvement is central to

democratic life and the stakes in retaining or reclaiming it are immensely high (Dewey,

1927; Jacoby, 1982; Mills, 1944). Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge chillingly suggest,

"The masses live with experiences of violence, oppression, exploitation, and in the

broader sense of the term, alienation. They possess material, sensual evidence of the

restriction of possibilities in their lives, of their freedom of movement" (1993, p. 43).

The average person may have tangible evidence of difficulties in her life, but may not

know exactly how to deliberate about it in a way that gets attention and results. Public intellectuals, on the other hand, because of their status, often are seen as authorities on a topic and are given access to those with the power to change the situation. They may be consulted about particular decisions because of their expertise or perceived objectivity. They may be capable, because of extensive education and training, to articulate social, organizational or political problems in a way that gets these issues on the public agenda. U.S. Circuit Court Justice Richard A. Posner writes in his book, *Public Intellectuals: A Study of Decline*, that the intellectual "applies *general* ideas to matters of public concern, working from the top down, *theorizing* about the abuses, corruptions, or injustices that he [sic] has discovered" (2001, p. 19). Public intellectual life is therefore about "the search for validity, the willingness to entertain many hypotheses, the respect for difficulty, the resistance to hasty conclusions,"[i] the enthusiasm for the world, the curiosity for knowledge, and is directly connected to the maintenance and progress of the public sphere and public life. The fact that most intellectuals are unknown or rarely seen or heard from in the public because of their cloistered academic careers damages democratic deliberation.

It is not that intellectuals are all incapable of being successful using expertise on a particular topic with and on behalf of a public(s). But, their failure to do so marks a failure of rhetoric. Academic intellectuals have potential, but academic involvement often dictates rhetorical narrowness. Even though the kind of work these intellectuals do may be critical to the polis, their rhetorical failure in the public leads to important work never being brought to the communities it impacts. Take for example some sentences from three articles written by academic intellectuals, taken from the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, one of the most respected journals in the field of Communications:

> Theorizing the idea of communication as a psychical fantasy is important because, first, it responds to an increasingly popular, poststructural critique of mediation that jettisons the Self-Other relation central to rhetorical studies.[3]

> At irony's core is a strategic moment of reversal that takes a dialectic to its farthest terministic origins.[4]

> This liberalism is signaled by the documentary's elision of issues of race and sexuality within the second wave as well as by its ultimate emphasis on reformist goals, especially the Equal Rights Amendment, and the concomitant need to make feminism palatable to male opinion leaders and decision makers.[5]

You are in fine company if your gut reaction to this text is, huh? Narrow, academic rhetoric is to blame for a lack of understanding.

Yet, there are those intellectuals both willing and rhetorically able to engage the public: public intellectuals. These intellectuals, like traditional academic intellectuals, are those with rich training and deep experience in a particular area. Unlike traditional intellectuals, though, public intellectuals do not limit their work to extraordinarily pedantic-sounding articles in disciplinary journals employing the rhetoric of "academese." Public intellectuals work with and on behalf of a public or group of publics for social and political effect in a language that is understandable to the average person.

DEFINING THE PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL

Almost as old as the split between intellectual and public is its remedy. Roman philosopher Cicero's *De Oratore* is written in the form of a dialogue between Crassus, the mouthpiece of Cicero, and two other primary characters, Scaevola and Antonius. In

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[3] Olson, K.M. & Olson, C.D. (2004). Beyond Strategy: A Reader-Centered Analysis of Irony's Dual Persuasive Uses. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 90, p. 27.

[4] Gunn, J. (2004). Refitting Fantasy: Psychoanalysis, Subjectivity, and Talking to the Dead. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 90, p. 2.

[5] Dow, B.J. (2004). Fixing Feminism: Women's Liberation and the Rhetoric of Television Documentary. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 90, pp. 53-80.

the dialogue, Cicero, through his character Crassus, emphasizes the importance of education to the development of the whole person. For an orator to be ethical and great, "A knowledge of a vast number of things is necessary, without which volubility of words is empty and ridiculous" (Book I, V). There is a real Isocratean rhetorical thread running through this dialogue in that logos[6] is the medium through which all civil institutions and communities are cultivated and sustained. Therefore, being taught and skilled in rhetoric is critical to the creation and maintenance of community and society. There is another component, though, to Cicero's stance on a broad education. He says, as Crassus, "no man can be eloquent on a subject that he does not understand; and that, if he understands a subject ever so well, but is ignorant how to form and polish his speech, he can not express himself eloquently even about what he does understand" (Book I, XIV). In other words, without rhetoric, disciplinary knowledge is useless to the development and maintenance of society because the scholar cannot communicate her knowledge effectively.

Generally, Crassus serves as Cicero's voice in *De Oratore*, however Antonius seems to be Cicero-as-practicing-orator. In Book II, Antonius suggests that scholars are not necessarily good orators. Likely we have all suffered through a semester with a teacher with vast knowledge but absolutely no rhetorical skill for teaching it. The ideal orator, for Cicero, needs a "fund" of konoi topoi[7] to draw on to argue what is at stake and relate his disciplinary knowledge in an eloquent way to others to move a community of people to honorable ends. Cicero strikes a balance between learning and doing. Antonius mentions that he does not want to appear too bookish because people are

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[6] From the Greek meaning the word or form that expresses a thought. Also from Biblical texts meaning the divine word of God, incarnate in Jesus (second in the trinity is "the word" or "the son" of God).
[7] Greek meaning specific and general commonplaces—in other words, to relate to people and persuade them, you must speak on topics that are familiar or use rhetoric to make them familiar.

persuaded in their own language using their own conceptual frameworks, not the language or frameworks of scholars. If one is too much the philosopher in the Socratic or Platonic sense, one will not be rhetorically effective because the ideal rhetor has an organic emotional connection with people. The kind of education Cicero advocates is not really about speechmaking at all, but rather about improving a person's or a community's character and utilizing philosophy (this word stands in for disciplinary knowledge) for public good.

Cicero's *De Oratore* is a lengthy document that deserves greater treatment than I have the opportunity to give in this essay, but this theory of rhetoric is pertinent to the study of public intellectuals. First, it provides a blueprint for the would-be public intellectual or engaged scholar. Cicero carefully balances the importance of learning a discipline with the need for knowledgeable action in the polis—in other words, just action or just learning are not enough on their own, but the combination is what makes one a public intellectual. Second, Cicero's treatise emphasizes the magnitude of the public. By this, I mean that Cicero believes that it is unimportant what a person does as a private person[8]; what counts is what a person accomplishes as a public citizen. Cicero's theory of rhetoric demands a public-orientation of scholars. They should pursue disciplinary knowledge, but only to do honorable work in public. Cicero's rhetorical theory therefore orients scholars as citizens of a larger community of people, not as individuals toiling in disciplinary silos writing for peers in the priesthood. Third, while *De Oratore* is a complex document for modern readers, a Roman audience would have understood it perfectly well. This is because Cicero's believes rhetoric gains power only when it engages people in their own language, and his document is a model for what that

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[8] Interestingly, the Greek word *idiotes* means private—though we do not derive the English word *idiot* from the Greek, the resemblance is a bit more than coincidental.

might sound like. For would-be engaged scholars, Cicero calls for reform in academic writing—no longer should scholars or intellectuals write in pedantic prose, but should engage in intellectual exchange on a level that is clear to the public. Cicero does not advocate "dumbing down," rather he implies that it makes no sense to write the way most academics write and that to be a public intellectual requires writing like the larger public to which one belongs.

Fast forward several centuries to Antonio Gramsci who provides an emic, political and undeniably Marxian definition of the public intellectual. Gramsci explains, "The notion of 'the intellectuals' as a distinct social category…is a myth. All men are potentially intellectuals in the sense of having an intellect and using it, but not all are intellectual by social function" (1971, p. 3). In stark contrast to traditional academic intellectuals is the public intellectual or what Gramsci calls the organic intellectual. He states, the "thinking and organizing element of a particular fundamental social profession" is not determined by job title but "by [public intellectuals'] function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong" (p. 3). According to Gramsci, public intellectuals perform "an essential mediating function in the struggle of class forces" and provide "theory and ideology (and often leadership) for a mass base of non-intellectuals, i.e. workers" (p. 3). The organic intellectual is the "preferred" archetype for Gramsci because of his emphasis on every person's potential as "philosopher…artist" with "a conscious line of moral conduct" who "contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is, to bring into being new modes of thought" (p. 9). In other words, a Gramscian definition of the public intellectual does not rely on traditional markers of intellectualism like numbers of degrees earned, but on

expertise, AND an ability to use that experience to positively advance publics politically or socially.

Gramsci is wary of more traditional intellectuals, instead advocating the critical function of the intellectual as an emic, public philosopher. For, as Gramsci posits, public intellectuals must embrace "active participation in practical life, as constructor, organizer, "permanent persuader"." Gramsci is concerned here with public intellectuals dedicating themselves to constructing a better society through rhetorical action. We should move from "technique-as-work…to technique-as-science and to the humanistic conception of history, without which one remains "specialized" and does not become "directive" (specialized and political)" (p. 10).   The Gramscian public intellectual "shirks the contemptuous pose of the distant observer" (Dyson, 2003) in favor of the role of emic teacher and activist.

Russell Jacoby's critically important work, *The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe,* sheds further definitional light on the public intellectual. Jacoby's fundamental concern is the seeming disappearance of the intellectual from public life, the disappearance of intellectuals who "employ the vernacular," "embrace a public," who are "writers on general topics," and serve as "major figures outside their specialties" (pgs. 6-11). Most importantly, academic life values, hires, promotes and tenures those who wear their disciplinary and departmental constraints with quiet resignation if not pride, those who *fit in.* The public intellectual, conversely, is one who *stands out.* Though, standing out is not enough unto itself—the public intellectual not only stands out, but stands out *in the right way.* Jacoby's sense of the public intellectual does not discount the possibility that academic intellectuals can also be public intellectuals, but it does require a different understanding of a "public" than merely an

audience of peers or students. It also requires different work from the intellectual than publishing in refereed journals. Being a public intellectual demands writing "to and for the educated public"—"surrender[ing] the vernacular" of specificity or risk "[sacrificing] a public identity" (1982, p. 26). In other words, the public intellectual adopts a particular rhetorical style or set of styles that the academic intellectual does not.

Many scholars have contributed to the discussion on what "makes" a public intellectual, and though I have addressed many of the important contributions here, one final clarification is necessary. A public orientation is certainly central to one's ability to be a public intellectual, but a general interest in the public's welfare is not enough. As Posner (2001) remarks, the distinction for the public intellectual is that he or she applies "ideas to matters of broad public concern" rather than only "applying them to specific tasks of making things or accreting, refining, or transmitting bodies or specialized or expert knowledge, whether commercial, professional, or academic" (p. 18). To be more specific, a public intellectual does not just address a public in a public vernacular, he or she is fundamentally political or ideological in addressing the questions of the day. Posner gives as an example Allan Bloom, author of *The Closing of the American Mind,* a work about rock and roll. Bloom "was writing not as a music critic but as a social critic discerning signs of moral and political decay in the attraction that such music holds for college students" (p. 20). So, only those intellectuals who "write for a general audience about the ethical and political" (p. 21) are public intellectuals. Critical Studies professor, Michael Berube, contends, "Teaching and writing are two important ways of being public...but what I want to call for is a practice…that articulates the theoretical and critical work of the so-called public intellectual to the movements of public policy" (1998, p. 12).

A final facet of the way in which we should consider public intellectuals is in terms of their value. I have already described their value to the culture at large, but what this distinction refers to is how "good" or "bad" a public intellectual is for the public sphere. This dissertation is not a project that deifies progressive public intellectuals as the only kind that are pro-social. Just because a public intellectual has progressive politics, he or she may display a rhetorical style that does injustice to our social sphere. Conversely, we should not demonize conservative public intellectuals simply on the grounds of their personal politics—they may be acting in ways that further pro-social goals, just from a different vantage point. So, the public intellectual should neither be considered a "good" person or "bad" person, but rather an agent in the public sphere whose rhetorical style is one that deserves contemplation. The public intellectual occupies a discursive space that we *need* in the public sphere, regardless of that person's personal politics.

For this dissertation, the public intellectual is defined as an individual who a) has substantial training in a particular area, specialty or field, b) speaks a public language, c) uses expertise in a publicly visible, political and ideological way, and d) is devoted to enriching public life for the masses, and e) is successful in connecting with a public.

DEFINING THE PUBLIC SPHERE

To understand why this disjunction between intellectual and public life is so troubling, it is also necessary to understand the public sphere, or the sphere of life outside of private life involving work, public space and issues of social and political concern. Craig Calhoun states, "The importance of the public sphere lies in its potential as a mode of social integration. Public discourse...is a possible mode of coordination of human life"

(1992, p. 6). Nancy Fraser takes as, "a basic premise for this essay that something like Habermas' idea of the public sphere is indispensable to critical social theory and democratic political practice" and that "no attempt to understand the limits of actually existing late-capitalist democracy can succeed without in some way or another making use of it" (1992, p. 111). And Michael Schudson finds, "the concept of a public sphere indispensable as a model of what a good society should achieve. It seems…a central notion for social or political theory" (1992, p. 160).

Not only is the public sphere important theoretically, it is the place where we locate public intellectuals. As I mentioned previously, the privatization of intellectual life and work is immensely detrimental to public life because of a lack of leadership and deliberation on issues of social and political concern. Public intellectuals, on the other hand, invest themselves and their work in the public sphere in the hope of rebuilding a vital public culture where reason, evidence, empathy and deliberation are the central elements of a democratic society.

Social theorist Jurgen Habermas outlined the boundaries and practice of the liberal bourgeois public sphere that, he argues, existed in the salons and coffeehouses of Europe in the eighteenth century. In its basic form, "The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public" (Habermas, 1989, p. 27). In this sphere, private persons coalesce as a public and engage in critical-rational debate over issues of common concern and form public opinion that ultimately guides the state or the leaders to do what is right by the people. Public intellectuals are integral to this kind of deliberative sphere because of their own expertise, status and training. There are six major conditions of this public sphere, the first of which I already mentioned and that is critical-rational debate. What he means by this is

"people's public use of their reason" rather than the heated, emotional verbal barrage so common in politics (Habermas, 1989, p. 27-28). Critical-rational debate is the cornerstone of Habermas' ideal public sphere.

In order to engage in critical-rational debate, the other conditions of the public sphere come into play: reflexivity, ideal role-taking, sincerity, discursive inclusion and equality, and autonomy from state and economic power. Reflexivity involves constant and vigilant self-reflection to understand the connection between one's personal values and interests and social values and interests. Habermas (1998) clarifies this saying, "this political confrontation [is] peculiar and without historical precedent: people's public use of their reason" (p. 27). In other words, reflexivity is about rhetoric, a discipline historically devoted to reasoned argument in public. Public intellectuals are capable of understanding and participating in a public rhetoric, thus are particularly capable of reflexivity whereas traditional intellectuals may struggle with it.

Ideal role-taking, then, is an empathic orientation toward discourse in that participants try to comprehend the argument at hand from the other person or group's perspective. In the public sphere, "the psychological interest increase[s] in the dual relation to both one's self and the other" where "self-observation enter[s] a union partly curious, partly sympathetic with the emotional stirrings of the other I" (Habermas, 1998, p. 49). Many in the upper echelons of academe remark on the importance of "the people," but perhaps they are not entirely sympathetic with the "other I" in a sense of ideal role-taking required by the public sphere. If we return to Cicero's example of the public intellectual, PIs consider themselves members, in addition to observers, of the public—this membership allows a level of rhetorical empathy unattainable by communities of intellectuals insulated from or disinterested in the public.

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Habermas conceives of sincerity as an effort to divulge all the information a participant holds on a given topic, such that access to all of the information informs a thoughtful opinion and offers solutions based on integrity rather than deception. For Habermas, "the public that read and debated" about issues that affected the public sphere "read and debated about itself" (1998, p. 43). The individual in the ideal public sphere "unfolded himself in his subjectivity" (Habermas, 1998, p. 48) as he considers all relevant information for a problem under consideration.

In terms of discursive inclusion and equality, Habermas believes rational-critical debaters capable of tabling all issues of status and difference and honoring everyone's abilities and rights to make assertions or claims, advancing "a tact befitting equals" leading to the "parity of 'common humanity'" (1989, p. 36). Yet, the public sphere cannot "close itself off entirely and become consolidated as a clique; for it always understood and found itself immersed within a more inclusive public of all private people, persons who…could avail themselves via the market of the objects that were subject to discussion" (Habermas, 1998, p. 37). Underlying this notion of inclusiveness and equality is the idea that all individuals share in common an intrinsic sense of humanity and an idea of what is good (Calhoun, 1997; DeLuca & Peeples, 2002; Habermas, 1998), and therefore should be included in the public sphere and should be allowed to debate and to question.

Finally, autonomy from state and economic power is necessary to Habermas because, quoting Hobbes, "*veritas non auctoritas facit legem (*truth not authority makes law)" (1989, p. 53). Since Habermas grew up as a young man in the Weimar Republic and subsequent Nazi domination of Germany, it is fairly obvious why he is keenly concerned with state and economic power (Calhoun, 1997). The strength of his

conviction that state and corporate entities should not be involved in the public sphere is rooted in the idea that "money and power are nondiscursive modes of coordination…they offer no intrinsic openings to the identification of reason and will, and they suffer toward tendencies of domination and reification" (Calhoun, 1997, p. 6). While it is not possible to bracket histories and ramifications of money and power and while intellectual expertise does not trump these forces, public intellectuals have always played an important role in fostering dialogue about the conditions created by money and power. It is not a remedy, but it is a salve for the wound.

Criticisms of Habermas' ideal have prompted reconceptualizations of the public sphere, which seek to identify characteristics of actually existing publics in capitalist society today.[9] First, multiple publics are not only acknowledged, but celebrated as counterpublics, subaltern publics or under other nomenclatures (Benhabib, 1992; Deetz, 1992, 1995; Fraser, 1992; Habermas, 1992; Schudson, 1992; Warner, 1992, 2002). Second, issues of difference and issues of the private sphere are amplified rather than silenced (Benhabib, 1992; Fraser, 1992; Warner, 2002). Third, new media technologies become open to the possibility of democratic use by a public (DeLuca & Peeples, 2002; Schudson, 1992). Fourth, and finally in terms of summary, the issue of access both to information and to resources is critical in new conceptions of the public sphere (Deetz, 1992, 1995; Habermas, 1992; Warner, 2002). These will be important for our understanding of public intellectual styles because these factors are instrumental, to a degree, in determining which rhetorical styles emerge as relevant in our contemporary moment.

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[9] It should also be mentioned that Habermas addresses many of his critics through his later work, remedying some of the concerns about his original ideal public sphere.

DEFINING RHETORICAL STYLE

Truly, intellectuals become public only through rhetoric, marking rhetoric as a way of being in the world, a place for common ground, an understanding that what you say and how you say it matter for language's ability to connect people and ideas in a powerful way. More traditional intellectuals certainly have a rhetoric, but it is a rhetoric inappropriate in engaging the public sphere. These intellectuals use a "private" vernacular, one that is totally outside public concern or understanding, a language that damages the public sphere by creating insular societies where intellectualism flourishes to the exclusion of the vast majority of humanity. Public intellectuals, on the other hand, are fundamentally rhetorical beings whose vernacular is embedded in public concern and understanding, a language that enhances the public sphere by including different publics and helping connect expertise and social problems. In essence, traditional intellectuals address a different audience than public intellectuals, and, different styles of public intellectuals each appeal to distinct audiences as well. There are reasons to believe the public sphere is ready and capable of engaging difficult, traditionally "intellectual", ideas: cries for reform in television news such that coverage means in-depth deliberation rather than surface gloss, progressive political candidates igniting grassroots momentum rather than lobbyists or special interest groups, young people's interest in community service. John Dewey (1927) wrote of this desire, "Democracy is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself…a name for a life of free and enriching communion" (p. 148). It is this drive toward democracy in the public sphere and its connection to public intellectuals that I will explore in this dissertation.

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Because "public" and "intellectual" are conceived as diametrically opposed, they stand on opposite sides of a shifting rhetorical fault line. This line began forming when Plato "invented philosophical thinking" (Rorty, 1979, p. 156) and suggested that students follow the Socratic tradition and recuse themselves to the study of philosophy, rather than tainting their souls in the course of being civically and socially engaged. What Plato meant by this, really, was that people should not study or practice rhetoric. I would argue that we would be better off plugging our ears and singing "Do You Know the Muffin Man?" when people cry for something more than *mere* rhetoric. Rhetoric and rhetorical theory articulate why the fault exists, why it is placed in a certain location, time and space, how to navigate it, what the consequences of its movement might be, and what we might do about it. Rhetoric is a public art.

Rhetoric is the central discipline. By this, I do not mean to suggest that everything is rhetoric, therefore nothing is—this postulate eliminates rhetoric's force. What I mean is that there are rhetorical elements to the study and practice of any subject, discipline or profession, placing rhetoricians at the theoretical and practical fault line of the study of public intellectuals. Rhetoric is the discipline that spans the fault line between theory and practice, between reflection and action.

As I noted earlier, Cicero's *De Oratore* makes the excellent point that if academic intellectuals write and speak in what I am calling "academese," they are actually harming public deliberation because virtually no one understands the vernacular. In other words, the reason this fault line exists between traditional intellectuals and the public sphere is, in part, because of rhetoric. Intellectuals can only achieve publicness through rhetoric. What Cicero highlights is that the avenue of intellectual engagement in the public *is*

rhetoric. Thus, disengagement is a failure of rhetoric. Specifically, though, people become public intellectuals because of particular rhetorical styles.

If and only if intellectuals command certain rhetorical styles will they be able to use knowledge and expertise to engage the public sphere and that style is what makes them public intellectuals. Public intellectuals are immune to anti-intellectual kryptonite precisely because they speak a public vernacular, and therefore manage to strike a balance between being "one of the gang" and "one of the intellectuals." Certainly, intellectuals could be more rhetorical in a number of ways. However, since style is a rich ground for comparing intellectuals and is the way intellectuals present themselves in public, I argue in this prospectus and dissertation, however, that a rhetoric of style is what is needed.

A Rationale for Rhetorical Style

When most people think of style, they think of fashion, genre or taste, but just as communication and rhetoric are greater than the use of words, style is greater than the use of clothing. Rhetorical style takes into consideration that it is not simply content that matters in making meaning; rather, it is the way something is said that evokes particular meaning. Thus, rhetorical style involves word choice, historical situation, audience analysis, delivery, motivation, effectiveness, implications, connections to other speeches, issues of culture and so on. In this way, style is threefold: physiological, psychological and sociological. For the purposes of this project, I will borrow Pierre Bourdieu's definition of style as "manifested preferences" (1979/1984, p. 56). That is, style is the physiological, psychological and sociological manifestation of preference. And, this tripartite understanding of style is also cohesive if understood rhetorically. Bourdieu

(1979/1984) posits that there is a "unity hidden under the diversity and multiplicity of practices" (p. 101).

Physiological Style

First, style is physiological, and therefore performative. Bourdieu suggests that style "*puts into practice* a repertoire of devices or techniques, in short, the whole art of performance" (1977, p. 20). These "expressive forms and rituals" (Hebdige, 1979, p. 2) of style are enacted through the symbolic medium of the body.   Style as physiology also assumes a measure of intentionality or strategy. That style is mechanistic is naïve, suggests Bourdieu (1977). A person is sometimes said to have "style" when she demonstrates knowledge of an appropriate response to a given situation (Aristotle might say the available means of persuasion). To acquire such style, imitation is a necessity. Bourdieu remarks, "children are particularly attentive to the gestures and postures which, in their eyes, express everything that goes to make an accomplished adult—a way of walking, a tilt of the head, facial expressions…using implements…a style of speech" (1977, p. 87). All of these imitations combine to create a style that appears natural and appropriate as it manifests itself physiologically.   Public intellectual style is "transmitted in practice" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 87).

Paralleling the idea of style as performative is the notion that style creates or reflects a certain persona. Featherstone (1991) articulates "identity, presentation, appearance and lifestyle" combine to construct a persona where the body "is regarded as an extension of [one's] *persona* which must be stylized to express the individuality of the bearer" (p. 60). Goods, in turn, are an outward expression of persona. Yet goods and

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physiology alone do not encapsulate style, so we follow Bourdieu and examine the psychological elements of style.

Psychological Style

Not only do we recognize when someone has style because his intended performance is appropriate to a certain situated persona, but we also recognize when someone lacks style. By this, I am not addressing the man wearing Bermuda shorts and black socks with sandals. Although this man is certainly a fashion catastrophe, he is not without style—indeed, perhaps his style is "fashion catastrophe" or he intends his attire to be ironic or he is attending a costume party where the theme is "Beach Nerds". I believe we say that a person lacks style when his style is inconsistent in some way. This is a psychological reaction to form. Brummett (2004) argues that consistency (or homology) tugs on us and relates Bill Nichol's notion of "pleasure-in-recognition" (p. 10) as proof of this phenomenon. We seem drawn to styles that are familiar. Marcel Mauss (1934) describes a similar feeling. He recalls the parades in England following a victory alongside the French during World War I at the Battle of the Aisne. Because they wanted to honor the French soldiers who had fought alongside them, the Worcester Regiment requested that the British infantry would march to music played by French buglers and drummers. Mauss states, "The result was not very encouraging. For nearly six months, in the streets of Bailleul, long after the Battle of the Aisne, I often saw the following sight: the regiment had preserved its English march but had set it to a French rhythm" (p. 457). On the surface, Mauss may have been reacting to the strange gait and rhythm combination, but on a psychological level, he perhaps sensed that something about the

marchers was "off"—that they were inconsistent with their identities or substance, that they lacked style.

Continuing in the same vein, style is as much about identity as identification. Style must be psychologically consistent for others to be comfortable, thus it is very much concerned with identity. To be sure, physiological style is superficially malleable—fashion fads come and go as do slang words, salient conversational topics, gestures and dance steps. However, psychological style is the identifiable core or center of a style. As Spinoza states, *"Style is character. It is the quality of a man's emotion made apparent."* It is far less dynamic than physiological style and is the way it is possible for Hamlet to have said, "I knew him, Horatio" (V, i, 203-204). When we say we *know* someone, it means their style is consistent, particularly that they have psychological style that is consistent with an overall style. We identify a public intellectual, in part, by her psychological style.

Sociological Style

Finally, style is sociological. Stuart Ewan (1990) has described style as a way of being with others. Style is "history turned into nature" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 78) through social construction and reification and is impossible in a vacuum; rather, "In group life as a whole, there is a kind of education of movements in close order (Mauss, 1934, p. 473) that can only be obtained through social contact and practice. Mauss suggests "This, above all, is what distinguishes man from the animals: the transmission of his techniques, and very probably their oral transmission" (1934, p. 461). In other words, style is socially constructed and taught. In turn, some kinds of style are rewarded (those

leaning toward hegemony) and others are punished (those on the fringes). Different

styles may be en vogue at different times, but all are socially constructed.

Style is also quite public. Bourdieu goes to far as to say that style is a mark of

"*social position* and hence of the social distance between objective positions, that is

between social persons conjuncturally brought together in physical space" (1977, p. 82).

While this statement is ideologically loaded, the issue becomes clear: style must be

publicly visible and performed, as well as publicly acknowledged as successful or

unsuccessful. If style is a way of being in the world, that way of being must be with

others and in the light of day to determine the social position or desirability of the style

(and of the individual or group to whom it belongs).

Style and Rhetoric

In sum, the rhetorical problem of the traditional intellectual is specifically one of

style. Physiologically, psychologically and sociologically, the public perceives the

private intellectual to be a failure of rhetorical style in reaching the public. He is dressed

inappropriately. She carries herself strangely. He describes ideas in ways we cannot

understand. She holds the floor for too long and seems to find herself to be very self-

important. He does not want to talk to anyone without a Ph.D. She is out of touch with

my life. All of these stylistic markers of traditional intellectuals fail to connect with the

public sphere. Conversely, the public intellectual is one who has mastered physiological,

psychological and sociological style that does engage the public sphere. Because the

public intellectual has the "right" style, he or she is able to work with and on behalf of

publics in ways traditional intellectuals will never be able to do, so long as they cling to

their "outmoded" styles.

Seeing style as a rhetorical construct allows us to use our rhetorical toolkits to pull the thread of style. Style becomes readable and analyzable for its meaning and depth. It also becomes interpretable. As rhetoricians, we are trained to see intricacies as part of a much larger picture of the text. With style as the text, in this case, the rhetorician has the distinct advantage of being able to discern patterns between and among styles, finding connections and contrasts between individuals and groups. Perhaps the advantage here is obvious, but finding points of identification in style could have profound implications for building understanding and connection within different communities. The rhetorician also sees how these threads of style are interwoven to form a tapestry of many textures, colors, depths and images. Style as a rhetorical concept is both micro and macro, providing richness that would otherwise be impossible should style not be considered a rhetorical construct.

Although richness is a strong advantage of looking at style rhetorically, this approach also provides a theoretical backdrop to style that it may otherwise be more difficult to discern. Rhetoric recognizes the availability of many means of persuasion whether through word selection, or cadence, or figurative tropes, or dress and composure, or power, and on and on. Yet, rhetoric also realizes that some of these means may trump others at different times and in different contexts; realizing also that this prioritization is equally important to the implications of a text. Style benefits from this kind of coherent approach. Viewed as a rhetorical construct, style can be seen as this pushing and pulling of various elements, and because of a theoretical approach, we have a basis of judgment for style. Is the style honest? Does the whole picture communicate integrity? Why might that person have developed that style and what are the implications of that

development? Using rhetoric as a theoretical methodology invites us to make sense of and make judgments about style in a critical, yet valid way.

Now that we know the advantages of considering style a rhetorical construct, what might it mean to do so? As I mentioned above, imagining style as rhetorical means style takes on rhetorical properties. Hebdige (1979) tell us, "if a style is really to catch on, if it is to become genuinely popular, it must say the right things in the right way at the right time. It must anticipate or encapsulate a mood, a moment. It must embody a sensibility" (p. 122). In other words, style is only style because it is rhetorical—it has power only when it takes on rhetorical properties like kairos, ethos, logos and pathos. Specifically, to envision style as rhetorical is to consider motivation, power, structure, aesthetics, culture, social construction, persuasive effect, limitations and transcendence. It is, ultimately, to situate style as a text (or series of texts) among historical, social, political, ideological and material concerns. Mauss emphasizes, "Here are a large number of practices that are both techniques of the body and that also have profound…echoes and effects. All this can and must be discovered" (p. 468).

OUTLINING THE DISSERTATION

My dissertation project addresses this connection between public intellectuals and the public sphere on the basis of style by extending two main themes: 1) Elements that act as engines or barriers for intellectuals to an engaged public sphere in the current moment, and 2) Rhetorical dynamics and impacts of different public intellectual styles, particularly as they impact the participation of the intellectual in the public sphere. I see two research questions emerging from these themes:

RQ1: What is and/or should be the role of the public intellectual in today's public sphere?

RQ2: How do different rhetorical styles of public intellectuals impact engagement in the public sphere?

The rationale for studying public intellectuals and the public sphere is, ultimately, to understand how certain rhetorical strategies can be used to maintain and augment public life, as well as how other rhetorical styles hold the potential to erode it further. Rhetorical style, because of its richness and depth, provides fertile ground for comparison of certain genres of public intellectuals and connects intellectual life to the quality and quantity of deliberation in the public sphere. A typology of public intellectual rhetorical style allows for identification of particularly progressive and regressive styles, as well as a methodology for comparing rhetorical effects of such styles. Though, the typology is not an ending point in the study of public intellectuals and the public sphere, rather a starting point for enriching our comprehension of strategies and effects of those strategies on public life.

The four styles are The Prophet, The Guru, The Sustainer and The Pundit. My rationale for studying rhetorical styles is because I believe we should learn more about what works well and in what rhetorical, social and political situations to understand how we might extend those rhetorical strategies to less democratic spaces. However, it is critical to acknowledge that certain rhetorical styles are totally ineffective and even dangerous—thus, changeable, manageable or avoidable. In all I hope this dissertation is the first step in a richer picture of engaged intellectuals and their impacts on public life.

With these issues in mind, I outline the dissertation which proceeds as follows: Part I consists of two chapters, this one and Chapter Two, which develops the typology of

public intellectual rhetorical style, modeled on Robert Hariman's typology of political

style.   Part II consists of four case studies and a conclusion. Chapters Three through Six

are case studies of rhetorical style: the Prophet, the Guru, the Sustainer, and the Pundit. I

will present an exemplar of each rhetorical style as a text. Chapter Seven serves as

discussion and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Sociopolitical History and Public Intellectual Style

An understanding of today's dearth of public intellectuals active in the public sphere, particularly relative to private or academic intellectuals, requires some historicizing. The public intellectual is a challenging position to hold for the reasons I discussed in Chapter One: American anti-intellectualism, and theoretical and institutional barriers that stand between the public and the intellectual elite. However, there are public intellectuals operating in the world today despite the odds against them, and their success requires some background into how they were able to flourish. Specifically, what rhetorical styles are going to "work" in today's world given recent socio-political trends?

Historicizing allows us to see how the four styles I will detail in this project, Prophet, Guru, Sustainer and Pundit, have become so prominent. Historical social and political factors enable and constrain certain styles, each of which can have both positive and negative skews. Historical positioning also recognizes that style "has to be appealing if it is to be effective" and that there are limited "economies available to speakers in particular situations" (Hariman, 1995, p. 3). In other words, based on the current social climate, only a limited selection of rhetorical styles will be acceptable in the public sphere. In the following section, I will give a brief description of the United States socio-political climate over roughly the last thirty years that has led to the dominance of the Prophet, the Guru, the Sustainer and the Pundit, all rhetorical styles at the extreme.

I will detail these styles later in this chapter, but to preview, the Prophet is called by a higher power in a time of chaos or anomie to deliver judgment to the sinners in his

or her midst. The Guru is a wise and spiritual teacher who leads followers out of the din of grey area by setting them on the path to enlightenment. The Sustainer is a visionary who creates products and processes to sustain the natural, political and social environments around him or her. Finally, the Pundit is an expert summarizer and deliverer of complex issues in pithy segments via the mass media. Each of these styles, in turn, may be the larger category or a sub category of a larger style.

A 30-YEAR SOCIOPOLITICAL HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

Certainly, the last three decades have highlighted fundamental social changes both positive and negative: attention to the rights of sexual, racial and religious minorities, a massive influx of women into the workplace, soaring divorce rates, greater access to education, the rise of the religious right and the fracturing of the political left. And, the last thirty years have been bookended by grossly unpopular, conservative presidential administrations. Robert Dahl explains that our modern corporate capitalist system produces "inequalities in social and economic resources so great as to bring about severe violations of political equality and hence of the democratic process…" (1985, p. 60). In turn, these inequalities create a system of anomie or crisis spurring public intellectual rhetorical styles on the fringes.

Four trends are particularly relevant to this discussion of a breakdown of democracy and a socio-political moment of crisis in which relatively extreme rhetorical styles dominate. The first is a popular swelling of distrust in government, business and other formal institutions where questions of ethics arise. The second is the ascendance of religious fundamentalism and extremism in Christianity, Judaism and Islam and the call for voices of spirituality. The third is the profoundly negative turn the natural

environment has taken at the hands of global warming and other human-made catastrophes that is the harbinger of disasters in the sociopolitical environment, as well. The fourth is a hyper-mediated culture that applauds pithy sound bites while deemphasizing deliberation and participation. Each of these trends calls forth one or more of the styles I detail in this dissertation, so let us look at each in greater depth.

Distrust in Institutions

The last decades of the twentieth century witnessed a steep decline in social trust (Putnam, 2000). Yamigishi and Yamigishi (1994) define trust as a "standing decision" to give the majority of people, both friend and stranger, the benefit of the doubt in most situations. As Rahn (1998) reports, strong social trust is associated with many positive outcomes such as social cohesion, economic potency, civic participation and interest and also works as a deterrent for engaging in unethical, immoral or illegal behavior (p. 548). While the 1960 survey featured in *The Civic Culture* reported that 55% of American adults trusted most people and institutions—that number dropped precipitously to 35% by 1995 (Rahn, 1998, p. 549). Just as high levels of social trust beget positive outcomes, low levels of social trust erode society's fabric (Putnam, 2000).

One of the most obvious derivatives of the erosion of social trust is an erosion of trust in government institutions as they are often seen as the "cause" of civic ills. Robert Putnam's landmark book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community,* details this trend from a scholarly perspective. Putnam (2000) asserts that social trust allows for mutually beneficial social coordination, cooperation and participation such that people can more easily gain employment, avoid criminal behavior, acquire an education and maintain a sense of well-being in their communities. More

specifically, "the proportion of Americans who reply that they "trust the government in Washington" only "some of the time" or "almost never" has risen steadily from 30 percent in 1966 to 75 percent in 1992" (1995, p. 68). Putnam points emphatically to television as the catalyst of civic demise in this country, but the very public and shocking political scandals over the last several decades from Watergate to the Iran-Contra Affair to Monica Lewinsky to Abu Ghraib have made the political establishment the epicenter of mistrust.

However, I would be remiss if I suggested only scholars have caught onto and are concerned about a decline in institutional trust. Any major newspaper, news website or television news channel in the United States reiterates and extends Putnam's concerns to current issues. For instance, by 1995, 29 women had come forward to accuse then Senator Robert Packwood of sexual harassment and even sexual assault—he was forced to resign. 1998 saw Bill Clinton impeached, only the second U.S. President in history to go through the ordeal, because of his lies to a Grand Jury about his affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. CNN reported on June 6, 2003 that George W. Bush had likely falsified information on weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in Iraq to make a case for military action in that country. John W. Dean, former attorney to Richard Nixon, wrote,

> Presidential statements, particularly on matters of national security, are
> held to an expectation of the highest standard of truthfulness. A president
> cannot stretch, twist or distort facts and get away with it. President Lyndon
> Johnson's distortions of the truth about Vietnam forced him to stand down
> from reelection. President Richard Nixon's false statements about
> Watergate forced his resignation.

In late 2005, former lobbyist Jack Abramoff was found guilty of bribing predominantly Republican members of Congress for political favors with expensive "gifts" like golf trips and overseas vacations. In April, 2006, stories decried the city of New Orleans conducting its Mayoral election in the absence of nearly 400,000 primarily African-American citizens. It is certainly no great revelation that people distrust government, but business institutions are also targets of mistrust.

2001 was not, as predicted, a year of space odyssey, but rather an odyssey through the manipulation of stock values and earning statements that brought about the collapses of some of the nation's largest corporations: Enron, WorldCom, Tyco, and Martha Stewart. Investors lost millions of dollars and, at Enron specifically, thousands of people lost their entire 401K savings in the blink of an eye. Since then, several executives have been indicted and have been or will be serving prison sentences for their role in condoning fuzzy math and the outright falsification of data. Not surprisingly, these federal crimes have led to a widespread perception that corruption is at the heart of capitalist corporations. This perception, in turn, has implications for the economy as a whole. Charles Conrad (2003) states, these ethical lapses "resulted from a number of trends in the U.S. political-economic system" as "adaptations to the development of a complex combination of ideologies, practices and public policies that encourage ethically questionable behavior" (p. 6).

CEO compensation is one factor contributing to the negative perception of corporate America. Because CEOs have recently been compensated based on stock valuation, CEOs are more willing to engage in behavior that puts the entire firm (and all who are stakeholders in it) at risk to increase Wall Street evaluations. Consequently, CEOs like Ken Lay of Enron and Bernie Ebbers of WorldCom were paid vast sums of

money and exited with proverbial golden parachutes while their employees and stockholders lost their jobs, their incomes and their savings and the rest of the nation lost faith. In a May 3, 2006 interview with Jim Lehrer, Conoco Phillips CEO James Mulva defends the $400M package given to outgoing CEO of Exxon-Mobil, Lee Raymond, saying that if it was tied to performance, it is justified. This despite outcries from activist groups and even former House Speaker Dennis Hastert who called the move "unconscionable" given the high price at the pump. The public perception that CEOs will do anything and put anyone at risk for their own self-interest results in votes of little confidence in corporate America.

Of course, other eras have suffered crises commensurate with this crisis of confidence and faith in institutions. However, this particular crisis coincides with a rise in conservative power in the U.S. led by staunchly religious individuals touting America's history as a Judeo-Christian nation founded on Judeo-Christian beliefs. This leads to is an uncomfortable dilemma: Americans believe in God in huge numbers, yet the seemingly unchecked power that accompanies late capitalist institutions is graphically inconsistent with Judeo-Christian values like charity, responsibility, empathy, respect for all people and humility. In times when people find their behavior, or the behavior of their leaders, inconsistent with values, the prophetic voice returns. As I will explain later in this chapter, prophets are called by a higher power in a time of crisis to remind people of their covenant with God and to alert them to the fact that, if they continue to violate this covenant, serious punishment will apply. Not only does a lack of trust in institutions lead to the Prophet style, it calls for a voice of spiritual guidance in a time of crumbling faith in institutions. It calls, also, for the Guru.

A Rise in Religious Fundamentalism

Freiderich Nietzsche's proclamation that "God is dead" nearly 125 years ago seems now to be a laughable hyperbole—God is very much alive indeed. And, while mainstream churches have been losing members for decades, fundamentalist church attendance has boomed.[10] Religion reporter Douglas Todd of the *Vancouver Sun* in Vancouver, B.C. estimated in 2004 that a rise in Christian fundamentalism in the United States would "affect the way we do politics, wage wars, entertain ourselves, view sexuality, interpret scriptures, deal with the gap between rich and poor, view our next-door neighbour and find inner meaning." Indeed, in the United States, the Southern Baptist church, the Churches of Christ, the Assemblies of God, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints are staunchly among the top ten Christian churches in terms of both numbers of congregations and church attendance.[11] These aforementioned churches as well as other fundamentalists churches such as the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Church of God comprise the most ubiquitous churches—in other words, where the church is among the ten largest in many of the fifty states.[12] As recently as 1996, only 51% of people thought favorably of fundamentalists and evangelicals; ten years later, fundamentalists are viewed by 76% of people as favorable.[13]

So, while we can grapple over the meaning of the words "conservative" and "religious right," there is no doubt that fundamentalism is on the rise, not only in the United States, but in Latin America, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Former President

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[10] From the Pew Research Center and religioustolerance.org. Viewed June 2, 2006.
[11] From *Churches and Church Membership in the United States, 1990.* Published by the Glenmary Research Center.
[12] Ibid.

Jimmy Carter's latest book, *Our Endangered Values: America's Moral Crisis,* attacks

fundamentalism for its "rigidity, domination and exclusion" and decries

fundamentalism's invasion of politics citing that, "Narrowly defined theological beliefs

have been adopted as the rigid agenda" (2006, p. 32) of certain political leaders.

Maureen Dowd of the *New York Times* went so far as to characterize the current politico-

religious climate in the U.S. as having the "feel of a vengeful mob— revved up by

rectitude—running around with torches and hatchets after heathens and pagans and

infidels."

The very fact that fundamentalism is on the rise is perhaps not as interesting as

the proposed reasons why it is seeing such impressive popularity. The basic idea is, we

live in a world of gray areas, fuzzy borders, rapid change, increasing diversity,

"alternative lifestyles," ubiquitous technology and other uncomfortable phenomena.[14]

This postmodern confusion and blurring clashes with seemingly superior nostalgic values

of old. Out of the discord emerges fear, distrust and panic among some who would prefer

that the world be categorizable, black and white, fundamentally planned, answerable.

Enter the healing waters of fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is loosely defined as a

return to root values, a rigid adherence to those principles and an intolerance for

secularism and humanism. One has to look no further than the ascendance of the

Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran in the late 1970's, the dominance of the Taliban in

Afghanistan for several decades following the war with the Soviets, or to our own

backyard and the prominence of conservative extremists like Pat Robertson to see what

fundamentalism can look and sound like. While many are apt to dismiss the rise of

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[13] From the Pew Research Center, http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?PageID=113. Viewed June 2, 2006.
[14] Bendroth, Margaret L. (1996). *Fundamentalism and Gender, 1875 to the Present.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

fundamentalism as a fleeting trend, the "chaos" that started the trend is not going away. If anything, our world becomes more uncomfortable each day, fueling fundamentalism's fire (and brimstone).

To decrease a feeling of ubiquitous "ickyness" brought on by gray area, most people seek an enlightened solution. Very few, regardless of their tolerance for ambiguity, enjoy feeling like everything they thought they know is in flux—it is like living in a tornado at all times. Yet, we live in a time in which faith in government and corporate institutions has eroded substantially, so where do people turn? While increasingly fundamentalist churches in the U.S. provide an open door for prophetic rhetoric, this trend also opens the door to another public intellectual rhetorical style: the Guru. The Guru, as I will get into later in this chapter, serves to take the confused public by the figurative hand and lead them to enlightenment, salvation, righteousness or some other spiritual end. The Guru, although traditionally a Hindu teacher, does not subscribe solely to one religion, but could be a member of any religious group or philosophical spiritual orientation.

Environmental Damage

Perhaps the least shocking modern trend in this list is the overwhelming data implicating humankind in the destruction of the natural environment. We may not be the sole cause of this damaging cycle, but we have worked diligently to accelerate the process since the Industrial Revolution (McDonough, 2002). Because of fossil fuel emissions from factories and vehicles, the levels of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere will be 75-350% higher than pre-industrial levels by the end of the 21st century.[15] It now

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[15] From the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/ globalwarming.html#Q1. Viewed on June 3, 2006.

appears that stronger hurricanes, such as Katrina, are even related to this human-

advanced destruction.[16] The United States remains against signing the Kyoto Protocol,

the objective of which is to stabilize "greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at

a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate

system."[17]

In addition to global warming, other activities are contributing to environmental

destruction. Since 1970, more than 600,000 square kilometers (or 232,000 square miles)

of the Amazon rain forest have been deforested or clearcut for commercial

development.[18] Because of this deforestation in Brazil and other parts of the world, plant

and animal species are in extreme danger. Much was made of the "Save the Spotted

Owl" and "Save the Whale" campaigns launched by the Sierra Club, Greenpeace and

other environmental organizations, but the devastation of wildlife continues.

Finally, among the greatest dangers to the environment is nuclear proliferation.[19]

Ironically, the United States is trying to enter into negotiations with Iran and North Korea

to force the countries to abolish nuclear energy programs the U.S. believes are leading to

weapons development even as the U.S. remains the world's largest nuclear superpower.[20]

Nuclear accidents such as those at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania, Hanford in

Washington and most frighteningly, Chernobyl in the Ukraine led to loss of life,

poisoning of water and air, and a host of birth defects and health problems that persist

years and even decades later.[21]

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[16] Ibid.

[17] From http://unfccc.int/essential_background/convention/background/items/1353.php. Viewed on June 3, 2006.

[18] From http://rainforests.mongabay.com/amazon/amazon_destruction.html. Viewed on June 3, 2006.

[19] From Greenpeace, http://www.greenpeace.org/international/campaigns/nuclear. Viewed on June 3, 2006.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

The U.S. has for decades dealt with the natural environment through well-intentioned but piecemeal policy decisions—if we bury waste instead of dumping it in rivers, our problems will be solved. No? If we designate certain land as protected from human-led destruction, we will rescue the earth. No? If we recycle materials, we can use them forever. No?   Clearly, piecemeal "solutions" have been proven limited or ridiculously nearsighted. Out of the ashes of environmental devastation rises the phoenix of sustainability. Sustainer-variety public intellectuals are particularly relevant in times of crisis because the solutions they advocate are long-term rather than short-lived and healthful rather than destructive. Their solutions also have a sense of permanence because the rhetoric of sustainability seeks to make overarching paradigm shifts that will ultimately eradicate the problem at hand.

However, environmental issues are likely a symptom of destruction in sociopolitical environments—cultures have gone awry because of power and money being overly concentrated among special interests to the detriment of most citizens. Therefore, these issues also require the broader category (of which the Sustainer is a narrower part), and that is the Cultivator. In addition, this trend could easily be seen as calling forth the Prophet because of this style's focus on arriving in a time of crisis to deliver judgment on the guilty.

Soundbite Culture

Political communication scholar Rod Hart writes in *Seducing America: How Television Charms the Modern Voter,* "The eye, the most gluttonous of all human organs, takes in all that can be taken in; it is an organ that cannot be satiated" (p. 61). Hart is talking about television as the harbinger of change in political life, but his comment

speaks to a larger shift in our culture—hypermediation. We have information coming at us from every possible direction: billboards offering to buy ugly houses, spam e-mail suggesting we may benefit from physical "enhancements," television news, advertisements for everything from underwear to hard liquor and back again. No wonder people feel overloaded by information. Perhaps Hart (1994) is right when he says that modern media "fill an emotional void in modern life, a void perhaps created by modern life itself" (p. 11). Perhaps because are bowling alone, we feel alienated from one another and from our communities locally and at large (Putnam, 2000). And perhaps hypermediation is to blame.

Not only are we inundated for as many hours as we are awake, the information itself is often superficial and brief. We are in a moment of "off-the-rack attitudes now passing for informed…discussion" (Hart, 1998) where "discourse is propositionless, overly truncated, sensationalistic" (Hart, 1994, p. 7). Indeed, deliberation has been replaced by the "fifteen-second spot" (Hart, 1994, p. 6) on all channels, through all mediums, all the time. Because of the truncated and soundbite nature of many messages, people are miseducated and unengaged, but *feel* as if they are informed and participating (Hart, 1994). Television news, for instance, fails to inform its audience and highly dramatized forms of the "content" "decrease viewers' recall of information, as well as the complexity with which they thought about a given problem" (Hart, 1994, p. 58).

It seems that because we are so saturated with information from ubiquitous media, our instinct is to go indoors and try to wait out the flood. Sociologist Richard Sennett declares that people have "lost a sense of [themselves] as an active force, as a 'public'" (1977, p. 261). We have gone private to avoid feeling overstimulated in public. Media have "[expanded] the private sphere" such that we are "removed…from the public sphere

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by making it seem that the public sphere has come to us" (Hart, 1994, p. 69, 115). Our high-gloss, soundbite existence has real consequences for deliberation—we want up-to-the-minute news that takes as long to listen to as soup does to microwave and we would prefer it be entertaining, thank you very much. The very idea of congregating with others to deliberate social issues is not remotely in the purview of the average person, regardless of how truly informative and even inspiring that might be. If it does not fit on a bumper sticker, we look for something that does.

A lack of deliberation produces feelings of panic because there seem to be no obvious paths or solutions in sight. Also, because of their ubiquity, soundbites become a low hum—the only things that register, therefore, above the din are hyperbolic overstatements of particular positions that are never interrogated for their merit for the public sphere. Clearly, the Guru style fits well here because people seek to ease their sense of dread about a world that seems out of their control. However, the most obvious style fit here is the Pundit. The Pundit seizes upon the opportunities that mystification and ambiguity provide and becomes the color announcer of the chaotic game. Although superficial in nature, the Pundit's commentary is a salve for an information-weary nation because it at least mimics decision-making, knowledge or even conversation or deliberation.

THE FOUR RHETORICAL STYLES EMERGE

The convergence of these four trends points to one overarching social condition: crisis. There exists a crisis of trust in institutions, a crisis of intolerance in religious faith, a crisis of epic destruction in the natural and social environment, and a crisis of almost no deliberation in the polis. Other eras have experienced crises, but ours is an era where

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crisis is amplified by being played out every minute of every day via the mass media. Out of these crises, the four rhetorical public intellectual styles for discussion in this dissertation emerge: the Prophet, the Guru, the Sustainer and the Pundit. Each responds to one or more of the trends I have detailed and each marks a way of correcting or contributing to the mistakes that have driven us into crisis in the first place.

The Prophet

Prophetic rhetoric is a rich tradition in Judeo Christianity. In the scriptures, the prophet is called at a time of crisis or anomie as God's servant, submissive to God's will and proclaiming judgment on a nation. He or she is the mouthpiece of God, burdened heavily by this call of conscience. In the contemporary moment, little has changed about the role of the prophet, but he or she may look unfamiliar to an ancient people. Among intellectuals raised in this tradition of prophetic rhetoric, some public intellectuals emerge as the new mouthpieces of the divine. They may not practice Judaism or Christianity, instead being inspired by nature, by science, by politics or by philosophy, but their rhetoric rings of the biblical prophetic voice. This group of public intellectuals has become more visible in the last several decades and particularly in the last several years as a response to the crises of faith, intolerance, environmental desecration and democracy I outlined above. Because prophetic rhetoric only truly materializes in times of extreme social and political chaos, its appearance in contemporary society is remarkable. It is the larger category of style in this case. My case study for this style is Dr. Cornel West, but another public intellectual example of this style include Jimmy Carter in his diplomatic work and particularly, his latest book outlining the dangers of a lack of values in political and social life.

Prophetic rhetoric exists outside the pale. In the middle ages, landowners would drive stakes, known as pales, into the ground as beginnings of fences to demarcate their territory. It was acceptable to be within the pale, but being outside or beyond meant that one was a sort of social pariah. Certainly, this was true of Old Testament prophets like Ezekiel, Daniel and Jeremiah who were viewed as strange loners, appearing only to judge communities as wrongdoers in hopes of correcting their evil behaviors before God punished them with violent severity. Most prophetic public intellectuals would not be seen with quite the same level of disdain as their biblical counterparts. Rather, they embody a certain rhetorical habitus marking them as separate and different from ordinary people, even from other kinds of public intellectuals. They must take great pains to show themselves as different so that they are perceived as true prophets, not escaped mental patients or garden-variety smart folks. In essence, the prophetic public intellectual rhetorical habitus demands speaking and embodying a "higher form" of truth, truth that is self-evident to "reasonable" people.

Crucial to the understanding of prophetic rhetoric is the idea that the prophet is called by God. As a sacred messenger, there is an "element of subjugation in the call" since "The role of the prophet is not a role one seeks; it is a role with which one is burdened" (Darsey, 1997, p. 28). Jeremiah, one of the Old Testament's Major Prophets, cries, "O Lord, Thou hast seduced me, And I am seduced; Thou hast raped me And I am overcome" (Jeremiah 20: 7-8). Prophetic rhetoric always involves explaining the call, that God summoned the prophet and had spoken to him or her. Not surprisingly, prophets are often accused of being insane because of their role as mouthpiece of God. Audiences must accept the prophet, announcing therefore that they have accepted their covenant with God—to deny that the prophet is authentic (meaning has been called) is to

deny God. The only other option the audience has is to denounce the prophet *ad hominem*. The prophet's claim to authority is based on "personal revelation and charisma" and "Charisma, we are reminded, is only validated when recognized; it is a social phenomenon" (Darsey, 1997, 28-29). Not only must the prophet be called and answer the call, but he or she must be recognized by the people as the legitimate heir to the call.

Kairos plays a fundamental role in the calling and service of the prophet. Representing absolute logos falls short unless there exists a time of crisis, from the Greek *krisis* meaning judgment. "Crisis states assume the form of a disintegration of social institutions" or as Habermas states, a time of anomie without law (1975, p. 3). In this time of crisis comes the prophet to warn of God's judgment and remind sinners of their original divine covenant. People may have become estranged from God during crisis and "the prophet is accuser and judge…he is called into being when the law has been violated, a critical time" to announce "both the charges and the verdict of God or nature against the transgressors of the law" (Darsey, 1997, p. 24). In this way, the prophet is seen as the extremist—he or she must maintain trust with God to deliver a message of anger at the betrayal of the nation, separating him or her from the audience. The prophet cannot demonstrate identification with the audience because this would preclude him or her from sitting as accuser and judge. Prophets must remain distinct in order to have any efficacy as God's chosen messengers. As the prophet Micah posited,

> Woe to those who devise wickedness, and work evil upon their beds!...They covet
> fields, and seize them; and houses, and take them away; they oppress a man and
> his house, a man and his inheritance. Therefore thus says the LORD: Behold,
> against this family I am devising evil, from which you cannot remove your necks;
> and you shall not walk haughtily, for it will be an evil time (Micah 2:1-4).

Kairos is clearly present in the prophet's call to conscience—there is a sense of exigency

in prophetic rhetoric. There is a time of crisis, God calls on the prophet, and the prophet answers the call.

In addition to a sense of exigency, prophetic rhetoric is characterized both by "vengeance, of the anger of betrayal" (Darsey, 1997, p. 25) and the hope for redemption. God is angry with those who sin portrays the prophet, yet there exists the possibility that, if people are willing to repent and to honor their covenant, God will forgive them. Instead of inevitable punishment, prophetic rhetoric reflects the light of hope. However, the prophet must steadfastly convey God's anger over a broken covenant. Often, this is met with profound resistance because worldly success is admittedly preferable to many over the difficult path of righteousness (Goodall, 1996). As early American Jeremiah Samuel Danforth recounted, "when Israel was apostatized and fallen, the Lord, to convince them of their ingratitude and folly, brings to their remembrance his deliverance of them out of Egypt" (1670, p. 75). As Darsey (1997) asserts, "The announcement of judgment to their own nation, along with the reason given in the accusation, was recognized by all as the most essential, the most important, or the most frequent prophetic speech form" (p. 24).

The Guru

The Guru was historically characterized as a Hindu spiritual or philosophical leader or mentor, but has more recently come to mean a person with an otherworldly kind of skill or expertise in a given area.[22] Regardless of a guru's area of expertise, one aspect that all gurus share is an ability to bring enlightenment or self-realization. Often, this involves gathering followers who believe in the guru's ability to meld the spiritual and the secular, to constitute new frontiers and to bring meaning to followers' lives. F. Scott

Fitzgerald articulates this potentially subconscious felt need for meaning at the end of *The Great Gatsby* (1925), "for a transitory and enchanted moment, man must have held his breath in the presence of this continent, compelled into an aesthetic contemplation he neither understood nor desired, face to face for the last time in history with something commensurate to his capacity for wonder." The Guru shows up as a rejoinder to the intolerance common to fundamentalism, and is again the larger style category under which others may reside. In turn, the Guru serves many of the same functions as the fundamentalism leader—he or she offers "divine" answers for those struggling with life's gray areas. My case study for this style explores Dr. Deepak Chopra, but the Guru is a style that is found in many places. Other examples are Dr. Maya Angelou and Oprah Winfrey, both of whom have attracted scholarly and lay followings of individuals seeking answers, seeking wisdom.

The rhetoric surrounding the guru is marked by consistent references to relationships. That is, the guru is not a deity or singularity worth studying, but rather a teacher of the divine, a condition that necessarily implies pupils or students. Indeed, in India, the word *"anatha"* means "without a teacher" and is regarded as a terrible misfortune.[23] The 15th century poet Kabir wrote, "Guru and God both appear before me. To whom should I prostrate?/ I bow before Guru who introduced God to me."[24] So, the guru is not only a teacher but one who, because of his relationship with students, introduces followers to enlightenment in general (self-realization), or a figure of enlightenment in particular (God). Through the rhetoric of the Guru public intellectual,

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[22] Retrieved October 11, 2005 from http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=guru.
[23] Retrieved October 11, 2005 from http://www.poetseers.org/the_poetseers/kabir/kabir_index/.

[24] Ibid.

spiritual or philosophical enlightenment becomes possible in a world of shadows and dark unanswerables.

Certainly, the guru connects "worlds" for followers. By this, I mean that followers likely have an understanding of the world in which they reside: their jobs, their neighborhoods, their churches, their schools. Yet, they possess a latent, perhaps long-dormant need for connection to "higher worlds": better jobs or job performance rather than simply 9-5, a sense of community rather than simply residing in a neighborhood, spiritual enlightenment rather than simply being a parishioner, academic and philosophical brilliance rather than simply passing courses. As one self-professed guru relates:

> I am a Unix Guru: I debug programs from octal dumps.
> I eat VMS hackers for lunch.
> I know the entire Ada manual by rote, never use Ada anyway since I write
> all my programs in machine language and never use assemblers since I
> type in the binaries directly using cat. [a Unix program that displays
> output]
> [. . .]
> I write device drivers in my sleep.
> The DEC salespeople worship me as a minor deity and sacrifice young,
> buxom secretaries to me at full moon. [141-10][25]

Unix Guru acts as the connection between the world of the average programmer and Unix "heaven"—only through the teachings and philosophical visions of Unix Guru can followers achieve techie God-like status themselves.

The Sustainer

The rhetoric of sustainability is increasingly mainstream. Sustainability entails both philosophies and processes that avoid stripping enormous amounts of resources with no other motive but profit, but that promote "upcycling" or resources to sustain political,

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[25] Retrieved October 11, 2005 from http://www.firstmonday.dk/issues/issue2_6/sewell.

social or natural environments. As such, it is part of the larger style category, the

Cultivator. Whereas sustainability in past decades has been most closely associated with

recycling, the new rhetoric of sustainability goes far beyond defensive, programmatic

responses. The Sustainer posits that "although [industry] may seem invincible, the

fundamental flaws in its design presage tragedy and disaster" (McDonough, 2002, p. 17),

and that industry and governmental bodies should work toward developing processes to

sustain rather than reinvent resources. For example, the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize was

awarded to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for "their efforts to prevent

nuclear energy from being used for military purposes and to ensure that nuclear energy

for peaceful purposes is used in the safest possible way."[26] Clearly, the Sustainer is a

reaction to environmental destruction, but this rhetorical style goes beyond the natural

world—the Sustainer also asks that all political and social environments are also treated

as limited resources and that the policies that effect them respect the need for a more

sustainable world in general. The public intellectual examplar for my case study is

designer and architect William McDonough. An example of the Cultivator, the larger

category that works to sustain all types of environments, would be Ben Cohen and Jerry

Greenfield, or as they are more commonly known, Ben & Jerry. These are entrepreneurs

who used their intellectual gifts to put Ben & Jerry's ice creams at the fore of social

sustainability—they have consistently paid a living wage, they raise and donate money to

important political causes, they support the use of recycled materials and organic

products.

   There is a visionary quality to Sustainers' rhetoric. Sustainers comprehend the

grossly negligent design of systems from the Industrial revolution onward that have

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[26] Retrieved June 6, 2006 from http://nobelprize.org/peace/laureates/2005/index.html.

contributed to the demise of ecosystems globally. Industry, for example, "puts billions of pounds of toxic material into the air, water, and soil every year," "produces some materials so dangerous they will require constant vigilance by future generations," "results in gigantic amounts of waste" and "erodes the diversity of species and cultural practices" (McDonough, p. 18).   Even the movements that rallied to protest such pollutants and environmental hazards manifested the same nearsighted attitude about the environment. Instead of burying things, though, they downcycle products until they became wholly unusable and the process for their downsizing was just as polluting as the industry they had been fighting. The aftermath of this struggle is staggering as

> "Loss of resources, cultural depletion, negative social and
> environmental effects, reduction of quality of life—these ills can
> all be taking place, an entire region can be in decline, yet they are
> negated by a simplistic economic figure that says economic life is
> good" (McDonough, p. 37).

In addition to being visionary, Sustainers' rhetoric is wholly about invention and discovery.   Inventing or discovering new processes designed to "love all the children, of all species, for all time" (McDonough, p. 14) marks sustainability. For example, if leaders adopt "a serious shift in what [they] consider to be wealth and progress" to "see the hollowness and fundamental unsatisfactoriness of a life devoted primarily to the pursuit of material ends" (p. 50), we can sustain resources forever.

In a vein of discovery, this rhetorical style implies an active orientation. Sustainers "wish to grow education and not ignorance, health and not sickness, prosperity and not destitution, clean water and not poisoned water. We wish to improve the quality of life" (McDonough, p. 78). The rhetoric of sustainability is not content with

discovering ways to conserve and reuse political, social or environmental resources—it anticipates that any progressive discovery requires publicity. Sustainers, therefore, must also employ the rhetorical tools of public relations.

The Pundit

Information is ubiquitous: there is talk everywhere, but as I mentioned earlier in detailing the trend toward hypermediation, the talk is not necessarily directed at anything or used for deliberative purposes. Indeed, "the talk that fills the channels amounts mainly to signals, gestures, and stances—not reasoning" (Gitlin, 2000). The Pundit is part of the larger category of the Analyst and is not known for its reliance on evidence or reason, but for its availability—the Pundit covers a broad range of topics in an accessible way through a massively accessible medium (often the television). Viewers get glimpses of stories and not the full panorama of insight. By this, I do not mean to say that pundits are unintelligent or mean spirited, but because they are paid for their brief diatribes and skill at the pithy, their rhetoric is devoid of well-thought-out, logical claims and conclusions. As such, the Pundit is the dark side of public intellectual style—we need more public intellectuals, to be sure, but we need more pro-social styles to emerge. Gitlin (2000) opines, "[the pundit's] knowingness about how the game is played is a substitute for knowledge about what would improve society. Punditry is to intellectual life as fast food is to fine cuisine." Punditry is born of cultural Attention Deficit Disorder—we want people to give us the dirt fast because time is money. The idea of sitting down and reading a genuine newspaper cover to cover is for many people, a remnant of another era (Hart, 1994). Instead, we welcome the soundbite, the bumper-sticker-length witticism and the Pundit fills that desire. I discuss Democratic political consultant and television

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host Paul Begala in this style, but other examples include Dr. Sanjay Gupta, CNN's correspondent for all things health related, and Jon Stewart, beloved host of *The Daily Show*.

The Pundit's rhetoric is marked not by reason, but by availability—in other words, pundits "cover" a broad range of topics about which they may know little, but because they speak in an accessible way through a massively accessible medium (often the television), viewers get glimpses of stories and not the full panorama of insight. By this I do not mean to say that pundits are unintelligent or mean spirited, but because they are paid for their brief diatribes and skill at the pithy, their rhetoric is devoid of well-thought-out, logical claims and conclusions. Gitlin (2000) opines, "[the pundit's] knowingness about how the game is played is a substitute for knowledge about what would improve society. Punditry is to intellectual life as fast food is to fine cuisine."

Punditry is also devoid of evidence. Traditional rhetoric relies substantially on reason, the common use of formal logic. Take, for example, the "top story" I mentioned above called "Sexxxxy Rulings!" Several questions arise from this: Are people in the Pacific Northwest more confused than others? What constitutes "live sex acts"? In what capacity are lap dances considered inappropriate? Do these acts involve only women or both women and men? Does it necessarily make Oregonians morally devoid for voting for this? Does it necessarily make Seattleites ethically superior for voting down lap dances? What is "sexy" about this topic? Was this an actual law or an opinion poll? Do Bill O'Riley or anyone else at Fox News actually know anything about these rulings? Herein lies the rub with punditry—chat without deliberation does not enrich the public sphere. Instead it opens questions that are important to deliberate, but that are ultimately not resolved. As long as air space is filled, The Pundit gets paid.

METHODOLOGY: THE TYPOLOGY OF PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL STYLE

An important contribution of my dissertation is that it seeks to explain public intellectual rhetorical styles to enhance understanding of rhetorical strategies that intellectuals can use to engage the public. To do this, I will develop a typology of public intellectual style. Because style is a ground on which public intellectuals can be isolated and compared, it provides ample richness for the construction of a typology of public intellectual rhetorical style and its impact, both positive and negative, on the public sphere.

Typologies provide a useful way of classifying public intellectual rhetorical styles such that they are easier to identify, study and locate in the public sphere.[27] This typology of rhetorical style also allows for comparison since public intellectuals' styles probably have much in common, but are not identical. They may represent or resonate authentically with one type of public, but not another. They may select different words or wear different clothes. They may have had different types of training. Style is a way to get at those distinctions and determine their rhetorical significance for society. In fact, the stylistic dimensions of social life are generally unacknowledged, feared or undervalued for more "substantive" elements—yet, as Robert Hariman explains, an examination of style "looks for the problems and techniques shaping…successful performance, on the assumption that values only can be taken seriously once performed successfully" (1995, p. 10). In her description of genre theory, Carolyn Miller (1984) notes, "The critic who classifies a rhetorical artifact as generically akin to a class of

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[27] Retrieved October 11, 2005 from http://www.montague.com/abstracts/typology3.html

similar artifacts has identified an undercurrent of history rather than comprehended an act isolated in time" (p. 153). Similarly, this typology will not be used to place public intellectual rhetorical styles in convenient little boxes for the purposes of ending the discussion on the topic. Rather, the typology represents "a point of connection between intention and effect, an aspect of social action" (Miller, 1984, p. 153) in the public sphere. So, the typology highlights historical undercurrents by foregrounding connections between public intellectual rhetoric and its effects as action in the public sphere.

A typology is an ordered collection of categories.[28] Robert Bergmann (1998) elaborates that typologies represent relationships; that is, they highlight similarities and differences between elements in the typology.[29] As formal classification systems, typologies offer four distinct benefits. They: 1) provide a common vocabulary, 2) offer a basis for characterizing, evaluating and understanding a phenomenon, 3) are useful for emerging fields, and 4) remain extendable (Heller & Martin, 1993).[30]

Provide a Common Vocabulary

Bringing together terms like public intellectual, style and the public sphere makes the need for a common vocabulary obvious. Public intellectual could mean any number of things including any garden-variety Ph.D. on television like Dr. Phil, any of a number of commentators on CNN, or any author of any popular book. Style could mean fashion, it could mean genre, it could mean taste. The public sphere is similarly equivocal in definition. Add to these terms the words prophet, guru, sustainer and pundit and the need

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[28] Retrieved June 7, 2006 from http://www.wordmap.com/General/FAQ.html#what_is_a_typology
[29] Retrieved June 7, 2006 from http://www.wi2.uni-trier.de/publications/BergmannGwcbr98.pdf

for common vocabularies crystallizes further. Robert Hariman amplifies this issue saying, "The fact remains that we don't have a suitable vocabulary for discussing an important class of widely distributed skills" (1995, p. 2) of style. Typologies provide us with such a common vocabulary. With this lexicon, we have a way of understanding both the terms of the argument and the argument itself. In addition, our vocabulary provides a way of comparing and evaluating terms as we expand the typology. Without this way of communicating, misunderstanding and stagnation ensue rather than clarity and progress. Ultimately, the goal of the typology of public intellectual rhetorical style is to uncover how and why some people are able to be agents of socio-political change in the public sphere using intellectual resources. However, without the lexicon the typology provides, this goal would remain unattainable.

Characterizing, Evaluating, Understanding

As I mentioned before, having a common vocabulary allows for characterization, evaluation and understanding of public intellectuals' capacities and abilities. By identifying points of comparison, I will be able to more effectively accomplish this objective. I believe there exist a number of dimensions of public intellectual style we might use to compare different styles, but there are five dimensions that stand out to me: fluidity, degree, location, media, and resources. Let us discuss fluidity as a dimension. On a university campus in their native environment, an intellectual looks completely natural. Intellectuals look like they belong in a classroom wearing tweed, surrounded by students, covered in chalk dust, papers hanging out of a worn briefcase. However, if the

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30 Retrieved June 7, 2006 from http://www.seas.gwu.edu/~sheller/talk/edmedia1/tsld003.htm

intellectual walked into an interview in an office in the private sector, he or she would be shockingly out of place. Fluidity, then, is a dimension that allows us to understand how easily a public intellectual moves between "worlds." Is the public intellectual like water, maintaining its core integrity but being able to flow in different directions and in different contexts? If so, we might call a public intellectual's style fluid. Traditional intellectuals, on the other hand, are non-fluid—their rhetorical style that works so beautifully in the campus environment makes them conspicuous in other environments. Dr. Jim Westphal in the McCombs Graduate School of Management comes to mind. Their style does not travel well. Public intellectuals, on the other hand, are fluid, but perhaps to varying degrees in diverse situations. Knowing how fluid and in what situations helps us to understand the importance of fluidity to public intellectual style.

Closely related to the dimension of fluidity is degree. What I mean by degree is the level of "publicness" and the level of "intellectualness" that a public intellectual possesses and demonstrates. Of course, public intellectuals are both public and intellectual simultaneously, but the two worlds push and pull on public intellectuals which makes it challenging to keep balance. In turn, there are probably public intellectuals who are more heavily public than intellectual (Oprah Winfrey), and there are those more intellectual than public (Dr. Maya Angelou). Degree provides a way of gauging in what circumstances and with what habitus a public intellectual is more public or more intellectual. Degree can also measure change over time. If crises escalate, public intellectuals may be more dedicated to the public than to more traditional intellectual work; if crises deescalate, another path may emerge. Knowing this, we can better comprehend the contexts that produce a habitus with a higher degree of publicness

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and one with a higher degree of intellectualness, and we can better comprehend the implications of such a habitus in society.

In popular and academic literature on public intellectual figures, location is a common dimension of study. I believe it is a useful one here, as well. Location addresses the questions: where are public intellectuals? In academe? In the private or public sector? All of these? Different locations demand different styles. Our iceberg remains an iceberg at the North Pole but an enormous puddle in San Diego. While it is still authentically water, location dictates its ultimate form. We may note that, because of tenure requirements and other structural impediments, academics find it increasingly difficult to be public intellectuals. I pointed earlier to the case of Cornel West, fired by his own alma mater, Harvard University, for doing too much in the way of public works. Another example is Professor Robert Jensen of the University of Texas who, after his letter to the editor in the *Houston Chronicle* condemning the United States for its role in spurring on the events of September 11, 2001, was lambasted by UT President Larry Falkner who said "Jensen is not only misguided, but has become a fountain of undiluted foolishness on issues of public policy."[31] Location can also help scholars acknowledge the existence of public intellectuals outside academe—a line of thought that has been slow in developing.

Not only is it compelling to note where we find public intellectuals, but also how public intellectuals communicate. The use of media is a way to examine this distinction between public intellectual styles. How do different public intellectuals express themselves? Is it always face-to-face or in another physically present way such as public

address? Do they appear on television or write for a newspaper? Do they blog? All of

these tools may be used, but channel selection has always been of interest to

communication scholars and remains of relevance in this case as well. For example, it is

my anecdotal opinion that there is an inverse relationship between the amount of time a

public intellectual spends on television and the amount of perceived intellectualism that

person maintains. In other words, the more Sanjay Gupta, M.D. appears on CNN as a

medical correspondent, the less impressive an intellect he is perceived to be by other

doctors.   This begs the question: do different media have different reputations? Part of

unpacking media use will be understanding whether popular media channels like

television are less "intellectual" in some way than more time-honored media channels

like print news. By studying the public intellectual's use of media, issues like this may

be addressed.

As I mentioned in the literature review of this prospectus, the use of resources is

central to style. By resources, I include all things financial, but I also include training,

credentials, education, media access and opportunity. All public intellectuals are not

wealthy, or at least, they may not have begun their lives that way. All do, however,

obtain training and education in some area of expertise. What are those different areas?

What counts as "appropriate" training (i.e. does one need a Ph.D. to be a public

intellectual? Does one even need a B.A.?)? For example, in the last decade, many would

identify Bill Gates as a public intellectual because of his extensive work in education and

medical science through the Gates Foundation. Yet, famously, Gates does not even hold

a B.A. degree. And, as I have stated previously, many who do hold advanced degrees are

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[31] *The Daily Texan,* September 21, 2001.

not public intellectuals.   Further, as was just discussed, public intellectuals may access

different media resources to do work. And, different opportunities present themselves

depending on context, location, fluidity, and the other dimensions I have explained.

Above all, public intellectual style is "a particular expertise disposed, like any other

techne, to displace any other kind of intelligence" (Hariman, 1995, p. 3).

Useful for Emerging Fields

Rhetorical style as an object of serious study is an emerging field. It would be

absurd to suggest no one has been interested in or talking about public intellectuals—as

rhetorical scholars, we know this has occurred since ancient Greece. It would be equally

ridiculous to imply that people have not examined style—a quick walk through the

checkout line at any grocery store to see the rows of magazines devoted solely to the

topic would dispel that myth very quickly. However, the convergence of public

intellectual life and style *is* new. My definition of style as habitus and interrogating the

stylistic aspects of public intellectuals are both new contributions to our greater

understanding of both public intellectuals and style.

Because of the novelty of these ideas, a typology is particularly useful. As

Hariman (1995) details, "Each…style draws on universal elements of the human

condition and symbolic repertoire but organizes them into a limited, customary set of

communicative design" (p. 11). However, because this is an emergent way of thinking

about both public intellectuals and style, we lack a way to visualize how the styles are

distinct and how they intersect, what characteristics define them, how each finesses

rhetorically to be successful, and what these styles' prominence tells us about the world

in general. A typology does this kind of work. Frederic Jameson explains, "W are after

all fragmented beings living in a host of separate reality compartments simultaneously, in *each one of these* a certain kind of politics is possible."[32] While categorization is not the ultimate goal, it certainly aids emerging fields in flushing out key terms, key characteristics and key findings.

Extendable

And finally, a typology is extendable. As "style becomes an analytical category for understanding a social reality" (Hariman, 1995, p. 9), that reality requires a dynamic rather than static perspective. A typology is therefore an obvious choice as a methodology because it can be extended indefinitely. One of the current problems with stylistic analysis is that "the canon of style remains identified with cataloging discursive forms in the artistic" sense rather than "understanding the dynamics of our social experience or the relationship between rhetorical appeals" (Hariman, 1995, p. 8) and education and participation in the world. So, instead of categorizing public intellectual style for the sake of dropping the discussion, a typology gives scholars the flexibility to update, rethink, eliminate, summarize and otherwise extend our knowledge based on future research and revelation. My future research and work will continue to extend the typology.

CONCLUSION

Historical moments are characterized by particular rhetorical styles that "work" in that time. We are currently in a time that I would characterize as crisis: a crisis of faith

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[32] Fredric Jameson, "Interview," *Diacritics* 12 (1982): p. 75.

in institutions brought on by political scandal and corporate corruption. A crisis of intolerance brought on by a rise in fundamentalism and therefore, a narrowing of what it means to be ethical or even okay. A crisis of the environment brought on by human production since the Industrial Revolution. And a crisis of a lack of space and climate for deliberation brought on by hypermediation and the "Me" generation. Out of these crises come four rhetorical stylistic responses: the Prophet, the Guru, the Sustainer and the Pundit.

The typology of style is an appropriate and exciting methodology for four reasons: it 1) provides a common vocabulary, 2) allows for characterization and explanation, 3) works well with emerging fields, and 4) is expandable. All of these are necessary and important in this interrogation of public intellectual rhetorical style. In the next four chapters, I will extend the basic typology as I explore a case study example for the Prophet, Dr. Cornel West; the Guru, Dr. Deepak Chopra; the Sustainer, William McDonough; and the Pundit, Paul Begala.

PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL CASE STUDIES

Chapter 3: Prophet Style

Chapter Three begins a series of four case studies of a public intellectual example of the four rhetorical styles: Prophet, Guru, Sustainer and Pundit. This chapter is dedicated to Dr. Cornel West, the Prophet. Cornel West can be found in many places. First, he is the 1943 Professor of Religion at Princeton University, though he has held faculty positions at Union Theological Seminary, Yale University, Harvard University and the University of Paris, Sorbonne. Second, he is a contributor to CNN, C-SPAN and NPR. Third, he performed on a CD of rap music and spoken-word art called *Sketches of My Culture*. Fourth, he appeared in *The Matrix* films as "Counselor West." Fifth, his other nonfiction works, notably *Race Matters* and *The Cornel West Reader*, were bestsellers along with the most recent book and the work I will examine here, *Democracy Matters: Winning the Fight Against Imperialism*.

THE PROPHETIC STYLE

As I described in Chapter Two, the Prophetic Style emerges out of a long tradition of Judaic prophecy from Biblical times. It is the larger category of style and Cornel West is a pro-social exemplar of prophetic style. It is important to recognize that the Prophet can also be anti-social if that public intellectual is a false prophet, claiming to have been called by a higher power to serve the community when he or she is truly self-serving or serving anti-social interests. One-time energy prophet and former CEO of Enron, Kenneth Lay, leaps to mind.

Cornel West: Our Jeremiah

The prophets of the Old Testament like Ezekial, Daniel and Jeremiah, were called by God to live the ultimately difficult life of prophecy: lives of pious isolation and damning judgment of their fellow Jews for breaking basic covenants with God. There are six major characteristics of prophetic rhetoric that hold for public intellectual prophets: authenticity, being called by a higher power, speaking a "higher" form of truth, speaking in a kairotic moment of crisis, standing apart to offer judgment, and the description of betrayal and the road to redemption. I am examining Cornel West's description of his prophetic philosophy in *Democracy Matters,* media appearances as well as his own life as shining examples of West's prophetic public intellectual skill on two levels. First, West's rhetoric demonstrates mastery of the prophetic archetype by clarifying his status as an authentic, called prophet of God and American politics who rises in a time of crisis to deliver judgment and outline a hopeful path to redemption for the sinners in his midst. Second West's own rhetorical habitus reinforces the prophetic rhetorical form through his work to limit and ultimately eradicate American imperialism and its ramifications both at home and abroad, and his "lived" philosophy of "deep democracy" serves to regenerate activism and community. West's work and life shows West not as a strictly religious prophet, though he is a theologian and professor of religion; but because his focus is entirely sociopolitical, his brand of prophecy belongs to the category of public intellectuals known as Prophets. He speaks to several communities: African Americans, activists and the empowered elite. To understand this more completely, I will work to break West's prophetic public intellectual style into its constituent parts: physiological, psychological and sociological.

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Physiological Style

In Chapter One, I described Physiological Style as that which is embodied and performative. Cornel West does not look like a typical theologian: he is never seen wearing the robes of ministry, he does not maintain a conservative hair style and he does not pose for photo opportunities, smiling, Bible in hand. This is because West is predominantly a thinker-activist who uses the teaching of theology to inform his political and social philosophies. Therefore, his physiological style is somewhat unconventional relative to what most consider appropriate for a man of God. West still wears an afro and his taste in clothing seems to channel Malcolm X—plain black suits, white shirts, black ties. In fact, West looks more like a holdover from the late 1960's black power generation, but his appearance is thoroughly in line with his overall rhetorical style: the thinking person's activist.

However, listening to Cornel West, it becomes clear that this prophetic public intellectual embodies and performs theologian, intellectual and activist and rarely as discrete categories. In terms of the performance of theology, West's written work and public speaking engagements are rife with references to scripture and religious philosophy. Quoting Biblical prophets adds to the strength of this rhetorical move. West offers examples from scripture, "To do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6: 8) and "to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice" (Genesis 18:19)" (p. 114). West invokes the history of the prophetic, saying,

> Let us begin with the long and rich prophetic tradition among Jews,
>
> past and present…We recall that the Jewish invention of the

prophetic, to be found in the scriptural teachings of Amos, Hosea,

Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah and Habakkuk, not only put justice at the

center of what it means to be chosen as a Jewish people but also

made compassion to human suffering and kindness to the stranger

the fundamental features of the most noble human calling (p. 112-

114).

In using actual quotations from Biblical prophets in scripture interspersed with a

historical understanding of the history of prophecy, West exhibits a rich knowledge of

both the historical tradition and the language of the prophetic. In doing so, he begins to

make the implicit case for himself as modern day prophet.

Certainly with West's academic pedigree and distinguished teaching career at

some of the world's finest institutions of higher learning, we would expect West to

perform or embody intellect and he does not disappoint. In an interview with CNN, West

argues that "Classroom reasoning should be applied to gritty urban realities: Sensitive

race issues like whether reparations should be paid to black America for slavery have to

be confronted by whites and blacks before any true healing can occur."[33] West marries

philosophy from Soren Kierkegaard to the teachings of Gandhi and King. And, he

teaches some of Princeton University's most popular courses. As Ronald Walters,

professor of political science from the University of Maryland, offers, "Cornel is

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[33] Retrieved January 27, 2007 from http://archives.cnn.com/2002/fyi/teachers.ednews/01/10/
west.harvard.ap/. (Associated Press, January 10, 2002).

foremost a philosopher…He has one of the quickest minds among scholars I know and puts together unique perspectives on issues."[34]

Finally, West performs and embodies activism. Aside from the Malcom X vibe he gives off from his appearance, West uses his physical body to take action on critical political and social issues. For example, West was the intellectual leader of the Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan's Million Man March and worked with rival gang members to end street violence in the black community. In a February 22, 2000 interview with C-SPAN about his non-fiction work, *The Cornel West Reader*, West asks, "Why are black men 7 percent of the population and 50 percent of the jail population ...? It is a national crisis for me." As the Associated Press reports, "West is primarily a thinker who uses his life experiences and interpretation of other works for a more impassioned, seat-of-the-pants style of professorship"[35] for which he is famous, or even infamous, given one's perspective.

Not only is physiological style embodied and performative, it is also a reflection of an inner persona. In other words, physiological style involves embodying a worldview. For Cornel West, his life, religious ideology and political philosophy are grounded in the ideals of democracy: equality, justice, respect and humanity. Toward this end, West's physiological style can be described as democratic. He does not employ the vocabulary of the traditional academic, despite his tenure among the intellectual elite. For example, in detailing the legacy and goals of prophetic Judeo-Christian life, West explains simply, "The prophetic goal is to stir up in us the courage to care and empower

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[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.

us to change our lives and our historical circumstances" (p. 115). West's rhetorical style marks a belief in speaking accessibly for as many as possible. Not only does his speaking style embody this democratic worldview, but his use of media does as well. West has never felt confined to the classroom even if his primary occupation is university professor. Rather, since achieving mass popularity on the wings of his book *Race Matters*, West has been on the lecture circuit, a regular contributor to C-SPAN and NPR, in *The Matrix* series of films, on CD with his spoken word/rap, and most recently, online with his web presence. In other words, West embodies democracy by trying to speak and reach as large an audience as possible without it costing huge dollars to catch a glimpse.

Psychological Style

Having psychological style is having consistency between what one says and how one lives. For West, this consistency emerges through his indictment of current sociopolitical and even religious practices alongside his personal democratic practice, itself an implied indictment of the current moment. It has always been a hallmark of prophetic rhetoric that the prophet arrives at a kairotic moment of crisis to articulate God's judgment and provide a pathway to righteousness. West follows in this tradition in his indictment of this sociopolitical moment generally and the Bush administration and its policies specifically.

West begins *Democracy Matters*, in fact, with a chapter titled, "Democracy Matters are Frightening in Our Time" where he establishes that the entire book will be dedicated to looking "unflinchingly at the waning of democratic energies and practices in our present age of the American empire" because "There is a deeply troubling

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deterioration of democratic powers in America today" (p. 2). Instead of the kind of deliberative democracy our Constitution outlines, "elite salesmanship to the demos has taken the place of genuine democratic leadership" (p. 3) and where the three antidemocratic dogmas of free-market fundamentalism, aggressive militarism and escalating authoritarianism rule (p. 3-6). West sums up the sad situation succinctly when he writes,

> In short, we are experiencing the sad American imperial devouring of American democracy. This historic devouring in our time constitutes an unprecedented gangsterization of America—an unbridled grasp at power, wealth, and status. And when the most powerful forces in a society—and an empire—promote a suffocation of democratic energies, the very future of genuine democracy is jeopardized (p. 8.)

Certainly, we can point to other times in this country in which we faced crises: slavery and the subsequent secession of the American south from the Union leading to the Civil War; presidential assassinations; denial of basic rights to people of color, women, religions other than Christianity, and sexual practices outside of mainstream heteronormativity; and Vietnam. So what is more troubling about this contemporary moment that would bring the prophets to the fore? West states, "the course and unabashed imperial devouring of democracy of the Bush administration is a low point in America's rocky history of sustaining its still evolving experiment in democracy" (p. 10). He argues that the current status quo is a disaster and that to remain satisfied with it is further evidence of a broken covenant with, in this case, the god of democracy.

Continuing in his democratic psychological style, West also condemns American Christianity as it is practiced in fundamentalist circles. He states, "the dominant forms of Christian fundamentalism are a threat to the tolerance and openness necessary for sustaining any democracy" (p. 146). West asks a series of provocative questions: "Does not the vast concentration of so much power and might breed arrogance and hubris? Do not the Old Testament prophets and teachings of Jesus suggest, at the least, a suspicion of such unrivaled and unaccountable wealth and status? Are not the empires the occasion of idolatry run amok?" (p. 151). The questions he asks are quite obviously rhetorical, a device used to soften the blow of the prophet's message by asking the audience to engage in deliberation. Since West is a public intellectual prophet, he does not limit his focus to religious or theological concerns, but rather turns his keen attention outward to the broader scope of sociopolitical troubles and tanglings in which the American people find themselves.

The foremost job of the prophet, though, is to cast judgment on a guilty people for their decision to break their covenant with whatever higher authority the prophet serves. This is a lonely and unhappy mission. Biblical prophets, as I describe in Chapter Two, were intensely unhappy men—they had been called as the mouthpieces of God to deliver very damning tidings to the Jewish people and so lived as outcasts and loners because few others want to befriend someone who spends his life judging them unfavorably. Although this is an unfortunate mission, the prophet accepts it because he or she feels that not to do so would be to turn a back to God, a decision far worse than serving as judge and jury of a guilty nation. The public intellectual prophet, like the Biblical prophets of

old, must also cast judgment and must use considerable evidence as an intellectual to justify his or her chastisement.

Cornel West gives a judgment of the ills associated with the stripping of democratic practices in the United States and around the world. However, the public intellectual prophet cannot simply condemn everyone in his or her path, but rather must select those people who are the most egregious offenders, those against whom the prophet has the most damning evidence. Why? Because, unlike Biblical prophets who were accepted on the basis that God called them, public intellectual prophets have to answer to evidentiary standards of the intellectual elite. Intellectuals are fundamentally curious, well-researched people and without that basis, West would summarily be dismissed as taking a superficial swing at an issue he is clearly unprepared to hit out of the park.

West selects four major groups for judgment: the Bush administration, the religious "right"/fundamentalists, academics unwilling to engage the culture at large, and U.S. political policy at home and abroad. Yikes. He says the Bush administration marks a sharp decline in America's shaky experiment in democracy and that, "We must not allow our elected officials—many beholden to unaccountable corporate elites—to bastardize and pulverize the precious word *democracy* as they fail to respect and act on genuine democratic ideals" (p. 3). In addition, he holds that the Bush administration is particularly guilty of corporate and religious cronyism leading to an unholy and undemocratic alliance between corporate, religious and political elites. This marriage, he explains, "undermines the truth of informed citizens in those who rule over them. It also promotes the pervasive sleepwalking of the populace, who see that the false prophets are

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handsomely rewarded with money, status, and access to more power. This profit-driven vision is sucking the democratic life out of American society" (p. 4).

His prophetic judgment continues. If the Bush administration is digging democracy's grave, religious fundamentalism in America is putting the nails in the coffin. West makes the argument that Constantinian Christians (his term for Christian fundamentalists) today demonstrate many parallels with the Romans who put their savior to death on the cross. In addition, he chastises Constantinian Jews for their complicit alliance with the U.S. in condoning racist and violent policies against Palestinians and others of Arab descent. He also reminds those who practice Islam that their treatment of women in their own countries is not part of the democratic tradition he claims was envisioned by the Prophet Muhammad. He warns about all of these groups, "Even the most seemingly pious can inflict great harm" (p. 169).

Because, as West claims, "This love of democracy has been most powerfully expressed and pushed forward by our great public intellectuals and artists" (p. 15), he is critical of academic elites who do not engage the larger culture. He suggests that in colleges and universities, where democratic traditions should be cemented and taught, that market forces have started to invade. He states, "A market-driven technocratic culture has infiltrated university life, with the narrow pursuit of academic trophies and the business of generating income from grants and business partnerships taking precedence over the fundamental responsibility of nurturing young minds" (p. 186). In essence, West castigates his fellow academics for worshipping at the altar of high profile grants and selling their democratically engaged souls for a business partnership.

Finally, West condemns U.S. policy at home and abroad. Our domestic policy of "free-market fundamentalism" is a growing danger. West blames this brand of fundamentalism saying it "puts a premium on the activities of buying and selling, consuming and taking, promoting and advertising, and devalues community, compassionate charity, and improvement of the general quality of life" (p. 5). Not only is our domestic policy making a shambles of democracy, our foreign policy makes others in the world question whether we have any democratic fiber at all. He places blame on aggressive militarism and says, "This new doctrine of U.S. foreign policy goes far beyond our former doctrine of preventative war. It green-lights political elites to sacrifice U.S. soldiers—who are disproportionately working class and youth of color—in adventurous crusades" (p. 5). It also implies that the nation with the most military might is somehow the most "morally" capable of policing the world (p. 5).

West's own philosophy and life work as a kind of salve for all of the wounds caused by a lack of democracy. Specifically, he accomplishes this authentication as public intellectual prophet by listing his credentials as an engaged scholar, a public intellectual. He casts light on what he calls the "market-driven technocratic culture" (p. 186) that has engulfed university and academic life. Asserting that "the narrow pursuit of academic trophies and the business of generating income from grants and business partnerships" trumps the more noble goal of educating and nurturing youth, he argues "It is imperative for the adults who have made the life of the mind their life's calling to be engaged with the wider community and play a vital role in furthering the national discourse on the important issues of the day by exercising the ways of truth telling that engage youth" (p. 186). In other words, it is critical for intellectuals to *go public.*

The problems West illuminates in academe make his own practice as a teacher/thinker/activist even more important. His work as a citizen-prophet are consistent with his indictment or judgment of our current moment of undemocratic crisis. He explains, "I have made not only a serious commitment to teaching and writing in the academy but also a substantive conviction to communicate to the larger culture" (p. 186). In support of this claim, he recounts his teaching prison inmates, appearing on C-SPAN and NPR as a guest of Tavis Smiley, co-chairing the National Parenting Association, appearing in *The Matrix* film series, assisting with the Pass-the-Mic Tour with Tavis Smiley and Michael Eric Dyson, and supporting the efforts of Russell Simmons and KRS-ONE in using hip hop to reach a new generation of potential political activists (p. 187-188). In addition to his public outreach, West contributes to his own academic discipline with books like *The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism* and *Keeping Faith.* He concludes his list of accomplishments by recounting his version of his decision to leave his own alma mater, Harvard University, because of the "technocratic" regime of then President Lawrence Summers. West seemingly counts this among his successes rather than professional failures because he remained resolute that he was enough of an academic that he did not need to prove himself further and could devote time to both teaching at the university level as well as engaging the culture. In the end, the life of the public intellectual prophet is potentially no easier than the life of the Biblical prophets of old—there will always be those who not only broke the covenant, but do not care to hear you cast judgment or to hear your call to redemption.

In as much as psychological style is about consistency between word and deed, it is also about identity—an outward mark of a consistent identity. There are three

characteristics that describe the prophetic public intellectual's identity in terms of psychological style: authenticity, responsibility, and judgment/hope. Let us look at each in more depth.

The first essential characteristic of prophetic public intellectual rhetoric is to prove that one is a truly authentic public intellectual prophet and not merely an insane person, coming off the street to rant about the evils of the world, retreating to his or her private world, perhaps never to be heard from again.   I have already demonstrated how West is authentic both scholar and activist, but West is also an authentic prophet. While West certainly has an impressive command of prophetic history, language and goals, he also sets himself up as a prophet in another way. He turns from a more general comprehension and adroitness of the Judaic prophetic tradition from scripture to a more specific tradition of prophetic rhetoric: the Black church. West explains that "Prophetic witness was a driving force in Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision for the civil rights movement, and lay behind the solidarity of Jews and blacks in the enactment of that movement" (p. 19). Truly, "much of prophetic Christianity in America stems from the prophetic black church tradition" (p. 158). West begins to align the suffering of the Jewish people despite their status as the chosen people of God with the more contemporary suffering of black people in America despite their religious devotion. He opines, "The Socratic questioning of the dogma of white supremacy, the prophetic witness of love and justice, and the hard-earned hope that sustains long-term commitment to the freedom struggle are the rich legacy of the prophetic black church" (p. 158). In turn, he aligns himself with this black prophetic tradition because, "to have been designated and treated as a nigger in America for over 350 years has been to feel unsafe,

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unprotected, subject to random violence and hated" (p. 20). West names black prophetic Christians "from Frederick Douglass to Martin Luther King Jr." as among the formidable Americans who "fueled the democratizing movement that at last confronted the insidious intransigence of the color line" (p. 158).

Not only have black Americans fought to eradicate the color line, West explains, "the black American interpretation of tragicomic hope in the face of dehumanizing hate and oppression will be seen as the only kind of hope that has any kind of maturity in a world of overwhelming barbarity and bestiality" (p. 20). By arguing that black Americans have long been victims of violent oppression and subjugation yet have, in many political and social instances, turned the other cheek and instead, provided the nation and the world with a blueprint for justice, West elevates the struggle of the American civil rights movement to the status of the Jews leading a movement of a people out of Egypt to the promised land of Israel. This elevation of the black struggle in America and his overt alignment as a black American within that struggle in turn authenticates his status as a prophet. And, his calling upon iconic black figures like Frederick Douglass and Martin Luther King, Jr. only adds to this distinction because it highlights West's lineage within the black prophetic tradition.

To match his rhetoric, West has worked diligently as a spokesperson and activist in the black community and for black causes. I mentioned earlier that West worked with Louis Farrakhan to organize the Million Man March and with other black activists to begin a dialogue among rival gangs to end street violence. Not only does he teach classes on religion and theology, but also is one of the nation's leading voices in the classroom on African American studies. He publicly engages ideas of special concern to this

community. For example, in a May 26, 2004 interview on NPR's *Tavis Smiley Show*, West addressed the controversial comments made by Bill Cosby at the 50th Anniversary celebration of Brown v. Board of Education in which Cosby, according to Michael Eric Dyson, degraded black Americans by chastising their "lack of parenting, poor academic performance, sexual promiscuity and criminal behavior amongst what he called the "knuckleheads" of the African-American community."[36] West disagreed, arguing instead that Cosby was a sort of social parrhesiast, speaking the truth to the black community in a loving way. West stated, "I think that is both Biblical and true. If you love and serve, you're bearing witness. That is all you can do in this space and time before you meet your maker, brother."[37]

In addition to being authentic, part of the prophet's identity is being responsible for taking on the burden of the call to prophecy. In terms of everyday living, West claims, "Prophetic witness consists of human deeds of justice and kindness that attend to the unjust sources of human hurt and misery. It calls attention to the causes of unjustified suffering and unnecessary social misery and highlights personal and institutional evil, including the evil of being indifferent to personal and institutional evil" (p. 114). His description points to the fact that the goal of the prophet has changed relatively little over the centuries, despite what the prophet might look like or the subject matter on which the prophet casts judgment. Indeed, "The especial aim of prophetic utterance is to shatter deliberate ignorance and willful blindness to the suffering of others and to expose the clever forms of evasion and escape we devise in order to hide and conceal injustice. The

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[36] Dyson, Michael Erik. Retrieved January 29, 2007 from http://www.michaelericdyson.com/cosby/.
[37] NPR. Retrieved January 29, 2007 from http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1910649.

prophetic goal is to stir up in us the courage to care and empower us to change our lives and our historical circumstances" (p. 115).

West's commitment to this responsibility is obvious in his actions. I have already discussed many of these actions in this chapter: teaching, traveling on the lecture circuit and appearing on "democratic" media like radio and television on a regular basis. It is his books that I think best exemplify his commitment, however. While his other actions certainly paint a picture of a man engaged in prophecy, his books go much further in their indictment of the status quo as well as their treatment of unjust and undemocratic practices with regard to race, class, sexual orientation and gender. *Race Matters, The Cornel West Reader* and *Democracy Matters* all spent time on the New York Times Bestseller List and while not cost-free, books are a largely democratic medium as each of these books can be checked out through local libraries. West's philosophy can also be accessed on-line through a number of sources such as www.democracynow.com and www.pragmatism.org. His 1993 lecture, "The Responsibility of Intellectuals in the Age of Crack" is one such example of West's assumption of responsibility for the call in his own actions.

Judgment is the third part of the prophetic public intellectual's identity. Since Biblical times, judgment has been the central job of the prophet. I have already enumerated the specific groups West singles out for his harshest criticism: the Bush Administration, the religious "right," academics unwilling to engage a broader culture, and U.S. domestic and foreign policy. Ultimately, West's identity as judge serves to highlight the issue that undergirds all others: a democratic collapse in this country. Democratic ideals, says West, are the foundation upon which all else rests and without

them, we not only cede our legal rights, but our humanity. Thus, the action of the

prophet must be to illuminate a path to redemption for all sinners.

The prophetic public intellectual rhetorical style offers a sense of hope, a light at

the end of the tunnel that signals that redemption is possible should the public change its

sinful ways. This is an important element of prophetic rhetoric because it makes clear

that a covenant with a two-way street—if one party can repent, the other can forgive.

Giving his ultimate vision for American democracy, West states that to right ourselves,

we must

> Shore up international law and multilateral institutions that
>
> preclude imperial arrangements and colonial invasions; that should
>
> also promote wealth-sharing and wealth-producing activities
>
> among rich and poor nations abroad; and that should facilitate the
>
> principled transfer of wealth from well-to-do to working and poor
>
> people by massive investments in health care, education, and
>
> employment, and the preservation of our environment (p. 62).

In addition, West's vision includes "accountability and responsibility in democratic publc

life, including vibrant debate and dialogue" (p. 122), a "recasting of Islamic identity" (p.

132), and learning from "modern science, modern politics and modern culture" (p. 135).

In order to redeem our national covenant with democracy, Americans must also

embrace youth culture and not dismiss it as silly or naïve. West tells us that American

youth "long for energizing visions worthy of pursuits and sacrifice that will situate their

emaciated souls in a story bigger than themselves and locate their inflated egos…in a

narrative grander than themselves" (p. 177). We can begin to acknowledge the

contribution of youth culture by engaging young people in their own language, a theme familiar to public intellectuals. West's action mirrors this concern. I have discussed previously that West has been involved in providing rhetorical space and opportunity for gang members to cooperate to end street violence. In addition, West uses hip hop as his medium in completing two CDs, *Sketches of My Culture* and *Street Knowledge* that bridge generations in an inherently democratic way in an everyday language.

West offers his most complete vision for redemption when he tells us, "The historic emergence of Athenian democracy and the Greek invention of Socratic dialogue must instruct and inspire our practice of democratic citizenship in present-day America" (p. 204). He goes on to reconstruct the history of Western democracies to encourage the practice of Socratic questioning and dialogue, particularly on matters of public concern. Socratic questioning "shatters one's petty idols, false illusions, and seductive fetishes; it undermines blind conformity, glib complacency, and pathetic cowardice. Socratic questioning yields intellectual integrity, philosophic humility, and personal sincerity—all essential elements of our democratic armor for the fight against corrupt elite power" (p. 208-209). Ultimately, we must avoid "the paralyzing paranoia of Manichaean thinking, the debilitating hubris of dogmatic arrogance, and the myopic self-righteousness of nihilistic imperialism" (p. 212) to find redemption. We must also embrace the prophetic tradition because, "it generates the courage to care and act in light of a universal moral vision that indicts the pervasive corruption, greed, and bigotry in our souls" (p. 215). The prophetic, in its best use, opens up hearts and minds to suffering and social misery and requires us to fight our own indifference to this suffering. With these panels of our democratic "armor," we can "absorb any imperial and xenophobic blows," "face any anti-

democratic foe and still persevere" and "fight any form of dogma or nihilism and still endure" (p. 217-218). As God declares in Exodus 22:23, "I will surely hear their cry…For I am compassionate."

West is the founding member of an organization called the Tikkun Community that serves to "heal, repair and transform the world." It is an interfaith movement c-chaired by Dr. West, Rabbi Michael Lerner and Sister Joan Chittister. Part of the Tikkun Community (which also publishes a print magazine) is the Network of Spiritual Progressives. The focus of this group is to accomplish four major tasks: 1) to advocate a new "bottom line" in America that looks beyond profit and power to understand how institutions maximize love, caring, peace and respect; 2) to challenge a misleading use of religion by the religious "right"; 3) to challenge leftist anti-religion and anti-spiritual sentiments; and 4) to challenge philosophical liberalism and its antecedent, staunch individualism.[38] This entire project reveals West's active commitment to redemption. In addition, West is actively involved in a number of political and social organizations, the Democratic Socialists of America, The National Parenting Organization's Task Force on Parent Empowerment, and was a member of the Reverend Al Sharpton's presidential exploratory committee.[39] West acts as the prophetic public intellectual style demands: as authentic and responsible, as judge and advocate of hope.

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[38] Retrieved February 2, 2007 from http://www.tikkun.org/.
[39] Retrieved February 2, 2007 from http://www.pragmatism.org/library/west/.

Sociological Style

The sociological aspect of prophetic public intellectual style requires that the style be performed and, ultimately, judged as successful in public. In other words, sociological style requires interaction. The first characteristic of sociological style is that it is socially constructed. So, the public calls for the Prophet, in a way. Looking at the sociopolitical trends I detailed in Chapter Two, two issues arise: crumbling faith institutions and a rise in religious fundamentalism. Faith in government, business and other institutions has been replaced by a sense of outrage—those in power who espouse Judeo Christian beliefs of respect and charity are the very same people who throw ethics out the window when it comes to their own behavior. The Prophet enters in this time of crisis to judge those who have sinned and to offer a road to a renewed covenant. Perhaps it seems ironic that the Prophet could also be part of the answer to the rise in religious fundamentalism. However, today's public intellectual Prophet is not necessarily a servant of God, but the mouthpiece of some divinity, be it some philosophical ideal like justice or the logical ideals of science. Therefore, to counteract a herd mentality that accompanies a rise in religious fundamentalism, the Prophet enters with another version of truth.

For West as the prophetic public intellectual, the social construction of style means that not only is he authentic, as I have previously described, but also that he speaks a higher form of truth to the public. And, perhaps more significantly, that the public judges this truth-telling as a higher form and faithful to the prophetic style. A higher form of truth rhetorically elevates the public intellectual prophet as being somehow more closely linked to the divine. In Biblical tradition, prophets would work to convince their

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Jewish audiences that they were the incarnated mouthpieces of God speaking God's literal truth. In modern times, prophets would have a difficult time making this claim— audiences would be far too wary of anyone claiming to be God's trumpet. However, prophets must prove that their message is a higher form of truth because they have to be beyond reproach, trustworthy, and credible to a much greater degree than the average person. If they fail to establish their higher truth speaking, their rhetoric may still be impactful, but not as powerful as if they are successful in their persuasion.

Cornel West accomplishes this prophetic task in a two part rhetorical strategy: he denigrates the rhetoric of the Bush administration and its allies as false truth, then he elevates prophecy and the prophetic tradition as the "real truth." Much of West's rhetoric is dedicated almost solely to the task of proving that prophetic public intellectuals like him speak a higher form of truth. West moves that fundamentalist Christianity has,

> gained far too much power in our political system, and in the
>
> hearts and minds of citizens. This Christian fundamentalism is
>
> exercising an undue influence over our government policies, both
>
> in the Middle East crisis and in the domestic sphere, and is
>
> violating fundamental principles enshrined in the Constitution; it
>
> also providing support and "cover" for the imperialist aims of the
>
> empire" (p. 146).

West blames neoconservatives for this frightening trend, most obviously, the current Bush administration. Tracing the history of fundamentalism in America, West offers the legacy of Roman Emperor Constantine as the genesis—he articulates, "Immediately after his conversion, Constantine targeted numerous Christian sects for annihilation...as he

consolidated power by creating one imperial version of Christianity" (p. 148). What

resulted was what West describes as Christian schizophrenia—on the one hand, the

teachings of Christ promote justice, fairness, respect and tolerance; on the other hand, the

way Christianity emerged in Western practice after Constantine is based entirely on

imperialist authoritarianism. West reminds us that, "This terrible merger of church and

state has been behind so many of the church's worst violations of Christian love and

justice—from the barbaric crusades against Jews and Muslims, to the horrors of the

Inquisitions and the ugly bigotry against women, people of color, and gays and lesbians"

(p. 149). Out of the schizophrenic turmoil rises fundamentalism Constantinian Christians

led by those referring to themselves as the religious "right." We see Constantinian

Christian rhetoric, according to West, when the far right discusses a ban on same-sex

unions or justifies war against an Islamic enemy through a "religious" lens.

Yet, West, a Christian theologian himself, is quick to laud another brand of

Christian—the Prophetic Christian. He says, "In criticizing Constantinianism in

American Christianity, however, we must not lose sight of the crucial role of prophetic

Christianity as a force for democratic good in our history" (p. 152). He goes on to list

critically influential social movements like the abolitionist, women's suffrage, trade

unions and civil rights movements as having been founded and led by prophetic

Christians (p. 152). Even more important for West's democratic project, Prophetic

Christians have "done battle with imperialism and social injustice all along" (p. 152). In

other words, Prophetic Christianity is the antidote to Constantinian Christianity—it is the

higher form of truth.

Prophetic Christianity is the higher form of truth for three key reasons, according to Cornel West: 1) it is more historically based, 2) it is more moral, and 3) it is more like the life of Jesus Christ. Let us look at each of these in turn. West makes the claim that for himself and for other prophetic public intellectuals, Prophetic Christianity is more historically based primarily because it is rooted in Biblical tradition whereas Constantian Christianity is rooted long after the life of Jesus Christ. Proverbs 14:31 reads, "He who oppresses a poor man insults his maker / He who is kind to the needy honors Him." West explicates the history of the prophetic connection to democracy in writing, "Prophetic Judaic figures appeal to us as individuals to join in transforming the world as communities. They shun individual conversion that precludes collective insurgency. They speak to all people and nations to be just and righteous" (p. 17-18). He then goes on to connect the alleviation of social ills with the prophetic in a democratic system saying, "Prophetic Judaic figures also target the sole reliance on the force of power…"heal your wound" (Hosea 5:13). Escalating authoritarianism is a species of injustice that tightens the rope around one's neck ("for not by force shall man prevail" 1 Samuel 2:9)" (p. 18).

He further makes his case that the prophetic is more historical because of its appearance in the Bible by quoting a number of Biblical prophets as proof. For instance, Amos spoke in the name of a "God who decides the destiny of all nations" (Amos 9:7); Isaiah spoke to "all you inhabitants of the world, you who dwell on earth" (Isaiah 18:3). By making the observation that the audience matters, West again underscores the importance of rhetorical style to the prophetic public intellectual. To be a prophetic public intellectual is not to speak to colleagues or peers in arcane or disciplinary

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vernaculars, but to speak to a public in a public language. Notice also the scope of the audience. West selects verses that show prophets addressing a large public if not the entire world. While I would contend that all public intellectual rhetorical styles, including the prophetic, are more effective when targeted toward specific publics, it is still important to recognize that the prophet is motivated by his or her calling to address issues for humanity as a whole. And, of course, despite its negatives, today's mass mediated world offers connections to much of humanity simultaneously, making media selection an increasingly valid criterion for public intellectuals in general.

Not only is Prophetic Christianity the higher truth because of its historical background, it also is the higher form of truth because it is more moral or ethical. West recounts, "The Jewish invention of the prophetic commitment to justice—also central to Christianity and Islam—is one of the great moral moments in human history" (p. 17). He continues by explaining, "Prophetic witness consists of human acts of justice and kindness that attend to the unjust sources of human hurt and misery. Prophetic witness calls attention to the causes of unjustified suffering and unnecessary social misery" (p. 17). According to West, then, Prophetic Christianity is more ethical because it is centered in religious tradition. Although the prophetic was a Jewish invention, West relays that the "prophetic commitment to justice is foundational in both Christianity and Islam. The gospel of love taught by Jesus and the message of mercy of Muhammad both build on the Jewish invention of the prophetic love of justice" (p. 19).

West makes public his higher form of truth through his immense visibility. In turn, this visibility allows audiences to judge the fidelity of his performance of prophetic public intellectual style, a key characteristic of the sociological dimension of style. As I

have already discussed West's mediated visibility, I will not go into this in painful detail. However, I do not want to minimize the importance of this publicly visible performance. By using a variety of particularly democratic media such as radio, television, film and books as well as the Internet and face-to-face communication, West can be seen almost anywhere, virtually anytime. His message of judgment and redemption through his higher form of truth is available to many if not most, and therefore, his dual goal of engaging and then helping to transform the culture can be better realized. Amen.

DIMENSIONS OF COMPARISON

As I described in Chapter Two, there are five main dimensions I will explicate to compare the four public intellectual styles I am exploring in this dissertation. These are fluidity, degree, location, media, and resources. Fluidity can be understood as the ease, or lack thereof, with which a public intellectual moves between "worlds," between the world of intellectual endeavor and the world of public life. Cornel West is a highly fluid prophetic public intellectual. He has an impressive academic intellectual pedigree, having graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University, earning a PhD from Princeton University and having taught at both his alma maters as well as Union Theological Seminary and the Sorbonne. In addition, he has written 16 books and is a dedicated teacher. For his stature as an academic, however, West is astoundingly politically and socially active. He has appeared on CNN, C-SPAN and NPR; he has put out two rap CDs; he starred in *The Matrix* film series as "Counselor West"; he was a participant in the Million Man March and Russell Simmons' Hip Hop Summit; he is the honorary Chair of the Democratic Socialists of America; he works for PETA's Kentucky

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Fried Cruelty Campaign. He is something of a celebrity intellectual and said in an

interview with PBS, "I've always wanted to use whatever celebrity status I have for the

struggle for freedom, the struggle for goodness."[40] However, the prophetic style is

extreme—the prophet, because of his or her calling by a higher power, must live a

somewhat lonely existence on the fringes in order to be able to have credibility to

pronounce guilt on a nation and offer hope for redemption. So, while West demonstrates

exceptional fluidity, he is likely something of an anomaly within the prophetic public

intellectual style because most prophets are too rhetorically extreme to be as embraced

both publicly and intellectually as is West. Though, West's ability to achieve this level

of fluidity is noteworthy because it recognizes that it is possible, even for more extreme

rhetorical styles, to move between intellectual and public worlds.

Degree is closely related to fluidity in that it denotes the "level" of "publicness"

or "intellectualness" the prophetic public intellectual embodies. In other words, under

what circumstances must the prophet be more public or more intellectual? Cornel West,

as I just explained under the category of fluidity, is very highly intellectual as well as

very highly public, but the way he balances these things in different moments is valuable

to understand. West has clearly read his Cicero. Although he has written 16 books, his

most notable works, *The Cornel West Reader*, *Race Matters* and *Democracy Matters*, are

clearly written and researched by an intellectual but are spoken in the voice of the public.

In other words, West is able to balance both the maintenance of rigorous standards of

intellectual work with the standards of sounding like an engaged, smart but *one of us* guy.

He refers constantly to "elite power" as if he is totally outside of it. In addition, as crises

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[40] From http://www.pbs.org/thisfarbyfaith/witnesses/cornel_west.html. Viewed August 7, 2006.

loom, West becomes more public rather than less. He seems to believe that crises points are the moments in which intellectuals are most necessary. What this balance tells us about prophetic public intellectuals is that, like their Biblical counterparts, they take rhetoric and timing very seriously. Prophets must speak in the voice of the audience on whom they pronounce judgment or risk the audience misunderstanding or dismissing the prophet as some deranged person out of touch with lay reality. Furthermore, the prophet becomes more public in times of crisis just as the Biblical prophets of old—crisis, in fact, is a major marker of prophetic rhetoric.

Location is our next object of interest. Location is a question of where to find prophetic public intellectuals. In *Democracy Matters*, West devotes a sizeable chunk of Chapter 6 to clearing the air on his reasoning for leaving Harvard after a very public dispute with then President, Lawrence Summers. He claims it was because Summers was unsupportive of his public works like his rap CDs and his role in *The Matrix* and its sequels because he felt they conflicted with the goals of Harvard University and West's teaching load. Public intellectuals, in general, have a challenging time remaining in academe for this very reason—the more public they are, the less seemingly intellectual they are to other traditional academics. So, we would generally expect to find the prophet in other places besides academe. Since the prophetic public intellectual is an accuser of nations, it makes sense to find him or her in roles where he or she can accuse: politics, the pulpit, protests. West is able to be co-located because of Princeton University's flexibility in his role, though many other public intellectuals have failed at this location.

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We turn now to how the prophetic public intellectual uses media to communicate. As I have now mentioned several times, the prophet accuses nations and so we should expect that his or her media resources are more mass than interpersonal. Cornel West demonstrates this clearly. He has appeared on a number of television shows, is a regular on-air contributor to *The Tavis Smiley Show* on NPR, has been in films, has two rap CDs, writes a blog and is a regular lecturer. Even his university courses have 700+ students in attendance. While Biblical prophets relied solely on a public but in-person forum for delivering their message of guilt and redemption, Cornel West and his prophetic public intellectual colleagues today have more media resources of which to take advantage. As I talked about in Chapter Two, it is likely that the more these public intellectuals appear on television or in film or on the radio, the less seriously they are taken by their intellectual peers, particularly if they are academics. In other words, the more "mass" the media, the greater the reduction in intellectual praise. On the other hand, there is a medium that can bolster the prophetic public intellectual or stave off the criticism that accompanies mass media participation. Books. Although books have the capacity to reach great numbers of people, they are taken as more "establishment" for intellectuals than is television or film. Cornel West has remained, by most accounts, a respected academic likely because he has balanced his mass media appearances with writing 16 books on philosophy, African-American studies and politics.

Finally, the last point of comparison between public intellectual styles is the use of resources. The above discussion on media use is part of the context of resources, but is not the whole picture. Resources encompass finances, training, credentials, media access and opportunity. Certainly, most academic intellectuals would not seriously

entertain the idea that academics is where the big money is, but West, because of his public appeal and his ability to capitalize on wide-reaching media experiences, is likely better paid than the average professor. More importantly, he seems to have access to people with money. Why might this be important? He has access to media resources that others do not have. Very few people are ever asked to be part of a major motion picture, and fewer still with a series of films that were as popular as *The Matrix*. I argue that prophetic public intellectuals, particularly religious ones, are going to have better access to financial and media resources because their message is very much en vogue in a time when only extreme messages rise above the fray and in which fundamentalist religion is on the rise as a central part of many people's lives. In terms of training and credentials, West has obvious academic pedigree other prophetic public intellectuals lack. However, as long as the prophetic public intellectual can prove to his or her audience that he or she was authentically called, that serves as the only credential the prophet needs to deliver the message.

CONCLUSION

In all, the prophetic public intellectual rhetorical style requires the prophet to prove authenticity and that he or she has been legitimately called by a higher power. In turn, the prophet must deliver harsh judgment in a time of particular crisis followed by a plan for redemption should the audience repent and recover its covenant with the higher power. This style is extreme—it requires a lonely road for the prophet, a life in many ways on the rhetorical fringes. However, in a time of rising religiosity (or at least rising fervor), escalating crisis and hypermediation, the prophetic voice also seems to be more

prominent. Cornel West demonstrates both the limitations and the possibilities of the prophetic public intellectual style—he is criticized by some academics for being a "less serious" scholar since his newfound celebrity status, but is celebrated by many because of his public work and activism. With West as an example, the prophetic public intellectual can expect great things.

Chapter Four moves from the Prophet to the Guru: a public intellectual who bridges of Eastern spirituality with Western logic in the form of the next public intellectual style, the Guru.

PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL CASE STUDIES

Chapter 4: Guru Style

Among the foremost tenets of Hinduism is the importance of finding a Guru, one

who can impart what disciples believe is transcendental knowledge. In the Hindu text,

the *Bhagavad Gita*, the student is told by God in the form of Krishna: "Acquire the

transcendental knowledge from a Self-realized master by humble reverence, by sincere

inquiry, and by service. The wise ones who have realized the Truth will impart the

Knowledge to you" (c4, s34). The guru is loosely translated from Sanskrit as "teacher,"

but can also mean "heavy with spiritual knowledge,"[41] and the light who leads those in

darkness to God.[42] Because the western tradition lacks an equal term or understanding of

the Hindu guru, the guru has come to signify virtually anyone who develops a following

or anyone who can teach others the way to some path of enlightenment. A quick Google

search of the word reveals some of these less spiritual definitions such as www.guru.com,

a site that specializes in freelance technology talent, www.gurunet.com, an on-line

reference site complete with dictionary, thesaurus and encyclopedia, or

www.gurugangstarr.com, the homepage of a rap group comprised of members Baldhead

Slick and Jazzmatazz.

Like the Prophet, the Guru is the larger style category. And, like all public

intellectual styles, the Guru can have positive or negative impact on the public sphere.

So, while I argue that Dr. Deepak Chopra is a pro-social Guru, the anti-social side of the

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[41] Cornille, C. (1991). *The Guru in Indian Catholicism*, p.207. New York, NY: Peeters
Publishers.

coin would be a Guru who attempts to lead followers to enlightenment for personal gain or to false "truth" that works against the better interests of society. An example of such an individual could be M.G. "Pat" Robertson who uses organizations such as his Christian Broadcasting Network and American Center for Law and Justice to blur all important lines between church and state and "reclaim" American government solely for persons of Christian faith.

The public intellectual guru does not need to be a Hindu teacher or practitioner by any means. Public intellectual gurus are, however, spiritual leaders of a flock of followers, formally or informally, helping to shepherd followers to knowledge, enlightenment, and ultimately, to God. Thus, the public intellectual guru is a teacher of a practice and a lifestyle that leads his or her followers closer to the spirit. Like Hindu gurus, public intellectual gurus must have real disciples and they must strive to pass along an undiluted brand of spiritual wisdom or knowledge to the disciples such that, once the guru is no longer alive or taking new disciples, his or her teachings will live on in the disciple that rises to become the next guru. In other words, guru imparts knowledge, guru is replaced by the next generation guru. The circle remains unbroken in this way.

DR. DEEPAK CHOPRA: THE GURU OF AYURVEDA

Dr. Deepak Chopra was born in New Delhi, India in 1947 and attended the prestigious All India Institute of Medical Science in 1968. Upon graduation, Chopra moved to the United States to complete his residency in endocrinology at the Lahey

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[42] From *Gurustotram* or *Verses to God.*   98

Clinic in Burlington, Massachusetts and the University of Virginia. Subsequently, he

taught at both Tufts University and Boston University medical schools and became Chief

of Staff at the Boston Regional Medical Center. He began an exceptionally successful

private practice as a board certified endocrinologist in the early 1980's. And yet,

something seemed "off" to Dr. Chopra about his medical practice. Western medical

practice traditionally accepts a definition of health as simply the absence of disease.

Eastern philosophies on medicine, however, consider the balance between mind, body

and spirit when determining the overall health of a patient. As a student of Indian and

American medical practices, Dr. Chopra was uniquely qualified to meld the two schools

and he founded the Chopra Center for Well Being in Carlsbad, California in 1995.[43]

The Chopra Center teaches a practice known as Ayurveda, an ancient holistic

health care practice that asserts, "that nothing exists in isolation, so that everything you

interact with, your diet, family, work or relationships, has an effect on your health and

well being."[44] Ayurveda posits that we all inherit an individual mix of mind/body

principles known as doshas: Vata, Pitta and Kapha.[45] If these doshas are in harmony,

we experience optimal mind/body/spiritual health. If any one dosha dominates, our

overall health is out of alignment and we will suffer physically, psychologically and

spiritually from the imbalance. To aid in achieving the healthful balance that Ayurveda

prescribes, experts in traditional western and holistic medicine lead classes in yoga,

meditation and Jyotish Astrology, a mathematic form of Vedic Indian astrology that

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[43] All biographical information gathered from http://www.chopra.com/article62.aspx. Retrieved
September 18, 2006.
[44] From http://www.chopra.com/article70.aspx. Retrieved September 18, 2006.
[45] From http://www.chopra.com/article.aspx?id=77. Retrieved September 18, 2006.

translates to "science of light" and can "help us realistically evaluate our strengths and weaknesses in order to optimize our full potential."[46] In addition, Chopra offers seminars, goes on speaking tours, has created a blog, has written 45 books translated into 35 languages that have sold more than 20 million copies and regularly appears on PBS on his shows *The Soul of Healing: Body, Mind and Soul* and *Body, Mind, and Soul: The Mystery and the Magic*.[47]

Physiological Style

Regardless of what the Guru masters around which he or she garners a following, he or she is a physiological embodiment of East meeting West in the sense of the spiritual meeting the logical. After looking at dozens of still photos and video clips[48] of Deepak Chopra, one thing is clear: he does not look like a doctor in the western traditional sense. No lab coat, no stethoscope around his neck, no orthopedic shoes. I do not mean that he does not look like he is medically competent or scientifically gifted, but rather that he is anything but sterile or institutional in appearance. Dr. Chopra has transformed from practicing endocrinologist to spiritual health guru over the past two decades and his physiological style followed suit. Chopra generally dresses in very simple colors, often black and white. He is fond of Nehru collared shirts and jackets, perhaps his injection of his Indian heritage into his Western practice. His hair is always impeccable and slightly graying at the temples, his clothes neat, his face clean shaven and his overall posture and

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[46] From http://www.chopra.com/article114.aspx. Retreved September 18, 2006.
[47] From http://www.chopra.com/article62.aspx. Retrieved September 18, 2006.
[48] Still photos found using Google Images. Video clips from http://www.bigpicture.tv./index.php?id= 53&cat=&a=121. Retrieved September 19, 2006.

demeanor, relaxed. Interestingly, his appearance over the last twenty years has changed relatively little—he does not look dated or out of touch, but he looks as if he has not aged much and certainly does not look like a man on the verge of sixty. Physiologically, therefore, he is the perfect advertisement for the kind of clean living he endorses both as a physician and as a spiritual healer and guru through his center and other public endeavors.

Since physiological style involves the performance of a persona, Chopra must appear the embodiment of the guru. Certainly it would seem contrary to his station as prominent physician and M.D. to appear in long, flowing, white robes and sandals as traditional gurus might be dressed. However, it would be equally contrary to his status as the poster prophet for alternative medicine to appear in public wearing a lab coat, glasses, and stethoscope carrying a clipboard. Chopra must walk the same kind of line all guru public intellectuals walk—not too much the scientist/intellectual, not too much the messiah.

The Guru is, first and foremost, a teacher. I mentioned briefly that Dr. Chopra always performs a sense of innate calm spirituality as if he is his own best patient for his brand of Ayurveda healthcare for the contemporary American. However, the relationship between guru and student is critical to understanding guru style. Obviously, Chopra is not the student but the master, but like any benevolent guide to enlightenment, he considers his relationship with the student to be one of spiritual intimacy. So, regardless of how many devotees or disciples any public intellectual guru has, each relationship must appear to be managed as if it is the most important one. Each student's journey to knowledge and truth is equally valued by the guru. To perform this physiologically and

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stylistically, Chopra works on two levels: through physical performance and through manner of speaking. In terms of his physical performance, videos of Chopra reveal a very camera savvy guru. Chopra works the camera as if he is having a cherished, private moment with a single disciple. He sits close to the camera and makes direct eye contact throughout. He has a relaxed posture and natural, conversational gesture. He speaks in the ideal "twelve inch" voice as if the disciple is sitting right in front of him, regardless of the fact that his audience is on the other end of a video camera on a webpage. He also insists that others call him by his first name, even signing all posts on his blog, www.intentblog.com, with the words "Love, Deepak." As a guru, Chopra realizes the significance of intimacy when talking spirituality. The Guru relationship historically has been face-to-face. It is an intimate relationship. The modern Guru, though, uses mass media to forge and maintain relationships with followers. Yet, he or she does so in what is perceived as an intimate way.

Disciples will then watch Chopra online or on television as if he is sitting right in front of them and they are sitting at the feet of their "master." Americans saw this technique work profoundly when former President Reagan addressed the nation from the Oval Office to deliver a televised eulogy to the *Challenger* astronauts. It felt as if our own grandfathers were telling us it was going to be okay and we perceived a certain amount of intimacy despite the message being delivered on television. Chopra channels that same skill as a Guru. Indeed, few would select a guru, arguably the most important relationship these disciples will ever forge, with a teacher whose attention is or seems to be divided or whose attitude is dismissive or unengaged. Chopra physiologically performs guru style through his embodiment of spiritual intimacy.

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Not only must the Guru teach student disciples, he or she must also teach in an intimate way. Chopra selects his words carefully to convey this critical need for intimacy. He constantly uses the word "you"—as in, "your body and your mind" and "you are contributing to your own environment." Rather than addressing his audience as some nebulous group somewhere in cyberspace or on the receiving end of a television or radio broadcast, Chopra chooses words that make his audience feel as though he is speaking to each one of them individually and not on any sort of mass scale. Using the second person accomplishes this sentiment. In his bestselling book, *How to Know God: The Soul's Journey Into the Mystery of Mysteries*, he is equally intimate in the way he says things. For instance, he writes, "Also, you might argue that just because God is seen in a certain way by us, that doesn't mean he *is* that way. I don't believe this is black or white" (p. 8). He goes on to say, "I believe that God has to be known by looking in the mirror. *If you see yourself in fear, barely holding on with survival at stake, yours is a God of fight or flight"* (p. 9). These transitions between "I" and "you" mark rhetorically intimacy—his book, like his media appearances, reads like a personal letter to a close friend instead of a mass produced, mega bestseller that sits in the homes of hundreds of thousands of readers. Again, the guru's style demands spiritual intimacy and again, Chopra performs it physiologically in word choice.

Public intellectual gurus must also embody spirituality and "religious" conviction. The language of the spirit is poetic in many instances—the book of Psalms, the use of parables in Sunday morning preaching, Walt Whitman. Chopra keenly understands how to embody spirituality through his poetic rhetoric. Indeed, his advice is often in the form of poetry. For example, one poem reads:

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God is a protector to those who see themselves in danger.

God is almighty to those who want power (or lack any way of getting power).

God brings peace to those who have discovered their own inner world.

God redeems those who are conscious of committing a sin.

God is the creator when we wonder where the world came from.

God is behind miracles when the laws of nature are suddenly revoked with
warning.

God is existence itself—"I Am"—to those who feel ecstasy and a sense of pure
being.

If in the place of poetry, Chopra were just to state things like, "Look, its obvious you see

yourself as being in danger for some reason, so it makes sense that you would see God as

a protector," he would not adequately perform the guru style's calm spirituality. Rather,

he would sound like any garden-variety counselor. By using poetry, though, his disciples

get the sense that he is somehow more divinely inspired than most, marking him the kind

of guru with whom one would feel comfortable studying.

Reflecting an Inner Persona: The Teacher

Not only is physiological style performative, it is a specific kind of performance,

one that reflects an inner persona. For the public intellectual guru, that inner persona is

as teacher. As I have described, the word guru is generally translated from Sanskrit as

teacher and the bond the guru cultivates with his or her disciples is a teacher/student

relationship. But, the guru is no ordinary teacher since his or her tutelage is not in a

traditional discipline, in a standard classroom, from September to May. The guru is not *a*

teacher, the guru is *the* teacher. For this reason, I would argue that the Guru serves as

more of a model for audiences than other kinds of public intellectuals. Students commit to one guru for life as their sole bridge to enlightenment. Therefore, for this kind of public intellectual to achieve appropriate style as a guru, it is imperative that he or she reflect through physiological style an inner persona of *the teacher*.

Chopra demonstrates the physiological style of teacher in a number of ways. First, he does it through his clothing. As I mentioned earlier, Dr. Chopra does not dress like a physician in that he avoids looking remotely "institutional"—no lab coat, no pocket protector, no suit or tie, no glasses. Instead, he chooses neutral-colored clothing like black or white and often wears Nehru collars. As Chopra is incredibly media savvy, his choice of dress is no accident. Donning neutral colors does not call attention to Chopra's attire allowing attention to be focused on his message of the health of Ayurveda. The selection of Nehru collars pays homage to the Indian tradition of the guru and harkens to the East, a rhetorical move that serves to remind students they are dealing with an authentic guru. Second, he does it through his overall demeanor, specifically his posture, gait and facial expression. Image after image reflects a man who is relaxed and calm—he is never overly animated and is thoughtful and reserved. As I described, he is also someone who makes media appearances intimate events—he leans into the camera, he uses familiar and comfortable gestures, he wears a fairly neutral expression on his face. Third, he does it through his physical environment. Chopra has created the Chopra Center for Wellbeing and he uses this environment to conduct classes and lectures on everything from yoga and meditation to the ways in which quantum physics and the soul intersect. In other words, he created a *teaching* center as his place of business. Just to

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really drive the point home, one of the programs at the Chopra Center is the "Teacher's Path." So, he has constructed a physiological reflection of guru style in his center.

Psychological Style

Psychological style revolves around a perceived sense of consistency between rhetoric and action or behavior. The guru's rhetoric focuses on seeking God or other higher power by walking a path of enlightenment through his or her teachings. Chopra wonders "whether we can open the door and allow helpful angels into our reality, along with miracles, visions, prophecy, and ultimately that great outside, God himself" (p. 3). He answers his own inquiry by stating that "God is a process. Your brain is hardwired to fine God. *Until you do, you will not know who you are*" (p. 14). His behavior echoes this search for God. The Chopra Center for Wellbeing is dedicated to this search and Deepak Chopra is at the heart of the organization: his smiling countenance greets you warmly as you visit the website (www.chopra.com) and there is even a section in the center of the main page that invites you to "Ask Deepak." In addition, Dr. Chopra has created a blog, www.choprablog.com, where he explores topics such as the connection between spirituality and health and issues of spiritual concern like Taoism, Kabala, the Dalai Lama and his mission of peace, and questions like "Do we have a self?" and "Do soul mates exist?" Chopra explores these issues of God and spirituality with both readers and other contributors. In addition, Chopra talks about how he has been on his own spiritual path to God. He says:

> The experience of God feels like flying. It feels as if I'm walking
> above the ground with such equilibrium that nothing can sway me

from my path. It's like being the eye of the storm. I see without

judgment or opinion. I just watch as everything passes in and out

of awareness like clouds (p. 5-6).

So, not only is Dr. Chopra teaching others to take their path of enlightenment to spiritual

fulfillment, but he writes and speaks about his own journey and his own discovery. This

is critical, of course, for guru style because the guru must be enlightened already,

otherwise, potential followers would select another guru to work with who already knows

God. Like the Prophet, the Guru must be a bit exotic because, although he or she does

not have to be authentically called or live a life of isolation to some degree, the Guru does

need to seem to possess an otherwordly spiritual logic or risk being called a poseur.

Gurus are teachers and as teachers, they must pass on their knowledge such that

others may become teachers as well. This is part of their visibility as public intellectuals.

As such, they must teach and model their philosophy to their disciples. Chopra believes

the way to knowing God is to discover, within yourself, a soul and he encourages his

students to do just that. He writes that the soul "doesn't feel or move; it doesn't travel

with you as you go about your life" but instead, "the soul is really a junction point

between time and the timeless. It faces in both directions…But it would be a mistake to

think that the soul and the person are the same" (p. 275). So where does that leave

Chopra's philosophy? Ultimately, for Chopra, the soul is the "carrier that takes us

beyond; it is the essence connecting us to God" (p. 274). As psychological style is about

consistency between word and action, Chopra has to demonstrate his own search for and

finding of a soul. He states, "When I experience myself in the world, I am not

experiencing my soul, yet it is somewhere on the periphery…if everything I know about

myself since birth is separate from my soul, it must not be a material thing" (p. 275).

Chopra seems to have found his soul through practices like yoga and meditation. Proving

that it is true that there is no place like om, the Chopra Center offers the opportunity to

"Meditate with Deepak" for a weekend in Jacksonville, Florida. During this weekend,

Dr. Chopra will take disciples on a journey of "self-discovery as they teach you to go

beyond your current reality into deep states of healing and transformation. Using timeless

meditation tools, you will unlock your inner essence and access your full range of human

potential."[49]

       All Gurus balance the spirit with logic in some form or fashion, and Chopra is no

exception. He is concerned with the balance between mind and body in terms of his

psychological style. Chopra sells his "Soul of Healing" seminar as one that is offered a

few times as year at the Chopra Center to transform the lives of students through

"healing, balance, discovery, and awakening…Soul of Healing will help you clear your

mind, lessen anxiety, detoxify your body, empower your nutrition, manage stress, re-

center yourself, and bring peace, health and wellness into your life."[50] This connection

between mind and body means "The person has to be reduced to the merest point, a speck

of identity closing the last miniscule gap between himself and God. At the same time,

just when separation is healed, the tiny point has to expand to infinity" (p. 164). If part of

the guru's rhetoric involves a connection between mind, body and spirit, in order for the

guru to have psychological style, he or she must then behave in a way consistent with this

kind of balance. For instance, in the "Soul of Healing" seminar program, it is

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[49] From http://www.chopra.com/article48.aspx. Retrieved September 22, 2006.
[50] From http://www.chopra.com/article.aspx?id=39. Retrieved September 22, 2006.

recommended that all participants undergo a medical examination by Dr. Chopra or one of his M.D. colleagues on staff for the event. This is no ordinary exam, however. It involves the participant undergoing not just a physical exam, but an examination of psychological and spiritual health to get a better understanding of the person's level of balance or imbalance. Dr. Chopra believes in creating "a personalized body/mind/spirit health-enhancing prescription is formulated, including recommendations on diet, stress management, exercise, emotional healing, nutritional and herbal supplements, and sensory modulation."[51] He himself describes following such a regimen and believes that the results have led him to a new plateau of consciousness and health. This self-proclaimed level of conscious, spiritual achievement has garnered some angry responses. When Dr. Chopra was on *Larry King Live* on CNN with a strict biblical preacher, the preacher turned to him and said, "I've read your books. I know you think you're God."[52] However, Chopra's understanding of the balance between mind, body and spirit is based in Indian Vedanta tradition which dictates that the guru may say "I am the universe" without it being a sacrilegious, scandalous or blasphemous utterance. It is a state of being that Chopra has achieved through meditation, yoga, diet and a lifetime of learning, and now it is a state that he as guru tries to help others realize.

Psychological style also involves an outward presentation of an inward identity. We know the guru is a teacher, but what does that involve in terms of his identity? Three identity components are central for the Guru: one who has experienced an awakening, one who sees the light, and one who bridges East and West. First, in terms of his

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[51] From http://www.chopra.com/article.aspx?id=88. Retrieved September 23, 2006.

awakening, Chopra testifies, "It is no wonder that finding God is called *awakening*. A fully awakened brain is the secret to knowing God" (p. 26). After one is awake, "literally all the paradoxes of religion start to unravel, and God's ways make sense for the first time" (p 34). For Chopra, his own personal spiritual awakening led him to feel that,

> "With the loss of time comes a complete absence of ordinary identity. The personality that I feel myself to be dissolves beyond the material level, and with that, I lose the need for the landmarks that I have gathered since birth" (p. 209).

To publicly confirm this spiritual awakening in terms of his psychological style, Chopra describes on his www.intentblog.com what he calls his "Chinese Menu" approach to awakening. Some of the things that he does to project outwardly his inner identity of awakening are: stopping for a moment to say to himself, "I am conscious" and see what it feels like, asking for viewpoints outside of his own and taking them seriously, giving generously of his time and money, and reading the inspirational words of the great sages.[53]

Chopra also counts as part of his identity what I am labeling as "seeing the light." He explains, "I am proposing that no one is alive who hasn't taken just such a journey [into higher awareness]. The "way," whether it is used in the Christian sense of a path or the Taoist sense of the hidden stream of life, means following the light. None of us could be here without having roots where light is born, in the quantum domain" (p. 211). For

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[52] From http://www.intentblog.com/archives/2006/09/do_we_have_a_se_1.html. Retrieved September 23, 2006.
[53] From http://www.intentblog.com/archives/2006/09/do_we_have_a_se_1.html. Retrieved September 24, 2006.

Chopra, this idea of light being the quantum domain is central to his philosophy as a guru, blending quantum physics with religious philosophy. In its simplest form, it means humanity's "shared home" (p. 243), or the place we can all achieve if we follow a path of awareness into the quantum domain. Chopra demonstrates his achievement of seeing the light through his creation of the Chopra Center for Wellbeing—ultimately, the entire center is dedicated to helping people come to our "shared home" by teaching them paths and activities that bring awareness and teach teachers to help other students do the same. In addition, the Chopra Center sells literal lights. At www.chopra.com, if you type the word "light" into the "Search" field, the first several items that appear are candles, the Joyta Soothing Aroma Candle to be exact. This candle is designed to balance the Pitta Dosha and users are instructed to "Enjoy during meditation or simply throughout your day as a reminder to be present and celebrate the gift of life."[54] In other words, you can achieve light through awareness and discover a shared home, and you can purchase light to help you achieve awareness through meditation. Either way, seeing the light seems integral to the guru psychological style.

The final element of the guru's psychological style is the outward appearance of bridging East (spirituality) and West (logic), something Chopra does with great ease. Chopra quotes quite a lot of Eastern philosophy and philosophers. For instance, he cites an ancient Vedic hymn:

> In the beginning,
>
> There was neither existence nor nonexistence,
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> All this world was unmanifest energy…

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[54] From http://store.chopra.com/productinfo.asp?item=6&deptcode1=546. Retrieved September 25, 2006.

> The One breathed, without breath, by Its own power
>
> Nothing else was there…(p. 31)

However, as I mentioned when I described Chopra's "Soul of Healing" seminar, his teachings and seminars often involve a full medical examination that establish baseline physiological health as well as identify imbalances in emotional and spiritual health. Much of his rhetoric is dedicated to balancing East and West. For instance, on his blog, one of his posts is titled, "Mind-Body Bridge" and in it he laments the fact that "the average senior in America is taking 7 prescription drugs" when in fact "American medicine should be helping people build a mind-body bridge. The human body contains enormous wisdom, and we could be tapping into it."[55] He goes on to detail the benefits of practices like meditation, prayer and yoga on blood pressure, stress, heart disease and stroke. In other words, the guru's rhetoric literally and figuratively bridges East and West. In terms of his behavior, I have discussed a number of ways Chopra acts as a bridge between East and West—he has created the Chopra Center for Wellbeing, he is an active practitioner of his own "medicine" in the form of meditation and prayer, he has developed a philosophy that combines quantum physics, Western medical training and Eastern religion that is embodied in his Ayurveda practices. Chopra himself is a kind of embodied bridge between East and West. He is a person of Indian descent living in the United States; he is a student and fervent enthusiast of Taoism, Hinduism and other Eastern religious ideologies but is extraordinarily well versed in Christian philosophy. So, Chopra as guru bridges East and West through his very life and action.

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[55] From http://www.intentblog.com/archives/2006/09/the_mindbody_br.html. Retrieved September 25, 2006.

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Sociological Style

Sociological style involves understanding style as something that is socially constructed and publicly visible. In the first place, it involves audience co-construction. Let us return to the sociopolitical trends from Chapter Two that imply the need for the Guru style. While it is conceivable for the Guru to respond to a number of trends because a Guru can be a master of just about anything that is perceived to have a higher "spiritual" authority, the Guru responds predominantly to a felt need for answers. In Chapter Two I detailed our current moment as one dominated by chaos and gray area and, for many, this is an uncomfortable time. We are bombarded by mediated information from all sources, feel overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of noise coming from all sides. For most, this feeling engenders a desire for something concrete and tangible, something black and white. As Fantine sings in *Les Miserables,* we want someone to take our hand and lead us to salvation. The Guru public intellectual emerges to do just that.

For the guru, sociological style involves leading others to God or other higher authority in publicly visible ways. In Deepak Chopra's book, *How to Know God: The Soul's Journey into the Mystery of Mysteries*, he creates a socially-centered and publicly visible roadmap or outline into the ways the body, mind and spirit know God which, for Chopra means becoming aware, seeing the light and realizing balance in life. It is socially-centered and publicly visible because anyone can read and follow this

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roadmap—it does not require that one sign up for expensive seminars through the Chopra Center or "hire on" Dr. Chopra as your personal guru. Rather, the guidelines in this book, and the advice found in many of his other 42 books, is a monetarily inexpensive way to know God. In addition, it legitimizes Chopra as a guru because his books have sold 20 million copies and are translated into 35 languages around the globe—there are clearly disciples in search of the teacher. To begin, Chopra outlines "Seven Levels of Miracles" that individuals may have experienced and what happens to the body in each level. For example, in Level 3, called the "Restful Awareness Response," Chopra claims that, "Miracles involve synchronicity; yogic powers, premonitions, feeling the presence of God or angels" and gives the example of "Yogis who can change body temperature or heart rate at will, being visited by someone from far away who has just died, visitation by a guardian angel" (p. 20). Toward the end of the book, he proclaims, "According to our three ways of finding God, no one is ever trapped without hope: 1) We can always cross the horizon to a new reality. 2) Clues are left to tell us how to grow. 3) Second attention enables us to read these clues" (p. 297). Most importantly, Chopra shares the rules that have been effective for him and for others and they are: Know your intentions; Set your intentions high; See yourself in the light; See everyone else in the light; Reinforce your intentions every day; Learn to forgive yourself; Learn to let go; Revere what is holy; Allow God to take over; and Embrace the unknown (p. 301-305). Essentially, Chopra gives a spiritual path for his followers or for those who would like to follow and this path is publicly visible.

In addition, the Guru must make this philosophical balance publicly visible. Chopra has created several organizations that are publicly visible to spread his message

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of mind, body and spiritual health and balance. Through the Chopra Center, he invites

people to join communities of teachers, medical providers and volunteers and each of

these groups can utilize the center and its services or can be a part of the message board

and share ideas, comments and thoughts. He is also on Sirius Satellite Radio (Sirius Stars

102) with a call-in show where he discusses everything from healthful vegetarian recipes

to politics. Finally, he has two groups and one foundation: Alliance for a New Humanity

which is devoted to "accelerating a global movement for a better world"[56]; the Peace is

the Way Global Community committed to creating a "critical mass of peaceful global

citizens" and inviting people to join the "neuronal network of the planetary mind"[57]; and

the Chopra Foundation, dedicated to "advance the cause of mind/body spiritual healing,

education, and research through fundraising for selected projects."[58] Each of these

activities is a publicly visible way of leading others to God and, for that reason, comprise

the public intellectual guru's sociological style.

Finally, like all other public intellectual styles, the guru must be socially

recognized as such in order to have appropriate sociological style. While some Gurus

may be recognized by a small flock, others, like the Dalai Lama are recognized around

the world. However, the central issue is whether the Guru's actual or would-be followers

believe him or her to be *the* teacher, regardless of how many followers that person has.

In other words, the guru must be identifiable by others as a "real guru" if this type of

public intellectual is stylistically accurate. Like all authors, Chopra has a list of

endorsements in the first several pages of his books. However, Chopra's endorsements

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[56] From http://www.chopra.com/article109.aspx. Retrieved September 25, 2006.
[57] From http://www.chopra.com/article108.aspx. Retrieved September 25, 2006.

for his book, *How to Know God: The Soul's Journey into the Mystery of Mysteries*,

continue for seven pages and include such Eastern luminaries as The Dalai Lama and His

Holiness Vasudevanand Saraswati, Jagad Guru Shankracharya of Jyotirmath World

Headquarters and such Western figures as Andrew Weil, M.D., director of the program in

Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona and Candace B. Pert, Ph.D., Professor

at Georgetown University School of Medicine, department of Physiology and Biophysics.

For example, His Holiness Vasudevanand Saraswati writes,

> "Deepak Chopra has blessed the world by spreading the light of
>
> vedic knowledge and the timelss teachings on nonduality. Vedanta
>
> has inspired and transformed the lives of seekers for thousands of
>
> years. However, every age needs a voice tha can articulate ancient
>
> Wisdom in a contemporary framework. Dr. Chopra has given the
>
> seekers of self-knowledge a clear and scientific road map to
>
> understand and realize the ultimate reality. I congratulate him for
>
> his brilliant work."

And Dr. Candace Pert exclaims,

> "Deepak Chopra has really done it this time—a brilliant, scholarly
>
> yet lyrical synthesis of neuroscience, quantum physics, personal
>
> reminiscence, Eastern, Western, and spiritual thinking. Dr.
>
> Chopra's new theory of seven stages of understanding God is
>
> extremely relevant to the ongoing transformation in medicine

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58 From http://www.chopra.com/article121.aspx. Retrieved September 25, 2006.

today from the old soul-less paradigm to the new one with

spirituality and emotions occupying center stage…"

The acclamations are not limited to his immensely popular books, however. Not

only is he a popular speaker at such impressive institutions as Harvard University

Medical School and Divinity School, he is on the faculty of the Kellogg Graduate School

of Management and was named one of the "Top 100 Icons and Heroes of the Century" by

Time magazine in 1999.[59] More than a dozen of his books have appeared on the *New

York Times* bestseller lists.[60] Aside from these "official" designations, Chopra receives

accolades as a public intellectual guru in the form of testimonials from the Chopra Center

for Wellbeing and through his blog, www.intentblog.com. For instance, James, age 54,

from Duarte, California comments about the Primordial Sound Meditation seminar

offered by the Chopra Center, "Before I started meditating my blood pressure was 150

and above. Since taking the PSM course, my average blood pressure is now about 133,

and I only take half of my medication now!" And Nancy, age 57, from Boulder,

Colorado says about her experiences with Dr. Chopra, "I felt blessed, a true sacred

moment in life conducted with a perfect blend of love, light, and laughter." The replies

to his posts on his blog are equally enthusiastic. "DK Matai" posts, "Dear Deepak:

Thank you for this compendium of two marvellous and invaluable posts. Very

illuminating."[61] And "Richard Thomas" posts, "Great Guidance Deepak. Those steps

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[59]From http://www.chopra.com/article62.aspx. Retrieved September 26, 2006.
[60] From http://www.intentblog.com/author.php?author=Deepak%20Chopra. Retrieved September 26, 2006.
[61] Posted September 4, 2006 to http://www.intentblog.com/archives/2006/09/do_we_have_a_se_1.html. Retrieved September 26, 2006.

are a very practical and executable approach creating actual measurable results. I don't think it actually requires a belief system."[62] Virtually every person who replies to Dr. Chopra's blog posts calls him Deepak as do many of the people providing testimonials on his Chopra Center website. It is as if these people feel such a strong sense of intimacy with him that the consider him their personal guru, whether they have actually ever encountered Chopra in person or not seems irrelevant. His style as a true public intellectual guru is so strongly recognized that it transcends the physical limitations of being co-present for his teachings.

DIMENSIONS OF COMPARISON

With a fuller understanding of public intellectual guru style in place, I will now explicate the dimensions of comparison of this style. I will begin with Fluidity, or the ability of the guru public intellectual to move fluidly between the "public" and "intellectual" worlds. Chopra, like all Gurus, as a public intellectual is highly fluid. He a board certified endocrinologist and a former faculty member of both Tufts University and Boston University Medical Schools. He is currently an adjunct faculty member of Northwestern University's Kellogg Graduate School of Management. He was also the Chief of Staff at the Boston Regional Medical Center. He has been a keynote speaker at Harvard Medical School, Harvard Business School, Harvard Divinity School, Kellogg Business School, Stanford Business School and the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton Business School. He has written more than 40 books and sits on the Board for the National Institute of Health. Deepak Chopra is clearly recognized as a leading

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[62] Posted September 4, 2006 to http://www.intentblog.com/archives/2006/09/do_we_have_a_se_1.html.

intellectual in the fields of medicine and alternative, holistic health. Simultaneously, Chopra is very public. His books have been translated into 35 languages and have sold more than twenty million copies worldwide. As I mentioned earlier, more than a dozen of them have appeared on the *New York Times* bestseller list. He is a regular contributor to PBS, Sirius Satellite Radio, www.intentblog.com, and directs education at the Chopra Center for Wellbeing. In addition, he travels regularly as a speaker to locations all over the world and is involved in a number of political and social efforts to improve health and promote peace around the world. He explains truly difficult concepts such as quantum physics and medical jargon in a relatively easy to understand manner and his teachings are available in so many formats, it would be hard to miss his public intellectual endeavors. Chopra's highly fluid style is characteristic of guru public intellectual style in general because the guru must be recognized as such by both other experts and teachers as well as some corpus of disciples, otherwise he or she cannot be considered a guru.

Turning to Degree might help us understand guru public intellectual style more clearly. Degree refers to the level of "intellectual-ness" and "public-ness" the guru must maintain in order to be considered a true guru. In other words, how public and how intellectual must the guru be to be *the* teacher instead of *a* teacher. Certainly, Chopra is highly intellectual and highly public as I detailed in the previous discussion on Fluidity. Unlike the Sustainer, though, the Guru is more "intellectual" than "public" in terms of Degree. Yes, the guru must be somewhat public in order to be noticed and recognized as authentic and thus to acquire a following of students, a key element to being a guru.

Retrieved September 26, 2006.

However, it is more important for the Guru to be revered as having uncommon wisdom that is unavailable to most people, even to those who study or follow religion generally. There must be something profoundly mystical and special about the Guru's spiritual understanding and knowledge that can only be transmitted to disciples willing to commit their lives to the Guru's teachings. In other words, not every theologian or spiritual intellectual is a Guru—that is an elevated distinction. As such, the Guru maintains a higher degree of intellectual-ness than public-ness.

The question than becomes, if the Guru is more intellectual than public, where do we locate him or her? Moving to Location as a dimension of comparison, the Guru must be found teaching and practicing wisdom in a spiritual setting. Chopra can be found most often as Director of Education for the Chopra Center for Wellbeing. So, most often, Chopra is located as teacher. However, Chopra can also be found teaching around the world and serving in leadership positions in his groups and his foundation. Followers may also find him posting to his blog or listen to him on the radio or watch him on television. It is perhaps unsurprising that the Guru, because he or she must maintain a higher degree of intellectualness is generally located in more institutional, formal settings like centers, foundations and the like. However, because the Guru must also acquire and maintain a following and a sense of intimacy, he or she must find "spaces" for this work to occur. It is quite likely that, once the Guru acquires a following, word of mouth will bring others to whatever location the Guru chooses.

I have already described the irony of the mediated intimacy the contemporary Guru maintains with his or her followers. Chopra is clearly a media savvy guru—his

Chopra Center website is elaborate and includes a number of multi-media functions including several video clips of Chopra discussing topics of interest to those seeking spiritual, physical and emotional wellbeing. He regularly contributes to his blog. He has an extensive list of publications and some of his books are available on CD-ROM. He appears on television and on satellite radio. He interacts face-to-face with Chopra Center clients. He does large lectures at academic institutions. Despite the level of intimacy that Chopra and other public intellectual gurus must cultivate with followers in order to be recognized as true gurus, it seems unimportant or superfluous to most that the contact they may have with Chopra is through a television screen or on a monitor. This is likely a shift from traditional guru relationships which were based, in part, on an intensive face-to-face commitment to spirituality. Ironically, co-location and face-to-face interaction is not a prerequisite for the modern Guru in terms of Media usage.

Finally, I will examine the guru's use of Resources. The Guru must be the master of two worlds, thus the master of channeling resources. Chopra, like all public intellectuals, made excellent use of his training resources in terms of selection of schools and his position within the medical community in his practice. Because of his extremely successful endocrinology practice, he was able to make the leap into his real passion: combining Eastern philosophy with Western medical practice, and ultimately, to create the Chopra Center for Wellbeing. All of this takes tremendous financial resources, which Chopra has. No program at the Chopra Center is inexpensive. However, Chopra does use his financial resources in responsible ways such as creating centers for peace and balanced health as well as leading others to find spirit and "the light." Chopra, as I have

already described, is well versed in media resources and takes the fullest advantage of his ability to connect with audiences whether in person or in a mediated channel such as television, radio or the Internet. Despite being wealthy in Chopra's case, the guru is not supposed to be vocal or overtly concerned about resources, unless it means building up spiritual reserves. Resources are material needs rather than spiritual ones, so Chopra has to keep his rhetorical focus away from his own financial resources and onto his abilities to teach others to find spiritual wellbeing.

CONCLUSION

The guru is the ultimate teacher. He or she possesses a unique brand of spiritual knowledge that is obscured for most, even those who practice organized religion or a variety of spiritual philosophy. The guru must be recognized as authentic by other enlightened spiritual sages and must garner a following of disciples. The guru's physiological style involves projecting outwardly the inner persona of the teacher—calm, spiritual and intimate in this case. Psychologically, the guru shows consistency between rhetoric and behavior by demonstrating the achievement of having found God or spirit, being a touch with a soul and having a balance between mind, body and spirit. The guru is also a product of a spiritual awakening, having seen the light and, in the United States, mixing East and West. In terms of sociological style, the guru constructs a publicly visible path or roadmap for followers in order to lead them to the light and is socially recognized for this ability both by other gurus and by students or disciples of the teaching. Through the public intellectual guru's rhetorical style, we have a greater understanding of the powerful motivation that is provided by spirituality and ultimately,

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we may be better prepared to tap into that motivation for political and social change in the public sphere.

Chapter Five introduces a public intellectual style that includes natural as well as sociopolitical environments in its purview: the Sustainer.

PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL CASE STUDIES

Chapter 5: Sustainer Style

Sustainability has a "religious" following. Though likely coined by *The Ecologist* in the early 1970's, the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 takes credit for introducing the term "sustainability." The WCED defines sustainability as "the viability of natural resources and ecosystems over time, and the maintenance of human living standards and development" (1987, p. 43).[63] Sustainability is associated largely with the environmental movement and more specifically, to green building and design. However, as the WCED definition overtly states, sustainability also involves creating and maintaining responsible and altruistic social and political systems. For this dissertation, sustainability can be understood as a long-term commitment to the health of environmental, political and social systems such that these systems can sustain themselves over time in a pro-social manner. In turn, the people who practice sustainability are what I will call Sustainers. Regardless of its origin and scope, sustainability has gone "sexy" according to the August, 2006 edition of *Dwell* magazine which, I suppose, makes William McDonough the sexiest man on our green and blue planet.

Like all public intellectual styles in this dissertation, the Sustainer can have negative, anti-social repercussions if he or she is the Environmentalist. Perhaps this

seems odd to be critiquing environmentalism as a philosophy, but the Environmentalist

lacks the major pro-social contribution that the Sustainer provides: innovation. The

Environmentalist is concerned with preservation, with making the world "less bad."

Sustainers, as a pro-social style, are committed instead to innovation such that the world

is "more good" rather than "less bad"—products or processes that do not work to sustain

natural or sociopolitical environments are eradicated, not improved. The

Environmentalist is a bandaid for problems, the Sustainer is the cure for them.

WILLIAM MCDONOUGH: ITS NOT EASY BEING GREEN

McDonough is a world renowned architect and designer who, since he began

practicing as an architect in the late 1970's, has been at the forefront of eco-efficient,

green or sustainable design and living. In fact, McDonough built the first solar-heated

house in Ireland in 1977 while still a student at Yale and the first so-called "green office"

for the Environmental Defense Fund in the U.S. in 1985. He has founded two design

firms, William McDonough & Partners, Architecture and Community Design and

McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry. His sustainable philosophy is at work in a

number of places around the world from the U.S. to China and back again including Maui

Land & Pineapple, Fuller Theological Seminary, Bernheim Arboretum and Research

Forest, IBM and Nike.

There are several characteristics central to Sustainer style in general. Like

prophetic rhetoric, the public intellectual sustainer style relies first on a scathing

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[63] Pearce, A.R. *The Science and Engineering of Sustainability: A Primer*. Retrieved August 30, 2006 from http://maven.gtri.gatech.edu/sfi/resources/pdf/TR/TR018.PDF#search=%22%22the%20ecologist%22%20c

indictment of current practices and the effects of those practices. Sustainers are also creative visionaries—rather than viewing sociopolitical or environmental problems as things to be tweaked until they are less bad, sustainers work to invent new products and processes such that they eradicate the problems entirely. Ultimately, all sustainers are designers whether by profession or by style. Yet, Sustainers are part of a larger category of style that I call the Cultivator. Because sustainability can also be thought of as a social commitment or politic in addition to a style, a larger category is necessary to subsume this visionary style. I focus on the Sustainer here because he or she is one type of visionary working to sustain particular environments. I will detail these characteristics in three sections: physiological, psychological and sociological elements of style.

William McDonough and his partner, Michael Braungart, a chemist, write in their acclaimed book, *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*, that "Loss of resources, cultural depletion, negative social and environmental effects, reduction of quality of life—these ills can all be taking place, an entire region can be in decline, yet they are negated by a simplistic economic figure that says economic life is good" (p. 37). McDonough even recasts something as seemingly positive and socially responsible as recycling as simply the lesser of evils—instead of creating and using products or systems that are infinitely sustainable, recycling results in "downcycling" (p. 4), or the reduction of the product or service to an unusable and even dangerous form. Industry takes the brunt of the sustainer's environmental and social wrath. McDonough notes that, although the reduction of waste emissions is an important goal for industry, "even tiny amounts of dangerous emissions can have disastrous effects on biological systems" (p. 54).

oined%20term%20sustainability%3F%22.

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Of course, this destruction of natural and human environments is hardly a new phenomenon. Rather, McDonough points to the west's Industrial Revolution as the harbinger of much of our misguided thinking and practices as they relate to eco and socio systems. The Industrial Revolution has spawned a system of production that "puts billions of pounds of toxic material into the air, water and soil each year; puts valuable materials in holes all over the planet, where they can never be retrieved; measures productivity by how few people are working; and erodes the diversity of species and cultural practices" (p. 18). McDonough has dedicated his professional life not to making designs and buildings that are "better" for environments and people than the ones currently being built, but instead redesigning design itself. For McDonough and other sustainer public intellectuals like him, this kind of paradigm shift and transcendence is fundamental to their style.

Physiological Style

Physiological style consists both of performing a persona and reflecting a worldview characteristic of a style. For the Sustainer, this means he or she must perform creativity and reflect a worldview that incorporates a long-term vision for the sustainable health of sociopolitical and natural systems. McDonough is an ideal embodiment of these elements. William McDonough looks like an architect. In every still photo, interview and other media clip available, he is dressed both artistically and functionally— in all black with funky accessories—a polka dot bow tie, a checkered vest. He is confident and poised, standing and sitting with a relaxed but composed posture. He speaks with unbridled enthusiasm, even optimism which seems catching—there is a

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strikingly youthful energy about McDonough despite his tenure in the field of architecture and design. Like all Sustainers, he is obviously intelligent and engaged, but has a very approachable demeanor distinguished by his choice of simple ways of explaining his philosophy and his practice. He avoids jargon, rather he has created his own language of clear but colorful terminology: upcycling, industrial re-evolution, cradle-to-cradle, disassembly plant, ecological intelligence, nutrivehicle. He definitely commands attention, partly because he demonstrates mastery of his craft but also partly because he is physically activated by his passion for that craft.

His physiological style is, in addition to quintessential aesthetic qualities, a performance of his personal creativity and his choice of career. In other words, he just *looks like an artist* through his physiological performance of creativity. This is true for Sustainers in general. For instance, McDonough prefers using and wearing environmentally intelligent fabrics. He and his design team were challenged by Rohner, a Swiss textile client, to create such a fabric. They turned first to a blend of cotton and PET or polyethylene terephthalate, a fabric made of recycled plastic soda bottles. However, the biproducts of PET are potentially dangerous inhaled chemicals and dyes and a fabric that would not go back into the soil effectively. So, his team decided instead to "design a fabric that would be safe enough to eat: it would not harm people who breathed it in, and it would not harm natural systems after its disposal. In fact, as a biological nutrient, it would nourish nature" (p. 106-107). So, not only are his clothes appropriately artistic, some of them are edible, a literal embodiment of the inventiveness that is critical to sustainer style.

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The items he carries with him are also a performative embodiment of creativity and design. He is often interviewed about his philosophy and practice by magazines like *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Atlantic Monthly* and he frequently carries the book he and his chemist partner, Michael Braungart, co-authored: *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*. Perhaps this seems unremarkable, the author carrying a copy of his own book. This is a scene from virtually any book signing. However, what is unique about the situation is that his book is not made from a tree. It is, as he calls it, a "prototype for the book as a technical nutrient, that is as a product that can be broken down and circulated infinitely in industrial cycles—made and remade as "paper" and other products" (p. 5). The "book" is practically indestructible yet is upcyclable (his preference to recyclable which he calls "downcycling"), waterproof, probably even fireproof. It is made of plastic resins and put together by Melcher Media so that it looks like a traditional book. His "prop" for discussing his sustainable philosophy and practice is itself a product of that philosophy and practice and is another performed embodiment of McDonough's creativity as a sustainer public intellectual.

For McDonough, creativity also involves a thorough respect for diversity. He believes that "When given the opportunity, people choose something other than that which they are typically offered in most one-size-fits-all designs…People want diversity because it brings them more pleasure and delight. They want a world of four hundred cheeses" (p. 139). He performs this diversity through his choice of clients and the cultures in which he is asked to design and to speak. In other words, he embodies the diversity that creativity requires through his choice of place. His client list is as impressive as it is diverse: universities and colleges like Oberlin College's Adam Joseph

Lewis Center for Environmental Studies; the China Housing Industry Association "Cradle-to-Cradle Village"; Barcelona's Grupo Habitat Emrasario "Habitat"; and Brazil's Complexo Industrial Ford Nordeste Master Plan and Workplace Concepts. Clearly, his physiological style carries cross culturally because he has worked around the world for decades and this fit is due, at least in part, to his embodiment of diversity. For McDonough, "Diversity enriches the quality of life in another way: the furious clash of cultural diversity can broaden perspective and inspire creative change" (p. 144).

In addition to his choice of clients, his own office environment is an extension of his personal performance of creativity into his physical surroundings. Like any highly skilled, and very highly compensated executive, McDonough's offices are luxurious; unlike most of these uber executives' offices, McDonough's are very "green." Perhaps unsurprisingly, the sustainer believes in embodying his own philosophy on his body and in his environment as part of his physiological style. The offices themselves utilize fabrics that are upcyclable, sustainable woods like bamboo, upcyclable insulation that is so effective, the offices require little to no air conditioning and heating, and make the most of natural light sources so they are not disposing of thousands of light bulbs each year. In the "Mission Statement" section of William McDonough and Partners' website[64], McDonough states,

> WM+P strives to model the behavior we ask of our clients. To that
> end, we are currently offsetting our travel-related carbon-dioxide
> emissions for 2006 through The Conservation Fund's Go Zero
> Program. Go Zero launched the effort this spring by planting 50

trees in the Sloughs Wildlife Management Area in Kentucky;

another 150 will be planted later this year. These trees will not

only absorb 270 metric tons of CO2 emissions --- an amount equal

to the estimated impact of flying nearly 1 million air miles this

year -- but they'll also create new forestlands, restore habitat, and

expand existing recreation areas.

So, McDonough surrounds himself with sustainable practices and products as an

extension of his personal physiological style. And, he is always ready to create and

invent and then literally "wear" sustainability. He says, "*Be ready to innovate further.*

No matter how good your product is, remember that perfection of an existing product is

not necessarily the best investment one can make" (p. 184).

Not only is Bill McDonough's physiological style a performance of the creativity

that is central to sustainer public intellectual style, it is also a performance of his chosen

career as a designer. McDonough calls design a "signal of intention" (p. 9) and therefore,

his physiological style demonstrates intent on his part to look and carry himself a specific

way. And for McDonough, his intention is respect. How is respect "worn"

physiologically? This question is answered again in the clothes he wears, the clients he

accepts, the cultures he visits and his general philosophy as a sustainer public intellectual.

Like all sustainer public intellectuals, McDonough embodies his sustainable philosophy

by wearing not only clothing that is artistic and functional, but safe for the environment

and made by people who are not exploited as slave labor. He asks clients to adopt not

only environmentally green practices, but culturally green practices. His own firm, in

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64 Retrieved August 31, 2006 from http://www.mcdonoughpartners.com/mission_statement.shtm.

turn, is an example of respectful practice. McDonough's physiological style is a reflection of an inner persona, a particular worldview. McDonough shares this worldview saying, "We wish to grow education and not ignorance, health and not sickness, prosperity and not destitution, clean water and not poisoned water. We wish to improve the quality of life" (p. 78). McDonough's physiological style (including the environments he creates) *intends* creativity, diversity and respect. As he says, "Don't just rethink the recipe, reinvent the menu" (p. 179).

Psychological Style

Psychological style relies on consistency between rhetoric and practice, between who you are and what you appear to be. More specifically, McDonough's psychological style calls attention to his consistency between talk and action. For sustainer public intellectuals, there is a heavy reliance not only on the rhetoric of sustainability, but on the practice of sustainability. The rhetoric of sustainability can be broken into two major themes: 1) the indictment of current practices and outcomes of such practices, and 2) solutions to our current crises. As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, industry generally and the Industrial Revolution specifically, suffer the great majority of the wrath of the sustainer, but even the current environmental movement's practices are called into question in the sustainer's indictment. McDonough writes, "Instead of presenting an exciting and inspiring vision of change, conventional environmental approaches focus on what *not* to do. Such proscriptions can be seen as a kind of guilt management for our collective sins, a familiar placebo in Western culture" (p. 66). The general attitude of today's environmentalist (not today's sustainer) is to sacrifice and

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shrink waste and our ecological "footprint" to zero, but the sustainer believes that this "be less bad" approach is ultimately a failure of imagination (McDonough, p. 67). The sustainer's vision is not to be less bad, it is to be all good. The sustainer public intellectual indicts the systems that take without putting back and tries to remedy these systems by offering radically alternative ways of thinking about problems and solutions in general.

Critical to the psychological style of the sustainer, then, is to live the practice of sustainability such that he or she maintains consistency between rhetoric and practice. McDonough spends an enormous amount of time explaining his practice and spends the rest of his time living it. Particularly in his younger days, McDonough was an environmental activist who regularly protested destructive practices of industry and government. While he is not seen at protest rallies anymore, he created two firms (William McDonough & Partners, Architecture and Community Design and McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry) dedicated not to being "less bad," but to "be involved in making buildings, even products, with completely positive intentions" (p. 11). These design firms allow McDonough an avenue for sustainable practice in action, to manifest the sustainer public intellectual worldview in "chemical research, architecture, urban design, and industrial product and process design to the project of transforming industry itself" (p. 15).

Ironically enough, one tenet of sustainer psychological style that is consistent is change because that is part of the larger style category, the Cultivator. That is, these are public intellectuals who are fundamentally open to paradigm shifts, to dynamic ideas and to creativity and invention. Now, perhaps it seems odd that those who want to sustain

rely on an openness to change, but part of the sustainer practice is to question that things must be made and processes must be maintained in a certain way. Hence, part of McDonough's practice is questioning progressive taken-for-granteds like eco-efficiency and recycling and call into question the design of these systems. He says, "We leave aside efficiency the old model of product-and-waste, and its dour offspring, "efficiency," and embrace the challenge of being not efficient but *effective* with respect to a rich mix of considerations and desires" (p. 72). In other words, change and openness to it are central to sustainer psychological style. And, McDonough's designs reflect this strategy of change. For instance, McDonough designed office-furniture manufacturer Herman Miller's office spaces "in a way that celebrates a range of cultural and natural pleasures—sun, light, air, nature, even food—in order to enhance the lives of the people who work there…In its every element, the building expresses the client's and architect's vision of a life-centered community and environment" (p. 74-75).

Returning to McDonough's challenge to create a fabric that was so safe it was edible, his challenge was turned down by more than sixty European chemical companies because of its complexity, but finally, one company did step up to the plate to take their swing with McDonough. With the help of this company, McDonough and his team created an edible fabric—in fact, they created a process for creating the fabric such that, when inspectors came to examine the amount of waste produced by the new process, they felt their instruments were broken because "They could not identify any pollutants, not even elements they knew were in the water when it came into the factory" (p. 108). These projects reflect the sustainer's rhetoric and practice of "reestablishing our fundamental connection to the source of all good growth on the planet" (p. 131). In all

design challenges, McDonough and his team consider a variety of factors that will enable them to continue to walk the talk, so to speak. Among them are: chronic toxicity, biodegradability, potential for ozone depletion, and whether all by-products meet the same criteria (McDonough, p. 175). So, the psychological style of the sustainer is about consistency between word and deed—consistent engagement, consistent questioning, consistent change and consistent invention are all hallmarks of sustainer psychological style.

Psychological style is not limited to consistency, however. It also involves an outward expression of an inward identity. There are three characteristics of the sustainer public intellectual's identity: responsibility, a focus on the local, and a long-term vision. It should not be a shock that sustainer public intellectuals both advocate and live responsibly. Even acts as simple as purchasing athletic footwear do, for McDonough and other sustainers, elicit feelings of "social inequity and…guilt" (p. 4) because of the labor conditions of the workers who produce the shoes and the processes of production that are generally detrimental to the natural environment. McDonough wonders, "Maybe we want our things to live forever, but what do future generations want? What about their right to the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness, to a celebration of their own abundance of nutrients, of materials, of delight?" (p. 114). He states that his professional goal is to help create "a delightfully diverse, safe, healthy, and just world, with clean air, soil, water, and power -- economically, equitably, ecologically, and elegantly enjoyed, period. What's not to like?"[65]

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[65] McGregor, Jena. "William McDonough: Design for Living." *Business Week,* June 12, 2006. Retrieved from http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/06_24/b3988037.htm on September 2, 2006.

But how does this play out in his practice and performance? McDonough has

taken on the role as Chair of the China-U.S. Center for Sustainable Development. In this

role, he is leading the design of urban spaces, due to the fact that more than 400 people

are expected to move from rural to urban areas in the next twelve years, and planning

transportation and the mix of green space for the world's most populous nation. In fact,

in Liuzhou, McDonough is moving sugarcane farmland that would otherwise be

displaced onto the area's rooftops as insulation. Waste water will be converted through a

treatment plant into fertilizer and buildings will feature windows set at an angle to make

the most of natural light and heat.[66] Another example is the William McDonough &

Partners' new line of cradle-to-cradle inspired greeting cards. As his firm's website

details,

> Each card comes with a unique two-way return postage-paid
>
> envelope that allows its constituent materials to be safely reused
>
> rather than discarded. Both the cards and the envelopes are made
>
> from a Certified Technical Nutrient plastic material. Cards
>
> returned using the self-mailing envelope will be used by Shaw
>
> Carpet as raw material for new carpet tiles.[67]

In other words, behaving responsibly toward people and environments enables the

expression of the sustainer identity in public space.

In addition to being responsible, the sustainer public intellectual considers the

local to be vital to his or her identity—the sustainer sustains local places first before

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[66] Ibid.
[67] Retrieved from http://www.mcdonough.com on September 2, 2006.

turning attention to global issues. McDonough spent part of his childhood living in Tokyo. He vividly remembers the paper walls, futons and steam baths of Japanese homes; even those with very few material resources were simple but impeccably clean and, as he notes, "I was again struck by how simple and elegant good design could be, and how suited to locale" (p. 7). This sense of and connection to the local has been hallmark of McDonough's career and is elementary to sustainer public intellectual style perhaps because of the sustainer's elevation of respect for diversity—such an inclination propels the sustainer to find local idiosyncracies beautiful and interesting rather than provincial or inappropriate. McDonough explains that, "in healthy, thriving natural systems it is actually the *fitting-est* who survive. Fitting-est implies an energetic and material engagement with place, and an interdependent relationship to it" (p. 120). The sustainer public intellectual understands that people are more likely to work to protect a known and particular people and a personally meaningful, specific landscape than they are general human beings somewhere unfamiliar on the other side of the globe. Indeed, sustainability is local. Elaborating on this, McDonough opines, "We begin to make human systems and industries fitting when we recognize that all sustainability (like all politics) is local. We connect them to local and material energy flows, and to local customs, needs, and tastes, from the level of the molecule to the level of the region itself" (p. 123).

Making manifest this local identity is McDonough's Cradle-to-Cradle Village in Huangbaiyu, China. Rather than using imported materials or labor, McDonough and his team have made use of compressed earth blocks and straw bales from local land and farmers to construct the homes in the village. In addition, because the population of this

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largely rural area in the Liaoning Province of northeast China makes a living farming

corn and sheep and are quite poor, McDonough and his team are working with their

Chinese counterparts to develop local rural enterprises to boost villagers' incomes and

allow them an easier method for financing the new homes.[68]   Because heating and

cooking are great obstacles for the Huangbaiyu locals because of their remote and

northern location, the homes have been built to consume only one-third of the typical

amount of energy needed to heat a home and to prepare meals. In addition, fuel for

heating will be available from the newly built and locally-run biomass gasification

plant.[69] Although McDonough is clearly not a local citizen of the village, his admiration

of diversity and his identity as a person invested in local communities allows him to

transcend the boundaries of nation states and bring a sustainable philosophy to other parts

of the world. In this way, sustainer public intellectuals are locally global.

The last major component of the sustainer public intellectual's identity is a sense

of longevity or a focus on the long-term outcomes of a products' or process' design. This

also speaks to the visionary nature of the Sustainer and Cultivator styles. McDonough's

longevity philosophy is best captured in his own language when he hypothesizes,

"Images a building like a tree, a city like a forest" (p. 139). This philosophy means

conceiving of the design of a single building as a living thing that will be a contributing

component of an entire ecosystem, feeding and sheltering all of its inhabitants. For a

designer like McDonough, this means "considering not only how a product is made but

how it is to be used, and by whom. In a cradle-to-cradle conception, it may have many

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[68] "Project Targets Sustainable Village," *People's Daily Online*, June 13, 2006. Retrieved from
http://english.people.com.cn/200606/13/eng20060613_273493.html on September 2, 2006.

uses, and many users, over time and space" (p. 139) and having an eye toward this long-term plan is what separates the sustainer from the garden variety ecologist. The sustainer asks, "What would it mean to become, once again, native to this place, the Earth—the home of *all* our relations?" and answers, "This is going to take us all, and it is going to take forever. But then, that's the point" (p. 186).

In his work to create Oberlin College's Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies, he worked with "local" and Professor David Orr to create a building site in the same way a tree works. But, the design goes further than that. It seeks to actually reverse the damage perpetuated by the U.S. Industrial Revolution.[70] This approach works on three assumptions: "waste equals food, use current solar income, and respect diversity."[71] Ultimately, the Adam Joseph Lewis building will export energy rather than suck it up as a resource. And, with a continual eye not on the bottom line but on the future of the Oberlin environment, McDonough and Partners trumpet, "Just as the building's materials promote long-term human and ecological health, the vibrant atrium at the building's core enriches the social character of the place, functioning as the "town hall" for Oberlin's southern campus."[72] By striving to reverse damage caused by the Industrial Revolution, Oberlin's center moves cleanly into the future. By designing a building that repays both the natural and human environments of Oberlin College over the long term, McDonough lives his own standard and turns his identity outward to benefit the local public sphere of a college campus.

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[69] Ibid.
[70] Retrieved from http://www.mcdonoughpartners.com/projects/oberlin/default.asp?projID=oberlin on September 2, 2006.
[71] Ibid.

Sociological Style

Sociological style, as I described in Chapter One, is socially constructed and publicly visible. In other words, the sociological aspects of style require an audience to co-create the style and then judge its performance as authentic. Returning to the sociopolitical trends I outlined in Chapter Two, the Sustainer is part of the Cultivator style which is the public intellectual stylistic response to the destruction of both our natural and social environments. Americans have heard for decades about our beloved industry's contribution to holes in the Ozone Layer, to global warming and to clear-cutting. In turn, these environmental disasters spawn social and political disasters: a rise in cancer, concerns over our use of fossil fuels, wars in the Middle East, loss of jobs in this country as the need increases for imports.

For sustainer public intellectuals, the way that we interact needs a radical paradigm shift—instead of interacting superficially with a barely passing notice of others, we need a return to a commitment to legitimate community in order for our human "systems" to become sustainable over time. We must, according to sustainers, ask ourselves "not only what has worked in the past and present, but what will work in the future. What kind of world do we intend and how might we design things in keeping with that vision?" (p. 145). If we intend to sustain human community, we cannot continue to design spaces and technologies that isolate people from one another. As McDonough notes, "To concentrate any single criterion creates instability in the larger context and represents what we call an 'ism,' an extreme position disconnected from the

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[72] Ibid.

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overall structure" (p. 147). This kind of sociological style is reminiscent of Thomas

Jefferson's words to James Madison when he wrote, "The earth belongs…to the

living…No man can be natural right oblige the lands he occupied, or the persons who

succeeded him in that occupation, to the payment of debts contracted by him. For, if he

could, he might, during his own life, eat up the usufruct of the lands for several

generations to come, and then the lands would belong to the dead, and not the living" (p.

185-186).

This philosophy must be performed sociologically if it is to be a style and not

merely a political commitment. This paradigm shift to community is exemplified in

McDonough's Kanawha Museum of Life and the Environment outside of Charlotte,

South Carolina in the small town of Fort Mill. The museum is the central showpiece of

an entire master-planned community that McDonough hopes will feature, "a very rich

mix of housing types. We want to have granny flats, places to rent and small studios --

we want to make sure housing is available to the ordinary income earner."[73]   The

county's Culture and Heritage Foundation President, Frank Barnes III, states that the

"Fort Mill residents will get a cultural facility that tells the story of sustainable

development" in the museum and "a *community that lives the story*"[74] (emphasis added).

McDonough & Partners describe the planned community as "a new model for the

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[73] Smith, Doug. "The Next Big Thing: Museum is Star of S.C. Project." *The Charlotte Observer,* March 22, 2006. Retrieved from http://www.charlotte.com/mld/charlotte/business/columnists/doug_smith/ 14156178.htmc on September 3, 2006.
[74] Ibid.

interaction between people and place" to ultimately "encourage the search for a deeper understanding of how human communities connect."[75]

Indeed, McDonough & Partners, Architecture and Community Design, has an entire area of practice devoted solely to the transformation of human communities. Other projects in this area include the Coffee Creek Center in Chesterton, Indiana which "fosters vibrant mixed-use neighborhoods, walkable streets, and convenient transportation"[76] and the Fuller Theological Seminary's North Campus Comprehensive Residential Master Plan in which "Buildings are organized around two housing types that emphasize community—courtyard housing and stacked flats. By reinforcing the traditional American campus idea as a well-defined urban precinct, the design solution seeks to foster a spiritually centered living and learning community that preserves public open space in a cohesive, adaptable, and culturally diverse setting."[77] The emphasis, for McDonough and other sustainer public intellectuals, is a sociological style of community.

Not only does the sustainer's sociological style mark a paradigm shift in terms of social construction of knowledge about human community, it is also publicly visible in the form of public texts. McDonough certainly wants people to know he is an authentic Sustainer in terms of his style and hundreds of clients undeniably have embraced his Sustainer style as faithful. McDonough has been interviewed by and featured in newspapers from small town America, like the *Charlotte Observer*, through to major news magazines like *Time* and *Business Week*. In addition, there is a documentary film

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[75] Retrieved from http://www.mcdonoughpartners.com/projects/mle/default.asp?projID=mle on September 3, 2006.
[76] Retrieved from http://www.mcdonoughpartners.com/projects/coffeecreek/default.asp?projID= coffeecreek on September 3, 2006.

titled *The Next Industrial Revolution* that is narrated by actress Susan Sarandon. The hour-long video is dedicated to exploring how McDonough is combining ecology and commerce to, as the film states, "change the world." A six-hour interview with McDonough on his cradle-to-cradle philosophy was captured on a 6 CD set called *The Monticello Dialogues.* And, as I previously mentioned, the firm has now started a line of greeting cards based on the cradle-to-cradle philosophy and book. Finally, he has a number of websites including www.mcdonough.com, www.mcdonoughpartners.com and www.mbdc.com. Despite his stature in the field and his own contribution to a number of university and college campuses as a designer and as a faculty member, his work and philosophy are not the subjects of academic research, debate and writing—the texts about him and the texts he contributes in a lay context are always those of the lay public. Sustainer public intellectuals must be publicly visible in terms of their sociological style because, of course, they are *public* and not private intellectuals, but also because they address an audience around the world. They believe their ideas too important for too many to circulate only in the confines of specialists and academics.

DIMENSIONS OF COMPARISON

Returning to the five dimensions of comparison I am using in each case study in this dissertation, we begin with fluidity. Again, fluidity refers to the ease with which a public intellectual flows between the world of the specialist and the world of the lay person. In the case of William McDonough, he is a highly fluid sustainer public

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[77] Retrieved from http://www.mcdonoughpartners.com/projects/fuller/default.asp?projID=fuller on

intellectual. He holds a Bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College and a Master's in

Architecture from Yale University. In addition to his two firms, William McDonough

and Partners and McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry, he is also a Consulting

Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Stanford University, the Chair of

the Board of Overseers for the Center for Eco-Intelligent Management, a venture partner

with VantagePoint Venture Capitalists and from 1994-1999, served as the Edward E.

Elson Professor of Architecture and Dean of the School of Architecture at the University

of Virginia.[78] Despite his significant stature within the design, architecture and ecology

communities, McDonough lives his life serving communities around the world. Through

his projects to bring his cradle-to-cradle philosophy to life, he embeds himself in the

public, learning how specific communities operate, what materials are native to a place,

and how to make architecture and design feel native and make it contribute more than it

takes away. All of this requires his fully embodied presence as both a designer and as a

member of a greater human community. He states, "I believe we can accomplish great

and profitable things within a new conceptual framework—one that values our legacy,

honors diversity, and feeds ecosystems and societies . . . It is time for designs that are

creative, abundant, prosperous, and intelligent from the start."[79]

    While Cornel West and the prophets are more evenly distributed between

"public" and "intellectual," McDonough and the sustainer public intellectuals

demonstrate a greater Degree of "publicness" in their style. Certainly, this is not to

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September 3, 2006.
[78] Retrieved from http://www.mcdonough.com on September 4, 2006.
[79] Retrieved from http://www.mcdonough.com on September 4, 2006.

discount sustainers as sub par intellectuals or to suggest that McDonough is somehow less capable a thinker than West. It is, though, to say that sustainers, because they are trying to bring ecological activism mainstream, must be more public than intellectual for that movement to be possible. To demonstrate this, see McDonough and Braungart's *Cradle-to-Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things,* any number of interview texts or any film footage of McDonough as a speaker or interviewee. The chiefly noticeable element of each of these mediated texts is that all are in the language of the lay person, not "architectese" or design-speak. I mentioned earlier in the chapter that McDonough has created his own sort of vernacular to describe things like "upcycling" instead of recycling or "nutrivehicle" instead of automobile. Even though McDonough is a capable specialist and an acclaimed designer, his manner of speaking is very publicly accessible. Also contrary to prophetic public intellectuals, as crises escalate, McDonough maintains the same degree of "publicness" rather than assuming a greater public role. Sustainers are used to weathering crises—in fact, the entire sustainability movement arose out of a perceived ongoing crisis situation: environmental destruction. For that reason, they are not as bound to a particular kairotic moment; rather, they "sustain" their level of public participation through all types of social and political situations.

Turning to Location, the sustainer public intellectual can largely be found in the community. That is, in whatever public he or she is currently working. McDonough is incapable of doing his job solely in an office setting, surrounded by other design professional peers and sending his ideas off to someone else to complete. His philosophy of respecting the diversity of native cultures and the natural habitats in which they exist

prohibits him from isolating himself, even if his "day job" is as architect, designer, ecologist or professor. For instance, McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry is dedicated to their "Cradle to Cradle Design paradigm" which is "powering the Next Industrial Revolution, in which products and services are designed based on patterns found in nature, eliminating the concept of waste entirely and creating an abundance that is healthy and sustaining."[80] This strategy of "Eco-Effectiveness" is not done in a vacuum. Indeed, sustainers have to take their show on the road. Yet, for a sustainer like McDonough, there is a balance to be struck between local and global in terms of location. So, while McDonough and his teams greatly value and participate in the local, the sustainer's goal is to change the global by changing many locals. So, the sustainer, though located "locally," always has his or her eye focused globally.

The sustainer public intellectual also avails him or herself of media for communicating an important ecological message to the world's neighborhoods. McDonough seems almost masterful at this stylistic task. He has several websites that I have cited through this chapter, a book, a line of greeting cards, a documentary film, a 6-CD box set of his interviews, a speaking tour, academic positions, face-to-face work with clients and countless interviews in popular press, many of which have also been cited in this chapter. Media diversity is important for the sustainer because of his or her focus on respecting local customs—if, for instance, McDonough is working in a community that has a lower socioeconomic level and where people are not always on-line, it does not make sense to use electronic media for his message, but instead may make perfect sense

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[80] Retrieved from http://www.mbdc.com/overview.htm on September 4, 2006.

to speak to villagers face-to-face and do an interview with the local newspaper. However, the work will later be described on his websites or in interviews with larger press outlets such that it has a higher degree of visibility. Technological innovation is also critical to the sustainer because electronic media, for example, use less natural resources to produce and disseminate messages than does print press. So, media use is based, for the sustainer, on the project, but all technologies are available.

And lastly, the use of resources. Obviously, media are among the resources used by the sustainer, but resources are a touchy subject for the sustainer public intellectual. The idea ultimately is to give back a greater amount of resource than one has taken in any given circumstance. Resources for other public intellectuals may make a huge mark, but sustainers try to leave very little trace of themselves on ecological systems in particular. McDonough is clearly highly paid, no one disputes that. However, he works diligently to help clients pay for his services through sustainable community businesses that help to subsidize his work. He certainly made use of valuable training resources through his education and apprenticeships, but gives back a lot in this way by training other designers and community members to be more eco-effective themselves. He has been given many opportunities to share his philosophy and his life's work, but much of his press is dedicated to telling the stories of locals in a particular community who made something extraordinary out of the most ordinary of resources. So, the sustainer works to put back at least as much, if not more, than he or she takes away in terms of resources. Without that kind of orientation, the sustainer is not a sustainer but a regular environmentalist or

concerned human being. Sustainers' street cred is based on giving back vast amounts of resources and trying to take as little as possible, to leave a smaller ecological footprint.

CONCLUSION

McDonough is one example of a Sustainer, but he exemplifies the characteristics critical to Sustainers in general. The sustainer public intellectual style requires an indictment of current practices and their outcomes, but more importantly, a transcendent paradigm shift of a vision for natural and human products and processes. There is a strong dedication to respect, diversity and local communities while maintaining an overarching goal of changing the world. Sustainability is finally in fashion, allowing sustainers a more amplified voice not only in ecology, but in industry as well. Sustainers pride themselves on being part of humanity, never isolated or removed from it. They are doing more than just trying to make the world a better place. They are reinventing what counts as better in the first place.

Thus far, I have highlighted pro-social public intellectual rhetorical styles in this dissertation. Chapter Six marks a move to the "dark side" of public intellectual style as I take on the Pundit.

PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL CASE STUDIES

Chapter 6: Pundit Style

So far in this dissertation, I have worked to detail the pro-social aspects of three different public intellectual styles: Prophet, Sustainer and Guru. Each of these three styles, though, can have negative impacts as well. And while this chapter's style has a pro-social side to it, this chapter is devoted to the "dark" side of public intellectual style: the Pundit. There are many pundits in America—turn on any network or cable news broadcast and you will undoubtedly run across this style. The pundit I have chosen to focus on is Paul Begala. Begala was born in New Jersey and raised in Texas and is a two-time graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, holding both a B.A. and a J.D. from the institution. He taught briefly at the University of Texas before going to work with partner James "Ragin' Cajun" Carville (together they make up the political consulting firm Begala & Carville) for then-governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas. After an unlikely but resounding victory in the Clinton campaign, Begala found himself thrust into the national spotlight as a political strategy consultant. Begala & Carville scored more victories for Democrats Diane Feinstein and Zell Miller, among others.

Paul Begala: Always Already Available

Begala served as one of the key spokespeople for the Clinton administration's policy efforts while consulting with former President Clinton during his tenure in the White House. During this time, Begala helped John F. Kennedy, Jr. launch his political magazine, *George*, and worked as contributing editor and author of the "Capital Hillbilly" column. The author of four books including *Is Our Children Learning?: The*

Case Against George W. Bush and *Take it Back: Our Party, Our Country, Our Future*
(co-authored with Carville), Begala is a regular op-ed contributor to a number of news
publications and the former co-host of the CNN debate program, "Crossfire." Currently,
Begala serves as Affiliated Professor of Public Policy at Georgetown University and
appears regularly on Wolf Blitzer's CNN news show, "The Situation Room."[81]

PUNDIT STYLE BASICS

In contrast to the pro-social takes on public intellectual styles that I have detailed
so far, the Pundit stands as the exemplar of anti-social style. This is not to say that Paul
Begala is a bad person or that Begala as an individual is always working against the best
interests of our culture—it is to say, though, that punditry itself is counter to democratic
desires. In 2006, sociologists at Duke University published a study examining 19 years
worth of data on the link between social ties and the social health of our nation. The
Duke study confirms the thesis of Putnam's *Bowling Alone,* that spending larger amounts
of time at work and smaller amounts of time doing social activities degrades civic
concern and participation.[82] In other words, the more people who bowl alone, the worse
the social health of our nation. If those surveyed by the Duke sociologists are
extrapolated to the larger population, Americans feel like they do not have time for
lengthy dialogue. Hence, we have the Pundit public intellectual.

That said, there are certainly public intellectuals who are in the same line of work,
but assume a pro-social style. The pro-social side of the Pundit is a public intellectual

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[81] Retrieved February 3, 2007 from http://explore.georgetown.edu/people/peb/?PageTemplateID=179 and
http://www.cnn.com/CNN/anchors_reporters/begala.paul.html.

who is visible on television and other media and tackles political and social issues, but does so in a more reflexive way that engages both audiences and ideas to provide an entrée into thoughtful dialogue. Physiologically, this means dressing professionally, embodying an openness to diversity of opinion and a willingness to share the proverbial floor. Psychologically, the pro-social Pundit is consistent with his or her attitudes of openness in that this public intellectual works to create dialogue rather than provide quick answers. This Pundit cultivates an identity of expertise through dress and carriage, but of an accessible kind through language and media choice. Sociologically, the pro-social Pundit discusses issues of interest to the polis in a mediated context. So, the Pundit is very visible to the public and is judged to be an expert by the public to whom the Pundit speaks. Think Christiane Amanpour and her work with issues of the changing identities of women in anti-feminist societies such as her native Iran. The anti-social Pundit is of another sort—a political commentator on a very superficial level, providing a mediated gloss on concerns of the day and moving on to the next hot topic seconds or minutes later.

Of course, the Pundit is widely visible and generally democratic in his or her approach. Punditry is simple to understand. In fact, that is the predominant reason it is so popular. As I talk about in Chapter Two, we live in a sound-bite culture in an era of attention spans the length of time it takes to microwave popcorn. People seem to sense they are moving faster than ever yet have less time than ever and so, they turn on CNN where, every half hour, the world is wrapped up like a pithy little package by the Pundit. Pop, pop, pop. Yet, Habermas' philosophical focus on rational critical debate, reflexivity

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82 Retrieved March 5, 2007 from http://www.dukenews.duke.edu/2006/06/socialisolation.html.

and ideal role taking implies that the health of the public sphere mandates a seemingly contradictory prescription—to end the sense of increasing urgency, we need to slow down. Rather than answer urgency in pithy sound bites, we need greater deliberation and dialogue. So, both the Pundit's pace and his or her lack of deliberation and engagement harm the public sphere.

Physiological Style

Conservative talk show host Rush Limbaugh refers to him as "The Forehead," but whether or not Paul Begala has a canyon between his eyebrows and hairline or not, his physiological style clearly works for him. Physiological style is embodied and performative. The Pundit has to walk a particularly fine line between the perception of the audience that he or she is an expert in something, but also that he or she is not stodgy or patronizing like those other experts (read: traditional intellectuals). Of course, all public intellectuals walk this line to a degree, but the Pundit is specifically aware of this requirement, likely because punditry is seen most often on television—if the average American is going to invite you into her living room, you had better know something that she does not but dish it quickly. She has other things to do. In other words, Begala has to portray the physiological style of "every person's expert." To accomplish this, Begala is always seen in a conservative, "politician" suit, neat haircut and clean shaven. This is the garb of the political expert and Begala wears it like he was born in it. Looking like the politicians he supports and critiques allows Begala the ability to craft himself as *the* strategy analyst and expert on all things political.

However, Begala would be unsuccessful as a Pundit public intellectual if he were only seen as a political expert, however pithy he may be, if he did not also seem like a fun guy to invite to a dinner party at your house. While his clothing and physical comportment scream "expert" (or at least "Brooks Brothers"), his folksy and straightforward manner of speaking shout "I'm one of you, despite how I'm dressed!" Of course, Begala is not really "one of the guys"—he is a professor of public policy at Georgetown, hosted his own very popular CNN show, and is called upon to represent the Democratic party line on television several times a week. However, he seems like one of the gang and that is because of his physiological style. Begala is funny without being cruel ("Politics is show business for ugly people") and smart without being pedantic ("One of the problems we saw in the last presidential election in our party is that our nominee, while winning the election, which we ought never to forget, often lost sight of the difference between strategy and tactics"). Because of this folksiness, Begala is able to walk the line between expert and dinner party.

Physiological style is not only about embodied performance, it also is a reflection of an inner persona. Or quite simply, Begala conveys a worldview through his physiological style. For Begala as a political strategist pundit, he views the world through an undeniably political lens. This framing is most evident in the way he describes the world. For instance, Begala is a regular contributor to several political blogs, one of them TPM Café. In a post dated February 14, 2006, Begala describes Cheney's hunting accident in South Texas involving attorney Charles Whittington. He writes,

To quote Mary Matalin to vouch for Cheney's safety, as the *Post*

does, is absurd.   I love Mary - she's married to my best friend. But

she was 1500 miles away, drinking a fine Rhone, no doubt. And I

daresay she's never been hunting in her life. And yet the *Post*

quotes her reassuring us that Cheney "was not careless or

incautious." Baloney. That's like quoting me on Mrs. Bush's

inaugural ball gown. I didn't attend the event, and I don't know

squat about the subject.[83]

Self-depricating humor aside, Begala takes a subject that is *not* political prima facie and

politicizes it by chastising Vice President Cheney and questioning the credibility of Mary

Matalin, conservative strategist. If we extend the argument, Begala takes on the

Republican Party. Begala exists in the world as if all things are politically polarized and

that is represented in his style of speaking.

Begala, as I have already explained, is a strategist for the Democratic party, and

so places himself on the political left, or at least left of center ideologically. This is

noteworthy because part of physiological style is the embodiment of an inner persona and

these leftist attitudes manifest themselves in his physical location. Let me explain.

Whenever Paul Begala appears as a guest of Wolf Blitzer in "The Situation Room," a

news "discussion" program on CNN, he appears alongside a conservative counterpart,

usually Bay Buchanan or Bill Bennett. And, he consistently stands to the left of the

conservative pundit. When Begala was co-host of the CNN political debate (read:

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[83] Begala, Paul (February 16, 2006) "VP Cheney: You're Lucky Those Reporters Aren't Hunters."

yelling match) program "Crossfire," he would always sit to the viewers' left of his conservative sparring partner Tucker Carlson or Robert Novak. Now, this could certainly be for some reason known only to television producers, but it is likely he chooses to stand to the left of the conservative pundit to reinforce his status as a left-leaning strategist.

Since the Pundit must constantly be available for pithy commentary, he or she must have a physiological style that reflects this occupational requirement. As I mentioned previously, Begala dons the suit of the politicians for whom he strategizes. I discussed earlier how this gives him credibility as an expert in politics because he is dressed like someone involved in politics. However, it serves a second purpose in terms of reflecting an inner persona. By always being seen publicly dressed in a suit, Begala gives the impression that he is a man who is ready, at any moment, to discuss the news of the day. And, of course, this is his job. Begala is successful, though, because he understands the level of stylistic preparedness necessary for the life of the professional pundit.

Psychological Style

Psychological style is, first and foremost, about consistency between talk and action. As I described in the preceding paragraph, the Pundit is always available as punditry, as public background noise, is always available—that is its nature. So, physiologically, this requires the Pundit to be available both in terms of physical proximity to a medium to disseminate a message and also clothing and manner of speaking that conveys expertise in a given area. Part of being always already available as

the Pundit public intellectual is having something to say about virtually anything under your umbrella field of expertise. Begala is no exception. Certainly, a quick informal poll would reveal that most people feel Begala is entitled to consideration as an expert in politics, but what kind of politics? A more informed opinion would reveal a more limited swath of expertise: traditional electoral political activities such as campaigning, PR, communicating party platform and the like for the Democratic Party. Begala himself would probably admit, off-the-record no doubt, that he is not an expert on social movements, globalization, or education. Even in his most honest moments, Begala would have to admit he is no policy wonk. Yet, Begala's popularity suggests audiences feel he can wonk that way. The Pundit must cast the widest net possible in terms of expertise in order to get as much face-time as possible on whatever medium is most readily available. A quick Google search on quotes by Paul Begala lends credence to this argument: "Again, President Reagan was sort of an amiable presence out at the ranch by the last 6 months of his presidency. He had no effect on national policy at all;" "Defining the terms of the debate generally dictates who's gonna' win it;" "I'm a Catholic, but I used to love going to Vacation Bible School with my fundamentalist friends;" "It seems to me the American people never really forgave the Democrats for being right about Vietnam;" "See, I think if it just became who's sleeping with whom, then there's no reason to prefer one party over the other, 'cause the truth is we're all sinners."[84] Once a Pundit like Begala has media "street cred," he can opine on just about anything from Catholicism to sex, Vietnam to Reagan, without having his credibility called into question. This fundamental lack of questioning, or even critical thinking, by either Begala or his

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[84] Retrieved February 9, 2007 from http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/p/paul_begala.html.

audience, highlights the danger of punditry. Most people get just enough information

from the Pundit to be dangerous, but not enough to be pro-social.

Begala's actions outside of his quipping on all things political further support a

high level of consistency between talk and action. Begala used to appear several times a

week on CNN when "Crossfire" was still on the air. When it was cancelled, Begala was

tapped to be the "voice of the left" on Wolf Blitzer's newest program, "The Situation

Room." Despite the fact that Begala is not the primary host, nor even the only

commentator on the left, he is on television at least once a week. And, he occupies time

and space on other media, as well. He is on the radio on such programs as "Imus in the

Morning" with Don Imus, and on PBS with Chris Bury. He contributes regularly on a

number of blogs including www.TPMcafe.com, www.buzzflash.com,

www.bernaisesource.com, www.campusprogress.org, and www.huffingtonpost.com. He

has a very active blog on CNN where he comments on such things as Presidential

debates. For instance, on October 8, 2004, Begala writes about the third debate between

George W. Bush and John F. Kerry, "Bush was asked to name three mistakes he's made.

He can't name one. Breathtaking arrogance. He's had the hardest job in the world for

almost four years and he cannot name a single mistake. Either he's the Second Coming of

the Messiah, or he's so damned arrogant he's dangerous."[85] The Pundit, like the Analyst,

is always available and Begala is always everywhere.

Not only must the Pundit be readily available, he or she must be available in the

right places. All public intellectuals have an area of expertise and the Pundit is no

different. So, we would expect to find the Pundit occupying spaces particular to his or her area of perceived expertise. For Begala, this means he must be available to be seen in political contexts in general and heard on the "left" in particular. For starters, Begala lives and works predominantly in Washington, D.C. For a political strategist pundit, this nation's capital is an obvious choice. Begala highlights this choice saying that he and Carville "want to be where the politicians are and where the voters are. I love being in Washington (D.C.); it's often the nerve center." In addition, in the 2004 Presidential election, citizens of Washington D.C. cast 90% of their votes for the Kerry/Edwards ticket.[86] In other words, for a single city, it would be challenging for Begala to pick one that has a higher concentration of citizens on the political left. There, in addition to his television work that I have already described in some detail, Begala is Affiliated Professor of Public Policy at Georgetown University. The course he teaches for the Spring semester, 2007 is "Politics and the Media" where he instructs students about the intersection of the press and politics. He says in his course description,

> "If you don't read a daily paper and aren't prepared to discuss
>
> current issues affecting politics and the press, you don't belong in
>
> this class. Finally and most importantly: robust debate will be
>
> required, as will a decent respect for the opinions of others. So

[85] Begala, Paul (October 8, 2004). "Paul Begala's Debate Log: Round 3." Retrieved February 9, 2007 from http://www.cnn.com/2004/ALLPOLITICS/blog/10/08/begala.blog/.
[86] Retrieved February 10, 2007 from http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/2004/popular_vote.html.

bring both a thick skin and a civil tongue; both will be

necessary[87]."

Begala may be most famous for his political consulting and strategy firm, Begala &
Carville, that he runs with James "Ragin' Cajun" Carville and that most notably helped a
then-little-known Arkansas governor named Bill Clinton with the 1992 Presidential
Election. I have already described Begala's left physical location relative to conservative
counterparts on television. So, Begala lives in the political epicenter of the United States,
teaches politics at Georgetown and stands on the audience's left in his television
appearances.

In addition to his actual physical home and work locations, Begala can be found
on the "left" by anyone, anywhere with access to a television, a radio, an Internet
connection, a book store or a library. So, even if Begala-philes live outside the D.C. area
and cannot see him in person, this Pundit lives his life visibly on almost all
communicative media. Begala is on CNN on "The Situation Room." He is on the radio
on NPR, "Imus in the Morning," and other shows. He writes a political blog for CNN
and contributes his opinions to a number of liberal blogs. He has written four books, two
of his own and two co-authored with consulting partner James Carville. He is often
asked to write Op Ed pieces for newspapers like *The Washington Post*. Quite surely,
Begala is consistent in talk and action in terms of his psychological style.

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[87] Retrieved February 10, 2007 from https://www1.georgetown.edu/explore/courses/index.cfm?
Action=View&CourseID=PPOL-564.

The other component of psychological style is identity. Begala has cultivated his identity as a pundit public intellectual—I will refer to his identity as "every person's liberal geek." It should be obvious by now that Begala is on the political left and is available through most mediated sources as a strategist in this capacity. However, because Begala is a public intellectual in the Pundit category, he must also represent accessibility in terms of his identity. Hence, people feel comfortable inviting him into their homes on a regular, if not daily, basis. He achieves this accessibility, I believe, through his simplistic descriptions of complex political policy and process and his use of folksy humor. For instance, he stated about the highly controversial topic of sex education in schools,

> "It's important that the whole international community come together,
> speak candidly about it, forget taboos, forget about conservative ideas with
> respect to what you should tell young people about. It's the lives of young
> people that are put at risk by unsafe sex. And, therefore, protect yourself."

While the issue of whether to teach sex education in schools is undoubtedly important, Begala's treatment of it suggests it's resolution is just a matter of getting some folks in a room and chatting. Other examples exist in abundance. In the February 28, 2005 taping of "Crossfire" on CNN, Begala "debates" conservative co-host Bay Buchanan about our progress in Iraq. He muses,

> "Of course, we were told Mr. Bush's invasion would be a
> cakewalk. We were told our troops would be greeted as liberators.
> We were told that killing Uday and Qusay would change

everything, that capturing Saddam would be the turning point. We

were told that the handover of sovereignty was the key, and we

were told that elections last month were the light at the end of the

tunnel. Through it all, we were told everything but the truth. I just

don't know how much more of Mr. Bush's kind of progress our

troops can stand."[88]

And, famously, Begala hails from Texas which gives him some "authority" in using

down-home humor. His folksy brand of humor is clear when he quips, "Texas is the

nearest thing to heaven there is. We love our state but we are embarrassed by our weak

government. We ignore 400,000 souls in Third World conditions with no electricity and

running water. We pay our teachers less than our football coaches, and we get the results

you'd expect." Another example of his witticism can be found in his CNN blog entry on

October 13, 2004, "As we say in Texas, don't piss on my boots and tell me it's raining."[89]

As every person's liberal geek, Begala successfully boils involved political issues down

to the most simplistic terms in a humorous way, regardless of the fact that this style does

not invite deliberation and may in fact be misleading.

Sociological Style

   The first element of sociological style is that all styles are socially constructed.

The public audience must co-create the Pundit style, in other words. This is where our

sociopolitical trends come into play. The clear effect of the hypermediation and

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[88] "Crossfire" (February 28, 2005). Retrieved February 10, 2007 from http://transcripts.cnn.com/
TRANSCRIPTS/0502/28/cf.01.html.

soundbite nature of our contemporary moment, people perceive that they have very little time. I referenced the 2006 study conducted by sociologists from Duke University earlier. Primarily, this study demonstrated a trend among the approximately 1500 people surveyed about their social networks that most felt they spent more time at work and had less time to do anything else. As boundaries between work and "normal" life collapse because of the ability to take the office home on a laptop, this feeling becomes even more pronounced. For people who want it all right now, punditry emerges as a legitimate form of public discourse. If we have to wait longer than a few minutes or even seconds to learn what is going on in our political landscape, we flip channels or boot up an online resource because it "saves" time and time is scarce and time is money. So, the public, in many ways, calls forth the Pundit public intellectual as a response to this need for brain-cell-saving news. Fortunately for us, Begala's commentary runs the very small gambit of pithy to quippy, so he fits the proverbial bill. For instance, he stated in regards to a 1998 bill signed by President Clinton, "Stroke of the pen. Law of the land. Kinda cool." Kinda funny, kinda scary.

In addition to co-creating Pundit style, the public must also judge the Pundit's performance as authentic or faithful for this public intellectual to be successful. Clearly, the public has pronounced his performance as authentic to Pundit sociological style. Although it has been cancelled, Begala's CNN program "Crossfire," despite its 4:30pm timeslot, was CNN's seventh highest rated program in 2004 and had been on the air since

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[89] Begala, Paul (October 13, 2004). "Paul Begala's Debate Blog: Round 4." Retrieved February 10, 2007 from http://www.cnn.com/2004/ALLPOLITICS/blog/10/13/begala.blog/.

1982 featuring a number of prominent voices from the left and right.[90] As a faculty

member at Georgetown, students line up for his courses on political topics.   By March 9,

2006, Begala and Carville's newest tome *Take it Back: Our Party, Our Country, Our

Future* had sold 17,734 copies in two months according to Nielson Bookscan and

receives an average reader-rating of 4 stars on Amazon.com. So, in terms of

authenticity, Begala has been embraced by the public.

The second part of sociological style is being publicly visible. Style cannot occur

in a vacuum. For Begala as a Pundit, Begala is undeniably visible. Begala, I have no

doubt, believes that he utilizes the media to help audiences understand issues. And, I

have already gone into many pages of detail about Begala's media visibility. A quick

recap: Begala was on television on CNN with "Crossfire" and is currently seen on "The

Situation Room;" he is interviewed on the radio by various programs; he writes books

alone and in conjunction with James Carville; he blogs; he authors Op Ed pieces. Few

Pundits, in fact, are more publicly visible than Paul Begala.

DIMENSIONS OF COMPARISON

There are five dimensions of comparison for public intellectual styles: fluidity,

degree, location, media, resources and function. Fluidity is the degree to which the

public intellectual moves between the public and intellectual worlds. Begala seems to be

fairly fluid, although likely less so than other public intellectuals. It is a fact that Begala

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[90] "Nail in the Coffin for Crossfire: Stay Tuned" (January 5, 2005). Retrieved February 10, 2007 from
http://www.mediabistro.com/tvnewser/archive/2005_01_05_archive.asp.

is an intellectual. He holds a doctoral level degree in law, runs a thriving political

strategy consultancy with partner James Carville, worked intimately with President

Clinton and teaches public policy courses at Georgetown University. However, I think it

is very likely that if we polled the faculty at Georgetown who teach full time and do not

have the kind of media visibility Begala enjoys, they would admit that they find him

lacking in intellectual rigor. This is not to say that Begala is not smart enough to teach

classes on public policy—after all, he was at the center of public policy for Bill Clinton

and worked as the spokesperson for that administration. It is to say, though, that Begala

is probably too far outside the traditional academic realm to be taken seriously by his

traditional academic colleagues. Again, this is not necessarily a negative

characterization, but a colloquial observation. The more Begala appears on television,

the less legitimate he is in the intellectual world. So, he is not terribly fluid, though

movement is evidently possible.

Degree is the second point of comparison for this dissertation project and is

closely related to fluidity. Degree marks the level of "publicness" and "intellectualness"

the Pundit embodies. The Pundit lives most of his or her life in the public, rather than

intellectual, world. Although Paul Begala is a highly educated person holding both a

B.A. and a J.D. from the University of Texas at Austin, and although he counts

Georgetown University professor as his day job, the Pundit cannot live predominantly in

that world. Intellectual life is about critical and analytical thinking, about asking tough

questions, and ultimately, about *depth*. The Pundit engages in summary, superficial

questioning and is about breadth rather than depth. This is not to say that the public is

unintelligent—that would be patently false to argue. It is to say, though, that the public's attention span tends to be quite short. Without much spare time, activities such as critical thinking, and in-depth questioning and analysis take an almost permanent backseat to having high level information at a moment's notice in a moment's time. While the intellectual world digs into issues, questions and problems, the public world soars above them at about 30,000 feet. Therefore, Begala as Pundit must concentrate the bulk of his time in the friendly skies because popularity is paramount to the Pundit. He is a sort of flight attendant on the airline of political discourse. Welcome aboard.

The third issue here is location, or where to find Pundit public intellectuals. While some public intellectuals maintain a reasonable degree of privacy even with public visibility, the Pundit is plainly visible. Again, Begala teaches in a classroom with limited seats and goes home every night to a house without a television crew. He has some private space. However, his job literally *is* public—the Pundit has to be intellectual in public all the time. There is no "private" intellectual time for this style. When he is not on television, he is on-line. When he is not on-line, he is on the radio. When he is not on the radio, he is writing Op Ed pieces. We locate the Pundit solely in the public eye— even a classroom can be considered a kind of public. His extreme visibility to a mass audience is what makes Begala a captivating intellectual. He is just nerdy enough to seem brilliant, but is overwhelmingly savvy in his ability to win an audience through media.

Our next point of comparison will be somewhat of a "duh" moment: media usage. Indeed, I have spent the bulk of this chapter detailing Begala's mastery of media.

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Pundits, in general, require media for exposure to an audience. Pithiness does not get very far toward publishing a disciplinary article in a peer-reviewed journal. But, it gets the Pundit amazingly far toward a career in front of the camera, over radio waves, or through the Internet. Our culture, as I said earlier, dictates brevity and prefers to avoid deliberation and debate regardless of the fact that informed dialogue could mend much of what is broken in this country. Instead, we embrace the short, the pithy, the diluted, the simple. In truth, we embrace the Pundit.

Our last point of comparison is the use of resources. Pundits generally and Begala specifically capitalize on resources. Begala has made the most of his education— he has parlayed his knowledge of the law into an indisputably impressive strategy consulting firm. He then capitalized on his "win" for Bill Clinton and has gone on to be one of the most prominent voices in popular culture related to the Democratic Party. For this, he is both admired and despised. The Pundit has the requisite style to be the kind of person people invite into their homes. This is not true of the other styles I have outlined in this project. The Pundit seems like the kind of person we would like to drink a beer with and for that reason, the Pundit is able to make incredibly effective use of resources available to him or her in ways that other public intellectuals cannot or would not even be asked to do. Pundits are, by their very nature, popular and they become that way through their use of media and other resources. They stay that way because we like them.

CONCLUSION

The Pundit public intellectual style is about presenting complex issues with a gallon of wit and a dash of wisdom. Our hypermediated, soundbite culture demands a pithy, high level response to even the most disconcerting dilemma or grossly negligent public policy decision. We should be careful what we ask for. Paul Begala is not a bad person by any means, but his public intellectual style is bad for our society. Paul Begala is also not a poseur, but his brand of political "dialogue" is bad for our culture. Begala believed that "Crossfire" was a legitimate debate show when it was, in fact, a superficial pissing contest. The fact that we welcome the Pundit into our homes with open arms makes him or her even more potentially dangerous. A lack of true deliberation in the public sphere will suffocate the last embers of the fire of West's "deep democracy." My mother always said too much television rots the brain and in terms of the Pundit public intellectual, she may have really been onto something.

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion

This dissertation project has been dedicated to investigating the impacts, both positive and negative, of public intellectual rhetorical style on the health of the public sphere. Style is a physiological, psychological and sociological manifestation of preferences, to paraphrase Pierre Bourdieu. And, at different times and in different cultural milieus, different rhetorical styles emerge as particularly relevant, powerful and persuasive. Such is the case with the styles I have detailed here: the Prophet, the Guru, the Sustainer and the Pundit. The Prophet is called by a higher power at a time of crisis to judge sinners in the community and outline a path to redemption. The Guru is the teacher who gains a following of disciples and leads them to enlightenment. The Sustainer innovates products and processes that sustain natural, social and political environments. And the Pundit is a subject expert who discusses the issues of the day in a superficial way via the mass media. In this final chapter, I will return to my research questions from Chapter One that have guided this dissertation. Next, I compare the styles using the five dimensions I outlined for each style: fluidity, degree, location, media and resources. I will then discuss what we can learn by comparing these styles in the typology. Finally, I will detail the impacts of public intellectual rhetorical style on the public sphere.

Public intellectuals are a rhetorical success story. Their capacities to harness particular training and derived experience and put these things to productive use in the public sphere highlights two important factors. First, it illuminates the critical position rhetoric occupies in public life—truly, without it, a public sphere is fundamentally impossible. Second, it points to style as an intriguing and fruitful avenue for exploring impact on the health of the public sphere. To put these ideas in perspective, I turn now to my research questions.

RQ1: What is and/or should be the role of the public intellectual in today's public sphere?

After examining the four case studies of Prophet, Guru, Sustainer and Pundit, the notion that underlies public intellectual style as a more aggregate category is activism. When I had initially conceived of this dissertation, I had intended to have a discrete style category of the Activist, but the major idea that has emerged in the process of this project is the centrality of activism for public intellectuals. Rhetoric plays a pivotal role here. At least for Western thought, rhetoric enabled the conception of a democratic tradition. Greek and Roman statesmen would not, very likely, have called themselves activists, but their professional and philosophical engagement in dialectic and dialogue marked the profound relevance of rhetoric to public life. That has not changed. In our contemporary moment, one thing that is unavoidably clear is that rhetoric enables activism. And, successful rhetorical styles beget productive activism in the public sphere.

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RQ2: How do different rhetorical styles of public intellectuals impact engagement in the public sphere?

The four case studies examined in this dissertation provide the answer to this second research question. I have categorized three public intellectual styles as pro-social: Prophet, Guru and Sustainer. And, I have categorized one public intellectual style as anti-social: Pundit. Certainly, pro-social and anti-social are the ways in which public intellectual rhetorical styles impact the public sphere for the purposes of this dissertation. However, I realize there are gradations between the two and that other monikers may provide more nuanced answers. For now, though, I think it is important to be a bit more harsh with the categories and to determine whether, at the end of the day, certain styles really help or harm the public sphere.

COMPARING THE PROPHET, GURU, SUSTAINER AND PUNDIT

Fluidity

Fluidity accounts for a public intellectual's ability to move between the "worlds" of intellectual and public. What fluidity really gets at is a public intellectual's rhetorical style and its capacity to appeal to both intellectual and public "worlds." It highlights adaptability. Recall that the history of the prophetic tradition requires the prophet to live a somewhat lonely existence in order to be perceived as authentically called when offering judgment on a nation. Thus, the traditional prophet's fluidity is limited by his or her social isolation. The prophetic public intellectual, though, cannot be isolated, otherwise he or she would not qualify as a *public* intellectual. In other words, the public

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intellectual Prophet is less isolated than exotic—he or she does not "descend from the mountain" regularly, but when he or she does, we should expect tremendous news. So, although Cornel West's prophetic style is highly fluid, he is less of an anomaly for the contemporary iteration of the style than we might assume. I would categorize the Prophet's fluidity as fairly average for public intellectuals.

The Sustainer is highly fluid as a public intellectual rhetorical style, and William McDonough is an apt example of this level of fluidity. The Sustainer must be accepted as an intellectual in order to be innovative enough to create and maintain the products and processes that sustain the natural, social and political environments of which the Sustainer is a part. The Sustainer must also be accepted by the public because that is where the ideas of sustainability are played out and where the effects are felt. The Guru, like the sustainer, is a highly fluid public intellectual style for the same major reason: he or she must appear the "master" of two worlds. As the Guru melds East and West through his or her teaching or disciples, a high degree of fluidity is required to achieve this style. The Pundit is the least fluid public intellectual rhetorical style. Again, though, this is not to say that Pundits are not intellectuals—they certainly can be. It is to say that because of their absolute reliance on the mass media, particularly television, they are not embraced by the intellectual community to the same degree and therefore, do not move particularly fluidly between worlds. Based on this comparison, I would offer a continuum of style fluidity moving from most intellectual to most public that is as follows:

Intellectual   Public

←---→

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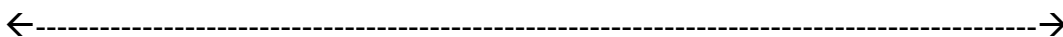
Prophet   Guru   Sustainer   Pundit

This comparison of fluidity between public intellectual rhetorical styles may

indicate two main things. First, and not surprisingly, some level of fluidity is required of

a public intellectual. Generally, this level is average to high. Certainly, if an intellectual

is to "go public" and therefore avoid the failure of rhetoric that keeps most intellectuals

out of the public, we should expect that intellectual to be moderately to highly fluid.

Second, I would argue that a higher degree of fluidity is required for the pro-social public

intellectual rhetorical styles than the anti-social style. Habermas' criteria for the health of

the public sphere includes rational critical debate and reflexivity, activities that require a

keen understanding of issues and a knowledge of how to slow down and tease out ideas.

Habermas also requires that deliberation and interaction occur in public, that we must

draw people out of any social isolation and into the collective mix. And, even though the

Prophet is the style at the farthest end of the fluidity continuum on the intellectual side

and the Pundit occupies the farthest end of the public side, the Prophet is more public

than the Pundit is intellectual. What I mean here is that the Prophet is more fluid than the

Pundit, and is for that reason, more pro-social.

Degree

Degree is very closely associated to fluidity and encompasses a public intellectual

style's degree of "publicness" and "intellectualness." So, while fluidity explains a public

intellectual's *adaptability* between public and intellectual worlds, degree emphasizes how

much time and space the public intellectual occupies in either realm. The Prophet is both

highly public and highly intellectual, but the degree of each is larger influenced by the needs the Prophet perceives in a discrete kairotic moment. In other words, Cornel West, like all Prophet public intellectuals, is more "public" than "intellectual" in times of crisis, as I have named the moment in which we find ourselves currently. So, as the moment calls for judgment and a path to redemption, the Prophet goes "public." For the Prophet, degree is related entirely to timing. Sustainers demonstrate a greater degree of "publicness" as part of their job—indeed, their role is to take sustainable philosophies and processes into the mainstream, thus this requires a more public posture than an intellectual one. Again, this is not to say that Sustainers are less intelligent or capable in terms of gray matter; rather, it is to say that Sustainers take their intelligence to the streets.

The Guru, on the other hand, is more intellectual than public. It is true that the Guru must be public to acquire followers or disciples and to teach those individuals the way to enlightenment. However, the more critical aspect to Guru public intellectual style is to be perceived not as *a* teacher, but as *the* teacher. It is imperative that the Guru be seen as one having uncommon and somewhat unattainable wisdom—if everyone could do it, we would not need the Guru. Therefore, a higher degree of "intellectualness" is a mark of Guru style. Conversely, the Pundit is one who performs a high degree of "publicness." Like the Sustainer, a high degree of "publicness" does not mean the Pundit is lacking intellectual capacity, but it does mean the Pundit must always be available and easily accessible through the mass media. The Pundit must have enough of a degree of "intellectualness" to make informed commentary on the issues of the day, but

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predominantly, his or her degree of "publicness" is significantly more obvious. Recall the continuum:

Intellectual   Public

←---→

Prophet   Guru   Sustainer   Pundit
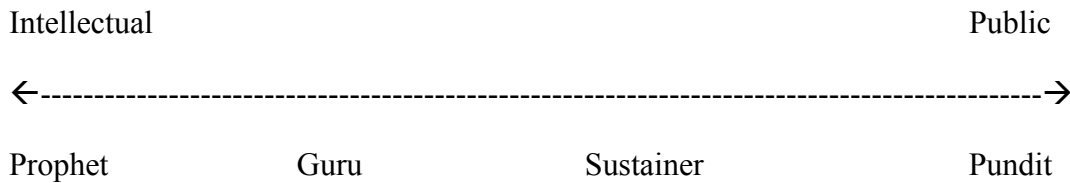
In terms of what we might take from this four-way comparison, the fact that there are equal numbers of "intellectualness" (Prophet, Guru) and "publicness" (Sustainer, Pundit) among those in this dissertation project, it becomes clear that balance is crucial to public intellectual style. We can see the need for balance both at the individual and aggregate level. At an individual level, balance must be in place for a rhetorical style to even qualify as belonging to a public intellectual. Said another way, an individual cannot be entirely "public" or entirely "intellectual" and be considered a public intellectual. At the aggregate level, it is important to note that our contemporary moment calls for a balance of higher-degree "public" rhetorical styles and higher-degree "intellectual" rhetorical styles. This larger picture highlights again the importance of bringing intellectual endeavor into public life and injecting public ideals into intellectual pursuits. Most critically, though, this idea of balance points to rhetorically sensitive styles across the board. Different kairotic moments in the public sphere call for different degrees of "intellectual" and "public" response—it is not an a priori rule that every sociopolitical climate requires a balance of styles, but overall, a balance is available and the public intellectuals who rise at any given time are the ones with the right degrees of intellectual and public.

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Location

Location refers to the physical places and rhetorical spaces we might find certain public intellectual styles. Cornel West as the Prophet can be located, as I described in Chapter Three, in many places. On the "intellectual" side, he is found in the classroom at Princeton University and in print in 16 books. On the "public" side, he can be seen leading demonstrations, at political campaign events for candidates such as the Reverend Al Sharpton, and on mass media like radio and film. The Sustainer, on the other hand, is seen predominantly in the community. Part of the Sustainer's job is to embed him or herself in the community, such that he or she is perceived as something of a local. In turn, the Sustainer can be found in the local community. For instance, William McDonough learns the strengths and weaknesses of a community in which he is set to do a project. He then capitalizes on the strengths of the community to create sustainable economic, social and natural resources, thereby reducing or eradicating the weaknesses. But, he does so on a community-by-community basis such that, each time, he achieves a sense of the local for that community.

The Guru's job is to teach and practice an otherworldly wisdom to a group of followers. The relationship between the Guru as teacher and his or her students is an intimate one. Therefore, wherever we find the Guru engaged in either intellectual or public activities, he or she must make that location *feel* intimate, even if it is a television set as Dr. Deepak Chopra sometimes uses. The Pundit is found predominantly on television and sometimes on-line, but always the Pundit is located somewhere "mass." Of course, the Pundit as a private individual may be a number of other places, but as a

public intellectual, he or she is always in view when we turn on our televisions or computers.

I think the most important element to note in this comparison of the location of certain public intellectual styles is that, regardless of their level of fluidity or degree, public intellectuals must **always** be located in the public. And style is the avenue for this location. A style that works with different intellectual and mass publics allows for public visibility. So, location is about rhetorical style—we find public intellectuals where they fit in.

Media

All public intellectuals make use of some forms of media in order to reach a public, achieve further relevance or notoriety, discuss issues or make connections. This category of comparison examines the differences in different public intellectual's media usage. The Prophet may certainly use mass media to accuse the guilty and offer a path to redemption, and Cornel West does this through his radio, television and film appearances. However, the Prophet, because of his or her higher degree of "intellectualness" relies more heavily on other media like books and other print or the perceived "high end" mass media like NPR. The Sustainer also must make calculated use of media to spread the philosophy of sustainability, but because this public intellectual is concerned predominantly with conservation, he or she is more likely to use "green" media. What this means is, we probably will not see a lot of the Sustainer in newspapers, but on-line. Or, at the innovative extreme where William McDonough resides, plastic polymer books that are waterproof and fireproof and that do not waste resources.

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The Guru must rely on media to some degree because part of the vocation of the Guru is to build a following and one way to accomplish this in our current moment is to use media. However, because the relationship between the Guru as the teacher and his or her students is one of spiritual intimacy, the Guru's media use must reflect this. Advents like personal weblogs are one way the Guru might accomplish this. Yet, the Guru can use mass media, but it has to be in an intimate way—Deepak Chopra does this even with a medium as mass as television. Think Ronald Reagan and the televised eulogy for the space shuttle *Challenger*. At the opposite end from intimacy is the Pundit's use of media. As I have described in much detail, the Pundit's livelihood relies on his or her media savvy—any public intellectual Pundit would need to be adroit in terms of media usage and the more "mass" the media, the better. Almost entirely, the Pundit is located on television.

As I briefly mentioned when describing the Prophet's media usage, there are media that are considered more intellectual than others. Or, said another way, all media are not created (or received) equally. So, while all public intellectuals employ media, some media is perceived as more intellectually-oriented than others: print and "smart" programming like NPR and PBS are obvious examples. Other media is viewed as more "popular" and its corollary, more base: magazines, generic evening news, most on-line sources. Not surprisingly then, in comparing public intellectual rhetorical styles in terms of media, the more pro-social styles avail themselves of at least a balance of, if not more of, the "intellectual" variety media. And, in turn, the anti-social style draws on less intellectual media, predominantly the television. I made this argument when discussing Begala, but I will restate it: it seems, colloquially, that the more a person shows up on

television, the less seriously that person is taken by his or her intellectual colleagues. It is not necessarily a fair treatment and perhaps underlies sour grapes, but this perception has labeled certain media as less "smart" than others.

However, public intellectuals are not merely more or less mediated, rather there are also certain media that suit certain public intellectuals better than others. Some public intellectuals may be better at what television does, others may be far more proficient through books and other print media. For still others, it does not seem to make a difference what media are used. For instance, Cornel West is on-line, in print, and on radio, television and even film. Yet, his choices are always seen as more "intellectual" even if he appears on television and that is because he is careful about what kinds of shows he participates in—he is never going to make a guest appearance on a sitcom, but he might show up in an interview with Charlie Rose on PBS. Again, proficiency with media is important for all public intellectuals, but the choices they make are equally relevant.

Resources

The final category of comparison is the use of resources by our public intellectuals. Resources have traditionally meant money, but for this project, we are considering other kinds of resources: education, opportunities, media and the like. The reason this category is important is largely definitional—what does it mean to be an intellectual and what does it mean to go public? Traditional intellectuals may identify others as intellectual only by proper pedigree—that is, they have the requisite letters after their names. However, my definition of public intellectual does not rely on pedigree.

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Traditional intellectuals may believe that writing on topics of relevance to the public "counts" as going public, even if the results are written only for academic peers. My definition of public intellectual disagrees—it must be in a public venue in a public vernacular. And, resources are both about actual command of resources like money, education, media and the like and public perception of those resources.

The Prophet certainly makes use of opportunities and media in order to do the job of judging and shining a light to redemption. Yet, we do a Prophet who looks like the elite that he or she judges would be treated as less authentic than a prophet who looks as if he or she is somewhat marginalized and on the level of those he or she judges as sinners. Thus, although the Prophet exercises resources, he or she cannot appear as if that is true. The Sustainer is an interesting case in resource mobilization because the underlying philosophy of this style is to *put back* rather than take, and this applies to resources. Anything the Sustainer makes us of, he or she puts back into the cycle. So, when William McDonough takes money for a job contract, he finds a way to apply the skills of the local community to a sustainable business or industry that puts money back into the community. Resources, for the Sustainer, are created, shared and maintained indefinitely.

The Guru, as the master of East (spirit) meets West (logic), is also a master of resources. This teacher has twice the education most have—a traditional pedigree in the "logic" of the West and a spiritual pedigree in the philosophy of the East. By bringing two sets of resources together, the Guru acquires a following and teaches his or her brand of wisdom to the next generation. The Pundit is also one to capitalize on resources, especially media and financial ones. This ability to employ (or exploit, in some people's

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opinion) resources for mass audiences is both the reason the Pundit is in business and the reason for traditional intellectuals' concern and possible sour grapes about the Pundit's fame.

Regardless of rhetorical style, all public intellectuals master and capitalize on resources, financial and otherwise. This ability is perhaps the greatest rift between traditional and public intellectuals because ushering resources and applying them to public use relies entirely on one's ability to natively master a public rhetoric. Because traditional intellectuals tend toward the pedantic, specialized jargon of the expert or scholar, they are stylistically unable to manage resources to public advantage. This inability is a failure of rhetoric. Public intellectuals, though, have a successful rhetoric for just this kind of work and because of this physiological, psychological and sociological style, are able to make use of resources to their and hopefully the public's advantage.

PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL STYLE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC SPHERE
Let us move beyond the specific rhetorical styles of the public intellectuals I have detailed to understand more about rhetorical style as a category of being in the world. Rhetorical style is physiological, psychological and sociological preferences manifested through language, bodily adornment and carriage, space, time, identity and interaction. It determines where and how we fit in, with whom we interact, where we can comfortably work and live, how we speak, what we wear, and who takes us seriously. As such, style is an avenue for activism both pro and anti-socially in the public sphere. While style is often treated as a sub category of delivery or otherwise superficial fluff, it is just the opposite. It is a layered, dimensional and rich way of getting at *why* and *how* certain

rhetorics can be employed to progress or regress society socially and politically. More than that, it is an exciting way to understand *why* and *how* certain individuals are successful in this work and why others are not. And while the styles that work at any given time may change, the category of style remains an important avenue for unpacking the sociopolitical landscape.

We may also learn more about the public intellectual beyond rhetorical style. Public intellectuals are essential agents for the health of the public sphere. As I articulated in the introductory chapter, the lack of intellectuals doing public work in an accessible language diminishes the public sphere. So it is important to describe and locate public intellectuals who remain influential such that we might learn why and how they can accomplish this status. Beyond being change agents, public intellectuals are activists. When I conceived of this project, I had initially thought to have a category of public intellectual style that is the Activist, but through my work, it became apparent that to be a public intellectual means to be an activist—it means to be fundamentally political, socially-oriented, book and people smart and visible.

Also clarified by this dissertation is an assumption I made in the introductory chapters: the more balanced styles of the Prophet, Sustainer and Guru have more pro-social impact on the public sphere than the strictly "public" style of the Pundit. Again, each of these styles can have both positive and negative impact, but the Prophet, Sustainer and Guru are the positive sides of their own or larger style categories, and are therefore more pro-social. Habermas calls for, among others criteria, rational-critical debate, reflexivity and ideal role-taking to create and maintain a healthy public sphere in this country. He also calls on us to be agents, to *act in public*. Each of these activities

and all of them together demand a balanced posture—the ability to decelerate, to dig deep, to ask tough questions, to respectfully dialogue, to be comfortable in conflict and disagreement, and most importantly, to do all of these things in a public venue in a public vernacular. These pro-social styles are therefore able to elicit greater discussion and participation because they appeal to people's need to feel as part of a community and feel as if their ideas count for something. Without some degree of balance, the invitation to participation will not be extended and that leaves the public sphere impoverished.

The public sphere also calls forth a response by way of rhetorical style based on need. So, our moment of crisis calls on some rhetorical styles on the margins, those that the public sphere feels may correct the direction our society seems to be heading. The public sphere also calls for certain styles out of desire. This is where we see the anti-social rhetorical styles emerge. We do not have time to deliberate, so we think to ourselves as we sit in traffic listening to music while talking on our cell phones and eating fast food, so we need the skinny and we need it fast. Enter styles like the Pundit. Some styles are necessarily called upon to remind, teach and highlight values or ethics of our society that we have forgotten and must reclaim. Other styles are a quick fix. Both are co-created by needs or desires of the public sphere. This idea also harkens back to media use. Again, I have no desire to become a critic of television as a medium; television has its place and it can be a pro-social tool when used correctly. However, because it is a medium where life's great problems are often solved in 30 minutes (with 10 minutes of commercials), the Pundit's heavy reliance on it is part of the problem— yes, we can talk back to the television screen if we are sitting at home (come to my house to view *American Idol* as proof of this phenomenon), but we are not engaging in a

dialogue with it. So, the public intellectuals that use a wider variety of media are also more balanced and more effective agents of progress in the public sphere.

Finally, it seems clear that a rhetorical style that is balanced is the most promising avenue for (re)creating and maintaining a fruitful public sphere in the United States in late capitalism. A style that is too intellectual does not appeal because it fails to connect with a wider audience and that audience comprises the largest membership in our would-be Habermasian public sphere. A style that is too public does not appeal because it fails to engender confidence because of a perceived lack of expertise and therefore, legitimate backing and direction. It lacks intellectual vigor of any kind and that scares most in the public sphere. So, public intellectual style is a *via media*, literally a "middle way" or third way philosophy for the public sphere. Just as the Anglican church may be seen as the via media for Catholicism and Protestantism in Christian religious circles, the public intellectual is the via media for connecting with and fostering a thoughtful and productive public sphere. I have argued that style is a fertile ground for understanding and comparing rhetorics and their impacts on the public sphere, and the public intellectual is the central or middle figure of that study. Without a balance, either side will fail—with a balance, the two may come together for real deliberation.

FUTURE RESEARCH

As I continue to work in this area, I would like to delve into other styles, particularly more of those on the anti-social side of the equation. I think in terms of the public sphere, it is important to know thine enemies, or at least rhetorical enemies. Through a greater comprehension of the rhetorical features of anti-social styles, we may

learn more about the rhetorical antidotes. I have said several times in this dissertation that this typology of public intellectual rhetorical style should not function as the end-all-be-all of tomes on the topic. Rather, it should open a greater discussion on the impacts of the public intellectual rhetorical style on the public sphere.

Rhetorical style and specifically, rhetorical style of public intellectuals may also be a fruitful direction for unpacking other sociopolitical issues aside from the reclamation or fostering of a progressive public sphere in this country. These topics of study may lend themselves to grasping or appreciating mainstream issues like electoral politics or more marginalized fields such social movements, activism and counteracting our cultural habit of avoiding dissent at all costs (even though the costs are incomprehensibly high).

And third, as new media like weblogs emerge as potential powerhouses in public discourse, they provide openings for greater understanding as to *how* public intellectuals *go public*. Weblogs may be the medium of choice for the modern public intellectual and their democratic potential deserves greater exploration. New communication technologies alter participation in the public sphere and future research should focus on that impact.

SUMMARY

In this dissertation, I have argued that our sociopolitical landscape is impoverished by the dearth of public intellectuals in our midst. Most intellectuals have flocked to the academe for stable, salaried work and subsequently abandoning public dialogue in an accessible vernacular. Yet, scholars from Cicero to Russell Jacoby have argued that without intellectuals in public circles, there can be no informed deliberation

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or progressive movement. In turn, Habermas makes the case that, without intellectual work in public, there is no critical rational debate, removing the figurative cornerstone of the public sphere and allowing the whole structure to erode.

I believe that rhetorical style is an innovative and significant lens for realizing the impacts of public intellectuals on the public sphere, both positive and negative. Style, I believe, is habitus or physiological, psychological and sociological preferences manifested in public. This three-part picture of rhetorical style moves the study of style from a subject of academic ridicule and dismissal to one of prominence because it identifies successful rhetorical styles for moving the public sphere in a positive and healthful direction.

I have looked at four styles in great depth: the Prophet, the Sustainer, the Guru and the Pundit. The first three I found to be predominantly pro-social: they are responsible, communal, innovative, inclusive and spiritual. The last I would argue is anti-social: it is irresponsible, self-aggrandizing, superficial and exclusive. However, all styles have both positive and negative aspects—the way the styles manifest themselves on different bodies and in different times differentiates their significance for the public sphere.

In summary, I believe that public intellectual rhetorical style has tremendous impact on the public sphere. It is also an innovative method for categorizing, comparing and understanding a number of crucial sociopolitical phenomena. My hope is that this dissertation sets a course for future research that helps me take this work "public" such that my research has its own impact on the course of the public sphere in this country. As

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Russell Jacoby stated, "Great minds…sought and found a public." May this dissertation

seek and find a public such that I contribute to the public sphere I hold in such esteem.

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