ASSEMBLING LOCAL PUBLICS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

By

Jessica Lynn Rivait

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

RHETORIC AND WRITING

2011

ABSTRACT

Assembling Local Publics in the Digital Age

By

Jessica Lynn Rivait

In the following dissertation, I develop a model for studying how local publics are assembled. Using textual analysis and individual interviews, I explore two Lansing area community initiatives and their advertising and recruitment practices via public documents on their websites. In doing so, I uncover public and private motivations and influences on the crafting of these public documents, which are impacted by conditions of access, chronos, organizational roles, and available topoi in the local public sphere. Because community initiatives constantly engage in making public documents to garner support and to “recruit” various stakeholders, “taking inventory” of such documents and the people and processes from which they are produced is key to understanding how and why these initiatives “go public.” Community initiative coordinators produce “local publics” of stakeholders through the production of public documents—and each public document represents an opportunity to alter community initiative representation, garner more stakeholders, and shape the local public sphere. Collectively, these public documents create a fragmented “public” history about each initiative. These public documents, however, do not foreground their own production; alone, community initiatives cannot use them to create sustainable public documents. I argue that keeping an active inventory of public documents, as well as keeping records of stakeholder relationships, community initiatives and researchers can provide a strong base for public document production and subsequent evaluation of impact on their intended audiences.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would have not been able to draft this dissertation without the aid of many helpful people. I want to thank Cindie Alwood, Dr. Manuela Kress, and Dr. John Monberg for using their lives to create innovative solutions to pressing social issues in the Lansing area. Cindie, Manuela, and John gave me access to their initiatives, allowing me to contribute as both a researcher and a volunteer. This access also allowed me to gain credibility I needed to converse with other WCGL and OMA contributors. I also want to thank all of the contributors to the WCGL and OMA websites who graciously agreed to share their stories with me. Of course, dissertation would also not be possible without my conscientious committee members: John Monberg, David Sheridan, Stuart Blythe, and Bill Hart-Davidson, my incredibly smart chair. I have been extremely fortunate to have a committee in which members all have different strengths, but have been able to work so well together. Additionally, I want to thank Guiseppe Getto, Jeff Grabill, Gwen Gorzelsky, Dean Rehberger, and Malea Powell for aiding me in thinking through difficult issues that arose as this project first took shape. I also want to thank Jill Morris and Mary Karcher for commiserating with me during this process, and cheering me on all along the way. Finally, I want to thank my dad; my mom; my sister, Maria; my brother, Justin; and my Grandma Rivait for encouraging me throughout my journey in graduate school. To everyone who has been supportive of me during this process: I am honored to have worked with you, and am better for it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: EVER-EVOLVING PUBLICS

How Public Rhetoric Happens in Local Publics

Rhetoricians have a long and storied history studying the public sphere—so much so that they have difficulty separating their definition of rhetoric from the public sphere.[1] Nevertheless, a small but growing number of rhetoricians claim "public rhetoric" as a concept that merits definition (Sheridan et. al, Edbauer, Warnick, Coogan, etc.). Most of these definitions do not attempt to erase previous scholarly ontological efforts, but instead seek to expand upon them.[2] While I do challenge methods of studying public rhetoric, I am more concerned with using my study of community initiative writing practices to theoretically demonstrate how public rhetoric happens when community groups "go public."

In her book *Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Local Publics,* Elenore Long defines a local public as a regional group trying to "go public" about an issue for a non-specified amount of time (5). While the term "local public" may be new, rhetoricians have studied such groups as citizens concerned about public policy (Flower; Coogan; Grabill, etc); community members advocating for a single issue (Cushman; Parks; Mathieu, etc.) and non-profit organizations (Lindeman; McEachern; Bernhardt, etc). This corpus of work

---

[1] I have had many conversations with rhetoricians about "public rhetoric." While there is a niche cadre of scholars who believe that this is a distinct area of inquiry, many rhetoricians believe that the term "public rhetoric" is redundant.

[2] For example, Sheridan et al., in their *Journal of Advanced Composition* article "Beyond Snap, Crackle, and Pop: Toward a Theory and Pedagogy of Multimodal Public Rhetoric" discuss how digital delivery systems are the grounds for theorizing a multimodal public rhetoric.

has primarily focused on events (such as a protest, or invention of a document, or a semester-long service-learning project) rather than on the sustainability of community initiatives. As I argue throughout this dissertation, community initiatives provide rhetoricians with a new lens through which to view public rhetoric, which accounts for the work they perform as local publics.

Public rhetoric, as performed by local publics, has four distinguishing components. First, local publics rely on chronos more than kairos to structure their activities; because they rely on constant recruitment for sustainability (because members are often not paid), they must make their own opportunities rather than wait for them to happen. Second, local publics establish roles not only to coordinate activities that are essential to their mission (which may have nothing to do with writing or media), but also to make decisions about branding and advertising (such as appointing volunteer newsletter feature writers). These roles account for various levels of commitment to these public-making activities, but are influenced by ideology. Third, local publics are heavily influenced by conditions of access; they use assumptions about access to guide decisions about recruitment, but also are limited by their access to resources (such as web authoring software and knowledge). Fourth, local publics consistently draw upon common topoi within their local public sphere (and beyond) to promote themselves and voice their perspectives within their local public sphere.

Local publics that are created by community initiatives, therefore, challenge many prevailing notions in rhetorical theory. While chronos is mentioned in encyclopedic tomes about rhetorical theory, rhetoricians use kairos more frequently to describe time's role in rhetoric (especially see Chapter 3). While rhetoricians have discussed "roles" in the public sphere, these roles describe individual and not collective agendas (consult my literature review in Chapter 6). While rhetoricians discuss access in terms of disability (Dunn and De Meers; Ratcliff), some discuss the Internet as an open public sphere (Barton; Clark, etc.). When rhetoricians discuss web authoring best practices, they assume relatively equal access to software and training—at least among the young digerati (with the notable exception of Reynolds and Lewis). When rhetoricians study community initiatives, in their attempts to "go public," they find that this assumed knowledge is just that—assumed. In order to discover new knowledge about the public sphere, rhetoricians must embrace an empirical approach to studying publics, which allows them to risk challenging old ontologies and create new, evidence-based theories about the public sphere.

Beyond Soapboxes and Townhalls: Assembling Publics

I want to highlight how public sphere theory has evolved and why it is important to the theory-building I am engaging in. Scholars who contribute to public sphere theory or discuss "public"-ness generally agree that the "public-at-large" is a term that is outdated (Weisser, Kennedy, Sheridan et al, Long, Ratcliffe, Williams, Habermas, etc.). They agree that it assumes a ready-made audience that necessarily will be willing to engage, willing to listen, or willing to respond to a rhetor acting in a public space (Kennedy 7).[3] Fittingly, scholars use the term "publics" to refer to several possible audiences that might form in response to a multitude of conditions in various possible locations. Publics do not simply exist to be called upon for duty; they must be persuaded to become a public. Potential

[3] The term "rhetor" refers to someone who "speaks" in a public space (Kennedy 7).

members of a public can be required to participate because of their private obligations. Employees or students may deliver a speech, or run a public event, or post documents on a telephone poll or on the Internet as part of their work responsibilities. Conversely, potential members of a public may simply volunteer to participate because they see a personal or social benefit.[4] Whatever the conditions, publics must be assembled.

But assembled by whom? More antediluvian scholars who wrote about the public sphere assumed a genteel, homogenous public sphere. These scholars also assumed that all rhetors could gain access to the most effective means of persuasion and become a successful (Aristotle to Blair). These scholars do not question the rules, but merely assert them. More recently, as contemporary public sphere scholars have critiqued the normative rules of the public sphere, these scholars have assumed power differentials: they assume that rhetors with revered professional and socio-economic stations have made the rules, which not surprisingly benefit their class interest (Habermas to Arendt). Upper class and middle class rhetors, in short, are allowed to speak on their own terms. These rhetors can, in turn, assemble publics. While these public sphere theorists realize the limitations of civil, rational discourse, they still promote these rules, believing that democratic ideals will materialize.

Most recently, contemporary public sphere scholars have been interested in how lay publics, who have relatively low access to effective means of persuasion, negotiate access to the available means of persuasion and advocate for themselves (Warner, Dewey, Mathieu, etc). While social conditions tend to favor those in power, contemporary scholars

[4] See Westheimer and Kahne for an extended explanation the kinds of pre-determined roles citizens choose based on their ideological stances.

make it clear that influential rhetors can arise in any number of circumstances (including situations that manifest because of systematic oppression, such as slavery). Not only can these rhetors assemble publics, but they can also constitute publics as well. Publics cannot only be assembled by rhetors, but a collection of rhetors can also constitute a public.

How does a collection of rhetors become a public, and what makes them a public? As a result of the social-epistemic turn in the field of Rhetoric and Composition, rhetoricians have shifted from their focus on the individual have focused much more attention on marginalized groups and community groups and their practices of “going public” by representing themselves or engaging in debate in public spaces. Generally speaking, rhetors’ willingness to engage collectively with one another and have those interactions publicized makes them an active public—a group that works together to “go public” on a regular basis.

Yet, an active public still acts selectively. Not every action of an active public is “public” (Nelson, Stark, Gunn). Publics value private means of communication and operation. Meetings happen behind closed doors. Internal communications have limited circulation. And while rhetors can choose to make private communications public, they do not choose to make all of these communications public. Publics choose representation is carefully because it impacts all kinds of possible internal and external relationships within and beyond their purview.

Community initiatives can be excellent active publics to investigate because they have complex methods of representation. Community initiatives include non-profit organizations, foundations, and community-focused programs based in local government and higher education. Often, community initiatives find one or more marginalized groups to represent; working not-for-profit purposes, they often try to engage in capacity-building (rhetorical and otherwise) for those groups. Although community initiatives value organizational sustainability, they are also more often concerned about ethically representing their stakeholders (including, but not limited to clients, staff, interns, volunteers, donors, and partners).[5] Their challenge is not only to create collective voice, but also to allow for their stakeholders to represent themselves. But community groups, or initiatives, can only represent other groups if they are sustained. Community initiatives are often sustained via recruitment. Because community initiatives have a high degree of turnover, they must constantly recruit possible stakeholders. Non-profit organizations (NPOs) and community initiatives may recruit by crafting their own materials (like websites, newsletters, etc.) or delivery techniques (such as informal and strategic "word-of-mouth" practices), they may also use recruitment tools that other organizations develop for them. Such organizations and initiatives may use national volunteer databases (such as idealist.org and volunteermatch.org), as well as university databases (like Michigan State University's CSLCE site: http://www.servicelearning.msu.edu/students/look-for-a-position). Community initiatives strategically adopt specific public naming practices to persuade other publics to engage with them.

Public Naming Practices as Instrumental for Assembling Publics

[5] Through perusing central publications like *Nonprofit Quarterly* and *Foundation Center* books, I have discovered that the nonprofit sector equates sustainability with stable income streams. Foundation directors, like the Global Women's Fund's Kavita Ramdas, expresses the importance of diversifying funding possibilities (through grant writing, fundraising, and endowment), which often means soliciting different potential stakeholders (or publics) to support a community initiative.

Active publics can be recognized through their public naming acts (PNAs).

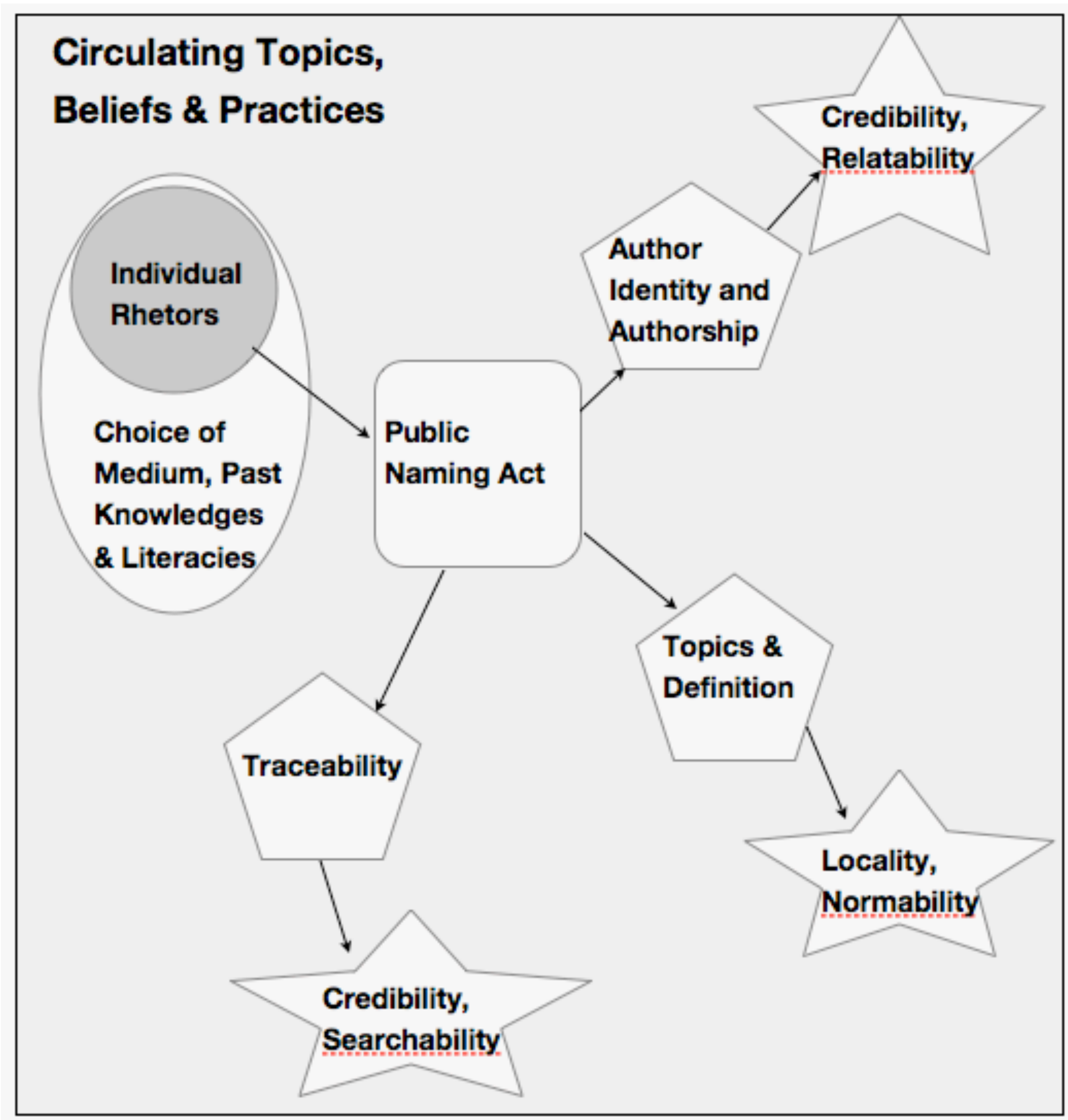

Figure 1: Public Naming Act

Public naming acts occur through the production of speech, visual media, and texts. Public naming practices (PNPs) are the most visible rhetorical practices in which active publics engage in because their acts are often archived as mp3s, video footage, flyers, painted rocks, website posts, and the like.

Possible Public Naming Practices	
Ownership Practices	-Writing a Full Name -Writing a Partial Name -Writing a Pseudonym -Hyperlinking a Name -Including a Biography (Beginning, or End) -Including Biographical Information
Definition Practices	-Affirming existing notions another local rhetor, organization, place or idea -Adding new information about another local rhetor, organization, place or idea -Challenging existing notions about another local rhetor, organization, place or idea -Including media to explicate or contest definitions made in text -Using captions for media (such as photographs, audio, and video files)
Traceability Practices	-Including in-text citations -Hyperlinking key words or authors' names -Creating a works cited or references section

Table 1: Public naming practices

PNPs consist of a rhetor using different media (one's own voice, musical instruments, graphic design programs, etc.) and making the message (whether it is affirmative, additive, or challenging) easily available for other rhetors to view, listen, or read. PNAs are captured synchronously in public spaces (like a park, townhall, or a sidewalk), or they are archived in media (like video, podcasts, websites, discussion forums) in public spaces (like the Internet) and are intended for asynchronous use. This archived nature makes them more easily found.

Although a multitude of rhetorical moves (like metaphors, tropes, etc.) can be included in PNPs, there are particular features that make PNPs distinct. PNPs, as opposed to private naming practices, can be risky.

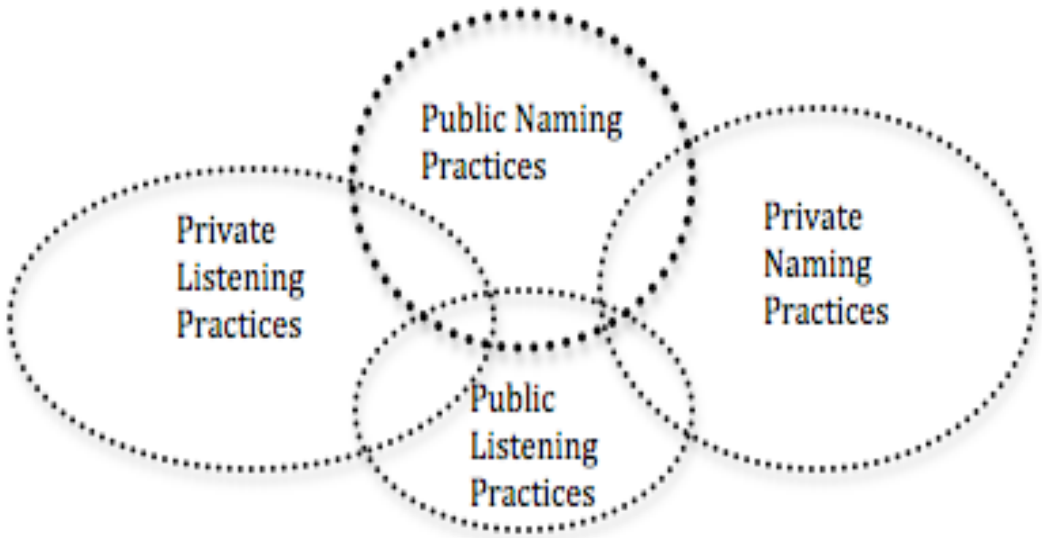

Figure 2: Practices that Constitute Public Rhetoric

They are traceable (via public archiving and eye-witness accounts). PNPs also require some kind of ownership of concepts and opinions (which may have consequences in both public and private life). Additionally, PNPs invite critique because they are often archived in the form of PNAs; rhetors need not respond necessarily synchronously to PNPs, and often do so after the fact. PNAs are critiqued when respondents test out proposed solutions; evaluate rhetor argumentative skills; or analyze how rhetor identity impacts the persuasiveness of their argument. PNAs also require much invention work. Rhetors engaged in PNPs present a (hopefully) kairotic way of viewing (reaffirming, adding to, or challenging) commonplaces by representing personal, second-hand, or collective experiences or ideas. Rhetors achieve this through creating solutions to issues that other rhetors explicitly cite or to which they passively refer (which often involves new arrangements of existing people, organizations, concepts, processes, and other resources).

Community initiatives find PNPs instrumental because PNPs allow for useful kinds of invention. Community initiatives are started as a reaction to PNAs at the local, national, and international levels. In order to receive recognition and support, community initiatives must articulate how they are responding to previous PNAs and the material conditions from which they arise—and how that is different than how other groups or institutions are responding. Yet, community initiatives also need to recognize how individuals might be differently persuaded to participate in a multitude of roles, and create and advertise these roles effectively.[6] PNPs can, as rhetorical strategies, make or break community initiatives.

Packaging can impact the effectiveness of PNAs. PNAs are delivered in particular ways in community settings. PNAs can be packaged for oral delivery in face-to-face settings. Members of community initiatives can deliver speeches during fundraisers; engage in grassroots organizing as part of their client work; or serve as a moderators in community deliberations. Additionally, members of community initiatives may also engage synchronously by participating in IM chats with student volunteer groups, or by hosting a webinar to benefit small nonprofit organizations in their capacity-building. Community initiatives also produce a lot of documents that are meant to be asynchronous: possible readers or viewers can view these documents on their own time, and decide whether or not to support them and their mission. Community initiatives create fliers, press releases, and print mail invitations for their fundraising events. They write grant proposals to support

[6] Given the fact that the number NPOs in the U.S. have nearly doubled in the last decade, NPOs use strategies like Internet advertising to increase their visibility to potential supporters (Hackler and Saxton 474).

operations and programs. They create newsletters, websites, Facebook groups, Twitter accounts and videos to generally advertise themselves to their stakeholders (which include possible clients, interns, donors, volunteers, partners, and future staff).[7] They use these technologies and make deliverables because of the advocation of national periodicals, the success of regional community initiatives that have used these techniques, etc.[8] Community initiatives want to use best practices in order to survive, and make both an ideological and material difference.

Community initiatives aim to create a multi-vocal presence in their communications. Their sustainability is linked to their ability to change conditions for those they serve; they must show evidence of this in their communications, and one of the ways in which they do this is by allowing those they serve to tell their own stories in their own voices. Additionally, community initiatives sometimes also allow volunteers to share their own stories in their own voices on the website, or in newsletters. Finally, community initiatives find ways to say thank you to supporters, through an acknowledgement section of the newsletter; an advertisement in a fundraising book or banner; or a special section of their website. Coordinators of these community initiatives still reserve editorial power over

---

[7] At CCCC 2010 in Louisville, KY, Phyllis Ryder gave a presentation entitled, "Public 2.0: Social Networking, Nonprofits, and the Rhetorical Work of Public-Making." In this presentation, she examined how a local nonprofit she worked with used Facebook.

[8] Pivotal journals like *Nonprofit Quarterly*, as well as well-respected capacity-building organizations like Guidestar, have published articles about the necessity of adopting information technologies While national projects like TechSoup provide "how to" advice for NPOs, regional collaboratives (like the Power of We) and capacity-building nonprofits (like the Capital Area Community Media Center) not only provide local assistance using technologies, but also allow NPOs to find more models for technology infrastructure by showcasing their past work with other NPOs in the local area.

these contributions from these contributors, and often decide who will be solicited to contribute and how that will fit in within each kind of public communication that they produce.

In many ways, PNPs, and the deliverables in which PNPs appear, can be viewed as the lifeblood of community initiatives. Members of community initiatives use PNPs to invite participation. If they consistently use similar PNAs, they can build a brand for their organization and garner internal and external support. And over time, members of community initiatives can use PNPs and associated deliverables to create a history of community initiatives and of the local, national, and international conversations to which community initiatives both belong to and address.

Taking Stock of PNPs and PNAs:

or, Toward a Fragmented History of Community Initiatives

PNPs and PNAs matter in important ways to community initiatives, and so it is important for them to assess what it is that they are doing. Community initiatives already do this in for a few reasons. Community initiatives must assess themselves for grant writing and reporting purposes. Additionally, community initiatives might work with a researcher, for free or on a contract basis, to assess their efforts.[9] Community initiatives can measure this assessment against best practices, which can also provide knowledge of how actual or intended stakeholders respond to their current PNPs and associated deliverables.

---

[9] Some public relations firms specialize in media design to specifically account for the needs of community initiatives. In Lansing, firms like Mark Fisher and KBS, Inc. serve the media needs of local NPOs. Message Makers is a Lansing-based firm that serves national organizations like the American Red Cross.

Community initiatives can benefit from this kind of research for a few reasons. First, community initiatives can become viewed as credible if they engage in assessment of their services on a regular basis. Most potential and actual stakeholders respect community initiatives that conduct assessment of their efforts and communication practices. Second, community initiatives are reminded or informed about what stakeholder interests and preferences are and how that impacts participation through these assessments. Because of time and money, these assessments often happen quickly and the focus is justifiably more external; recommendations are typically future-oriented, and what matters to community initiatives is what their next recruits want.

Often in the process of conducting these assessments, researchers take into account the history and mission of the organization.[10] They listen to community initiative leaders talk about how these communication materials impact the work that they do with stakeholders. However, researchers often find that this work becomes only a small part of the research process because community initiatives typically value the information that will inform their future decisions.[11]

---

[10] Although university professors engage in doing this research (paid and unpaid) for NPOs on their own time (as consultants) or as part of their research trajectory, academic non-specialists do this work on a full time basis. MSU Outreach and Engagement employs several academic non-specialists to work on capacity-building projects with local NPOs individually or as part of a group endeavor (via workshops). For university professors who want to learn how to do this work, organizations such as IARSLCE and Imagining America exist for both training as well as advice about integrating this work into their research and teaching agendas.

[11] That said, NPOs often create brief histories to add to their websites or annual reports. These histories include structural changes, major grant wins, and the start dates and anniversaries of major projects.

And why should history matter?[12] Why should community initiatives value past and current documents when their primary goal is to produce ones that are more responsive to new recruits? And why should a researcher take a detailed inventory of these documents when the organization already has these materials?[13] How can community initiatives benefit from an inventory that is converted into a fragmented history?

Not surprisingly, researchers benefit more from this inventory approach than community initiatives do. If community initiatives are organized and have very searchable archives, the process of constructing an inventory can be redundant for them, researchers may simply tell community initiatives what they already know, in which case the research is not valuable for community initiatives. When researchers take inventory or stock of community initiatives and their documents, the results need to be more robust. Researchers must add something new and of value to community initiatives.[14]

Fortunately, researchers can add value by taking inventory in several ways. First, they may be able to preserve old documents for posterity (by digitizing them). Second, they may be able to detect new patterns of which community initiatives might not be aware

---

[12] NPO history is often viewed as a means to an end—a marketing tool for sustainability in the present and the future. Few writers and researchers have written about NPO history as a deliverable in and of itself. Susan J. Ellis and Katherine Noyles' 1978 *By the People: A History of Americans as Volunteers* is one of a few lay attempts to provide a comprehensive history of NPOs in the U.S. Ruth Ray, a Rhetoric and Composition faculty member at Wayne State University, is coordinating a collaborative academic book project about patient archives at Hannan House (a senior care facility in Detroit, MI) during the early 20th century.

[13] Ruth Palmquist, a professor of Library Science at the University of Texas, believes that every researcher should do historical analysis as part of their research design.

[14] If a community initiative does not perceive the research as immediately beneficial to them, they may view volunteer service or other services as reward for participation. See my agreement with the WCGL in chapter 2 as an example of this.

(such as website usage). Third, they may be able to trace how these inventories compare to others locally and nationally. Fourth, they may be able to place those materials in a different context through doing local archival research and talking to folks who produced those materials. Community initiatives may change their advertising and recruitment practices based on these kinds of results.

Previewing Inventory

Through this dissertation, I present both inventory and heuristics that I hope will be useful for academics and community initiative leaders alike. In Chapter 2, I outline my public rhetorics methodology, using both theoretical and empirical precedents. Using this methodology, I illustrate how community initiatives can be located, both practically and according to public rhetorics theories. Additionally, I demonstrate how asynchronous public rhetorics guide my choices of data collection and data analysis methods. Ultimately, I make visible what a generalized public rhetorics methodology, as well as one focused on asynchronous public rhetoric, can both look like and add to current methodologies in Rhetoric and Composition.

In Chapter 3, I discuss why chronos is significant for groups interested in participating in public-making work. Chronos, as I argue, accounts for the mundane activities that are important to community groups that are interested in becoming local publics. While kairotic moments are important for such groups, I maintain that chronos has more of an impact on such groups as they rely on regular production of deliverables to brand themselves and to engage in recruitment practices which make sustainability possible. Finally, I preview how chronos impacts roles and imitatio in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, respectively.

In Chapter 4, I discuss how organizational roles complicate my model of public naming practices. I contemplate the centrality of roles to community initiative efforts, as well as deliberate on how roles can be situated in rhetorical conversations regarding ethos and praxis. I compare these ruminations to my findings about roles in WCGL and OMA. Finally, I discuss how temporality impacts these roles, and what that means for community initiative recruitment.

In Chapter 5, I argue about the recursive role of imitatio as it intersects with topoi in local public rhetoric, and why and how that disrupts any stability of public naming practices. Rhetors consistently use public naming practices in response to local public rhetoric, which constantly reaffirms, adds to, or challenges other public naming practices. I explain how local, national, and international conversations impact local public rhetoric of community initiatives, but ultimately local conversation traceability is more feasible and practical for their purposes. I develop and utilize a strategy for doing this, which can also be adapted for other scales (national, international, etc.) of mapping public rhetoric, and public naming practices in particular.

In Chapter 6, I discuss how evolving community initiatives illustrate how publics are assembled, as well as what kinds of roles may emerge. Further, I examine what this study can teach Rhetoric and Composition researchers about local public rhetoric, and what still remains to be explored. Additionally, I explore how these lessons may be adapted for both community initiative coordinators and consultants (paid and unpaid) who do writing and multimedia work with community initiatives. Finally, I outline areas for future research in the areas of access, chronos, roles, and topoi.

CHAPTER 2: TOWARDS A PUBLIC RHETORIC METHODOLOGY

Operationalizing Public Rhetoric

Public rhetoric, as I explain in Chapter 1, is more than a theory, or a container for action: it is a set of complicated factors that influence thoughts, behaviors, and actions. Because more public rhetoric scholars study public writing without talking to human subjects, I have found it difficult to locate an explicit public rhetorics methodology that involves studying human subjects and their relationship to public writing.[15] As I was searching for methodological precedents for studying public rhetoric and using that to make public rhetoric theory, I realized that there were few precedents that involved human subjects research (such as Levasseur and Carlin; Killingsworth and Steffens; Simmons and Grabill).[16] When most rhetoricians choose public discourse, public dialogue, publics, and especially the public sphere as the primary focus of their writing, they are often writing theoretical treatises, not conducting human subjects studies (Habermas, Young, Warner, etc.).[17][18] I find definitions offered by public sphere scholars as a useful baseline to consider what is "public."

---

[15] When I use the term "human subjects research," I mean research that must be approved by IRB boards and involves communicating with humans as part of data collection. For more information, please consult the MSU IRB website: http://humanresearch.msu.edu/about_irbs.html#what_is_irb

[16] Research necessarily involves the explicit presentation of methods, including a justification for methods and protocols for performing data analysis (see Dane for more context).

[17] These are all terms that can stand in for "public rhetoric," which is a term just starting to be used among rhetoricians in Rhetoric and Composition and Professional Writing who are interested in studying such phenomena.

Defining Key Terms

For rhetoricians who study "public" rhetorical utterances, strategies, and tactics, they find that definitions of "public-ness" are key in making methodological choices about how to do empirical work in public rhetoric. Although rhetoricians study the phenomena that can vary widely (from grassroots social movement propaganda to presidential speeches), they use a few key concepts that constitute the public rhetoric corpus that guides methodology: public sites, publics, and public documents.

I. Public Sites

Rhetoricians interested in "public" utterances, strategies, and tactics need to know where to find them: not surprisingly, "public-ness" is a matter of location (Haynes, Leff, Warner). But what kinds of sites count as "public?" Typically, rhetoricians consider accessible physical spaces (such as parks, streets, government buildings, libraries, neighborhood centers) and low access cost media (such as network television, mainstream periodicals, free social networking sites) to constitute sites for public rhetoric (McIlvenny, Mathieu, Conley, Grabill, Barton).[19] Rhetors from a variety of backgrounds can access these public sites for a low access cost.[20]

II. Publics

[18] Aristotle's theoria, or theory, can be combined with praxis and is not simply knowledge; however, it is "self-sufficient, with no necessary result." (DeHart 15).

[19] Low access costs means users have easy, wide access to a service, forum, or document for a minimal expense. However, it may cost producers a lot to create, maintain, and update a service, forum, or document.

[20] Even with the advent of the online public sphere and the proliferation of free, social networking sites, geophysical public spaces are on the decline (see Welch, Hertie, and Kohn for more details about the rise of privatization).

But rhetors will not necessarily access a site because of low access cost. Potential members of a "public" need to be convinced of the use-value (see Cooper) of a public site before they decide to use it. Rhetoricians are also interested in measuring the use-value of a public site. They roughly gage the use-value of a public site by observing how many people are consistently speaking, listening, or taking some form of action within that site (Dewey, Warner, Kinsella and Chima). While it is difficult for rhetoricians to predict or track who will take action on a site, they can track users practices on public sites (through utilizing methods like ethnography, participant accounts, interviews, and textual analysis). When these composers create rhetorical utterances (such as the co-construction of a document, discussion board, etc.) that are meant to assemble "publics" in the present moment or in the future, they themselves can constitute a "public" of composers.[21]

III. Public Documents

But how can public rhetoric be tracked? How do rhetoricians know that it happens, when it happens, and how it happens? Most rhetoricians who study public rhetoric use public documents as the primary data they use to answer these questions (typically because interviews with institutional actors are very difficult to obtain) (see the Peterson et al collection *Green Talk in the White House* for examples of text-dependent analysis). Rhetoricians consider public documents to be constituted of texts (video, audio, alphabetic) that are used to communicate with a broad range of citizens within and beyond a physical

---

[21] "Publics" is not only a term that is used by humanities and social science scholars (rhetoricians, in particular); it is also used in the more pragmatic field of Public Relations (in professional journals such as *Public Relations Journal, Public Relations Review, and the Journal of Public Relations*).

location about issues of shared concern. Rhetoricians may sometimes create public documents (see Sheridan et al, Cushman), but typically discover them (Coogan, Faber, etc.). Rhetoricians often discover a time and date stamp of some kind and an indication of authorship on these documents, which allows them to reconstruct the socio-historical and rhetorical context of these documents and of the public rhetoric that they are tracking. For some rhetoricians, part of reconstructing means accessing private documents and interviews with rhetors (see Waddell, for instance).[22]

Case Study Selection and Rationale

Given these definitions, rhetoricians can find public rhetoric and public naming practices at many sites. Even when a researcher limits their search to public documents composed by non-profit organizations and community initiatives, there a great number of sites from which to choose. However, my goal of analyzing how publics are assembled through public naming practices aided me in making stringent criteria to narrow my search for two rich, but significantly different community initiatives with different values, missions, and website functionalities. Additionally, my goal of finding community initiatives in the same local area and my desire to build reciprocal relationships with these initiatives focused my search considerably.

I. Methodology to Local Sites

While public sites and public documents seemed fairly easy to locate, I wanted to find local publics that were invested in producing these kinds of documents. My working theory of local publics and how they worked was based on Blythe and Grabill's assemblage

[22] From my experiences doing this study, I can say that it is impossible to completely understand motivations and influences on writing without actually talking to writers about their writing.

theory of publics: that disparate individuals formed groups based on shared interest for limited amounts of time.[23] I was interested in how work happened together, and how individual work was mediated by and guided by intermediaries—"project managers" who were invested long term in sustaining their work, even though other members were transitory (see Lave and Wenger especially about how communities of practice have high turnover rates).

I had worked on such a project (as part of a directed study): the "Our Michigan Ave" (OMA) website. Michigan State University faculty and students made OMA, a web 2.0 public deliberation website, in conjunction with the Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority (MACIA). These stakeholders had made OMA website because the coordination of Dr. John Monberg. Dr. Monberg taught several classes from January to December 2009 in which students conducted user research interviews with community members; created web 2.0 features (such as voting, mapping, and submittable forms) from scratch based on those interviews; and wrote improvement articles and community member stories based on interviews and experiences on the Michigan Avenue Corridor. I also identified another community initiative, the Women's Center of Greater Lansing, because of a presentation that Co-Director Cindie Alwoord performed at a national conference (FemRhet) that I organized in October 2009.[24] Because of that presentation, I became aware of several

---

[23] Without locating more than one assemblage of people who work on a project, it is impossible to conduct a comparative case study such as this one.

[24] I attended the October 2009 Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference, which was hosted at Michigan State University. I helped to organize this conference, and part of my work was serving on the Community Connections Committee (CCC). On the CCC, my job was to invite non-profit directors and community activists, like Cindie, to present on the Community Track.

different work groups present at WCGL, and of a dynamic, multi-vocal website that the WCGL used to represent itself online.

II. Top-Down vs. Bottom-Up Initiatives

I originally chose to study these community initiative websites because I believed that they contrasted highly in their approaches to community engagement. OMA, for example, started because of Dr. Monberg's involvement with MACIA. MACIA is a local government cooperative between the city of Lansing, Lansing Township, and the city of East Lansing and consists of council members and city planners. Although MACIA, conducted several face-to-face meetings with community members and created improvement categories based on the results, TC 491 (the class I did my direct study with) met with the city planners about their interpretations of those results—not with the community members who attended those meetings. MACIA and MSU constituted the major partners for producing OMA website.[25] Although TC 491 students did meet with community members for user research interviews and a community design critique (in which they presented their first version of the website to community members and asked for feedback) to create the website, they had too many decisions to make in a short amount of time and relied heavily on professional writing and website building best practices when they did not have time to elicit a community response. While MACIA city planners and officials were enthusiastic about the OMA website, they did not contribute any monetary

[25] To date, four of Dr. John Monberg's classes worked on this project. In Spring 2009, TC 491 ("Ethnography and Interaction Design") and WRA 320 ("Advanced Technical Writing") students conducted user research interview, and wrote content for the OMA website. In Fall 2009, WRA 150 ("Evolution of American Thought") students and WRA 415 ("Digital Rhetoric") students wrote improvement articles and conducted further user research to make suggestions for website redesign.

support to develop and maintain the website; this impacted the kind of research that could be completed during the website's development.

In contrast, the WCGL has struggled to receive official recognition by the city of Lansing (up until July 2010). Cindie Alwood, a MSW, and Dr. Manuela Kress, a Ph.D. in Counseling, started the WCGL because they saw a need for it: their female clients described the shortcomings of government unemployment agencies, and they believed they could create a walk-in center to meet those unmet needs.[26] Sacrificing their salaries as social workers, they started a small advertising and word-of-mouth campaign to garner volunteers and donors for the Women's Center of Greater Lansing, which they ran together full time. For years, they operated without 501c3 status because the city of Lansing believed that they were discriminatory in their name: they did not include the term "men" in their organizational title. Even though their practices are fairly established, they are struggling to create a stable financial based in the wake of the 2008 recession.[27] At the moment, they are relying on soft money like grants and fundraisers because major donors (businesses and wealthy individuals) have retracted their yearly donations (i.e., the "hard" money). As a result, the co-directors and some of their former clients make a concerted effort to advertise the WCGL at Lansing functions throughout the year to raise awareness

[26] I know of this history because of initial intermediary meetings I conducted, as well as the WCGL board meeting that I attended.

[27] During the course of this study and analysis thereof, Dr. Manuela Kress decided to step down from her role as co-director to pursue a full-time job as a grant writer in Western Michigan. This has influenced and changed the structure of the WCGL, as well as the organization's writing practices. These changes have occurred post-data collection.

and garner support. They must consistently advertise their work in an effort to gain a reliable foot holding in the Lansing community.

III. Dynamic vs. Static Websites

Not surprisingly, these community initiatives also call for different kinds of user participation on their websites deliberately thorough design. The OMA website is a dynamic website because it allows for user-generated content. Users must register with the site, providing their real full name, e-mail address, display name, and password. Once they have completed a profile, they can add stories, mapped opinions, comments and improvement articles. Without being registered, website visitors can read content and vote on improvement articles ("yes" or "no"). In contrast, the WCGL website is a static site precisely because content is only added to the website through a web administrator. Website visitors can read different kinds of content (such as success stories and feature articles) and download past and current issues of the newsletter, but cannot add public content to the website (e.g., there are no user registration or commenting options). WCGL users can fill out forms (such as registration or payment for fundraising events) on the website, but must copy and paste the WCGL e-mail address or call their phone number to reach the WCGL.

In many ways, the OMA website and the WCGL website represent the norm and not the exception for community websites in the Lansing area. Before the OMA website, the "Lansing Sucks" website (2003-2006) was a discussion board-based website in which students and community members complained; raised awareness of issues; advocated solutions to issues; and advertised community organizations and events. The "Lansing Metro" group on LiveJournal (recently defunct) served primarily as an advertising space for Lansing community members, although it also served as gallery space for all kinds of images as well. Neither the “Lansing Sucks” website or the “Lansing Metro” LiveJournal group had any official partnerships offline. In contrast, the WCGL was one of the first community organizations to establish a stable partnership with the Professional Writing program at MSU, which in part led to the initial launch of their website (created by Christina Tower, M.A. student in Digital Rhetoric and Professional Writing). They also were one of the first few recipients of a Power of We (PoW) grant, which allowed many Lansing area nonprofits to create their own websites (or to have them made for them) and other kinds of technological and non-technological infrastructure that they needed to sustain themselves.[28] In the last few years, the Capital Area Community Media Center (CACMC) has taken more of a web 2.0 approach (via Wordpress) to create sustainable websites for Lansing area community organizations. Still, static websites largely represent the Lansing NPO online community (although quite a few have started to utilize Facebook and Twitter to advertise). Lansing area NPO leaders are still skeptical about web 2.0, given their rhetorical purposes for being on the web (which are primarily to invite face-to-face participation).

IV. Website Function: Pedagogical to Informational

The OMA website and the WCGL website serve different functions. Many Lansing area community members have not written content on the OMA website. In fact, MSU

---

[28] The Power of We (PoW) was a non-profit consortium that mainly was designed to provide capacity-building opportunities for local non-profit organizations (NPOs) in the Lansing area. The PoW won a national grant (“Capital Compassion Fund”) to provide individualized services and workshops for local NPOs that applied for the funds for three years. Unfortunately, there is no replacement for this fund and no continuation of funding. The PoW is no longer a NPO, but still remains an important consortium run by local NPOs in Lansing.

students who took Dr. John Monberg's classes have produced most of the content on the OMA website. [29] MSU students have found value in the website as a learning experience, as they become writers and website designers. Thus, the OMA's primary function has been pedagogical, although it does contain much information about places, organizations, programs, and people in the Michigan Avenue Corridor.[30]

The WCGL's primary function, however, is informational, and secondary function is pedagogical. While the web master for the site was a revolving volunteer, Cindie Alwood is the primary decision maker who determines what makes it onto the website. She uses much of the content from the newsletter on the website; she has primarily authored and coordinated the newsletter since the WCGL's inception. While some interns, board members, and volunteers write content, Cindie is the final editor of public writing for the WCGL, and this writing is often brief and not based on substantial research (but rather informal interviews and personal experiences). Writers do not spend substantial time on training to write or revising, as the WCGL board members and staff view the newsletter and website are seen as necessary advertisements that are calls to action. That is, they focus on convincing website visitors to donate, intern, and volunteer with WCGL as a result of engaging with the website, not on attracting potential users to add their own opinions to the website.

V. Document Diversity on Websites

---

[29] Although more posts have been added to the website about local artists, these posts have been added by another set of students taught by Dr. John Monberg. Overall, the same pattern of students soliciting participation and doing most of the composing remains true.
[30] Only five community members have fully identified themselves on the website, and only four remain in the Lansing area.

Not surprisingly, the OMA and WCGL websites have very different kinds of documents. The OMA website has an introductory home page that briefly describes the initiative; an about page; a credits page; stories; improvement articles; mapped opinions; and a photo gallery (with tags that connect to stories and improvement articles). The WCGL website has an about page; a services and resources directory; success stories; feature articles; newsletters; news releases; a "get involved" page; and an external link to an associated Flickr gallery. Both websites include a variety of documents with different persuasive purposes that account for a variety of possible audiences (e.g., to propose ideas, to take an active organizational role, etc.). Yet, each of these websites is bounded by a particular set of circumstances outlined by their respective community initiative: the kinds of actions that a user may take, the kinds of documents and features they encounter are pre-selected and limited by creators of these websites. Both the OMA and the WCGL websites are arguing for particular methods of participation: they are defining their respective initiative as a solution as much as they are providing rationale for the issues that they are addressing.

VI. Researcher Positionality

Choosing a research methodology and sites of inquiry is not just about accounting for intellectual traditions; it also requires being reflective about personal ideology and associated experiences (Taylor 153). There are several ways in which my positionality has impacted this study. First and foremost, I have become involved in both initiatives quite extensively. I was a part of the "Our Michigan Ave" website project since its inception in January 2009 in TC 491, Dr. John Monberg's "Ethnography and Interaction Design" class. While I was never officially enrolled in TC 491, I was one of two Ph.D. students who deliberately took a directed study with Dr. Monberg to have a chance to work on this project. My role in this project was to serve as the user research coordinator and the project documentation manager, which profoundly influenced both the outcomes of the project and my intimate knowledge of the process of creating the project (as well as access to good documentation for the project). After the class, I was part of a volunteer group of students from my class who decided to work on the project further in Summer 2009. While I conducted a mock focus group with MSU students (on advertising materials) and conducted a community website usability focus group at Gone Wired Café, those efforts (albeit with the exception of a few technical efforts) were the only ones during that summer. Finally, I passed on my knowledge of user research for WRA 415: Digital Rhetoric students as Dr. Monberg had them exclusively focus on user research for the website. While I was not involved at all at the Women's Center of Greater Lansing (WCGL) before I approached them about this study, I have since become involved as a guest contributor to their bi-monthly newsletter and have become a regular contributing member of their grant writing committee. Hence, I am not fully objective about either of these initiatives.

While I am not objective about these community initiatives due to my involvement and investment in them, I believe the benefits of my involvement and commitment outweigh the costs. I am not conducting community-based participatory research (CBPR) or action research, but the spirit of those methodologies inspire my approach to this study: I believe that these community initiatives should benefit from my research in ways that are useful to their sustainability. To find mutuality, researchers must discover where their expertise meets community need. Researchers must also strive toward "equality matching"—a state in which both the researcher and participants can monitor the relationship to assure that needs are being met (Garner and Sercombe 83). Because of my extensive involvement with OMA as a writer and researcher, I met those conditions before deciding to study OMA. I used focus groups and user research to help designers make decisions about website function, layout, etc. While Cindie Alwood, the current director of WCGL, believes that WCGL will find some benefit from my study, she was more immediately interested in having me become involved with WCGL and the NPO operates in a largely face-to-face manner. Writing work, just as client work, or fundraising work, as I have learned, happens as a result of face-to-face encounters. I am not the only one to benefit from this work: WCGL had a real need for newsletter contributor, fundraising committee members, and grant committee members. Even though I know I am more needed as a volunteer than as a researcher, I have endeavored to find ways to make my research findings into useful deliverables for the WCGL (such as a presentation of strategies that NPOs use across the U.S. that she could use to rethink possibilities on the WCGL website).[31]

Besides my involvement with both community initiatives before and during the study, my previous involvement with NPOs also influences the ways in which I approach this project. I have had a strong level of involvement with NPOs since I became founding president of Interact (a teenage division of Rotary International) during my junior year in high school. During my undergraduate career, I helped to coordinate program board volunteering partnerships with Detroit-area NPOs. Late in my undergraduate career, I co-founded Alternative Spring Break Detroit (ASBD) at Wayne State University (Detroit, MI).

[31] Please see Appendix A for a listing of diverse strategies that U.S. NPOs use on their websites to represent stakeholders and to interactively involve visitors to their websites.

As a result of my involvement in ASBD, I became aware of the ways in which the image of the city of Detroit is constructed through the media and how that impacts NPO efforts within that municipality. It was then that I became interested in how writing and technology impact community efforts. With that focus, I started my Ph.D. program and became involved in efforts to aid NPOs in using technology—through my volunteer work with the Capital Area Community Media Center (CACMC) and my service-learning partnerships with local Lansing NPOs, in which my students have made writing and media projects in dialogue with community partners. My long involvement with NPOs has, at times, given me a false sense of comprehensive knowledge about NPOs. However, my involvement with WCGL, in particular, has challenged my previous knowledge and has made me aware that I am still a learner. I have learned to continue to ask questions instead of making assumptions.

What I have realized during this process is that although I am an active participant in the non-profit sector, I am not as much an insider as I once thought. I do not work for the non-profit sector; I work with non-profit organizations as a Rhetoric and Composition student. What this means is that when I write research reports, or make presentations, or disseminate findings, I am speaking for those whom I study. I agree with Alcoff about the problem of speaking for others as a researcher: my politics of location (i.e., my positionality) is not the same as my research participants, and I do occupy a priviledged location (as a graduate student at a Carnegie I research institution) that may result in "increasing or re-inforcing oppression" of my research participants (118). Because I need to be sure that I am allowing their words about their experiences, motives, and interpretations to shape my analysis, I have been careful to use several audio-recording methods; triple-check my transcripts based on those audio recordings; to do member checks with intermediaries about preliminary findings; and to gain participant feedback after I have written my chapters—before their representations "go public." My attempts to democratize this process are admittedly limited, because my research project is one based on my academic interests—not a research agenda that I share with my participants, although they have indicated interest in my results and their potential use for their initiatives.

Methods Theories: Conceptual Foundations of Procedures

For many scholars who study how rhetoric happens in public spaces, their site of inquiry is some kind of text—whether that text is a newspaper; an online, text-based forum; or even a series of Youtube videos. In public rhetoric scholarship, textual analysis is the dominant method of inquiry regardless of lens (feminist, Marxist, etc.). Even scholars who begin to discuss the circulation of texts as constituting a public or counter-public (see Warner especially) privilege texts as looking glasses into the nature of publics. But what do texts yield? And what can scholars learn form examining them?

From examining texts, researchers can learn what publics have said and how they have said it. Researchers can trace patterns between documents (such as repetition of ideas, topics, etc.) and references to link texts. But there is much that researchers cannot learn from texts alone. Without talking to rhetors about their public utterances, researchers' ideas about intentions, motivations, and goals for writing are based solely on texts; this is problematic because texts may only provide a limited basis for unveiling these factors. Also, without talking to rhetors, researchers have little ability to trace context for writing or the ways in which they have evaluated what they wrote. With texts alone, researchers can understand the "what" and "how," but researchers can only get the "why" and the "so what" of public naming practices from talking to rhetors.

What I am arguing for is the foregrounding the "pre-text" and "post-text" as much as the "text" itself. Because this triangulation is what gives rhetoricians the full picture, a full scene of public rhetoric—a scene which needs to be reconstructed because of the often asynchronous nature of how public naming practices happen in the information economy, which impacts how publics are assembled. But how do rhetoricians analyze texts and structure interviews in ways that allow us to capture public naming practices, and also makes rhetoricians accountable to those they study?

Textual Analysis

Textual analysis is a form of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis involves analyzing writing, speech, and non-verbal forms of communication (e.g., American Sign Language) (Johnstone 2-3). Discourse is assumed to be shaped by and shape the context in which it is found, including language, participants, prior discourse, future discourse, medium, and purpose (9). To study discourse, researchers usually choose to analyze texts—which serve as records of past activity not observed by the researcher or as the translation of media (i.e., notes, audio recordings, video recordings) that researchers use when conducting qualitative research (such as focus groups, ethnographies, and interviews) (19). Thus, although some researchers often call "texts" written documents and "discourse" spoken word, the distinction between texts and discourse conceptually and in practice of collecting and analyzing data is often difficult to establish (Titscher et al 20). Often, scholars use discourse analysis and conversational analysis to decode interactions in texts that were not transcriptions of speech. While there are many methods used to interpret texts, I subscribe to grounded theory as a method of textual analysis (which derives from Pragmatism and Symbolic Interactionism) because it does not rely on hermeneutics but rather the ability to allow the research situation influence how data is read and theorized (51).

Grounded theory (GT) is different from many traditional ways of decoding data because it values the knowledge of research participants, not just the knowledge of the researcher as a way of "reading" data (75). However, GT is not completely unstructured. Within GT, researchers have developed "coding families" as ways to read a range of situations: process, degree, type, strategy, interaction, identity, culture, consensus, mainline, etc. (77). While these are structured ways to read data, researchers may use "open coding" as a way to create "axial coding" (through which new theories and models based on a research situation can be produced) (79). Researchers can also employ selective coding to purposely search for indicators of the kind of phenomena for which they are searching (80). Because I used my data to develop a model of public naming practices, I used an open coding scheme (to analyze all possible claims), followed by selective coding (to look for specific instances of naming) to analyze data and create a scheme for analyzing instances of public naming practices (not just my own). In essence, I created my own GT family for looking for and coding public naming practices.

Interviews

Interviews are one of several methods in qualitative research. Qualitative research is concerned with both the "how" and "why" of phenomena, and values "the power of human observation" as a primary means of collecting data to answer these kinds of questions (Amin 45). Qualitative researchers assume that the research situation is socially constructed and that subjects have insights that can help researchers to create grounded theories to explain phenomena (46). Research design emerges, therefore, as the research process proceeds (46).

Sociology feminists created interview methods in the 1970s and 1980s as a response to what they felt to be the “masculine” (quantitative) research methods that were used heavily at the time to study women’s lives (like Likert surveys, experimental design, etc.) (Doucet and Mauthner 330). These researchers were interested in creating non-hierarchal relations; balancing power; showing empathy; developing rapport; and investing one’s identity in the research process (332). In practical terms, this means that researchers engage in dialogue with research participants rather than simply following a set script; use more open-ended questions that allow participants to tell more about their experiences and interpretations; show signs of active listening (such as recording, not-taking, making eye contact, asking relevant follow up questions); and reveal their own personality (by making small talk; offering some personal insight; smiling; nodding, etc.). But non-hierarchal interviews also have great costs. Face-to-face interviews inherently produce logistical issues; can be expensive to conduct; are influenced by the training of interviewers; and are more likely to yield reliable but not valid data without the use of a structured script (Leeuw 324). As describe in more detail later, I combined these techniques with my concern for the public representations of participants and contributors that would be potentially impacted by my study.

Procedures

Data Collection Phases

I. Phase 1

For me, public documents are a primary source of data in my study. I examine public naming practices of Lansing area community members who live on or near Michigan Avenue and MSU students who are involved as authors on these websites by looking at public documents produced and posted on the WCGL website and on the OMA website. These websites are public sites (although access to posting on the WCGL site is restricted to those who have permission from the WCGL to post) in which voices of Lansing area community members are represented (directly, or through mediation). Since these documents are openly accessible, I did not have to gain permission to analyze them. But since I believe that textual analysis alone severely limits my conclusions about these public documents, their authors, and their intended impact, these documents are only a starting point for my analysis. On these sites, I located names of those who posts; those who are represented; and those who are named as leaders (or intermediaries) of these initiatives.

I. Phase 2

I sought permission for these interviews, first through intermediaries (leaders of the website projects) and then from individual contributors themselves. Through individual interviews with these leaders and contributors, I better understood the motivations and goals of public naming practices within this local community. In addition, I had hoped to discover more about the writing process of the public documents that I found on the websites. From these interviews, I wanted to be able to ascertain what kinds of private documents informed decisions about the creation of public documents on these websites.

II. Phase 3

However, study participants often did not remember their influences on writing, which made tracing documents that did inspire their writing nearly impossible. Intermediaries and their instructions constitute reliable influences on the writing process. But in terms of knowing community context, did not rely solely on study participants. Instead, I performed a targeting probing of media archives (such as TV WILX, the *Lansing State Journal* and the *City Pulse*) to ascertain how other community members were and are talking about the topics that are central to participants' writing. I did this to triangulate and follow up on study participant claims about the community context for their writing.

Data Collection Process and Schedule

However, these phases are not as cleanly distinct from one another as they first may appear. For example, I did not stop analyzing the website once I entered Phase 2; I simply reread the website in light of the new information that my interviews yielded. And while I have generally followed that Phase 1-3 sequence for data collection, different groups from my case studies were available to interview at different times. For example, I chose to focus on my student interviews first because my IRB for this study was approved at the end of Spring Semester 2010 and I knew that I had limited time to reach them before they departed campus. I started data collection with community members later because I knew I would have access to them during the summer; their work and personal lives still largely have determined if, how, and when I was able to interview them. Additionally, before I had finished Phase 3, I had actively worked on Chapters 1 and 2, as well as starting grounded analysis of my data for my results chapters. I needed to perform this kind of research is iterative way, in part because of my reliance on research participants for access to other research participants, and my work to create a flexible ethos and relationship with research participants who are relative or complete strangers.

Data Collection Schedule:

Mid-April 2010: Intermediary Interview with Dr. John Monberg (OMA)

Late April 2010: Intermediary Interviews with Cindie Alwood and Dr. Manuela Kress (WCGL)

Late April to Late May 2010: Student Interviews (OMA)

Late May to Early June 2010: Community Member Interviews (OMA)

June to July 2010: Client, Volunteer, Former Intern Interviews (WCGL)

Early August 2010: Member Check Interviews with Intermediaries (Cindie Alwoord, Dr. John Monberg)

Data Collection Techniques

I. Accessing and Archiving Public Documents

I first accessed these websites several months before the study was approved and I met with intermediaries. While I believed that these websites were relatively stable (i.e., they would not likely disappear from the Internet), I did not want to take a chance that they would disappear from the Internet during the course of the study without a chance to recover what was on them. Therefore, I decided to talk a screenshot of each web page on these websites that I was interested in examining and saved a downloaded copy of each of the embedded documents (e.g., WCGL newsletters) that I was interested in examining.

Initially, a committee member suggested that I use Zotero to take screenshots. I downloaded Zotero, and was impressed with its capabilities, but quickly discovered that it did not capture most graphical elements of both the WCGL and OMA websites. I discovered that the same was true for other local community websites (like the Allen Neighborhood Center website). While I could not explain why Zotero worked on websites like www.cnn.com and not the websites I was studying, I knew that capturing graphical elements was essential to preserving my digital memories of the websits and conducting analytical explorations of the websites. Fortunately, I found that Screengrab!, another freeware screen capturing device, did capture these graphical elements, albeit with less complex features than Zotero.

II. Author Identification and Solicitation

Even though I could, in quite a few instances, identify authors of writing on the WCGL and OMA websites, I decided not to pursue soliciting them without intermediaries. Before soliciting them, I formed relationships with Cindie Alwood and Dr. Manuela Kress, the original co-directors of the WCGL and Dr. John Monberg, coordinator of the OMA website project. Both of these intermediaries had at least influenced and contributed to writing on these websites, and I assumed would be trusted to some extent by authors of the posts (with whom I wished to converse). In addition, because I knew that I would not know most of my interviewees, I also had to find a way to build my ethos with them: being introduced by intermediaries seemed like a solid way to do that consistently. Additionally, I believed it was ethical to start my research by talking with intermediaries because I reasoned that they would be invested with their respective websites long term and would be able to implement any suggestions I would find that they found helpful. Finally, I did not want to start a research project without their knowledge; I respected that these projects are of their making, and I was treading upon their privacy when I did more than read what is on their respective websites.

However, after the initial meetings and interviews with intermediaries, my methods of soliciting interviews changed. For the WCGL website, I needed to rely on Cindie Alwood because I was just starting to build an ethos with the WCGL as a volunteer. Additionally, she had knowledge of which clients, former interns, and WCGL supporters were approachable, available to reach, and reachable. In some cases, I would not have been able to identify possible participants without her help: in some areas on the WCGL website, last names are not provided, which would make it impossible to identify participants (especially former clients). For example, some feature articles on the WCGL do not included the name of an author, making author identification impossible without Cindie's knowledge (whom I knew from the first meeting was the primary author and primary editor of the WCGL newsletter). While I wanted to be able to identify authors of posts and articles, I also shared Cindie and Manuela's concern regarding protecting clients from unwanted identification and making sure that the WCGL knew of all of the possible clients, former interns, and the WCGL supporters I was contacting. Cindie provided me with e-mail addresses of possible interviewees based on these shared concerns.

When I was recruiting participants who had worked on the OMA website, I needed to consult Dr. John Monberg in instances in which I could not identify participants on my own. I was able to identify OMA participants in many instances because they often left their full names or used a pseudonym I was able to identify as a possible MSU ID. Additionally, Dr. Monberg told me that 90% of OMA website posters were his students. To identify posters as students, I typically searched for them in the MSU directory by their full name or their partial name. In instances in which students produced a pseudonym that looked like an MSU ID, I simply guessed their first or last name and included a first or last initial and searched for results. At times, that was enough to positively identify or not identify someone as a student obtain an e-mail address in the former instance. But more often than I liked, I did not have enough information to identify a person as a student. At one point, I did ask Dr. Monger to provide me with enough information to identify certain author display names that I could not identify. He provided me with e-mail addresses and names of those authors whom I was interested in interviewing.

To identify OMA posters as community members, I simply took all of the names that I could positively identify as not MSU students and conducted a Google search for their full names plus the "city of Lansing." I clicked on the first page of links for each of them, through which I was able to determine that they were residents and workers in the Lansing area. Because they did not have a public profile with contact information on the OMA website, I had to rely on the links that I found to make contact with them: via Facebook; a workplace website with a submittable form; a non-profit website with a submittable form; and an e-mail address from a church website.

Although my methods of reaching authors varied, my advertisement protocol remained the same.[32] I briefly introduced myself; my specific interest in their post; how the post fit into my dissertation project; and my protocol for conducting interviews. I gave interviewees their choice of location for the interview and the time in which we would meet. There were two students one community member who did not feel comfortable

[32] My scripted protocols for different kinds of participants (intermediaries, students, volunteers, and clients) appear in Appendix B.

meeting in person; because of the difficulty in obtaining interviews, I decided to allow for e-mail interviews upon their request for them.

III. Conducting Interviews

In preparation for my interview phase, I decided to adopt an interview approach that was structured yet flexible. I developed a structured set of questions to ask interviewees ahead of time, which I altered and customized for each interviewee (per my understanding of their posts, and my desire to know more about particular ideas or the context in which those ideas developed). I also developed a common protocol for asking questions, which included small talk; a brief explanation of the study and consent; a description of the audio devices I was using; the interview questions and probes; and a discussion of the next steps in the study after the interview stage (including transcription, analysis, and my representation of them and their words in my study). However, my interviews were also very non-hierarchal because I allowed participants significant control over many facets of the process. Interview participants chose the meeting place, as well as how long the interviews lasted; some opted for as little as 18 minutes, whereas some chose to talk for over an hour (which was outside of the 30-45 minute range that I had advertised). Additionally, interview participants generally directed the structure of the conversation. I frequently departed from my script to ask follow up questions, or to abandon some of my questions in favor of new information interviewees wanted to tell me. Finally, interview participants had complete control over whether I used their full name or just their display name that they provide in their posts. Those participants who had fully disclosed their names on the websites were informed that their identities were already revealed, but that I would pay special attention to how I represented their interview comments in presentations and publications. However, I did not just provide this special treatment for those who decided to become research participants: I also paid close attention to the ways in which I represent WCGL and OMA website contributors who are not interview participants as I am representing their public face in this study, too.

IV. Requesting Public and Private Documents

When I introduced the interview protocol, I told participants briefly about each phase of data collection and that I was hoping to trace their textual and media influences for writing. I said that I would try to identify these influences during interviews, but that I might send them a follow up e-mail after these interviews were conducted to request more information about a public reference or a private document that they referenced as an influence during their interview. By viewing these documents, I hoped to gain a better idea of what these texts consisted of and triangulate their responses to these texts. However, I did not have much success with this approach because participants had trouble recalling texts that had influenced their writing. Ultimately, I abandoned this approach because participants could often not remember how they influenced and by what person (or persons) and the by what mode of communication (such as television, radio, informal conversation, etc.).

Data Analysis

I. Locating Public Naming Practices

To locate public naming practices, I first comprehensively read all of the text on each of the websites, including text of web pages and downloadable documents (which appeared in the form of articles, stories, newsletters, and the like). Then, I conducted a key word search for central nouns (or topoi) used in these texts (such as collective nouns, proper nouns [familiar and unfamiliar]) and recorded those into labeled sections by website.[33] Then, I conducted an analysis of how each of these nouns was being defined (reiterated, added to, or challenged—according to my knowledge of community commonplaces).[34] Finally, some of these topoi become the subject of questions that I asked interviewees.[35]

II. Transcription Techniques

Although I audio-recorded interviews on both Garageband and a Sony mp3 IC recorder, I decided to transcribe interviews using the audio recordings from Garageband. I did upload audio recordings from the Sony mp3 IC recorder as mp3 files when could not hear participant audio via Garageband (because of excessive background noise in certain interviews). I decided not to do that primarily because the Sony mp3 IC recorder did not reliably capture more than the first 45 minutes of interviews in some cases. In addition, some of my interview participants were quiet in my audio recordings, and I was not sure

---

[33] A comprehensive list of these topoi and associated categories by section on each website, appears in Appendix C.

[34] For a more explicit account of how I do this, please read Chapter 5.

[35] For example, one of the central topoi in Silvana's story was "doula," her former profession in which she aided pregnant women in childbirth and cared for mothers post-partum. Because she credits this work as (Footnote 35 cont.)having part in the breakdown in her marriage and the start of her relationship with the WCGL, it has been really important for me to understand what it involves and why she had to stay employed in Pennsylvania and commute back and forth from Lansing. What I found out is that the doula profession is generally not practiced in Michigan, and that she was not able to even talk to practicing doulas in Ann Arbor because they would not return her phone calls. Although she loved her profession, these circumstances led her to make a career change when she found the WCGL. She's now pursuing a career as a creative writer.

that the .mp3 to .doc conversion would be clean; I thought that, in some cases, much could be lost in translations (particularly with different kinds of volume, talking speed, and annunciation). I chose to listen to Garageband audio files of the interviews because they included full interviews; I could amplify the sound for even quiet interviews; and I could easily return to a spot that I previously listened to by simply scrolling and clicking, or not moving the cursor, and clicking "play" in an area of audio I was interested in.

While I was not able to decipher everything that was said (especially in the case of interview participants who talked fast, quietly, or whose speech overlapped my own), I was able to capture most of what they were saying by listening to a few seconds of audio, pausing, and writing down what was said and by whom on a word document (which served as the transcript). I played each audio file two times after producing the initial transcript to ensure accuracy and corrected the transcript when it was appropriate.

III. Applied Grounded Theory and Claims Coding

Although I did allow my first readings of the OMA and the WCGL websites influence my definition of public rhetoric I developed before pursuing the study, I opted for an open coding strategy once I was evaluating website text and interview transcripts. In each of these types of documents, I looked for any information that could lead me to make a single claim, even if that claim was not triangulated by other pieces of data.[36] After I had made all

[36] Most of the claims that I could not triangulate related to the experiences and opinions about the WCGL and OMA that were particular to individual interviewees. For example, my interview with Jeremy Dowcett (pastor of Blacksoil, a barefoot church on the Michigan Avenue Corridor) yielded this claim: "Churches are relying on formal advertising to attract parishoners, which is leading to the erosion of local parishes." While this claim is

of the possible claims I could with my data, I used selective coding to find claims that a) were triangulated and b) exhibited instances of naming of any kind.[37] From there, I developed my theory of public naming practices based on my results from selective coding.

IV. Evaluating Local Public Rhetoric and Triangulating Terms on the Case Study Websites

Non-profit organizations and community initiatives define themselves in comparison to other organizations, ideas, issues, etc. For rhetoricians do this definition work successfully, they need an awareness of what other rhetors and their collectives are saying (or are not saying) about issues and ideas of concern to them. While rhetoricians can find some of this in explicit or implicit forms on NPO or community initiative websites, they can only find much of this context by exploring beyond the website. They can use interviews to find out this information, but interviews are not always easy to come by. Rhetoricians can also find media documents in the community to trace this; media documents can also be quite indicative of what community values are and what kinds of conversations are taking place. Here is the method I used to trace local community conversations about terms that appeared on the WCGL and OMA websites that I found through my initial coding for public naming practices:

(Footnote 36 cont'd) interesting and could be triangulated with further research, it is one piece of data that does not relate to other claims made by other OMA contributors or research participants.

[37] When I say "triangulated," I do not simply mean that I can find another source or sets of sources to prove accuracy. I also mean that within the original data set, a similar claim or the same claim is made. For example, one claim that continually emerged about public naming practices on the WCGL website was that intermediaries proofread contributions from volunteers and clients, but did not alter their writing in a substantive way. Every participant I talked to (both intermediaries and contributors) told me this without prompt.

1. Trace local media.[38] Local media can include national TV affiliates who provide local news, local radio stations, newspapers, magazines, and any local media that provides either video, podcasts, or text transcripts online. New information is usually free, while older information is either archived (for a fee), or is longer available.
2. Trace citizen forums. Citizen forums can include local citizen-produced newspapers, web 2.0 websites, and community or single-authored blogs.
3. When a comprehensive list of these forums has been categorized with links to websites, use a single topic that is mentioned on the case study website and search for it on each of the websites on the master list. Copy the URLs that have positive results and place them underneath topics headings.
4. Read each article, view each video, and listen to each podcast. Compare the URLs with the post on the case website.
5. Although each post will be categorized as “affirming,” “adding to,” or “challenging” community definitions before the process has begun, be prepared to move each topic to a different category based on what you discover.

While rhetoricians cannot use this method to fully account for local public rhetoric, they can use it to start constructing a context for the value of community websites to ongoing local discussions. Admittedly, rhetoricians who use this method alone rely heavily on textual analysis to continue inquiry, and start new inquiry. Rhetoricians need to talk to rhetors to understand a fuller picture. However, I was not able to conduct these possible

[38] My full list of official media sites, less official media sites, and citizen forums that I used appears in Appendix D.

additional interviews because they are outside of the scope of my study; my focus is on the making of the case study websites, not the making of local public rhetoric in the Lansing community over time.

Toward an Asynchronous Public Rhetoric Methodology and Praxis

Given the asynchronous and distributed nature of how public rhetoric can occur and how publics are assembled, it is difficult for researchers to always coordinate a study of process using ethnography and other observation techniques to fully understand how it happens. Admittedly, rhetoricians cannot textual analysis and interviews alone to measure or fully account for this process. However, I believe there are many instances of public rhetoric that we can only recognize as significant after the fact; I argue that both the WCGL and OMA websites are such instances. In these cases, it makes sense for rhetoricians to assume the stance of a historian and use more traditional techniques of analyzing public rhetoric, like textual analysis and conducting interviews. Unless public rhetoric scholars are privy to the knowledge of an upcoming special event or have special access to the production of public rhetoric in community initiatives, they are correct to find instances of public naming or public listening practices and work backward to find traces of how publics are assembled. Given these specialized conditions, rhetoricians are smart to adapt an asynchronous public rhetorics methodology for exploring the nature of the components that constitute, as well as the whole of, local public rhetoric.

Now that I have outlined my public rhetoric methodology and procedures, I will use these to read my results and shape my claims in chapters 3, 4, and 5. In Chapter 3, I provide a fleshed out model of how chronos impacts the assembling of publics—built based on the patterns I found on the WCGL and OMA websites and interviews with contributors and intermediaries. As I will explain, this model is generalizable to other studies of public rhetoric, and is complicated further by circumstances unique to my case studies. I expand upon and complicate this model in chapters 4 and 5 when discussing more specialized incidences of assembling publics that may be particular to cases like the ones I studied for this dissertation.

CHAPTER 3: CHRONOS AND THE COORDINATION OF LOCAL PUBLICS

As I argued in Chapter 1, chronos is key in coordinating local publics. Local publics may have institutional ties, but are functioning in a not-for-profit capacity. Because there are fewer resources to draw from and because participation is voluntary, local publics have to engage in constant recruitment activities in order to sustain themselves. In this chapter, I explain how the coordinator role and volunteer roles in local publics are impacted by these conditions, especially when they are organized by the structure of a community initiative. Chronos, as I argue, impacts how rhetors in roles complete tasks. Community initiatives must coordinate roles to account for outside commitments of volunteers, and other stakeholders in order to become "normed" (or established) as organizations.

Rhetoricians who study local publics have overlooked the importance of chronos in favor of kairos. Since many rhetoricians have entered kairotic partnerships with community initiatives, their focus on kairos makes sense. However, as I argue, by exploring chronos, rhetoricians can develop a better sense of how community initiatives operate on a daily basis and leverage their resources in order to "go public."

How Local Publics Utilize Kairos

Within the field of Rhetoric and Composition, rhetoricians embrace the concept of kairos. Although kairos was originally associated with causing "dissoi logoi" and other forms of deceptive behavior, kairos did not carry that stigma for long (Carter 103). Protagoras soon defined kairos as the "opportune moment"—when conflicting elements reached harmony (103). Contemporary rhetoricians reiterate Protagoras's definition of kairos. Rhetoricians still view kairos as descriptive of a particular time that is quickly shifting (Kinneavy 41). Other rhetoricians attribute more power to kairos. Papillion emphasizes the importance of rhetors developing awareness, or fitness, to discover when the opportune moment may arise—in order to take full advantage of kairos (151). Montesano attributes more power to kairos; for him, it is more than just a fortuitous opportunity: kairos is literally the intersection of theory and practice (169). For Short, kairos is more than a moment; it is “immediate, immutable truth.” (371). Throughout most of the history of rhetoric (including the present day), rhetoricians have been fascinated with kairos and its possibilities.

This fascination also impacts studies of community settings. When rhetoricians describe their encounters with community members in the context of service-learning projects, kairos remains a subtext that underlies these encounters and their interpretations of them. Rhetoricians often do not describe how difficult it is to make community partnerships happen; they do not detail the mundane process of establishing a process, or discuss how long it takes in order to do this. Instead, they often offer a quick story about how “the pieces were already in place” before a service-learning project began (Mutnick 627). Additionally, rhetoricians often do not discuss the temporality of community projects that they are participating in, but often discuss the special circumstances that surround these projects. For example, in their article, “Personal Narrative Experience and Public Debate: Writing the Wrongs of Welfare,” Lorraine D. Higgins and Lisa D. Brush foreground the National Institute of Justice grant that allowed them to both institute and study a writing project that allowed former welfare recipients to create personal narratives about their experiences (41). However, they do not discuss how this project will end when the money runs out, and what consequences that may have for public knowledge about welfare recipients stories in the long term. Finally, rhetoricians who write about community engagement focus on stories that illustrate the moment rather than track what happens to community projects over time. For example, Linda Flower uses Andre's proclamation of how teenager and police distrust impacts community discussions about curfew policy in Pittsburgh, PA in her article "Talking across Difference: Intercultural Rhetoric and the Search for Situated Knowledge." Although this example illustrates current conflicts, it does not alone examine historical trends that would support this story, or discuss what happened to these conflicts as a result of this community discussion. Community discussions, although important, are "special" moments—kairotic moments. When rhetoricians pay exclusive attention to kairos, they miss investigating what happened before and tracking what happens after rare moments of connectivity.

Because of a recent, emerging interest in assessment and sustainability, rhetoricians who study community projects and engage in community partnerships have started to pay attention to aspects of kairos that may be detrimental. For example, in her article "Sustainable Service-Learning Programs," Ellen Cushman begins her argument by discussing the "hit-it-and-quit-it" nature of service-learning partnerships. Enthusiastic college instructors commit to a semester working with community partners, and do not continue a partnership when a semester is over (41). This leaves community partners feeling skeptical about partnering with college teachers in subsequent semesters, as well as feeling resentful towards the colleges and universities they represent. Cushman argues that a possible solution to break this cycle is to have teachers participate in sustainable service-learning programs. While individual teachers may rotate in and out of the program, community partners have relationships with program directors that consistently keep the program running. When sustainable service-learning programs are established, there is a focus on chronos over kairos: while neither the program or the community partners may know what future opportunities may arise, they value a chronotic, long lasting relationship that is based on commitment to working together.

But even a chronotic focus may be laced with kairotic expectations. Rhetoricians often view service-learning experiences as kairotic for student growth. According to Nancy Welch, rhetoricians who teach service-learning often expect that students will successfully make a transition from "outsider" to "insider" status in the course of a semester in the communities that they serve. But even though she provides the example of her former student, Janis, making that transition in the community center in which she served, Welch questions Janis' claim that she knows the people in the community at the end of the semester (245). Welch claims that even with hard work, students may still not be "insiders" at the community settings where they spend much of their time during a service-learning experience. Even with doing mundane tasks over time, a kairotic opportunity may not yield the results that rhetors are seeking.

How Local Publics Utilize Chronos

Rhetoricians may have a preoccupation with kairos because of the popular definition of chronos as "linear time." Linear time, itself, is ripe with the mundane; Kairotic time includes the special events which rhetors commemorate. Elizabethada Wright, in her article "Reading the Cemetery: 'Lieu de Memoire par Exellance'," challenges this dichotomous look at the two temporalities in rhetorical theory. Wright poses that the kairotic event of a funeral precedes the mundane aftergrowth of weeds and decay, a province of chronos (36). After time, the kairotic event is forgotten; it fades into chronos, and becomes mundane (36). Wright poses that chronos subsumes kairos, but does not attribute special properties to chronos. The kairotic event, according to her theory, is still what is worth paying attention to; chronos simply aids the forgetting process. But is chronos worth paying attention to? Is chronos more than linear time? Is chronos more than a backdrop against which special events happen?

Chronos is worth paying attention to because rhetors use it to organize their activities. For most community initiatives, kairotic opportunities are rare. Most community initiatives do not have locations on the bus route that students can take, nor are their locations necessarily close to campus. Most community initiative coordinators will not be approached by a program officer or a researcher to receive grant money, especially in the first few years of operation. Most community initiatives will not have 0% turnover in their volunteer pool in the course of a year. Instead, community initiatives must make their own opportunities. In order to do so, they must rely on chronos over kairos when they are making daily decisions.

Both the OMA website project and the WCGL website would not exist if stakeholders relied entirely on kairos. While Dr. Monberg was fortunate to teach a class that allowed him to make the OMA project happen (TC 491: Ethnography and Interaction Design), this class required him to do a lot of preparation and coordination before the class began. Dr. Monberg spent years learning computer coding, user research, and reading case studies of similar projects. He also spent a year and a half talking to various community members about the Michigan Avenue Corridor. And finally, he spent time networking with students and city planners who had the expertise to martial the skills needed to make his vision a reality. Perhaps Spring 2009 was an opportune time in which to teach the class, but Dr. Monberg performed many mundane activities over time in order to eventually launch the OMA website project. Similarly, the WCGL website project was a product of chronos as much as kairos. As Cindie asserts, the WCGL website project was not the first form of advertising that the WCGL engaged in. After almost four years of word-of-mouth advertising, using fliers, the WCGL newsletter was the most technologically advanced form of advertising for the WCGL. Over 1200 print copies circulated around the city of Lansing and the city of East Lansing. When the Power of We Consortium launched their CAC Voices website project (a platform for local nonprofits to advertise themselves on the web), the WCGL decided to become part of that project. When they realized, however, that the project was disrupting their ideas for branding, they decided to not wait for another opportunity for better software. Rather, they decided to create their own opportunity by creating their own website. Through their connection to Michigan State University Rhetoric and Writing professor Jeff Grabill, they were able to find a professional writing Master's student to help them realize their vision for branding their own website. Instead of passively waiting for an opportunity to present itself, they seized an opportunity to tap into their existing network of stakeholders to accomplish a task they felt was important to the growth of their community initiative.

Besides using chronos to launch projects, community initiatives use chronos in order to complete everyday tasks that are important to sustainability. When the OMA website project was being constructed, student coders relied on "stand up" meetings, as well as collaboration software (i.e., Apache Subversion) to streamline the process of individually collaborating on the website.[39] During the daily "stand up" meetings, individuals and groups would report on their progress and discuss what their next steps would be that day. This allowed Dr. Monberg and the students to know all of the work that was happening, as well as ask for advice or to assign collaborations that would make the process of building the website more efficient. Dr. Monberg also had students install Subversion so that conflicts and redundancies in coding could be reduced. While this software simply used algorithms in order to detect and alert students about these problems, this mundane action was really important to making sure that students worked efficiently and that the final website was functional for community users. Similarly, the WCGL also has mundane procedures for making sure that their website is in tact. For example, Cindie is a member of the fundraising committee; when this committee hosts a fundraising event (which is often monthly), they want to utilize the website as an advertising venue. Once they decide on advertising and logistical details, they craft a short plug for the "Upcoming Events" section on the WCGL website. Cindie passes this plug on to the volunteer web master, which updates the website. Even though this routine is mundane, it is really important for the life of the organization. By having this information on the website, not only can potential stakeholders view the information, but they may also understand that the website is not simply static; rather, it is dynamic because the WCGL is consistently doing events and is stable enough to advertise an event in enough time to garner support from stakeholders. These behind-the-scenes mundane actions, therefore, impact the ethos of these community initiatives in important ways.

---

[39] See Fowler for an expanded definition of "stand up" meetings and their purpose. For more information about Subversion, visit <http://subversion.apache.org/>

How Chronos Yields Different Opportunities than Kairos for Local Publics

I am not arguing that kairos is not important for community initiatives. In fact, community initiatives can position themselves to have kairotic opportunities as they become more established in the community—which can given them a better possibility for sustainability. When community initiatives are approached without prompt for grant opportunities that is a sign that they have built positive ethos.[40] This is a desirable position for community initiatives to be in. These are the kind of opportunities for which they work. But these kinds of opportunities are possible when these community initiatives are established, normed, and already sustainable—to some degree. While community initiatives are still storming and forming, kairotic opportunities are more rare.[41]

Table 2: Affordances and limitations of chronos and kairos

	Affordances	Limitations
Chronos	-Accounts for negotiating schedules -Allows for a focus on time management and productivity -Reminds rhetors to look for opportunities	-Discourages rhetors to stray from their routines -Discourages flexible deadlines

[40] By positive ethos, I mean to echo Aristotle's definition (recounted by Frobish) in general: both the WCGL and OMA wish to use their practices and "good character" for the benefit of their audience, which constitutes actual and potential stakeholders. However, their production of ethos is context dependent and does depend on the interplay of private exchanges that impact public performances (see Reynolds, Buchanan for their theoretical treatment of ethos for more details).

[41] Community initiatives often use an adapted version of Tuckman's stages of group development to discuss how their organizations may achieve sustainability. See Zurick for an example of how the "storming, forming, and norming" heuristic applies to these organizations.

TABLE 2 (cont'd)

Kairos	-Reminds rhetors to pay attention to and take advantage of special opportunities that arise -Provides good stories that rhetors can use in their marketing materials	-Discourages focusing on mundane work that may lead to opportunities -Can cause some rhetors to misrepresent a chance happening as a norm

They are still establishing their brand, and building support. Because of declining trends in grant and donor funding, storming and forming community initiatives must do much mundane work to strive towards "norming" status.[42]

Community initiatives achieve this by establishing routines that yield reliable results and deliverables over time. This task may be especially daunting for coordinators of service-learning projects. Dr. Monberg strived to establish a posting routine for the OMA website project that would spark other posting routines. From his review of previous research, he discovered that pre-populated websites were more successful in attracting new users than new websites with little or no content or evidence of heavy user presence. Because of this, he assigned his WRA 320: Advanced Technical Writing students to pre-populate the OMA website with improvement articles, community stories, mapped opinions, replies, and votes. When the website was launched in late Spring 2009, community members could see how these features could be used. When Dr. Monberg saw that not much activity had taken place on the website after the initial launch, he assigned his current students to populate the site with more content. Although this was not the routine that Dr. Monberg intended to establish, this routine has characterized usage

[42] Harmon reports on the donation decline at the nation's biggest charities, including the United Way.

patterns of the OMA website. The WCGL has established different routines that its stakeholders have come to rely on. Besides posting upcoming events on the WCGL website, Director Cindie Alwood has relied on the e-newsletter for consistent communication with stakeholders. Because the web master has not been reliable and the print newsletter volunteer does not have a consistent volunteer staff, the WCGL e-newsletter is the one deliverable that is regularly assembled in a timely manner.[43] Cindie does not know Dreamweaver, and the 16 page print newsletter is too much for her to assemble without the aid of interns, undergraduate volunteers, and professional volunteers on a bi-monthly basis. Yet, because Cindie feels comfortable with using the e-newsletter software and the formatting demands conciseness, this routine has been easy for her to manage. Additionally, Cindie is assured that WCGL stakeholders pay attention to this e-newsletter; WCGL staff and volunteers add every client and special events attendee to this listserv. Therefore, it is one of the reliable methods of reaching past and current WCGL stakeholders, and soliciting them to take actions to sustain the WCGL. For both the OMA website project and the WCGL, these routines define how stakeholders view them, as well as how they decide to become involved.

But, as my descriptions imply, deliverables do not make themselves. Rhetors must occupy particular roles in order to make these deliverables a reality. In community settings, coordinators are needed to pay attention to deadlines; to set tasks for interns, volunteers, and students to complete; to monitor progress and provide feedback; and to sometimes

[43] Although 1,200 copies of the bi-monthly print newsletter had been printed in the past, the WCGL has recently decided to publish this newsletter only on their website.

produce deliverables themselves. But how are roles occupied, and how does chronos impact roles? And how are deliverables shaped because of this relationship?

How Chronos Impacts Roles and Deliverables in Local Publics

Through looking closely at the deliverables which rhetors in local publics produce and the conditions that impact production, rhetoricians can better understand the relationship between chronos, roles, and deliverables in local publics. In the following section, I highlight instances that show different kinds of relationships. There are, of course, more relationships possible than those that I highlight here.

Instance 1: Positionality

The first instance that I want to describe is C. Leslie Charles' feature article entitled "Crisis or Challenge: Living in Unprecedented Times" (found at: http://womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org/feature/feature_FebMar2009.html). I want to highlight this article because it illustrates how the unique positionality of the author impacts the choices that were made in the soliciting the making of the article. What stands out initially about this article is its location. Now, the obvious current site for this article is the Women's Center of Greater Lansing (WCGL) website, and specifically the "Feature Articles" page that has the following other categories: car maintenance, mentoring, our bodies, proposal 2, relationships, and women's health. It is under a category of its own, called "Working Through Crisis, Adversity, and Other Challenges." Nothing like it has been written elsewhere on the WCGL website, including other WCGL newsletters; it is a unique addition. It originally appeared in the Feb/March 2009 newsletter (as indicated by the name of the page and note before the “Feature Article” link). Not every feature article is dated on the page, although they have all appeared in previous newsletters.

Within the article itself, a wealth of public naming practices can be found. First, C. Leslie Charles provides much information about her identity as an author. She reveals that she is an “acclaimed” professional writer and speaker, but mentions no specific works that she has crafted. Instead, she mentions the “death of an adult child” as credibility for her to speak about crisis. By providing her full name, she additionally provides a high degree of traceability: when performing a web search, it is easy to find her professional website with much further information about her professional portfolio (including services, links to her books available on Amazon.com, and her professional biography). In terms of texts and topics, she focused on economic crisis. Her methods are quite different from those espoused in the *City Pulse* and the *Lansing State Journal* (which consist of proposals to cut military funding and to allow Pres. Obama to propose solid policies for change, respectively) because it focuses on what ordinary citizens can do (such as become involved with the Women’s Center of Greater Lansing) rather than what elected officials can accomplish.

But by textual analysis alone, we do not learn her real reason for writing the article: she was invited to do so by Cindie. Because Leslie is an introvert and does much of her work at home, she is not always connected to what is going on outside of her small, social circle. Cindie told her about what was happening with previously middle class women losing their jobs and becoming unemployed. While Leslie is not an expert on economic crisis, she used pathos quite effectively to spur both empathy and involvement. Much of what she wrote on the post was not just her reaction to the moment, but a re-synthesis of professional presentations she's given on crisis and grief and how to move through it. Leslie's case illustrates how texts, even when rich with personal information about the author, can only tell us so much about context. We need to dig further to understand motivations for and influences on public writing.

Leslie's role as a professional volunteer, a committed assenter, impacts her writing of this article.[44] As one of the founding board members, Leslie is committed to positively portraying the WCGL as a change agent in the community; her writing can be viewed as serving as a catalyst for different kinds of action than what is advocated by mainstream media. However, her time constraints and other work commitments prevent her from doing a more ethnographic article. Her article, instead, is a reflection based on the stories she hears from Cindie. Her role, in this situation, is to respond to that. To do so, she draws upon her previous experiences with crisis—and her past writing from her books. For the WCGL, her choices are appropriate; as a professional volunteer, and as a committed assenter, she is asked to balance her professionalism and time constraints in a way that benefits the WCGL and represents it by proxy.

Instance 2: Community History-Building

The second instance that I want to describe is the origin story of Magdalena's Teahouse, according to Miko (the owner): (http://www.ourmichiganave.org/stories/33). This story post is illustrative of how community history can be archived. Miko was interviewed by Becca Ebner for the "Our Stories" section of the "Our Michigan Ave" website. Most of the stories in this section are based on student interviews of community

[44] A committed assenter is a rhetor who regularly contributes to a group without challenging the status quo.

members (business owners, community leaders, longtime residents, and a few student residents). While most interviews about small businesses use small business owners simply as informants, Becca uses this interview to show how one's personal beliefs impact the kind of businesses they create. Becca artfully tells how Miko's battle with Ulcerative Colitis impacted her decision to adopt a "raw foods" diet, and how the teahouses she frequented in Turkey inspired her decision to create a local teahouse that featured the raw foods diet that cured her disease.

By talking to Becca, I learned that much was left out of the post. Because she had to meet a length requirement for her class, she had to find, in her words "the most important information to accurately represent the conversation." This meant that she left out information that was outside of the history, such as the "amazing, welcoming experience" she had when entering the teahouse, or trying out a vegetable smoothie for the first time. Although Becca explained her transformation in considering raw food, she also told me that "no one really knows" about Magdalena's Teahouse. Unfortunately, Magdalena's Teahouse did not weather the economic crisis as well as other Lansing area businesses did: it is now closed (http://www.yelp.com/biz/magdalenas-tea-house-lansing). But the story of how it came to be still lives on the "Our Michigan Ave" website. Although websites are often seen as "just-in-time" spaces, this story illustrated how the "Our Michigan Ave" website functions as a community history archive-full of stories that maybe never circulated, or live on only through oral acts of communication in the Michigan Avenue Corridor.

Becca's role as a student volunteer influences many of her decisions when interviewing and writing this post for the "Our Stories" section of the OMA website. As a student volunteer, her role is necessarily transient: her class lasted 16 weeks, and her commitment lasted for that amount of time. As an occasional assenter, she was still committed to ethically representing Micca's story, as well as accurately portraying Magdalena's Teahouse—while balancing that with knowledge of website writing best practices to which she had to adhere in order to do well in Dr. Monberg's class.[45] These conflicting commitments were unresolved beyond the page. Becca's role involved her making decisions to please both community members and her teacher. Yet, even though she did so successfully, she still yearned to tell more on the OMA website than she did. Although Becca took the time to experience Magdalena's Teahouse, that time was not fully represented in her final web post.

Instance 3: Accidental Misrepresentation

The third instance that I want to draw attention to is Dolores' success story on the WCGL website.[46] Her success story illustrates accidental misrepresentation not by what is included in her story, but by where her story is located on the website. Although the "Success Stories" section of the WCGL website does not have an introduction to explain what the success stories are and what they are meant to do, most the authors identify themselves as past clients or as "graduates" of the WCGL. In fact, Cindie and Manuela (the original WCGL co-directors) confirmed this when we discussed what was on the website and why it was on it. For them, this is proof-of-concept that the work that they are doing is achieving their organizational goals for clients. When I asked which clients I should talk to

---

[45] An occasional assenter is a rhetor who contributes to a group for a limited amount of time and does not challenge the status quo.

[46] Her name is spelled wrong on the website. It is actually "Delores." One of the reasons that I did not make the connection that the WCGL board member Delores May was for certain "Dolores" was because of the misspelled name. When I was given her name as a possible interviewee, I clarified with Cindie that they were indeed the same person.

for this study, Cindie gave me a list of clients who said they would be willing to share their stories in the future (beyond just the writing of their story in the newsletter---of which all of these stories originally appeared). Dolores May was among those she recommended that I talk to about their experiences with the Women's Center (http://www.womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org/success/dolores.html)

Not surprisingly, I assumed Dolores was a client, which made my interactions with her on the fundraising committee a little uncomfortable when I thought about soliciting her for an interview. And during the interview, when I asked her about her experiences at the Women's Center, she made it clear that she was a volunteer; she was never a client.[47] Because of this case of accidental misrepresentation, I had to change my interview questions on the spur of the moment to account for this new information. I had assumed that her motivation was promotional based on services that she had received from WCGL. Instead, I learned, her motivations for being involved was that she wanted to establish roots in the Lansing area and wanting to help NPOs professionalize.[48] This instance, as some others that I have found, illustrate the importance of placement of content in public spaces, and the misunderstandings that can occur when something is "out of place."

---

[47] Delores, as someone who had been all but ousted from her career in Texas based on her bosses' nepotism towards younger workers, moved to Lansing with an entrepreneurial spirit. A career women after the radical feminist movement in the 1960s, she pursued a position as an Edward Jones broker with her own office right next to Clean Water Action. She felt called back to Michigan to be with her family. But when she got her chance, she started a whole new effort: instead of drawing women into department stores (like Winkelman's), she was drawing them to work together through her work with NPOs like WCGL and the Lansing Zonta Club (which has been mobilized in WCGL events like "Walk/Run/Roll.") While Delores has not benefited from WCGL as a client, she has found her network in Lansing through being a WCGL board member and organizer.

[48] As a businesswoman, she is concerned about making sure that interns and staff know proper professional etiquette for addressing potential visitors, for example.

I had assumed that Dolores was an occasional assenter who then transitioned into a committed assenter. But I had mistaken her role, in part because I did not take the time to discover her real role as a committed assenter ahead of time. To make sure that the interview time was well-used, I developed new interview questions on the fly that accounted for her real role that she played. Surprisingly, Dolores still views this role as a new outgrowth of her personality; her role as a businesswoman is the role she often adopts, even in her actions as a professional volunteer for the WCGL.[49]

From Chronos to Coordination

Community initiative coordinators (CICs) take their cues from chronos. As I delineated in this chapter, CICs must collect information about other stakeholders' available time and deadlines in order to determine how they will conduct coordination. When possible, CICs must allow committees to conduct meetings and tasks when volunteers are available. Additionally, they must work around donor deadlines in order to receive important contributions like grants. Their very construction of roles in the community initiative, including their own, depends on this relationship to chronos.

Yet, coordinators do much work to set the rules and the tone for roles and activities in their community initiatives. In Chapter 4, I will discuss more about the practical impacts of the role of coordinators on other roles and activities, especially as the shape public deliverables (especially their websites).

---

[49] Dolores often asks Cindie if she can revise the training protocol for interns answering the phones at the WCGL.

CHAPTER 4: THE IMPACT OF THE COORDINATOR ROLE ON PUBLIC-MAKING

Public rhetoric, as I argue throughout this dissertation, is always constrained. Because of unequal access to public spaces, technological platforms, and moderation of these, individual rhetors are constrained in the choices they can make while composing in public spaces and for public audiences (as I fully illustrated in chapters 1 and 2). As I explicated in chapter 3, lack of accesses to resources limits kairos for rhetors. Community initiatives are far more dependent on juggling chronos to be productive, because rhetors volunteer their time and coordinators must manage numerous schedules and timelines to acquire resources and get work done. To manage this successfully, coordinators create roles and associated tasks—but rhetors that occupy these roles not always act in assenting ways. Regardless of style, coordinators often privilege organization identity, even as they aim to make their processes democratic. In this chapter, I will demonstrate how these processes operate, and discuss what deliverables are produced as a result. In doing so, I aim to demonstrate how "discursive practices surround textual artifacts,"(Goggin 310).

Community initiatives create public organizational identity through advertising their mission, goals, and projects in very specific ways. In the process, community initiatives endeavor to create a brand identity for themselves. Branding is a term that originally arose in corporate culture to describe the ways in which for-profit organizations and products are presented to the public-at-large. Branding includes the creation of unique names, logos, font type, mottos, and symbols (Zaichowsky 548). While non-profit organizations (NPOs) have much different operations and needs than businesses, they often adapt corporate practices and repurpose them to serve their needs. NPOs like the

WCGL do this because a) like businesses, they want to stand out in the sea of information and b) they view symbolic impact as the first steps to making a material impact. For this reason, they value brand iconicity: "the degree to which a brand symbolizes the values, needs, and aspirations of the members of a particular cultural group," (Torelli et al 108). NPOs and other community initiatives believe that achieving brand iconicity (i.e., community recognition and trust) may be a means to establishing organizational sustainability in local communities.[50]

While some scholars may be disheartened by NPO adoption of corporate practices (see J. Blake Scott), NPOs may use branding best practices to ethically represent themselves. For example, authenticity is one branding best practice: organizations should have "clarity about [their] reason for being, …[their] unique vision, goals, values, voice, and personality" (Wheeler 22). NPOs, whose missions usually involve addressing societal problems to create more equitable conditions for those who are marginalized, have natural affinity for this practice. However, NPOs and community initiatives may not always have the in-house expertise to brand themselves.[51]

Branding is a special kind of public naming practice that happens both on and off of the Women's Center of Greater Lansing and the "Our Michigan Ave" websites. Branding is a public naming practice because it involves creating a distinct, collective identity through

---

[50] When their brand iconicity is threatened, NPOs may take legal action. For instance, the Susan J. Komen Foundation took legal action when other NPOs used their motto "for the cure."
<http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4496:nonprofit-newswire-brand-warsnonprofit-style&catid=155:daily-digest&Itemid=137>

[51] For this reason, for-profit ventures like the Nonprofit Branding Institute have been very successful. However, many local marketing firms and a small, rising number of NPOs have specialized in helping NPOs creating their public faces.

public texts (i.e., print and digital media that are accessible to groups outside of the group or organization that is advertising). Beyond creating the public texts themselves, branding involves distribution of those texts into public and private places.[52]

In this chapter, I will introduce a process that community initiatives to gain a collective identity as evidenced by the WCGL and OMA. For these community initiatives, advertising involves using past models of advertising and creating several iterations (or versions) of that brand for the purpose of community sustainability of their initiatives.[53] For community initiatives, this involves a series of moments of public exposure, private deliberation, and continuous reflection. As my findings reveal, branding is circumstantial, and not always democratic: it is a response to the limited resources and needs of the moment.

Of course, rhetors have a large role in determining branding and decision-making, and can do so in a systematic fashion. As I discussed in Chapter 3, chronos itself is an exigency for community initiatives to steamline decisions and to select public naming practices that yield writing and media deliverables that support the work that they do. Roles are a practical invention that community initiatives use to get work done in a timely manner. The official names of positions may differ in each community initiative, as well as the gamut of roles that may appear in each organization.[54] If community initiatives have

---

[52] Lansing area community initiatives do advertise for free on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, but may also gain permission to advertise in private businesses like locally frequented coffee shops and restaurants.

[53] Often, foundations, nonprofit organizations, and their advocates discuss non-profit sustainability in financial terms. See Bell, and Dillon and Wilkins for more detail.

[54] I introduce these roles more thoroughly in Chapter 3 and later in this chapter.

short term and long term volunteers, they probably have committed and occasional assenters. However, unless they have activist or anarchist origins, they may be less likely to have committed or occasional dissenters. While these aforementioned roles may be utilized in community initiatives, the coordinator role is the one reliable role that must be filled in any type of community initiative. Whether or not this role is paid or unpaid, it is a continuing position that outlasts many possible changes in a community initiative. Through the lens of the coordinator role, rhetoricians can learn much about how roles impact the assemblage of local publics.

Building Organizational Identity through Models

For both the WCGL and OMA, collective identity did not just spontaneously happen: it was the result of long, deliberate processes (as I will discuss more in detail later in the chapter). However, in both cases, models played a key role in sparking the branding process. OMA and the WCGL coordinators sought out models, which was really important to branding and establishing presence in the Lansing community. Branding involves something new with existing means and cultural practices; members of a group begin the process of branding when they find existing branding ideas and practices (i.e. models) for the purpose of creating new ones.

Models for the "Our Michigan Ave" Website[55]

[55] "Our Michigan Ave" was not the first name of the website. This name was agreed upon after an initial round of user research and student presentation of website mock ups. The original name of the website was "Michigan Avenue Corridor," but this conflicted with the name of the MACIA website.

OMA's origins came from the MACIA conversations with citizens.[56][57] These conversations were intended to be dialogues between city planners and citizens to create a common set of goals for the city. Dr. John Monberg, the coordinator of the "Our Michigan Ave" website, attended these lively sessions:[58]

> …there were a series of conversations about the Oakland/Saginaw redevelopment and some of the planning activities for different neighborhoods. And the room brought together like a 100 different people. They showed 20 different kinds of maps. There was a lot of energy in the room. There were a lot of vibrant ideas for the future…and some opportunities for residents groups to make suggestions on what zoning changes they would like to see.

According to Monberg, these conversations extended to online spaces, and sparked his ideas about creating a public deliberation website:

> So, that kind of rich, public deliberation was presented in the local newspaper in a very short article. The majority of the comments were negative: "the tax base is declining," "we don't have money for ideas," "we need to cut back and shrink our

---

[56] MACIA is the Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority. MACIA, composed of city planners and elected local government officials from Lansing, Lansing Township, and East Lansing, formed in 2008 to address how a common thoroughfare, Michigan Avenue, could be improved. For more information, visit their website: <http://www.michiganavecorridor.com/>

[57] MACIA thought that big, local institutions like MSU and Sparrow Hospital were heard more than small business owners, community leaders, and residents. On the "About" page of the "Our Michigan Ave" website, (Footnote 57 cont.) OMA student writers have linked to aggregated conversations from discussions with these local community members via the "Corridor News" link. <http://www.ourmichiganave.org/site/mac>

[58] Dr. John Monberg is a tenure-track Assistant Professor in the Dept. of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures (WRAC). At the time of the initial "Our Michigan Ave" website, he had a joint appointment in WRAC and the College of Communication. His research interests include Internet studies, usability and user research, and urban studies.

> vision." So, to me, it seemed helpful instead of just having hot-button arguments, a knee-jerk reaction on one side or another, the web could be a space where we could have lots of technical resources, lots of links to projects that have worked in other areas. And so, if somebody wanted to make an argument for a new vision, instead of relying on a few bullet points, this would be space with a broader array of planning resources they can draw upon…

His observations, and his knowledge of websites that allowed for local community sharing of ideas, became his impetus to propose the OMA website to MACIA as a university service-learning project. OMA's branding process was largely framed through Dr. John Monberg's TC 491 course and previous exposure to urban web 2.0 websites.[59] To frame the class, Dr.

[59] TC 491 is a special topics course in the College of Communication at Michigan State University. Dr. John Monberg themed his 2009 section "Ethnography and Interaction Design."

Monberg perused and aggregated such websites.

Public Participation Projects

- The Open Planning Project | Tools for Civic Empowerment
- Policy Consensus Initiative NPCC - Case Studies
- The National Charrette Institute
- Urban Communication Foundation
- City Scan - People :: Technology :: Results
- Listening to the City
- Shaping San Francisco
- Participatory Media Literacy / Participatory Media Literacy
- Association for Community Design
- 73 urban journeys
- Connect Chicago
- Saving Democracy with Web 2.0
- Mediated Governance Research
- Situated Technologies Pamphlets 2: Urban Versioning System
- Brand Avenue: Detroit A City on the Move
- Places Journal: A Forum of Design for the Public Realm
- Brooklyn Typology
- shrinkingcities : Welcome
- The Nashville Street Life Project
- • Spacing Toronto • understanding the urban landscape
- CTA Has 99 Problems But The Web Ain't One
- Local Projects
- URBANPHOTO: Cities / People / Place
- Neighbors Project
- Louisiana Speaks: A long-term planning initiative
- Chicago Neighborhoods Map: WildOnions.org Interactive
- The Next American Dream : Kansas City : A Documentary Film
- Boston-Edison Historic District, Detroit Neighborhood
- Modern Agenda

Figure 3: Dr. Monberg's aggregation of public participation websites

As early models, they allowed students to imagine the kind of website genre that they were trying to create—from scratch.[60] They also allowed students to find other such websites that could serve as models for the OMA website.

[60] Dr. Monberg's students used Ruby-on-Rails (RoR) to code the OMA website. It was originally hosted on the MSU WIDE website using Liquid Web. When Liquid Web was

But extant models of these websites were not usually robust: they filled a community need, but did not have the same kind of professional look or capabilities imagined for the OMA website.

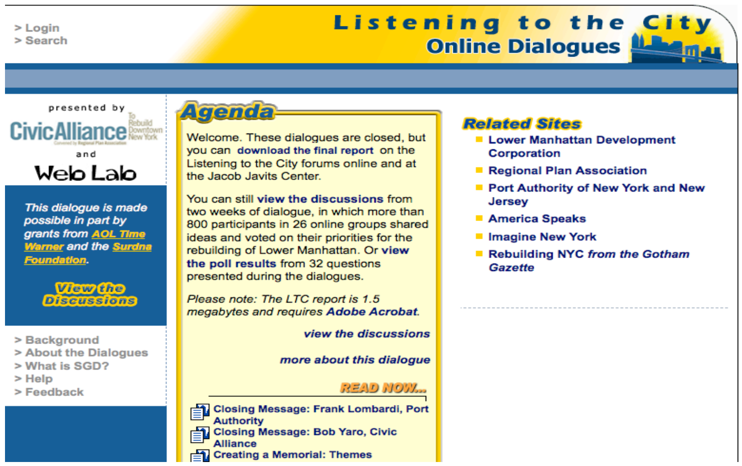

Figure 4: New York City's public deliberation website

(For the interpretation of the references to color in this and all other figures, the reader is referred to the electronic version of this dissertation.)

Dr. Monberg had students find other models of web 2.0 and contemporary web design and make mock website pages in small groups.

(Footnote 60 cont'd) updated, it conflicted with RoR. Dr. Monberg found a new home for the OMA website on the MSU Matrix server.

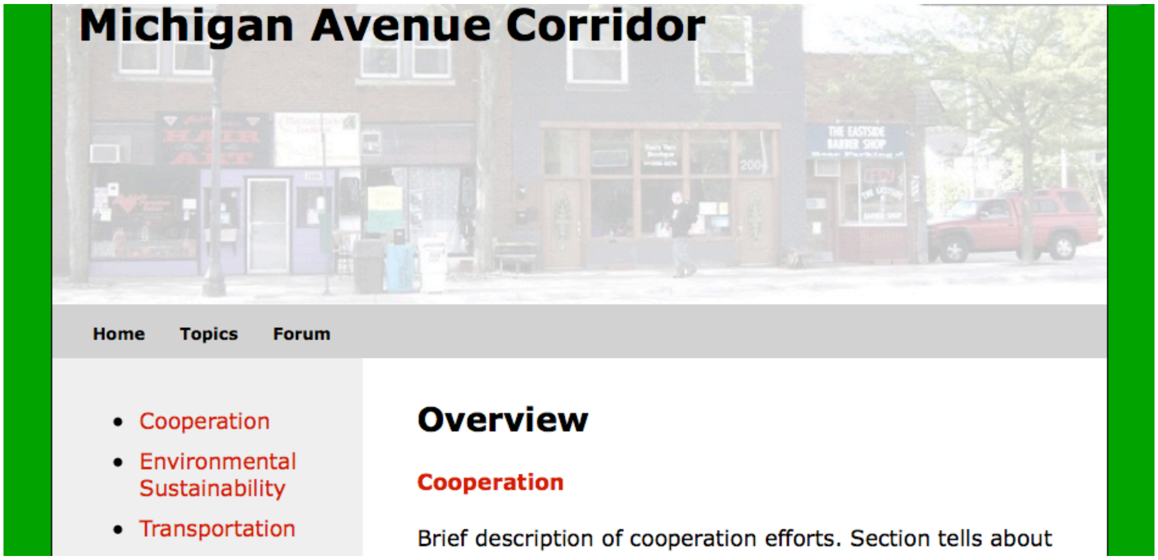

Figure 5: A student website "mock up" for the "Our Michigan Ave" website

The groups presented their mock pages, explaining their decisions for the look and feel they were trying to create. Eventually, students chose a sleek, contemporary design with a long banner photo of Downtown Lansing. This was just the first iteration for OMA, prior to user research results.

For TC 491 students, the public deliberation website was a genre that was unfamiliar to them. No one in the course had seen those kinds of sites before the class. Therefore, Dr. Monberg believed he needed to expose students to extant versions of public participation projects, and to connect that to students' previous knowledge of web 2.0 technologies (such as online voting, submission forms, and RSS feeds). In this way, students were introduced to ways in which to integrate organizational identity (provided by MACIA) with individual needs for participation and public naming.

Dr. Monberg's role as instructor heavily shaped both the research process, as well as how website design best practices were integrated into the design process of OMA. Because Dr. Monberg was an instructor with obligations to MACIA, as well as to students he was charged with imparting his expertise, it was appropriate for him to select the processes that guided students in making informed decisions about the OMA website and vetting those decisions when necessary. As coordinator of a large service-learning project, Dr. Monberg was ultimately responsible for the final deliverable that the community received and the processes that were used to produce that deliverable.[61]

Models for the WCGL Website

While OMA used models to create a solely online brand identity, WCGL's initial use of models was to primarily create enough of a structure to start their non-profit organization. Cindie and Manuela, as trained clinical social workers, were not concerned about a website at first: they were concerned about developing a "bricks and mortar" non-profit organization.[62] By interacting with clients and other social workers in the Lansing area, they were well aware of what kinds of career programs existed for women (their benefits, and their shortcomings). Manuela explains:

> Having worked with [organizations] under my other job, having worked with a lot of other agencies….and just, having been around Lansing since 1980…it gives you a sense of what is here.

---

[61] The OMA website project has been repurposed since its beginning. Through Dr. Monberg's recent collaboration with the Greater Lansing Arts Council, local artists have been featured on the website and are enthusiastic about using it as a forum to network. The Capital Area Transportation Authority has expressed interest in using the OMA website as well.

[62] Cindie Alwood and Manuela Kress, Ph.D. are both the founders and original co-directors of the Women's Center of Greater Lansing (WCGL). Manuela recently quit her position to pursue a career as an independent grant writing consultant for non-profit organizations in Western MI. Cindie is now the sole director of WCGL.

But what they were not sure of how to do was make their vision of holistically aiding women make career and personal transitions in their time of need happen.

To make their ideas concrete, they decided to do preliminary research to take stock of existing models of career and counseling services for women. First, they created an inventory of career and women's services in the entire Lansing area, noting their programs and services. Then, they located organizations like the one they wanted to build: NPOs dedicated to addressing women's career and personal issues. They then contacted these organizations and had long interviews with them, collecting fliers, brochures, and other materials as initial models for their own materials—which they admit were copycat versions, at first, according to Cindie:

> We actually took [the Femtor's]…actually, our first mission statement was their mission statement, just with our name on it, because we were doing the exact same things. And so our first brochure, I think, was modeled after theirs.

But as they developed the WCGL, they started creating models that made organizations like the Femtors "jealous" (such as the visual design of the newsletter and the current version of the website).

While both Cindie and Manuela were concerned for individual women who were making career and personal transitions, they were primarily concerned with creating an organizational identity that was credible. In order to do this, they borrowed heavily from organizations that they viewed as models for their own emerging organization. In order to even attract individuals to trust their organization, they first needed to create an organization that those individuals and organizational supporters could believe in.

As founding coordinators of the same community initiative, Cindie and Manuela chose to begin the WCGL as equal partners. Their decisions about finding models were based on consensus; they did not start a method of looking for models without first agreeing to take that action. But, their consensus was carefully considered, given their discussions with nonprofit leaders (such as Joan Nelson) who had run their own nonprofit organizations. They were striving for sensus communis—ethical consensus, and not resort to simple "group think" strategies (Shaeffer 8; Segal, 97). Given that their goal was to start a sustainable non-profit organization, their consensus during the early stages of starting the WCGL was extremely important.

Branding as Iterative Process

But although the models that these coordinators found provided initial branding for these community initiatives, WCGL and OMA brands evolved over time. In both cases, coordinators attribute this to the involvement of more and more stakeholders in the process of their representations.

Iterations of the "Our Michigan Ave" Website

OMA, as a community initiative, had always been defined by the involvement of different groups of people with different expertise. It was defined by a visible partnership between MACIA and MSU, primarily through the interaction of city planners with Dr. John Monberg.[63] Writing and technology students, as well as leaders of local community

---

[63] Through a January presentation to TC 491, MACIA city planners Lori Mullins, Brian Anderson, and Matt Brinkley described four groups they wanted to target based on MACIA conversations: long term residents, small business owners, community organization staff, and invested students. These groups shaped user research interview decisions.

organizations, were involved in spearheading the design of the site and the advertisement of that process and resulting product to the Lansing community. While MSU students were the coders and primary scribes, Lansing community members agreed to provide the space for MSU students to interact with local community members—the desired users of the OMA site.[64]

Per Dr. Monberg's directions, students used three different means of interacting with potential users: user research interviews; a community design critique; and a presentation to the Lansing community (through which community members could critique the website). During user research interviews, students could ask community members what was important to them about the Michigan Avenue Corridor and what uses they could see for the website. Students used these interviews to determine functions on the website. During the community design critique, students had an opportunity to show a completed first version of the website to community members. It was also an opportunity to show rough drafts of these functions and solicit community member feedback.

[64] John Melcher, of the Center for Community and Economic Development, agreed to host both the community design critique and the community presentation of the OMA website.

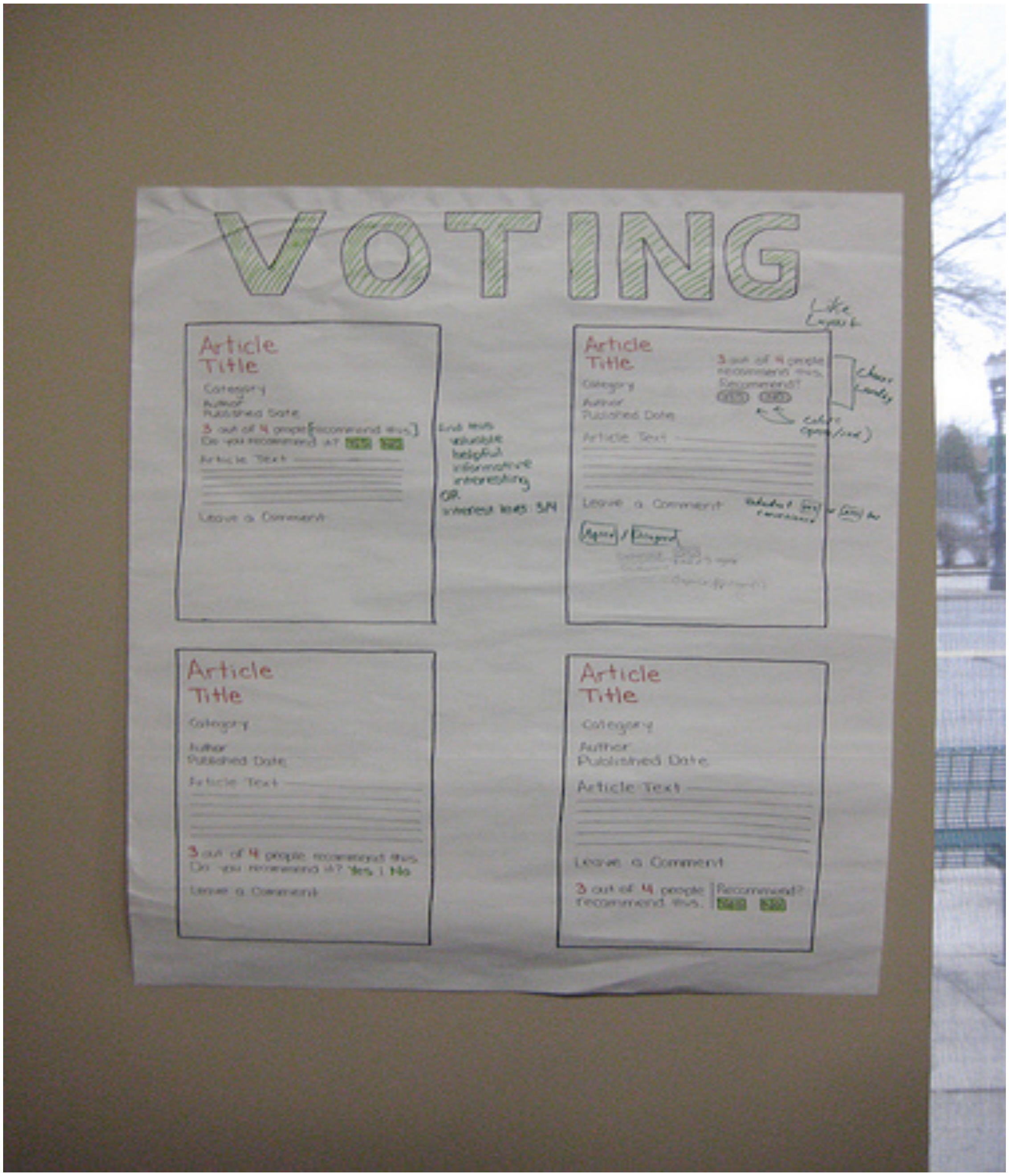

Figure 6: A proposed voting function for the OMA website with community member feedback in the margins

Finally, students used the community presentation to give a live demonstration of the website. Dr. Monberg also viewed the community presentation as yet another chance for community members to give feedback to student web designers. In each case, feedback was collected that influenced the look and feel of the website.

In particular, Dr. Monberg claims that the friendly, "neighborhood" look that the website now has came from feedback at the community design critique. Community members felt that the sleek version of the website felt too corporate, and did not represent who was supposed to be the intended users of the website: NPO staff, small business owners, and long term residents. But overall, students did not solicit community members for much ongoing feedback. They used the feedback on this presentation to change the color scheme, logo, and associated mottos, but did not revise these branding tools after the initial revision.

To be fair, the OMA website project had such an amorphous potential audience, which made the deliverable so different than many service-learning deliverables. While MACIA city planners supported the project, they were not reliable professional contacts and were not as invested in the OMA project the way that a staff member of a Lansing nonprofit would be invested in a website for their organization. Because potential ownership of the OMA website was distributed, students did not always know which community members they should consult about decisions related to the website—other than Dr. Monberg. Besides the logistical difficulty of attracting potential users to provide feedback, TC 491 students were also overwhelmed by the technical difficulties of coding the OMA website from scratch. In order to complete the OMA project as promised, Dr. Monberg's role as coordinator needed to take precedence over the solicitation of community feedback over every decision that was made the first semester. Dr. Monberg purposely planned revising the website using user research in subsequent semesters before the end of Spring semester 2009 (when the OMA website was initially produced and launched).

Iterations of the WCGL Website

In contrast, the WCGL branding has shifted by more informal means over time. WCGL did not start out with professional writers, so Cindie and Manuela utilized their best knowledge of flier design to attempt to create a following and base in the Lansing community. Manuela, in particular, describes their early attempts as "folksy."

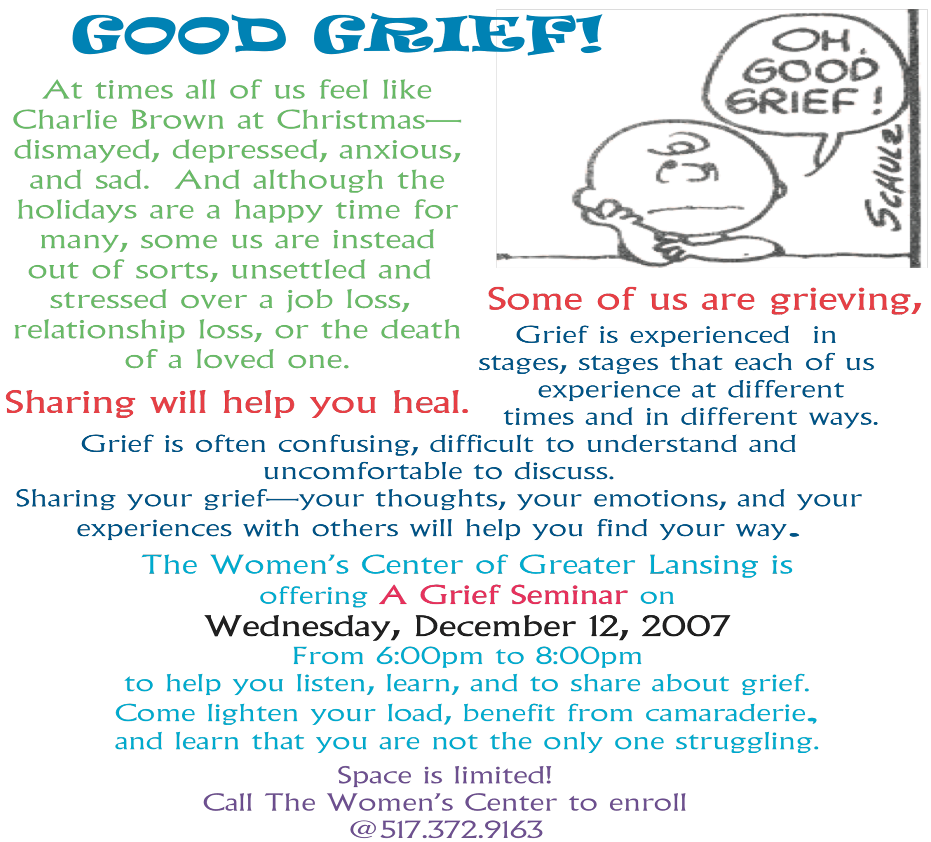

Figure 7: A "folksy" early WCGL flier

With no professional writers to aid them, Cindie and Manuela tried to appeal to potential volunteers through having them envision what WCGL could be. These first volunteers helped to do hard labor in the WCGL bricks and mortar buildings to create an inviting space—a space which no one knew about at first.

To advertise the kind of space that WCGL would be, Cindie and Manuela drew upon their existing connections to create the first executive board. That first executive board made important decisions made about branding. C. Leslie Charles, a professional speaker and writer, came up with the logo for the women's center: a zig zag, green half circle on a light purple background. Unfortunately, board members and staff could not agree on whether or not to adapt the logo.

WOMEN'S CENTER
of Greater Lansing

Figure 8: The original WCGL logo

Manuela explains:

Manuela: …we put the logo on that have now, which I think makes us look like an OBGYN clinic.

JR: [laughs]

Manuela: I never liked it. So..[laughs]

JR: It's an interesting logo. Is it supposed to be grass…?

Manuela: I don't know what it is supposed to be honestly.

According to Cindie, Leslie had some explanation, but no one currently a part of WCGL knows why. Board members and staff also debated the current name of the NPO:

Manuela: I also didn't want the name to be what the name is. There's compromises that you make. I wanted it to be "Working Women's Opportunity and Resource Center." That's what I wanted it to be. But, obviously that's not what it is.

JR: Who made that suggestion, or how did the name situation end up working out the way that it did?

Manuela: Well, like I said, a lot of these decisions…we actually started out…the person who made the suggestion initially…we actually started out as the Women's Network of Greater Lansing. And when we got a board on board, and started having board meetings and all that stuff…that's when we changed our name in 2005. And that's when we became the Women's Center of Greater Lansing. But I like the word "work," because that's really the focus of what we do.

Even though the logo and name were did not satisfy everyone's needs, they became a central branding tool for the WCGL.

The name and logo became a central stamp on fliers, press releases, and early versions of the newsletter. But eventually, it became an inspiration for the way the website was set up. Because the WCGL did not have staff or volunteers who were web savvy, they first took advantage of CAC Voices—a website project that helped to provide web space to local Lansing area NPOs.

Figure 9: The original WCGL page on the CAC Voices website

However, CAC was rigidly set up and did not allow for much customization: it had its own branding.[65] But Cindie was determined to have her own branding on the web. At the time, according to community activist and technology expert Matt Penniman, the Power of We Consortium had just gotten a federal grant to allow local non-profit organizations develop their capacity (which included free website design assistance from the Capital Area Community Media Center). Instead of using their capacity grant to build the website, they recruited a professional writing student (Christina Tower) from MSU to voluntarily create their vision on a website of their own via Dreamweaver in 2008.[66]

---

65 According to Kendall Leon, a researcher who worked with WCGL and CAC Voices, the plone-based system required that users edit using html.

66 The WCGL also has paid Image Media Marketing for custom newsletter and flier templates.

Figure 10: The Dreamweaver-based WCGL website

The WCGL website, from informal feedback, has been a successful branding tool. According to Cindie, the website creates a creates a warm feeling that often attracts donors, volunteers, interns, and clients:

> I just had, and this is no exaggeration, I had a guy who was at the job group Monday morning, and he was from UPS. And he looked at…he had looked at the success stories on our website, and he was incredibly moved, and when he came to the group, he said "I want to talk to you guys about giving you a grant." And it was so totally based on what he saw on the website.

But for Cindie and Manuela, the WCGL website is an advertisement, not a top priority.[67] Cindie explains:

> I think that we need to…we could probably update our pictures, you know? We could throw some more success stories on there…you know, there's some things we could do. But the issue is…what's the priority?

Even though they both note improvements could be made if it was systematically analyzed and updated, they are more concerned with the work of the center. The interactions that matter, for them, are face-to-face—in the center, and in the community. The WCGL uses branding is used to mobilize stakeholders, but branding not take center stage.

However, branding is not irrelevant to the WCGL—especially its impact on coordination. Cindie is more easily satisfied by what multiple stakeholders can agree upon for the WCGL. Her concern with branding is that it simply helps the WCGL do recruitment to sustain the NPO. Manuela, however, was more invested in branding when she was a coordinator. She believes that branding should exactly reflect the mission of the WCGL, and that coordinators should play a major role in decision-making for the WCGL. Their differing ideas about coordinators and their roles represent different kinds of ways of inhabiting the coordinator role when "going public."

In both cases, OMA and the WCGL contributors valued expediency that sometimes was more important than democratic processes. For OMA, both students and Dr. John Monberg only had so much time allotted for research and for production: their end goal was to produce a good product within a given time period. In particular, their interview

---

[67] Through many informal interactions I have had with Cindie, she has noted that clients are an immediate priority whereas writing helps to support that work. She confirmed this in a member check interview.

research with community members was a slow, difficult process and was not rapid enough to meet production deadlines. In the case of the WCGL, board members proved to be reliable support for WCGL and contributed highly to the first branding efforts; Cindie and Manuela were dependent on them initially because they had no other support. But as WCGL matured, the co-directors assumed more responsibility for branding and elicited the professional aid of those with branding expertise. OMA and the WCGL contributors chose to value expediency because they found it important to "go public" with what was acceptable at the moment—given their goals and time constraints.

Toward Community Initiative Sustainability

Given how difficult it is for community initiatives to pursue advertising and identity formation, why do they do it? After all, NPOs and community initiatives do not view advertising and identity formation as their mission, but rather a means to support their mission. Even though NPO and community initiative staff members and interns are supposed to wear many hats, they are often not disciplined as professional writers. I argue that NPOs and community initiatives pursue advertising and identity formation because they view it as a way to move toward sustainability of their organizations and projects.

Sustainability, in the non-for-profit sector, is difficult to achieve. Organizations that are less that a year old have difficulty obtaining grants and other kinds of funding simply because they are less than one year old: foundations and other funders want to give to already established organizations, ones that they think will be around.[68] When organizations like the WCGL reach the five year mark, it is quite an accomplishment. Although NPOs use chronos as one way to measure sustainability, they use other methods like community recognition, trust, and support.

Community Recognition

NPOs and community initiatives advertise, in part, to achieve community recognition. By community recognition, I am referring to individual and organization knowledge of an NPO or community initiative, regardless of experience. NPOs and community initiatives, or their consultants, can measure community recognition through formal means (like surveys, or focus groups), or through more informal means (like word-of-mouth and face-to-face encounters).

Both OMA and WCGL have usually used different means to measure their respective community recognition. To measure feedback on the website, OMA has used more formal means of feedback (as mentioned above). However, OMA and its stakeholders have not used formal measures to discover community knowledge of the website, or how well existing advertisements have impacted community member support of OMA. While the WCGL has not created a systematic survey, they did install and use Google Analytics for a year to figure out what was most important to users of their website (which they used to create priorities for services). However, the WCGL usually relies on what they hear from clients, volunteers, and partners (educational, NPO) to discover what if and how they are recognized in the Lansing community.

---

[68] I learned this information from informal conversations with Manuela and Dr. Dean Rehberger (WRAC) at Michigan State University who both do an extensive amount of grant writing. I have not found more objective sources that verify these claims to date.

Interestingly, both OMA and the WCGL have relied on face-to-face encounters for community recognition and promotion. Dr. Monberg and Steph Carlisle have promoted OMA in informal conversations with city leaders and co-workers, respectively.[69] Similarly, Cindie and Manuela actively promote WCGL through attending city luncheons and events of other local NPOs (through which they try to make short, oral pitches for WCGL). Unlike print and digital branding, the WCGL uses this face-to-face method of branding as an interactive, more personable way of gaining community recognition one person at a time. Community recognition indicates awareness of public audiences, but does not guarantee their commitment to acting on an organization's behalf.

Trust

Although community recognition is a step towards sustainability, NPOs and community initiatives realize that it does not guarantee that community members will commit to them. To commit to an NPO or community initiative, potential stakeholders (volunteers, donors, funders, etc.) need to develop trust in the organization. One step towards that is community recognition. As Cindie says, "What is said about us [WCGL] on the streets *is* our reputation." While trust in NPOs and community initiatives is intangible to some extent, NPOs, community initiatives, and their consults can be measure it in a few ways.

NPOs, community initiatives, and their consultants can measure trust by the group's ability to consistently recruit from a pool of potential volunteers, interns, and donors. Because of their investment in OMA, some students from TC 491 committed their time

[69] Steph Carlisle was a professional writing student who interviewed community members and posted those interviews to the "Our Stories" section of the OMA website. She agreed to have her name revealed in this study.

voluntarily to updating and promoting the website during Summer 2009. WCGL has also been able to experience a great deal of success with recruitment with its interns: the MSU Social Work program and Spring Arbor University consistently promote the WCGL as a great place to intern, which prospective interns note and pursue. Besides recruitment of interns, the WCGL is also able to receive some consistent grant support and donations from individuals and families.

While OMA was conceived of with government support, WCGL survived most of its organizational life without it. Because the city of Lansing government had never seen an initiative like the Women's Center, they did not think of it as a legitimate non-profit—especially because they thought it had a "women only" focus. To try to gain some foot holding among established institutions, Cindie and Manuela tried (and failed) to have recognition of their efforts in the *Lansing State Journal* (LSJ). With a successful pitch to the *City Pulse* and years of effort, the city of Lansing finally recognized WCGL as a 501(c) 3 in July 2010—five years after its inception. WCGL is proof that sometimes community initiatives need to gain trust and support from the ground up.

As OMA and WCGL demonstrate, trust is a difficult end to achieve while branding. Community initiatives can measure both the quality and character of their ties to their local communities by interacting with other groups over time. Often, this trust does not look like the city of Lansing's declaration of WCGL as a 501(c)3; instead, it is often relayed through private interactions with stakeholders.[70]

Support

---

[70] These private interactions include the efforts I mentioned above, the sending of private e-mails, the participation in face-to-face interactions, the delivering of donor checks, the participation in fundraisers, and the awarding of grants.

Once a NPO or community initiative can gain community recognition and trust, they are better positioned to gain enough support to self-sustain. Community recognition involves the creation of the brand; trust involves positive interactions with the brand, or the recognition of other successful positive interactions with the brand (e.g., when community foundations receive community member quotes as evidence of the impact of an NPO or community initiative on them in a grant application). These kinds of success are intentionally evidenced in community initiative's public advertisements to garner support.

For both OMA and WCGL, their websites are places where evidence of community recognition and trust is fore-grounded. On the OMA website, community recognition and trust is demonstrated by MACIA's involvement and support for the OMA site. There are also a few instances of community member posts (although, as mentioned in chapter 2, it is difficult to tell the difference between student posts and community member posts in many instances). WCGL foregrounds established organizations less on their website; they do not list partners on their web pages (although they do in uploaded documents like the newsletters), for instance. Instead, they highlight new and retiring volunteers, interns, board members, donors, and staff members in two paragraph biographies in the newsletters. In addition, they publish "success stories" of clients who have "graduated" on their website. In each of these posts, stakeholders reveal something personal about themselves and why they support WCGL. Although they do so in different ways, OMA and the WCGL both publically recognize their stakeholders (through full or display names) and their contributions.

They do this for a few reasons: to sustain relationships with existing stakeholders, and to invite new stakeholders into the fold. By naming stakeholders, OMA and WCGL also create more than a uniform collective: they acknowledge the diverse kinds of people who make their work possible. By noting diversity, OMA and WCGL make it possible for audiences to imagine the kinds of community networks and cooperation that they want to promote.

While OMA and WCGL may appear as uniform entities to the publics they recruit, they are actually driven on more dissensus than they present in public forums. For these community initiatives, more dissensus appears behind the scenes.[71] This behind-the-scenes dissensus is often generative, because people with different viewpoints are allowed to assert their opinions and consider merits of choosing one kind of action over another (West 150). Community initiatives have pressure to present a "normed" face to the public, for which they are rewarded (in recruitment and monetary support). For this reason, coordinator roles are presented to community initiative local publics in a neutral way that does not reflect internal politics.

Roles and Community Initiatives: Challenging Ideological Positions

Community initiatives create roles to get work done. As I have explained, in chapters 3 and this chapter, there are several roles that OMA and WCGL invented for this purpose: coordinator, committed assenting contributor, and occasional assenting contributor. With each of these roles, there were varying responsibilities. Coordinators direct other contributors, and even recruit board members that make decisions about their salaries.

---

[71] A few of Dr. Monberg's freshmen, who wrote some improvement articles for the OMA website, felt pressure to speak positively about the Michigan Avenue Corridor and the creative economy even though they did not agree with Dr. Monberg's perspective. While this is a form of dissensus, this is typical of instructor/student interactions, regardless of instructor intent.

Committed assenting contributors are regular staff members and volunteers. These contributors stay involved with community initiatives for long periods of time, and generally agree with how roles and tasks are defined and carried out. They often work closely with coordinators. Finally, occasional assenting contributors may serve one term in a role (such as board member or intern or special events volunteer) in a way that does not conflict with other roles or beliefs, but leaves after this period. There still can be quite a bit of variation in any of these roles, which depends not only on individuals and their context, but also organizational context as well. Community initiatives require some degrees of consensus; if a stakeholder does not agree with some action a community initiative is taking, they may simply withdraw. However, as I explain in this chapter, dissent exists and impacts rhetors' long term involvement in the community initiatives of which they are a part. Rhetoricians might find less subtle instances of dissenting behavior in community initiatives that are more activist-oriented than those I researched.[72]

Table 3: Individual rhetor roles in the public sphere

Type of Public Rhetor (Ideology)	Social Position	Preferred Voicing Strategies	Limitations
Deliberative Democrat	-Assumed to be from middle or upper class	-Turn-Taking -Deliberating -Trying to Create Consensus	-Does not question public forum framework

[72] Guiseppe Getto and Tony Michel write about this kind of dissenting behavior among student union volunteers in the California State University system. This publication has been accepted with revision to *College English.*

TABLE 3 (cont'd)

Activist	-Assumed to be from marginalized group and working class	-Verbal Interruption -Sarcasm -Alternative Modes (like images)	-Does not practice listening to those outside their own group
Discursive Combatant	-Sometimes assumed to be from the working class	-Verbal Interruption -Ad hominems -Shouting	-Is not interested in listening to others, or preserving the public forum framework

Table 4: Group roles in the public sphere

Types of Public Rhetors (Activity)	Social Positions	Preferred Voicing Strategies	Limitations
Coordinator	-Often a FT employee in the non-profit sector	-Finding Models -Creating Visions -Reporting -Editing	-May not see how their vision may not represent contributors or other stakeholders.
Committed Assenter	-Often a volunteer whose professional interests are met in some way by participation in the project	-Prescribed Moderating -Validates other members -Presents group progress in public and internal deliverables	-May represent own interest as organization's interest, or a group's interest.
Committed Dissenter	-Often a volunteer whose professional interests are met in some way by participation in the project	-Asking questions -Unprescribed moderating -Looks for outside models -Advocates for outside assessment	-May view organization as in need of change; willing to challenge other committed members with regularity, without always thinking of consequences.

TABLE 4 (cont'd)

Occassional Assenter	-Often a participant who has limited interest in a project	-Follows submission guidelines -Uses prescribed modes	-Views own interest as slightly aligned with organization; willing to accept organization limitations within reasonable limits. -Only participates when projects align with self-interests, or feels strongly compelled.
Occassional Dissenter	-Often a participant who has limited interest in a project	-Asks questions -Uses alternative modes	-Views organization interests as important, but not committed to continually challenging members and their decisions. -May voice concern over a project, but will not continue if concerns are not met.

These roles are needed for groups to function, and differ from public spheres roles presented by scholars like Iris Marion Young and Heidi McKee, which focus more on individuals representing themselves in public conversations. Scholars like Young and McKee outline traditional public sphere roles that focus on the individual, include deliberative democrat, activist and discursive combatant. These traditional roles alone do not account for how groups work together to go public, and do not stay static over time:

they represent a snapshot of how individuals act at a given moment. However, these individual roles may impact how group roles play out. This is one area that merits further investigation.

Implications for Further Research on Roles NPO Branding

In this chapter, I have tried to illustrate how roles, and coordination in particular, impacts community initiative public naming. For these community initiatives, public naming (and branding in particular) involves finding and using models, and using an iterative process that works toward community sustainability. While these cases may not account for all instances of NPO and community initiative branding, the differences between these organizations and approaches provides a good snapshot of the diversity of strategies that may be used to brand. This snapshot differs from "how to" models created by NPO marketing firms and journals that do not draw upon specific cases.

What my case studies of OMA and WCGL illustrate is where advertising models in both the business and nonprofit realms typically fall short: branding evolves over time, but not always reliably for community initiatives. For, unlike businesses and corporations that can spend much money, time, and staff to ensure their brand is always crisp, community initiatives might settle for what works (as long as it does work). Community initiatives advertising and identity creation is an intensive endeavor, which means that community initiatives must reconsider and redesign organizational identity using the available means of persuasion to do so (which usually means using the latest technologies and the designs they can afford).

Community initiative advertising is always dependent on ongoing assessment of public rhetoric in local communities, which is often conducted by or in consultation with coordinators. Coordinators may consider themselves to be visionaries; as experts; or as facilitators. These roles may be influenced by personal ideology, professional expectations, and simply by the needs of the given situation. Regardless of these tendencies, coordinators are charged with paying attention to the needs of stakeholders, and aiming for organizational sustainability—especially through branding. To even begin advertising or engaging in public naming practices successfully, rhetors must be aware of circulating topics in their community and beyond and how they are named. In the next chapter, I will discuss which topics were discussed on the WCGL and OMA websites were also discussed on other Lansing local media sites, as well as the different kinds of strategies writers used to define them. I will also discuss how OMA and the WCGL are a part of and contribute to larger conversations in the Lansing area.

CHAPTER 5: REDEFINITION AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE: TOPICS ON LOCAL MEDIA SITES

Roles set the stage for which topics are used when rhetors become local publics. As I demonstrated in the "models" section in Chapter 4, rhetors use PNAs in response to other PNAs. This is a function of historical conditions, influenced by access to local public rhetoric and the moment of access. When rhetors access topics that they later use in their PNAs, they may be using or creating topics that are of interest to local publics. As Kennedy asserts, "A [rhetor] can also use [generic] topics, many of which became traditional, to gain the trust or interest of an audience." (5). Publics trust topics, or topoi, which therefore can be used to open "lines of persuasion that can be used in a particular discourse situation," (Welch 170). Because of repetition, kopoi topoi (common topics) can lose potential for original invention, but are highly retrievable (113). How "common" topics are depend on the situation in which a rhetor finds him- or herself.

Topics can become "common" through repetition over time. Chronos, in combination with other factors such as access and ideology, impact which topics become common. Although intentional mimesis has been associated with pedagogical exercises with no bearing on the public sphere, mimesis is also a useful, habitual activity that makes public debates and discussions possible.[73] Through using the same words and phrases,

[73] Imitatio, another name for mimesis is significant to the history and the contemporary practice of rhetorical training. David Fleming and James Porter note that imitatio is indispensible to the training of writers. This chapter extends their argument about imitatio beyond the classroom, and extends discussions about "reuse" of writing in professional and civic contexts.

local publics can express consensus and dissensus about topics of shared concern. Mimesis is mundane, yet allows for interesting opportunities in local public spheres.

Community initiatives use topics in strategic, but not always scripted ways. Rhetors on WCGL and OMA websites have their motives for writing, for acting on these websites—which may or may not have to do with ongoing conversations in the local Lansing area.

Online Sites for Local Public Rhetoric
Official News Sites Local Newspapers Local TV Local Radio Local Magazines Local government websites Student Newspapers
Social Media Facebook Groups Twitter (Organization Users; Individual Users) Live Journal Groups
Citizen Media Citizen news websites Group blogs Individual blogs

Table 5: Online sites for local public rhetoric

However, what they write and how they frame their writing matters: their writing reaffirms, adds to, and challenges old ideas and practices, sometimes adding something entirely new. These categories are not solid, but pourous and instructive. Rhetors can use these categories to measure the usefulness of contributions of PNPs to local community public rhetoric in the Lansing area and beyond.

Affirming Local Public Rhetoric

Rhetors use affirmation as one method of defining a topic. Through affirmation, rhetors reaffirm norms: they are supported through the use of similar conclusions, even if the data changes—based on time, but usually not substance. In fact, norms are produced through repetition.[74] However, affirmation need not be negative: some norms are not negative, but are instead positive.[75]

As I will explain in this section, there are several ways that community initiatives like the Women's Center of Greater Lansing and the "Our Michigan Ave" project can and do affirm existing norms in local communities, the non-profit sector, and in professional settings. Collectively, WCGL and OMA use repetitive methods and techniques to establish their own credibility and common ground with those in local Lansing, MI area.

Credentials as Affirmation

The WCGL view credentials as a community norm; this is key to their identity as an organization.[76] Like any bricks-and-mortar direct service organization, they value client trust and confidentiality One of the primary ways that they build that trust with clients is by advertising expertise of those staff, interns, and volunteers who are trained in social work and psychology. Stakeholders can find and read announcements in the WCGL newsletters when a staff member, board member, intern, or volunteer starts working with

---

[74] Affirming local public rhetoric, as I describe it, is a way of asynchronously assenting to another rhetor's ideas and practices.

[75] For example, it is a community norm in the Lansing area for community initiatives and rhetors to entrust umbrella organizations like the Capital Area United Way and the Capital Region Community Foundation with general funding or earmarked funding to distribute to Lansing area direct service non-profit organizations.

[76] Credentials are recognized professional degrees or licenses.

the WCGL. These announcements often take the form of biographies that list educational degrees and training, and have some personal information that may or may not be relevant to the position.[77] Of course, stakeholders' past relevant experiences constitute different kinds of credentials, which may have different values to different stakeholders at WCGL. Nevertheless, the WCGL use credentials as a way of functioning as an organization.

Pragmatically, the WCGL uses credentials to function in a few important ways. In the long term, the WCGL writers use credentials for argument-building in documents like letters of intent, grant proposals, brochures, and the website. In the short term, the WCGL uses credentials to meet the needs of clients with assuredness of certain levels of training, and accountability. The WCGL interns may not have bachelor's degrees or master's degrees yet, but their performance and professional futures are at stake when they complete their internship. The WCGL knowledge of interns and their training, and knowledge of the kinds of training that their counselors have received is assurance of a certain level of quality that is necessary for future stakeholders when they are assessing their role in the WCGL.

Credentials also play an important role on the "Our Michigan Ave" public deliberation website. While degrees were not listed and experiences were not enumerated on the website, educational status and professional credentials still appear and influence the website. On the homepage at the top of the page, the "Our Michigan Ave" website is proudly listed as a product of collaboration between Michigan State University (MSU) and the Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority (MACIA). This information is somewhat misleading, given the fact that user-research with local community members in

[77] Credentials are important to all potential WCGL current or potential stakeholders, while personal information may be more important to WCGL staff and interns who may have personal, face-to-face interactions with new clients and donors.

the Michigan Avenue Corridor (residents, small business owners, community leaders, and students) was a central component of the process of building the website. However, these institutionalized initiatives also provided stability to the initiative: because this project is supported by a major university and a local government collaborative, community members may believe this project will likely be continually funded and is likely run by professionals.[78]

However, it is also clear from the “About” page that this project had been influenced by students. TC 491 student names are listed, and they are associated with MSU Telecommunications (although some students are actually professional writing majors and are not associated with telecommunication). The OMA website lacks a history of its creation, as well as acknowledgement of community stakeholders who were involved in user-testing. Additionally, the OMA website does not acknowledge all of the students who contributed to its creation. Students from Advanced Technical Writing, the Evolution of American Thought, and Digital Rhetoric and Writing have contributed technical aspects and writing, and in some cases attribute partial or full names to posts. This is most likely because while this project was spearheaded by an MSU-MACIA collaboration, the intended users were community members—and the creators of the site did not want to underscore their own involvement (as a means of encouraging Lansing community members to take ownership of the website). TheOMA website project was originally intended for

[78] Without his expertise in working with Ruby on Rails or creating functional web 2.0 websites, the “Our Michigan Ave” website would not be even materially possible or likely as a purely volunteer project.

community-government relations, and student involvement was to be minimal compared to eventual community member involvement.

Roles as Affirmation

On both the WCGL and OMA websites, writers connect credentials to roles that were adopted by members of each community respective community initiative. However, the WCGL had much more control of role adoption than OMA. The WCGL used face-to-face interviews with some documentation (such as resumes, letters of application, and application forms) to vet role assignments. While the WCGL clients are accepted without heavy vetting, WCGL staff, board members, interns, and volunteers have a more rigorous vetting process and training process. Also, while the WCGL clients do not have to commit to even one whole session of counseling or a group to be considered clients, the aforementioned the WCGL volunteers do make formal commitments of time and specified effort to WCGL. When these volunteers do not perform, they may lose their position. This process may be invisible in advertising, but the process of making initial commitment and of ending commitment is often highly visible in the newsletter.

The OMA website project does not foreground past roles as much as present roles. On the OMA website, present roles are foregrounded: one could act immediately! On the homepage, there are clear actions to take: create a story, propose an improvement idea, map an opinion. As potential users quickly discover, they need to register with the site to do more than just read what other users have posted. They need to create a user name and password to register with the site, They learn the code of ethics for the site on the "About" page, and learn they can monitor other users by "reporting abuse." But they also learn that they could interact with fellow users in positive ways, too. They could vote for another user’s improvement idea. They could reply to other users’ posts of all kinds. They could upload and tag pictures. And, thanks to efforts from involved students to populate the site, they could see many models for how to do this.

However, these models had inspired more student posts, but had not largely inspired regular or large community member participation on the website. While it is obvious that “Our Stories” are interviews of community members, it was not apparent to someone outside of the local area that most of the website users are past students of Dr. John Monberg’s. Without knowing the context of this class, or trying to use the MSU directory to discover whether or not OMA display names correspond to the names of current MSU students, readers or possible users may not know that many users have been students. If they pay attention to the times in which posts most frequently occur (during Fall and Spring semesters and almost always on the same dates) or the objective tone of some posts, they may be able to figure this out. This objective tone is very different than the heavy online debates that Dr. Monberg saw in response to online news articles prior to launching the OMA site.

Ideas as Affirmation

Frequently, writers on the WCGL and OMA websites use commonly held beliefs as a basis for making their own arguments. “Obesity as epidemic” and “economy as depressed” are two acts of affirmation that demonstrate how this happens. “Obesity as epidemic” is an affirming naming act that is used as support for a poster’s solution on the OMA website. In the article “Corridor Prosperity” by Sarah Villareal, it appears only as a picture of a man’s belly with measuring tape paired with the caption: “Obesity is a major issue.” While the writer’s goal is “decreasing obesity,” they focus their article on prescribing walkability as a desirable alternative to driving on the Michigan Avenue Corridor. This article constitutes the extent of discussion on OMA about obesity, but much can be found about obesity in local Lansing news archives.

While some focus is on the origins and extent of obesity in the local Lansing news archives, more of an emphasis is placed on solutions in local Lansing public rhetoric. Instead, local media features local events like "Stroll East Lansing" and programs like MSU Foodcorps (which aims to change the kind of food available for K-12 children in school cafeterias). Although there is no consensus about absolute solutions to obesity, there does not appear to be heavy debate within articles about validity of solutions as there is in local articles about the economy.

Each Lansing local media site, including the WCGL website, has a different perspective to offer about the economy. As I described before, C. Leslie Charles' article about "Crisis or Challenge" focused on defining a different kind of solution to economic crisis: compassion and grassroots and action (a la becoming involved in efforts like the WCGL). Although her solution is new, her timing and her description of the severity of crisis matches that of the local news media: the crisis is urgent, and we need to act now. During the same time, alternative solutions were posed to the same issue. Jeremy W. Steele, of the *Lansing State Journal,* posed Obama as a solution to stopping financial fallback in the private sector: his argument is that as president, Obama's plan could potentially stall foreclosures. Alternatively, Rob Brezny, of the City Pulse, believed that intervention in the public sector could be more valuable: military spending, he claimed, was obscene and the money could be directed instead to needed social services. Although Jeremy and Rob believe more in institutions than Leslie, ultimately they all agree that the economy is in crisis during and right after Fall 2008 and needs intervention. Leslie's agreement with local rhetoric in which Jeremy and Rob participate is not explicit, but does share common ground with other writers—a necessary move for building her own recommendations for dealing with the economic crisis.

Implications and Complications

Affirming local public rhetoric is necessary for local community organizations and initiatives. It helps to create stasis: the conditions under which local communities can agree to talk about the same issues, and sometimes reach the same conclusions. But it also indirectly points to the insider status of those who constitute the staff and volunteers of community initiatives: often, these are the communities they live in and the communities in which they come from. They are shaped by ideas and practices valued by these communities, and are not always looking to change them. This does not always mean that they are not aware of the limitations of these ideas and practices, but sometimes that they simply agree with them.

But affirming local public rhetoric does not always mean complete agreement about every detail of an idea or practice. For example, Leslie's agreement about economic crisis did not ensure that she shared Rob or Jeremy's view that big government was the solution to that crisis. This specific instance demonstrates that affirming local public rhetoric is not simply about accepting norms or trends completely, but simply about coming to one moment of consensus. Another moment may be addition of a solution, or a challenging of another norm. Leslie's new solution to the crisis is finding empathy for others, and being grateful for one's position; this challenges Rob and Jeremy's view that the responsibility belongs to national government to resolve the economic crisis.

Another complication of affirming local public rhetoric is that it does not always have to do with existing norms. New norms can be created very rapidly by extensive repetition of neologisms, or new terms for the local community (although those terms may not be new to other communities). I was surprised to find that urban terms that I initially thought would be exclusive to OMA, and perhaps found in Capital Gains magazine (a local city planning magazine) were much more extensively explained and applied in local news media. "Smart zones," "complete streets," and "brownfields" all had a huge local media presence in the Lansing area, but part of that can be attributed to public policy. In some of the articles that I found about all three of these terms, there was some mention of public policy that included these terms. Because of the efforts of reporters to explain what new municipal measures had passed, these terms gained quick importance. Whether or not these terms are used by ordinary residence in everyday life or even political discussions about Lansing are another matter.

Adding to Local Community Public Rhetoric

Another way that rhetors define a topic is through addition. When I say "addition," I mean that new ideas and structures are added to local communities that do not overtly challenge old ideas and structures but mostly expand upon them. There is a new organization, but it is recognizable. There are new stories told, but these stories are mostly in line with what stories have been told before. While these writers may seek to add to and challenge what has happened before, the framing is non-confrontational.

Missing Histories

As I mentioned in chapter 3, one substantial contribution of the articles on WCGL and OMA making known community histories or events that may not be widely known about or acknowledged elsewhere. Women's Equality Day was an event that was not publicized beyond the WCGL newsletter. In the August 2007 WCGL newsletter, Women's Equality Day is the first featured article on page 1. Through the article, readers learn that "the date [August 26] was selected to commemorate the 1920 passage of the 19th amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote." Like the *Lansing State Journal* (LSJ) article that reports on the event, the article also highlights specific women who are featured guests: Diane Madsen, who runs an organization to end discrimination against female high school athletes, for example. What the LSJ article does that the WCGL article does not do is include interview responses to the festivities of the day. For example, Girl Scout Laura Hoesl discusses not taking the right to vote for granted once she gains the opportunity. However, there are connections between both the LSJ and the WCGL with the event. Shala Cole, a WCGL intern at the time, talks about Women's Suffrage and the celebration of it as a "stepping stone" into future possibilities for women. While there is much overlap between the information about the significance of the event and the kinds of activities possible, the archiving of the article on the WCGL website is the only public record. LSJ charges for their full text article covering the event, although the information about what the significance of Women's Equality Day is still publicly available as an abstract. Although the history of how this event occurred in Lansing is archived, very little of it remains on the public record.

Community activists in Lansing also are part of the missing community history on the public record. While prominent non-profit directors like Joan Nelson from the Allen Neighborhood Center (ANC) are frequently featured in local media to give opinions, some simply are featured because of their positions. Rick Kibby is an example of a long-term community leader not highlighted extensively by local media. While the ANC video on the website features him as a key informant about the history of the ANC, most local media simply report his positions (City of Lansing representative, director of the Lansing Eastside Commercial Development Corporation) and not his personal opinions or story. From his story on the OMA website, readers learned that he has been a citizen in the area since 1972 and that he was dedicated to doing needed community work to make the Michigan Avenue Corridor thrive (and isn't a fan of red tape). Although readers did not learn what this means, the article also points to his work as a community archivist. While this account of Rick's history is rather thin, it was a first attempt to tell Rick's individual story to the community and recognize his long-term dedication to Lansing's Eastside. But stories of community activists, like Rick, do not constitute all of the missing histories on public record.

Community organizations, unlike WCGL and OMA, may have little to no representation on the Internet. On the "Our Stories" section of the OMA website, the Association for the Bingham Community (ABC), a local neighborhood organization, is featured. The ABC does not have their own website, and ABC has contact information on the ANC and LSJ websites. From the OMA article, readers learn that the organization hosts "Neighborhood Night Out" and combats illicit and illegal activities like prostitution in conjunction with the Lansing Police Department. Most notably, the ABC through long time active members like Denise Kelly, are invested in "changing perceptions of the neighborhood," transforming it into a community. The ABC has not been a beneficiary of the Capital Compassion Fund Grant, through which they could have their website designed by an organization like the Capital Area Community Media Center (CACMC). The OMA website was the only way in which their story is told online. Currently, they do not have their own web presence.

New Activities

In addition to providing missing histories, both the WCGL and OMA websites advertise activities for community members to participate in. The WCGL provides many face-to-face events that create a positive sense of community in the Lansing area. For example, many of their fundraisers not only support their operations and client services, but also support womens' well-being in the Lansing area. "Walk/Run/Roll" is their annual competitive race that they havve created, which allows women do a 5K and compete for medals. While it may not be the only race for charity in the area, it is the only women's race of its kind. Another substantial, unique fundraising event that the WCGL sponsors is "She Laughs," a comedy night featuring local female comics. Both of these opportunities not only bring women together, but also focus on creating wellness and a sense of community—an extension of the Center itself.

While the WCGL offers unique face-to-face events and activities, OMA offered unique digital opportunities for residents. Although city governments are increasingly going digital, they still do not offer many interactive digital activities for citizens to communicate with them about their needs and ideas. And while citizens do participate in online forums about local government, this usually comes in the form of comments or voting on official or unofficial online news forums. OMA offers the same kinds of opportunities for anonymity, commenting, and voting, but also presents the opportunity for the presentation of new stories and new ideas. Although other websites that are community-oriented allow for tagging and commenting, no other citizen website that I have encountered allows for the same kinds of possibilities for affecting public policy, or for relatively free expression of ideas.

New Ideas

Not surprisingly, the WCGL and OMA websites present opportunities for new ideas to be shared with the local Lansing area. One of these new ideas is presented by former intern Barb Dawson, in her article "Mentoring: A Bridge Out of Poverty." Her article is essentially a distillation and review of Ruby Payne's book *Bridges Out of Poverty*. In particular, she underscores the reason why mentoring is a useful tool for those in poverty: it allows middle class culture to be taught to those who are part of the working poor. While many local news stations talk about poverty as a growing issue because of skyrocketing unemployment (around 25%), very few focus on long term solutions that address systemic cultural problems like social class disparities.

Another concept that Lansing residents may not be familiar with is "new urbanism." The term "new urbanism" does appear in the Capital Gains article "Lansing Gets Green with Grand Rapids," but is only defined as "smart [municipal] growth" when it is referenced. The OMA website did not have an explicit definition, but had an article called "New Urbanism" through which many new inferences could be made. For example, author Sean Thomas identified his group as responsible for the following: "improving streetscape and landscape features an order to identify and distinguish the corridor as a destination, encourage pedestrian circulation, and support a vibrant urban experience." This was as abstract as his article became: during the rest of his article, he talked about particular solution ideas (specifically curbside recycling bins and trolleys). He introduced new urbanism, and discusses advantages to the movement: the concrete benefit to the local environment, and the change to citizen "consciousness." From his first paragraph, he writes a rich definition of new urbanism appears to involve both new attitudes tied to new methods of addressing communal issues. Another idea that he presents about is rain gardens. On the OMA website, rain gardens are listed as a proposed idea for the Lansing area. However, this idea was accepted long before it was proposed on the OMA website in Spring 2008. In the local media, Capital Gains excerpts from a LSJ article that is no longer public. As per usual, Capital Gains presents a definition of rain gardens and their function that is translatable for a lay audience:

> Rain gardens provide a natural way to manage storm run-off.
> By using strategic planting of indigenous plants, the gardens
> collect the storm water and naturally reduce pollution. Water
> that feeds the plants doesn't end up flooding streets or over-
> flowing storm sewers. And when those overflows are prevented,
> the region's rivers and waterways stay cleaner.

In addition, the city of Lansing updates the story of the 2007 addition of these rain gardens to the Michigan Avenue Corridor by sharing news of their selection for an EPA study on the impact of these rain gardens on urban cities. While the rain gardens proposal is not new, it is obscure information presented about rain gardens in the Lansing media. It is yet another portal to access information about rain gardens that may inform them more about their significance—especially if funding for renewal of these rain gardens is brought into local discussions in a few years down the road.

Implications and Complications

While I wish to highlight what both WCGL and OMA offer to the Lansing community via their websites, I do not wish to overstate their additions. For example, just because new information about community histories is available on these websites does not mean they are comprehensive, nor does it mean that more extensive information is not available in verbal circulation in the local community. In addition, new programs and events are based on old ideas: races for charities, user-centered web 2.0 technologies, and comedy nights are not new. What makes these structures new are their specific features, and the ways in which they are being used. Finally, while mentoring out of poverty, new urbanism and rain gardens may be new ideas for the Lansing community, they were not started here—not by these community initiatives. Rather, they were put into circulation here. New, used in this context, means not the norm, not abundant, and recently put into circulation.

New can also mean, however, renaming existing ideas and practices.[79] For example, the term "wayfinding" refers to the use of signage in a city to help pedestrians navigate streets and find their intended destinations. However, it is only used in the title of a LSJ article about new LCC signs in the local media. In contrast, "Complete Streets" is a much more abundant term that describes roads that are friendly and wide enough for both those who ride bikes and those who drive motor vehicles. "Complete Streets" is simply more widely found on local media sites than "wayfinding" because of public policy initiatives in

---

[79] Renaming involves rhetors providing a different, unfamiliar name to describe something with which their audience is already familiar.

the Michigan Avenue Corridor, and conversations that were started in the early 2000s about going green and making streets more friendly for those who wanted to bike for recreation and transportation. Regardless, both of these terms are specialized—they are used in city planning discourse, but are used to describe concrete objects that ordinary people encounter every day. These instances illustrate that additions are not really removed from everyday life, but often just involve different perspectives and slightly different methods of dealing with ordinary issues.

Challenging Local Public Rhetoric

The final way for rhetors to define a topic is through challenging existing norms and practices.[80] This is more rare on community initiative sites, particularly those that are not overtly framed as "activist" in operation. These challenges exist on a spectrum from mostly covert to clearly overt, but are recognized usually because of insider status in a community and not from official news publications. Challenges may take the form of calls for action, critique, investigation, or a rethinking of assumptions.

Challenging Initiatives

The WCGL, as an organization that provides employment services, challenges existing structures that have a similar function. One of the ways in which they challenge existing organizations is through "Success Stories" of former clients, who are more often than not "graduates" of the Job Seekers group. Shirley English is a former client who describes her first experience with unemployment and how she succeeded in becoming

[80] Challenging local public rhetoric, as I describe it, is a way of asynchronously dissenting in response another rhetor's ideas and practices.

employed with help from the WCGL (see here for the full story: http://www.womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org/success/shirley.html). What makes her story compelling is the way in which she contrasts the WCGL (and in part, the ANC) with the aid she was receiving from the "Unemployment Agency." Although she never says this explicitly, she strongly implies that community organizations were more helpful to her than more established organizations in the area. Local news media, interestingly enough, do not provide press on government and private agencies (although this information is available on municipal websites and the State of Michigan website). However, local media sites contribute to the conversation about unemployment by highlighting new solutions (like the new interactive database called the "Job and Career Accelerator") and by including job advertisements online and in print (e.g., http://www.capitalgainsmedia.com/jobs/). While different organizations provide different solutions, what makes WCGL really challenge existing institutions in terms of its use of rhetoric is client testimonials—which cannot be found on local media, government, or private organization websites or in marketing materials in the Lansing area.

On the OMA website, contributor Becca Ebner challenged the notion that Michigan manufacturing may be dead. Claiming that the Lansing region is prepared for changes in manufacturing as one of the central cities for automobile manufacturing, Becca argued that Lansing could retool itself for alternative energy manufacturing. She was not the only person in the Lansing area thinking along those lines. When she wrote her post on March 30, 2009, incidents like the auto layoffs of 2005 and the Fall 2008 financial crisis had just struck and had skyrocketed the unemployment rate. While groups like Michigan Future said during the same period that Michiganders should prepare for an information economy and not place emphasis on manufacturing, local news like WLAJ claimed that U.S. manufacturing leads the world with profits like 1.67 trillion in 2007 making “heavy equipment that cannot be shipped” abroad and circuits that are a part of many high tech devices that we use on a daily basis. More recently, concrete actions have occurred in Lansing that echo Becca’s call for manufacturing opportunities. Prima Civitas, a local non-profit organization, received a two year grant in 2010 to create a skills alliance to expand automobile bio-manufacturing; partnering with Michigan Works! and Michigan State University, they expect to hire an executive director to spearhead this endeavor. In addition, MSU recently hosted the Michigan Biomass Waste to Energy Summit as an opportunity for researchers, local government officials, and technology professionals to discuss what kinds of research and technological development was needed to make important decisions about financial incentives and job creation. It is difficult to know whether or not Becca’s post was considered in these discussions, but it is clear that her post was in tune with emerging conversations that contradicted the rhetoric of “death” of manufacturing in Michigan that had been prevalent in mid-Michigan in the mid-2000s.

Implications and Complications

From my examples above, it is clear that challenging definitions need not be aggressive. Rhetors need not name existing institutions they are criticizing (in the case of Shirley English’s remarks about the unhelpfulness of the “Unemployment Agency.”) Rhetors also need not cite an entire history before explaining their solution. Even when challenging existing ideas, local communities do have understood common ground—shared rhetorics, shared histories. But community initiatives, especially those who see themselves as acting on behalf of them, need to create and sustain a positive ethos—which often means not engaging in criticisms that do not lead to solutions, and endeavoring to illustrate their own place and worth versus criticizing existing institutions (at least publically). But some topics are so controversial that rhetors do not talk about them in highly accessible print or online discussions. These topics are so sensitive that they are difficult to triangulate; they highlight the reasons why only examining official digital and print documents are not enough to trace local public rhetoric or unveil the significance of certain contributions.

From my knowledge of the Lansing area, I know that local residents do not always view students in a positive light. Small business owners miss student business in the summers, and local landlords welcome their rent. However, institutions like MSU and the city of East Lansing consistently create initiatives to teach MSU students how to be "good neighbors" (through recycling campaigns, welcome back letters, etc.). These attempts are positive ones, however. Unfortunately, some neighborhoods have explicitly refused to allow student housing on their blocks. To permanent residents, students are transient figures that are not committed to improving the area or even participating beyond the MSU bubble.

The "Our Michigan Ave" website reveals a more complex portrait of MSU students, through the self-representations and interviews with MSU students. Ashley B, a junior at the time, revealed in her interview with lorirose39 that she wanted "a change in scenery" on the Michigan Avenue Corridor—some emerging hotspots (like a "Popeyes" or "Sonic") to make her become involved. Like Ashley B, rchampayne was also a transient student who will be soon be gone, but for different reasons. Unlike Ashley B, rchampayne was a local

Lansing resident who had worked at Michigan Avenue Corridor hotspots like the Green Door. Yet, he planned to move away for college—for the purpose of diversifying his skills and knowledge, and bringing that back to the Michigan Avenue Corridor. He functioned as a representative of someone who rejects the MSU student role literally (as he decides not to pursue it), but was also a student whose ultimate goal is to become a permanent, contributing resident of the Michigan Avenue Corridor. But even as rchampayne's story acts a foil for Ashley B's, and it does not present the story of an engaged MSU student.

Lauren Shumann was an example of such a student. She was involved in an MSU project called "Linking Lansing and U," which addresses the issue of MSU student engagement in Lansing local communities beyond the MSU campus. The organization has busses to take up to 500 MSU students to different kinds of cultural events and restaurants in Lansing. This is really significant, given the kinds of fears that students have about the city of Lansing—because of stories of prostitution on Kalamazoo street, or the comparisons of Lansing to the city of Detroit by family members.[81] One of the technical writing student contributors to the OMA website, Joseph Morsello, revealed in an interview that: "I've pretty much lived in the bubble of East Lansing. I was really ignorant to what was going on in Lansing [before I went to Old Town and participated in John Monberg's class]." Johnelle Chapman, a former freshman composition student, concurred that many of her classmates who were not from the city had a really eye-opening experience because of John Monberg's interactive class:

> …a bunch of people in my class, they had never even taken the
> bus, they had never even been down there and know what was

[81] Quite a few MSU students hail from the Detroit area.

> going on. They were like "Yeah, [we] were right there," but they had been on a tour. They didn't really know the corridor, or what has been going on. People in the neighborhoods there like know what has been going on because they've been there like forever. You know what I mean? Instead of people who had only been there a few times.

Joseph also agreed about the problem of student stereotypes regarding the city of Lansing, but, like Lauren, is optimistic about the possibilities for MSU creating programs for MSU students to overcome those stereotypes:

> I think the there needs to be an actual dialogue in which kids are put into the area. Not forced, or anything. But having more incentive. Because for me, my incentive was…this is my class, this is my grade.

As students who have overcome not only stereotypes they have held but have also become actively engaged, Lauren and Joseph's stories are rarely represented in public. Perhaps if MSU and other invested parties gave more publicity about MSU students and their impact of community engagement, theycould actively challenge prevailing stereotypes about both students and the city of Lansing. However, in order to do this, more organizations would have to be willing to own that this kind of public rhetoric exists. They may be resistant to doing this because this move could be interpreted as negative publicity that could actually harm rather than aid existing efforts to dispel these stereotypes. Institutional public face for MSU and for the city of Lansing, from my point of view, is much less reliant on word-of-mouth and much more on public and print materials.[82] However, this reliance does not entirely suppress unwanted publicity; it simply forces it underground.

Topoi Assessment for Community Initiatives: Beyond Initial Scans

Community initiatives do conduct a topoi assessment when they launch. They must carefully pay attention to what other organizations exist that do what they do. They must visit local media sites to gain a sense of need for their organization in the community. They must find models inside or outside of the community to base their own constitution as an organized group.[83] But assessment for grants and quarterly reports can be extremely internal. Community initiatives may not assess local topoi on a regular basis to evaluate themselves, or to plan their next steps.

Post-data collection, I was involved in a WCGL board member meeting in which we discussed conducting a formal environmental scan. Cindie revealed that the initial scan that she and Manuela conducted was informal: they simply talked to folks, using a snowball approach. The WCGL board members and grant writing committee members agreed that we needed to collect formal surveys from Lansing area female residents to determine what the current needs were in the community, and that we also need to assess what current impact our services and branding efforts were having on the local Lansing area. The WCGL,

---

[82] This contrasts with the public face of community initiatives, particularly non-profits like the WCGL who rely on word-of-mouth reputation for community support.

[83] Local public rhetoric that the WCGL and OMA participate does not involve the same kinds of "reuse" that Jason Schwartz and Charlotte Ribidoux describe. Both the WCGL and OMA participate in direct reuse on their websites (of their own materials) and did participate in such direct reuse when creating their initial models. However, my examination of local public rhetoric surrounding these websites shows this does not happen (often) between media sites. Notably, OMA uses an RSS feed for Capital Gains.

like so many other community initiatives, wants to contribute to redefining local topoi, as well as introducing new topoi. Yet, these topoi must be carefully delivered in a way that foregrounds their credibility (Olbricht 164). Their organizational credibility can be built through using methods like these to understand what role they can play in ongoing community conversations. To understand community need, community initiatives like the WCGL need to look beyond just what current services exist and do the kind of grassroots organizing that has long characterized the neighborhoods movement in the U.S. Even a survey of media articles and citizen forums only partially reveals the type and extent of need that exists in local communities. My methods of rhetorically analyzing local media and citizen websites serve as one kind of indicator that may inform grassroots research.

Grassroots research may be an avenue that researchers exploring community initiative practices may pursue to discover how their public documents meet true community need. Indeed, this could be a useful exploration for researchers who are extending and testing claims in this study. In chapter 6, I will further detail both the limitations of my study and my recommendations to researchers, practitioners, and teachers who are interested in the dynamic advertisement and recruitment work that community initiatives do in order to sustain themselves and impact local communities. Additionally, I explain how my "taking inventory" approach has been useful for the WCGL and for OMA, and what uses it may have for those interested in this kind of work—regardless of what kind of role they serve.

CHAPTER 6: FUTURE EXPLORATIONS IN PUBLIC-MAKING

Taking Inventory of Local Public Rhetoric

Throughout this dissertation, I have enacted a process of taking inventory of local public rhetoric. This process involves a few concrete steps:

a) identifying the origins and history of a community initiative
b) identifying and analyzing current advertising and recruitment strategies, as well as they relate to past practices
c) identifying how an organization is part of a larger, ongoing conversation in the local public sphere

Via conducting interviews and textual analysis, I have been able to explore these aspects of the *Our Michigan Ave* website project and the *Women's Center of Greater Lansing* website and organization. Researchers, community initiative staff members, and consultants can take advantage of this heuristic, albeit in different ways.

Table 6: Taking inventory of community initiatives

	Origin & History	Current & Past Practices	Ongoing Local Conversations
Researchers	-Talk to staff contact and research participants -Read/view annual reports, website, relevant advertisements	-View public advertisements -Interview staff and research participants -View archived advertisements	-Look at the materials to determine key words -Make a list of local media sites -Perform word searches for public documents -Use Google News to access additional archived articles

TABLE 6 (cont'd)

Community Initiative Staff	-Talk to staff, board members, dedicated volunteers -Reading/viewing annual reports, website, relevant advertisements	-Talk to staff, and long term volunteers -Look at past and in-progress advertisements, as well as any organization guidelines	-Decide which issues the organization wants to keep a pulse on -Select media sites to check on a regular basis -Archive relevant articles
Consultants	-Talk to staff contact, and suggested stakeholders (if requested by contact) -Read website	-Talk to staff contact -Ask to see relevant advertising samples	-Discover key words for NPO client -Do a key word search on a few local media sites -Base advertisement framing on results

Because researchers can afford to complete thorough investigations over time, they can afford to delve into archives and schedule moderately long (30-45 minute) interviews with key stakeholders of a community initiative. Because of this time to dwell, researchers may discover new trends, forgotten histories, and dissent within a community initiative that has not been made public—or has been long forgotten. Community initiative staff members do not have as much time to dwell, yet spend many more hours within their community initiative and garner trust to which researchers may not have access. Therefore, they have access to private conversations that can influence relationships and public documents. Additionally, community initiative staff members know which issues are most salient to their community initiative and can systematically keep track of what developments happen in the community as they happen—which can influence grant making, events planning, and more. Consultants are more constrained than researchers and community initiative staff members because of time constraints. They often need to limit their research to what will be useful for the production of public documents for the community initiative, although this research can aid in the framing of these documents. By meticulously taking inventory, researchers, community initiative staff members, and consultants can increase their understanding of community initiatives, their public writing practices, as well as ways to improve these practices and associated deliverables.

While I advocate taking inventory as a rhetorical approach to analyze how local publics assemble, I have also learned about the limitation of an approach that is limited to interviews and textual analysis over a short period of time. Although I use my data that I obtained through these methods extensively throughout this dissertation, I also depend in part on my role as a volunteer in these situations to add richness to my analysis and theory-building activities. Post-data collection, I am certain that rhetoricians pursuing a similar study in the future should conduct observational research, even if it is for a limited period of time.[84] Such observations allow for rhetoricians to capture cross-talk and deliberation over public-making activities that I have explored in this study. These are more informal moments that are often forgotten by interviews once they are formally interviewed (which made Phase 3 of my research impossible, as I explain thorough in

[84] Many Rhetoric and Composition scholars who study professional communication esp. see Barton for a broad overview of observational research) or service-learning (such as Adler-Kassner et al), or the combination of these (esp. Bowdon and Scott), conduct observational research or have their students do so when working with nonprofit organizations on client-based projects. While these projects are often short term, researchers may benefit from observational tools that these scholars have developed for themselves and their students (see Adler-Kassner for an example set of protocols).

chapter 2). Without capturing them, rhetoricians can only construct a fairly fragmented process of public-making.[85]

Public-Making Lessons for Rhetoric and Composition Scholars

While Rhetoric and Composition scholars often claim the public sphere as their natural habitat for intellectual investigations, there is still much about the public sphere to be explored. Public rhetoric, as a collective cognitive map for these explorers, can use routes I have charted for further explorations.

Publics depend on chronos. While kairos is a hallmark of successful assemblages of publics, it only serves to highlight culminations. For community initiatives, deliverables are indicators of rhetors responding to the moment, but do not full reveal chronos needed to understand the processes of public-making. Chronos is more than the mundane backdrop against which kairos shines so brightly, as scholars such as Elizabethada Wright claim. Rather, coordinators use chronos to organize productivity—by setting goals, establishing roles, creating tasks, and measuring progress. Scholars can only understand the role of chronos by discussing these processes with community initiative leaders and contributors. While virtual and public spaces where deliverable live may aid scholars trace deliverables and people, spatial conditions indicate only some of the “where” and “how” of public-making. When scholars taken into account both spatial and temporal conditions, a fuller context of public-making can emerge.

[85] I do recognize that interviews and observations may impact the way that rhetors in community settings may decide to act. Nevertheless, these methods are the best ways to garner information about motivations, intentions, and other factors that impact public-making.

Roles are important in shaping publics. Roles are also temporal, and are shaped by both kairos and chronos. Community initiatives create roles to engage in public-making; they also create roles in response to public-making. These roles are crafted for involvement in teams, and are different from the roles one occupies when engaged in public debate (as the individual roles for rhetors in the public sphere have long emphasized). These roles include coordinator, committed assenter, committed dissenter, occasional assenter, and occasional dissenter. Named positions that correspond with these roles are recursive: they change, or are eliminated, in response to perceived success—internal and external to community initiatives.[86] Roles create an ethos for community initiatives, in addition to shaping the kinds of praxis community initiatives and their supporters want to engage in. Roles are influenced by ideologies, but are also heavily defined by activities that result from them.

Previous public rhetoric is always shaping current public rhetoric. Community initiatives' recruitment efforts illustrate why previous public rhetoric sparks new public rhetoric.[87] When community initiatives seek grant money from grant-making organizations, they need to revise or add to existing programs to and survey current conditions in order to justify seed money. They may adapt their previous deliverables to account for new-to-them public naming practices to achieve this successfully. Additionally,

---

[86] Possible positions include volunteer coordinator (committed), development coordinator (committed), grant committee secretary (committed or occasional), newsletter contributor (committed or occasional), fundraising event participant (committed or occasional).

[87] The WCGL is using Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder's proposed cutbacks to state-wide employment programs as further justification of why the WCGL is needed in the Lansing community and can uniquely serve the working poor in an in-progress grant application of a national funder.

as programs change and organization capacities change, there are needs for different roles in the organization.[88] Also, changes in the community—what quickly become common topoi—may quickly impact what is kairotic for community initiatives to say and do.[89] Because of these constantly shifting variables, community initiatives need to always be aware of extant public rhetoric to use to make successful arguments for themselves.

These concepts may not be unfamiliar to Rhetoric and Composition scholars. In Rhetoric and Composition, scholars have long believed that people use the past to influence current conversations in the public sphere. However, these scholars may reconsider the importance of retracing chronos in thinking about community initiative processes (especially those in which they are trying to intervene); the range of possible roles for rhetors (which is collective and coordinative, in addition to representative); and ever-evolving histories of local public rhetoric (continuously archived online, with differing access points) are essential for (nearly) concurrent productions of it.

Public-Making Lessons for Practitioners

Of course, this study has pragmatic implications for practitioners who actively use PNPs to advertise community initiatives. Community initiative coordinators and contributors need to be well aware of the following conditions:

[88] For example, when Manuela left the WCGL, the WCGL did not have money to replace her coordinator position. As a temporary replacement, the WCGL quickly developed a grant writing committee to perform her former duties.

[89] Since the WCGL officially opened its doors in 2005, “unemployment” has become a more common topic. This has both enhanced the need of the WCGL and has made it more difficult for the WCGL to attract donors.

- No matter how stable a community initiative may seem, community initiative coordinators and contributors must consistently pay attention to internal and external conditions. Not only must they pay attention to funding trends from donors, but also play close attention to the ways in which current staff, clients, and volunteers are recognized. Newsletter "thank you" sections can be just one formal method of recognizing current contributors.
- Even when efforts are made to make contributors feel welcome, other exigencies can prevent a contributor's involvement from being relatively short term. Asking for time commitments can allow both contributors and leaders to negotiate the kinds of roles contributors will have, including advertising for new contributors.
- In addition to internal archives, community initiative contributors and contributors should actively find ways in which to keep an active pulse on what is happening via local media (which often includes relevant news about national and international affairs). While this kind of investigation prior to incorporation may provide useful information about the initial need for a community initiative, this information may prove useful to community initiatives in progress. This kind of knowledge may aid community initiatives in judging their current impact and relevance, as well as provide them with useful information to determine what to do with programming and advertisement in the future.

By constantly engaging in self-assessment, community initiative leaders and contributors can re-orient themselves in productive ways—ways that encourage fluid response to ever-changing conditions.

As I described in Chapter 1, community initiatives often do not operate in isolation when they advertise themselves. Often, community initiatives will partner with paid or unpaid consultants. Because these consultants negotiate writing and media projects (often advertisements) with community initiatives as relative outsiders, they should heed the following advice:

- When working in partnerships with groups that are different than your own, timetables rarely align. While paid consulting firms may induce community initiatives to work on their timetable, university groups usually must work on the timetable for the community groups for which they work. Sustainability of a project in the short or long term depends on timetables aligning in ways that are mutually beneficial. However, before starting a project, both need to assess whether all stakeholders will commit to working a project for enough time that is necessary to make the project successful. If one stakeholder cannot commit to the necessary timeframe to accomplish their goals, the terms of the partnership needs to be rethought.
- Before entering a partnership, each stakeholder group needs to make sure they have a representative to make the partnership sustainable. Without this delegation, communication breaks down and outside consultants risk creating a deliverable that is representative of their work but is perhaps not representative of the community group. Within each stakeholder group, each member needs to have a clearly defined role—and must have a stake in that role. By articulating and negotiating these roles at the start of a project, stakeholder groups can hold themselves and each other accountable.

- Each stakeholder group needs to be aware that the deliverables (e.g., websites, videos, brochures, newsletters, etc.) that they create in the partnership are kairotic, yet are subject to chronos—their circulation value will wane with time. They may serve as useful archives, or may be minimally updated in the future. However, their use-value is unpredictable; as a best case scenario, they are usable at given moments in time. But as local conditions change, community initiatives need to respond in new ways through revised deliverables.

By understanding the conditions that shape the partnership and the use of deliverables, consultants can contribute to a community initiative's successful use of PNPs in their public-making activities.

Future Research in Local Public Rhetoric

Throughout this dissertation, I have discussed the limitations of my study: short time duration; limited negotiation of research with stakeholders; reliance on participant memory and texts rather than first-hand observation, etc. Regardless of these limitations, my study opens a host of new possibilities for studies on local public rhetoric.

The following are just a few research questions that public rhetoricians may choose explore in response to this study:

- How does access to resources, like technology software, differ for community initiatives in the same local community? How are conditions of access altered by partnerships with other organizations?
- What kinds of tools and strategies do community initiatives use to negotiate the schedules of several stakeholders? How does this impact stakeholder frequency of

participation, as well as how stakeholders perform their roles (e.g., in assenting or dissenting ways)?

- How do changing roles impact the kinds of rhetoric strategies that publics use in their public-making activities?
- How do different ideologies perform in the same role (e.g., a contributor role)? How does that, in turn, impact a local public and their public-making practices?
- How do misconceptions of time impact how topics are defined? How often do these topics become accepted or abandoned by local publics?

These questions are not fully unexplored by Rhetoric and Composition scholars who investigate local publics like community initiatives, but current studies are also limited to moments of production, rather than moments of dissemination and evaluation.[90] This makes sense because Rhetoric and Composition scholars value production as mutuality in their partnerships with community initiatives. Community initiatives depend on the production of deliverables, especially those that are made with resources that colleges and universities can afford; such deliverables (like video advertisements) are difficult for community initiatives to afford, and are usually beyond their normal routines of production. However, Rhetoric and Composition scholars do not usually discover what happens to these deliverables post-partnership. Fortunately, both Professional Writing

[90] While notable service learning figures like Nora Bacon have called for longitudinal studies of service-learning, Rhetoric and Composition longitudinal studies of service-learning focus on students and critical consciousness rather than impact on NPOs or community initiatives that are involved in such partnerships. Even in professional writing studies, professors focus on how student values influence production—and how community partners respond to both process and product within a semester (see Kastman Breuch for a poignant example of instructors losing management of these processes). No studies, to my knowledge, have focused on what happens to documents post-production in community initiatives.

scholars and other communications specialists have developed protocols for analyzing the "now what?" of deliverables that are produced by organizations.[91] These protocols incorporate user research best practices to evaluate both professional standards and impact of materials on actual or potential stakeholders. Rhetoricians who work with local publics should take advantage of assessment tools in their pursuit to both study and intervene in the public-making practices of community initiatives.

My next steps as a researcher and local public advocate will involve learning more about dissemination and evaluation processes that are currently used by community initiatives and their research consultants. I am already aware of a few methods that are used to analyze digital writing, which including usability research; user research; and web analytics.[92] After analyzing those methods and their effectiveness, I will craft strategies for community initiatives to evaluate their own dissemination and evaluation processes effectively. I believe that community initiatives can benefit from learning how to analyze their own impact; while I will do the initial evaluation of their impact, I will aid the community initiatives that I analyze in my next study in learning how to do self-assessment. As a local publics rhetorician committed to capacity-building, I am aware of the need for this kind of tool—especially because community initiatives may not have

[91] David Kolb's work on the reflection cycle (often referred to short hand as "What? So What? Now What?") is often used by community initiatives (like the Ohio State University Service-Learning Center) to guide reflections on community engagement activities.

[92] Piwik is one of several free, open source software web analytics programs that is the freeware counterpart to Google Analytics. Academics and specialists who specialize in non-profit capacity-building may teach NPOs how to install and use this software to analyze their own web authoring practices.

partnerships with researchers that allow for continual assessment of the stakeholder impact of their communications.

But I do not mean to undercut how members of community initiatives work diligently to reflect on their work and to sustain their initiatives. As I have learned through this study and my volunteer involvement with OMA and WCGL, community initiative coordinators and committed volunteers utilize scholars as one potential resource in their efforts toward making tangible and ideological changes within their local publics and beyond. Community initiatives and scholars take inventory differently, even when they have similar goals. Perhaps that is why it is worth assembling; with joint efforts, community initiatives and scholars can impact local publics in ways yet imagined.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

U.S. NPO WEBSITE SURVEY FINDINGS

Stakeholder Representation:

Take action (becoming a volunteer, individual donor, corporate donor)
List of staff volunteer names and positions
Pictures of clients
Pictures of staff
Spanish version
Staff biographies
Board member biographies and pictures
Short introduction/summary of client story before story
Volunteer stories about experiences
List of donor names, logos, and website links
Number of volunteer hours in a year by year
Recent website activity status bar
Picture of physical location
Spanish version of website for non-English speakers

Interactivity:

E-mail button
Print button
Share button (Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
Donate button
Yelp! Button
Facebook like button for news events reporting
Join our mailing list button
Sign up for e-newsletter button
Linked or embedded map
Search bar
User login
Calendar with roll over
Link to reviews on “Great Nonprofits” website
Forms (reference, volunteer, donor, etc.)
Good Search and Good Shop Link
Facebook Fan
Facebook Causes
Podcasts

Gallery
Movies
Comments (add or view)
Online store
RSS Feeds
Services search
Guestbook

APPENDIX B

SOLICITATION PROTOCOL

To: [Interviewee E-mail Address]
From: rivaitje@msu.edu
[cc: wcgl1710@sbcglobal.net OR jmonberg@msu.edu]
Subject: Interest in Discussing [Name of Post] on the [WCGL or OMA] Website
Date: [Month Day, Year]

Dear [Interviewee's Full Name],

Hi! My name is Jessica Rivait, and I found your [type of post] post on [individual topic, official "subject"] on the [Women's Center of Greater Lansing website OR the "Our Michigan Ave" website]. I am interested in your post because [brief but substantive rationale directly related to content of that post].

Further, I am studying the public writing on [WCGL or OMA] and the [WCGL or OMA] websites for my dissertation; I want to interview you because [brief but substantive rationale explaining my results of textual analysis and methods of selecting interview participants].

If you're interested in an interview, it will only take 30-45 minutes of your time; you can choose the interview locale [suggest and list possible locales based on knowledge of participants].

Sincerely,

Jessica Rivait

Jessica L. Rivait
Ph.D. Candidate :: Rhetoric and Writing
Teaching Asst., Dept. of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures
283 Bessey Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48823

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Warm up: Are you [participant's full name?] I'm pleased to meet you. My name is Jessica Rivait, and I'm the secondary researcher for the research project "Towards a Comparative Model of Public Rhetoric: A Multi-Case Study Analysis of Public Naming Practices in a Local Community." Before we begin, we need to go over consent procedures and I need to have you give your consent for the interview. You can ask me questions at any time. I'll give you a blank, extra copy of consent that you can take with you for your records. Do you need to get settled (i.e., grab a coffee) before we begin?

Interview Questions (and associated follow-up questions):

> Why did you choose to write about x community issue or community initiative?
>
> How has your opinions about x community initiative developed over time?
>
> What other opinions or facts have influenced your perspective? Where did you find or encounter these opinions or facts? Did you find any of these on public or private documents?
>
> How have your beliefs and ideas about what should be done about x community issue or initiative developed over time?
>
> How can you measure how successful your contribution might be to the local community? What kind of impact do you imagine or know that your writing may or has had on the local community?
>
> Why did you choose to present your identity as you did within the text (anonymous, semi-anonymous, fully disclosed, etc.)?

Closing: You talked about x, x, and x private documents. Would you be willing to allow me to look at these documents so that I can better understand our interview and your writing on the [Women's Center of Greater Lansing website OR Our Michigan Ave website]? I respect whatever decision you make; I will be looking more at the public documents that you mentioned during our conversation today. [If given permission, make e-mail or face-to-face arrangements.]

Thank you for your time. Here is my contact information [gives a business card to interviewee]. I'll be in touch with you as I analyze what I find, and before I present my results publically.

APPENDIX D

LIST OF LANSING LOCAL MEDIA SITES

Newspapers

LSJ: http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/
City Pulse: http://www.lansingcitypulse.com/lansing/
NOISE: www.lansingnoise.com
TNCP: http://tncp.net/

Local TV Stations

WLAJ TV: http://www.wlaj.com/
WLNS TV: http://www.wlns.com/
WILX TV: http://www.wilx.com/news
WSYM TV: http://www.fox47news.com/

Municipal Websites

City of Lansing: http://cityoflansingmi.com/news.jsp
City of East Lansing:
http://www.cityofeastlansing.com/Home/Modules/CityBlog/CityManagersBlog/
Lansing "Charter" Township:
www.lansingtownship.org/

Radio Websites

1240 WJIM: http://www.wjimam.com/
730 AM: www.730amthefan.com
1320 AM: www.1320wils.com
1110 AM: www.flc.org/flr/wunn
88.1 FM: www.positivehits.com
99 FM: www.99wfmk.com
92.1 FM: www.wqtx.com
88.9 FM: www.impact89fm.org
94.1 FM: www.wvic.net
100.7 FM: www.witl.com
94.9 FM: www.wmmq.com
101.7 FM: www.1017mikefm.com
106 FM: www.q106fm.com
89.7 FM: www.wlnz.org

Business Magazines

Lansing Business Monthly: www.lansingbusinessmonthly.com
Capital Gains: www.capitalgainsmedia.com

Women's Magazines

Capital Area Women's Life Style Magazine: www.cawlm.com

University Newspapers

The State News (MSU): http://www.statenews.com/
The Lookout (OCC): www.lcc.edu/lookout/

Citizens Forums

Lansing News Online: http://lansingonlinenews.com/
Lansing Rocks: http://lansingrocks.com/
LJ Lansing Metro: http://community.livejournal.com/lansingmetro
LJ Gay Lansing: http://community.livejournal.com/gaylansing
LJ A Free Lansing: http://community.livejournal.com/afreelansing
MySpace: http://www.myspace.com/lansing_mi
The Lansing Blog: http://thelansingblog.com/

WORKS CITED

WORKS CITED

Adler-Kassner, Linda, Robert Crooks, and Ann Watters. *Writing the Community: Concepts and Models for Service Learning in Composition*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1997. Print.

Alcoff, Linda Martin. "The Problem of Speaking for Others." *Voice in Qualitative Inquiry: Challenging Conventional, Interpretive, and Critical Conceptions in Qualitative Research*. Alecia Y. Jackson and Lisa A. Mazzei, eds. 117-135. Print.

Amin, Martin E. *Social Science Research: Conception, Methodology, and Analysis*. Kampala, Uganda. Makerere University Printery. 2005. Print.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958. Print.

Aristotle. *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. Trans. George A. Kennedy. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. Print.

Barton, Ellen. "Design in Observational Research on the Discourse of Medicine: Toward Disciplined Interdisciplinarity." *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*. 15.3 (2001): 309-322. Print.

Barton, Matthew D. "The Future of Rational-Critical Debate in Online Public Spheres." *Computers and Composition*. 22 (2005):177–190. Print.

Bashore, Mark. "'Skills Alliance' Aims to Grow Area Manufacturing." WKAR News, 30 August 2010. Web. 1 July 2011. <http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/wkar/news.newsmain/article/0/0/1694402/In.Michigan/%27Skills.alliance%27.aims.to.grow.area.bio-manufacturing>

Bell, Abraham. "Private Takings." *The University of Chicago Law Review*. 76.2 (2009): 517-586. Print.

Bell, Jeanne. "Beyond Financial Oversight: Expanding the Board's Role in Pursuit of Sustainability." *Nonprofit Quarterly,* 6 April 2011. Web. 1 July 2011. <http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11661:beyond-financial-oversight-expanding-the-boards-role-in-the-pursuit-of-sustainability&catid=154:current-issue&Itemid=341>

Bowdon, Melody and J. Blake Scott, eds. *Service Learning and Professional Communication*. White Plains, NY; Longman, 2002. Print.

Brandes, Ute. "Baroque Women Writers and the Public Sphere." *Women in the German Yearbook.* 7 (1991): 43-63. Print.

Brezny, Rob. “Cut Military Spending to Jumpstart Economy.” *Lansing City Pulse*, 15 October 2008. Web. 15 April 2010. <http://womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org/feature/index.html>

Buchanan, Lindal. “Forging and Firing Thunderbolts: Collaboration and Women’s Rhetoric.” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly.* 33.4 (2003): 43-63. Print.

Carter, Michael. “Stasis and Kairos: Principles of Social Construction in Classical Rhetoric.” *Rhetoric Review.* 7.1 (1988): 97-112. Print.

Chapman, Johnelle. Personal interview. June 2010.

Charles, C. Leslie. “Crisis or Challenge: Living in Unprecedented Times.” *Women’s Center of Greater Lansing* website, Feb/March 2009. Web. 15 April 2010. <http://womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org/feature/index.html>

Confer, Karen. “Michigan Obesity Rates Ranked 10th in the Country.” *The State News*, 7 July 2010. Web. 1 August 2010. <http://www.statenews.com/index.php/article/2010/07/michigan_obesity_rates_ranked_10th_in_country>

Conley, Richard S. “George Bush and the 102d Congress: The Impact of Public and ‘Private’ Veto Threats on Policy Outcomes.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 33.4 (2003): 730-750. Print.

Coogan, David. “Public Rhetoric and Public Safety at the Chicago Transit Authority.” Journal of Business and Technical Communication. 16.3 (2002): 277-305. Print.

Cooper, Marilyn. “Labor Practices and the Use Value of Technologies.” *Labor, Writing Technologies, and the Shaping of Composition in the Academy.* Pamela Takayoshi and Patricia Sullivan, eds. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2007. Print.

Cushman, Ellen. “Sustainable Service Learning Programs.” *College Composition and Communication.* 54.1 (2002): 40-65. Print.

---.*The Struggle and The Tools: Oral and Literate Struggles in an Inner City Community.* SUNY Press, 1998. Print.

Dane, Francis. *Evaluating Research: Methodology for People Who Need to Read Research.* Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2011. Print.

Dawson, Barb. “Mentoring: A Bridge Out of Poverty.” *Women’s Center of Greater Lansing* website. Web. 15 April 2010. <http://womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org/feature/feature_mentoring3.html>

Deans, Thomas. *Writing Partnerships: Service-Learning in Composition*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 2000. Print.

DeHart, Scott M. "The Convergenece of Praxis and Theoria in Aristotle." *Journal of the History of Philosophy.* 33.1. (1995): 7-27. Print.

DeVoss, Danielle N. "English Studies and Intellectual Property: Copyright, Creativity, and the Commons." *Pedagogy: Critical Approaches to Teaching Literature, Language, Composition, and Culture*. 10.1 (2009): 201-215. Print.

Dewey, John. *The Public and Its Problems*, 2nd ed. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1957. Print.

Dillon, George T. and Matthew M. Wilkins. "True Sustainability: A New Model to Aid Nonprofits in Self-Sustaining Revenue Streams." *Guidestar,* May 2005. Web. 1 July 2011. <http://www2.guidestar.org/rxa/news/articles/2005/true-sustainability-a-new-model-to-aid-nonprofits-in-developing-self-sustaining-revenue-streams.aspx?articleId=795>

Doucet, Andrea and Natasha Mauthner. *The SAGE Handbook of Social Research Methods.* Pertti Alasuutari, Leonard Brickman, and Julia Brannen, eds. SAGE Publications, Inc. Thousand Oaks, CA. "Qualitative Interviewing and Feminist Research." 328-343. Print.

Dunn, Patricia A. and Kathleen Dun De Meers. "Reversing Notions of Disability and Accommodation: Embracing Universal Design in Writing Pedagogy and Web Space." *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy.* 7.1 (2002). Web. 1 July 2011. <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/7.1/binder2.html?coverweb/dunn_demers/index.html>

Durisin, Megan. "Foodcorps Aim to Provide Healthy Food." *The State News*, 10 January 2011. Web. 1 August 2010. <http://www.statenews.com/index.php/article/2011/01/foodcorps_aims_to_provide_healthy_food>

Ellis, Susan J. and Katherine H. Noyes. *By the People: A History of Americans as Volunteers. Energize.* 1978. Philadelphia, PA. Print.

English, Shirley. "Shirley's Story." *Women's Center of Greater Lansing* website. Web. 15 April 2010. <http://womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org/success/shirley.html>

Faber, Brenton. "Popularizing Nanoscience: The Public Rhetoric of Nanotechnology, 1986-1999." *Technical Communication Quarterly*. 15.2 (2006): 141-169. Print.

Fleming, J. David. "The Very Idea of a 'Progymnasmata.'" *Rhetoric Review.* 22.2 (2003): 105-120. Print.

Flower, Linda. "Talking across Difference: Intercultural Rhetoric and the Search for Situated Knowledge." *College Composition and Communication.* 55.1 (2003): 38-68. Print.

Fowler, Martin. "It's Not Just Standing Up: Patterns of Daily Stand Up Meetings." Web. 1 July 2011. <http://martinfowler.com/articles/itsNotJustStandingUp.html>

Frobish, Todd S. "An Origin of a Theory: A Comparison of Ethos in the Homeric 'Illiad with That Found in Aristotle's 'Rhetoric.'" *Rhetoric Review.* 22.1 (2003): 16-30. Print.

"G, Brad." Personal Interview. May 2010.

Gale, Frederic G., Michael W. Kleine, and James Kinneavy. "Speaking of Rhetoric: A Conversation with James Kinneavy." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly.* 27.3 (1997): 31-50. Print.

Garner, Mark and Peter Sercombe. "Research as Social Relations: Implications for Teaching Research Methods." *Teaching Research Methods in the Social Sciences*. Mark Garner, Claire Wagner, and Barbara Kawulich, eds. 81-89. Print.

Goggin, Maureen Daly. "An 'Essamplaire Essai' on the Rhetoricity of Needlework Sampler-Making: A Contribution to Theorizing and Historicizing Rhetorical Praxis." *Rhetoric Review.* 21.4 (2002): 309-338. Print.

Grabill, Jeffrey T. "Computer Computing and Citizen Productivity." *Computers and Composition.* 20 (2003): 131–150. Print.

Gurak, Laura J. *Persuasion and Privacy in Cyberspace: The Online Protests over Lotus Marketplace and the Clipper Chip.* Yale University, 2007. Print.

Habermas, Jurgen. *On the Pragmatics of Social Interaction*. Barbara Fultner, trans. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001. Print.

---. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Thomas Berger and Frederick Lawrence, trans. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989. Print.

Hackler, D, and Saxton, G.D. "The Strategic Use of Information Technology by Nonprofit Organizations: Increasing Capacity and Untapped Potential." *Public Administration Review*. 67.3 (2007): 474-487. Print.

Harmon, M.T. "Donations Drop 11% at Nation's Biggest Charities Last Year." *The Chronicle of Philanthropy,* 5 December 2004. Web. 1 July 2011. <http://philanthropy.com/article/A-Sharp-Donation-Drop-at-Big/125004/>

Haynes, Cynthia. “Writing Offshore: The Disappearing Coastline of Composition Theory.” *JAC*. 23.4 (2003): 667–724. Print.

Higgins, Lorraine D. and Lisa D. Brush. “Personal Experience Narrative and Public Debate: Writing the Wrongs of Welfare.” *College Composition and Communication.* 57.4 (2006): 694-729. Print.

Johnstone, Barbara. *Discourse Analysis*. Blackwell Publishing. Cornwall, UK. 2002. Print.

Kastman Breuch, Lee-Ann. “The Overruled Dust Mite: Preparing Technical Communication Students to Interact with Clients.” *Technical Communication Quarterly*. 10.2 (2001): 193-210. Print.

Kelly, Denise. Interview with Joseph Morsello. “Denise Kelly: Association for the Bingham Community.” *Our Michigan Ave* website, 21 April 2009. Web. 15 April 2010. <http://www.ourmichiganave.org/stories/45>

Kennedy, George A. *A New History of Classical Rhetoric*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994. Print.

Kibbey, Rick. Interview with Sean. *Our Michigan Ave* website, 20 April 2009. Web. 15 April 2010.
<http://www.ourmichiganave.org/stories/36>

Killingsworth, M. Jimmie and Dean Steffens. “Effectiveness in the Environmental Impact Statement: A Study in Public Rhetoric.” *Written Communication.* 6.2 (1989): 155-180. Print.

Kinch, John A. “Lansing Gets Green with Grand Rapids.” *Capital Gains*, 27 August 2008. Web. 1 August 2010.
<http://www.capitalgainsmedia.com/features/gren0233.aspx>

Kinsella, David and Jugdep S. Chima. “Military Industrialization and Public Discourse in India.” *Review of International Studies*. 27.3 (Jul., 2001): 353-373. Print.

Kohn, Margeret. *Brave New Neighborhoods: The Privatization of Public Space.* New York, NY: Routledge, 2004. Print.

Lansing State Journal. “Manufacturing Losses Alarm Michigan Workers.” A.1. 26 November 2005. Print.

Lansing State Journal. “Rain Gardens Livening Up Lansing Neighborhoods.” *Capital Gains*,19 September 2007. Web. 1 August 2010.
<http://www.capitalgainsmedia.com/inthenews/rain0102.aspx>

Lauer, Janice. “Composition Studies: Dappled Discipline.” *Rhetoric Review.* 3.1 (1984): 20-29. Print.

Lave, Jean and Etienne Wenger. *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991. Print.

Leeuw, Edith de. “Self-Administered Questionaires and Standardized Interviews.” *The SAGE Handbook of Social Research Methods*. Pertti Alasuutari, Leonard Brickman, and Julia Brannen, eds. SAGE Publications, Inc. Thousand Oaks, CA. 313-337. Print.

Leff, Michael. “The Habitation of Rhetoric.” Contemporary Rhetorical Theory: A Reader. ed. John Louis Lucaites, Celeste Michelle Condit, Sally Caudill. New York: Guilford Press, 1999. 52-64. Print.

Leslie, Kara. “New Job Search Aid Launched.” *The State News*, 10 January 2011. Web. 15 January 2011. <http://www.statenews.com/index.php/article/2011/01/new_job_search_aid_launched>

Levasseur, David G. and Diana B. Carlin. “Egocentric Argument and the Public Sphere: Citizen Deliberations on Public Policy and Policymakers.” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*. 4.3 (2001): 407-431. Print.

Lindeman, Neil. “Creating Knowledge for Advocacy: The Discourse of Research at a Conservation Organization.” *Technical Communication Quarterly.* 16.4 (2007): 431-451. Print.

Lorirose39. “B, Ashley.” 27 March 2009. Web. 15 April 2010. <http://www.ourmichiganave.org/stories/15>

Long, Elenore. *Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Local Publics*. West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press, 2008. Print.

Mathieu, Paula. *Tactics of Hope: The Public Turn in English Composition*. Portsmouth. 17NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc. 2005. Print.

---. “Questions of Time: Publishing and Group Identity in the Streetwise Writer’s Group.” *Writing Groups Inside and Outside of the Classroom.* Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004. Print.

McEachern, Robert W. “Problems in Service Learning and Technical/Professional Writing: Incorporating the Perspective of Nonprofit Management.” *Technical Communication Quarterly.* 10.2 (2001): 211-224. Print.

McIlvenny, Paul. “Heckling in Hyde Park: Verbal Audience Participation in Popular Public Discourse.” *Language in Society.* 25.1 (1996): 27-60. Print.

Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority website. Web. 15 April 2010. <http://www.michiganavecorridor.com/>

McMillan, Zane. "Summit Held to Discuss Using Waste for Energy." *The State News*. 7 December 2010. Web. 15 January 2011. <http://www.statenews.com/index.php/article/2010/12/summit_held_to_discuss_using_waste_for_energy>

Montesano, Mark. "Kairos and Kerygma: The Rhetoric of Christian Proclamation." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly.* 25 (1995): 164-178. Print.

Morsello, Joseph. *Personal interview*. June 2010.

Mutnick, Deborah. "Inscribing the World: An Oral History Project in Brooklyn." *College Composition and Communication.* 58.4 (2007): 626-647. Print.

Olson, Lester C. "Pictoral Representations of British America Resisting Rape: Rhetorical Re-Circulation of a Print Series Portraying the Boston Port Bill of 1774." *Rhetoric & Public Affairs.* 12.1 (2009): 1-36. Print.

Olbricht, Thomas H. "Delivery and Memory." P. 159-167. *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period, 330 B.C.-A.D. 400.* Stanley E. Porter, ed. Koninklijke Brill, Leiden, the Netherlands. 1997. Print.

Olesen, Thomas. "The Porous Public and the Transnational Dialectic: The Muhammed Cartoons Conflict." *Acta Sociologica*. 50.3 (2007): 295-308. Print.

Our Michigan Ave website. April 2009. Web. 15 April 2010. <www.ourmichiganave.org>

Palmquist, Ruth A. "The Historical Approach to Research." Web. 1 July 2011. <http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~palmquis/courses/historical.htm>

Parks, Stephen. *Gravyland: Writing Beyond the Curriculum in the City of Brotherly Love.* Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2010. Print.

Papillion, Terry. "Isocrates' techne and Rhetorical Pedagogy." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly.* 25 (1995): 149-163. Print.

Philanthropy Journal. "Nonprofit Revenue Growth Slows: Donors Decline." 11 April 2008. Web. 1 July 2011. <http://www.philanthropyjournal.org/news/nonprofit-revenue-growth-slows-donors-decline>

Philanthropy News Digest. “Nonprofit Sustainability.” October 2004. Discussion Board. 1 July 2011. <http://members4.boardhost.com/PNDtalk/msg/archive/35043.html>

Porter, James E. “Intertextuality and the Discourse Community.” *Rhetoric Review.* 5.1 1986): 34-47. Print.

Prater, Kathryn. “Women's Equality Day Celebrated Today at Capitol.” *Lansing State Journal*. 26 August 2009. Print.

PRN Newswire. “Every Child Healthy Network Launches to Help Kids Get Fit, Grow Confidence.” WLNS, 13 January 2011. Web. 15 January 2011.

Range, Stacey. “Census: 24.4% of Lansing in Poverty.” *Lansing State Journal*, 30 August 2006. p A.1. Print.

Ramdas, Kavita. "Sustainability for Nonprofit Organizations." 2003. Web. 15 January 2011. <http://academicearth.org/lectures/sustainability-for-non-profit-organizations>

Ratliff, Clancy. “Open Source and the Access Agenda.” *Computers and Composition Online.* 2010. Web. 1 July 2011. <http://www.bgsu.edu/cconline/OpenSourceAccess_Ratliff/OpenSourceAccess.html>

---. "Some Rights Reserved: Weblogs with Creative Commons Licenses." *Composition, Copyright, and Intellectual Property Law*. S. Westbrook, ed. SUNY Press, 2009: 50-67. Print.

Ribidoux, Charlotte. “Rhetorically Structured Content: Developing a Collaborative Single Sourcing Curriculum.” *Technical Communication Quarterly.* 17.1 (2008)” 110-135. Print.

Rife, Martine Courant. "Copyright Law as Mediational Means: Report on a Mixed-Methods Study of U.S. Professional Writers." *Technical Communication*. 57.1 (2010): 44-67. Print.

Ringmar, Erik. "Nationalism: The Idiocy of Intimacy." *The British Journal of Sociology*. 49.4 (1998): 534-549. Print.

Reynolds, Nedra. “Ethos as Location: New Sites for Understanding Discursive Authority.” *Rhetoric Review.* 11.2 (1993): 325-338. Print.

Sackey, Donnie Johnson. “Making a Rhetoric of Sustainability: Tracing ‘Local’ Dimensions of Environmental Writing.” *Master’s Thesis*. Michigan State University. 2009. Print.

Schaeffer, John D. “Vico and Kenneth Burke.” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly.* 26.2 (1996): 7-17. Print.

Scott, Colin. "Private Regulation of the Public Sector: A Neglected Facet of Contemporary Governance." *Journal of Law and Society*. 29.1 (2002): 56-76. Print.

Scott, J. Blake. “Civic Engagement as Risk Management and Public Relations: What the Pharmaseutical Industry Can Tell Us About Service-Learning.” *College Composition and Communication*. 61.2 (2009): 343-366. Print.

Segal, Judith. “Patient Compliance, the Rhetoric of Rhetoric, and the Rhetoric of Persuasion.” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly.* 23.3 (1994): 90-102. Print.

The Service-Learning Initiative at Ohio State University. “Reflection.” Web. 1 July 2011. <http://service-learning.osu.edu/docs/reflection.pdf>

Sheridan, David S., Jim Ridolfo, and Anthony Michel. “The Available Means of Persuasion: Mapping a Theory and Pedagogy of Multimodal Public Rhetoric.” *The Journal of Advanced Composition*. 25.4 (2005): 803-844. Print.

Short, Bryan C. “The Temporality of Rhetoric.” *Rhetoric Review.* 7.2 (1989): 367-379. Print.

Shuman, Lauren. Interview with “Ainsley.” Personal interview. 26 March 2009. <http://www.ourmichiganave.org/stories/10>

Simmons, W. Michele and Jeffrey T. Grabill. “Toward a Civic Rhetoric for Technologically and Scientifically Complex Places: Invention, Performance, and Participation.” *College Composition and Communication*. 58 (2007): 419-448. Print.

Steele, Jeremy W. “Obama Plan May Stall Area Foreclosures.” *Lansing State Journal*, 19 February 2009. Web. 15 January 2011. <http://womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org/feature/feature_mentoring3.html>

Swarts, Jason. “Recycled Writing: Assembling Actor Networks from Resuable Content.” *Journal of Business and Technical Communication.* 24.2 (2010): 127-163. Print.

Taylor, Peter. “Researcher Know Thyself! Emerging Pedagogies for ParticipatoryResearch.” *Teaching Research Methods in the Social Sciences*. Mark Garner, Claire Wagner, and Barbara Kawulich, eds. 153-162. Print

Thomas, Sean. “New Urbanism.” *Our Michigan Ave* website, 30 March 2009. Web. 15 April 2010. <http://www.ourmichiganave.org/stories/17>

Titscher, Stefan, Michael Meyer, Ruth Wodak, and Eva Vetter. *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis*. SAGE Publications, Inc. Thousand Oaks, CA. 2003. Print.

Torelli, Carlos, Chi-yue Chiu, Hean Tat Keh, and Nelson Amaral. "Brand Iconicity: A Shared Reality Perspective." *Brand Symbolism and Reference Groups: Perspectives on the Identity Value of Brands Symposium*. University of Minnesota. 2005. 1-5. Print.

UChannel. "The Decline and Rise of Public Spaces Conference (2008)." Hertie School of Governance. 2010. Web. 1 July 2011. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O12hV5C-rSM>

Vie, Stephanie. "Digital Divide 2.0: 'Generation M' and Online Social Networking Sites in the Composition Classroom." *Computers and Composition.* 25 (2008): 9-23. Print.

Villarreal, Sarah. "Corridor Prosperity." *Our Michigan Ave* website, 16 December 2009. Web. 15 April 2010. <http://www.ourmichiganave.org/articles/194>

Walzer, Arthur. "Blair's Ideal Orator: Civic Rhetoric and Christian Politeness in Lectures 25-34." *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*. 25.3 (2007): 269-295. Print.

Warner, Michael. *Publics and Counterpublics*. New York, NY: Zone Books, 2005. Print.

Weisser, Christian. *Moving Beyond Academic Discourse: Composition Studies and the Public Sphere*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002. Print.

Welch, Kathleen E. *Electric Rhetoric: Classical Rhetoric, Oralism, and a New Literacy.* The MIT Press. Cambridge, MA. 1999. Print.

Welch, Nancy. "'And Now That I Know Them": Composing Mutuality in a Service Learning Course." *College Composition and Communication.* 54.2 (2002): 243-263. Print.

---. *Living Room: Teaching Public Writing in a Privatized World*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 2005. Print.

West, Thomas. "Beyond Dissensus: Exploring the Heuristic Value of Conflict." *Rhetoric Review.* 15.1 (1996): 142-155. Print.

Westheimer, Joel and Joseph Kahne. "What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy." *American Educational Research Association.* 41.2 (2004): 237-269. Print.

Wheeler, Alina. *Designing Brand Identity: A Complete Guide to Creating, Building, and Maintaining Strong Brands*, 2nd ed. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2006. Print.

Wieland, Barbara. "East Lansing Walk Promotes Efforts to Help Combat Obesity." *Lansing State Journal*, 27 September 2010. Print.

WLAJ. "Group Pushes Moving Away from Manufacturing in Michigan." 15 April 2009. Web. 15 January 2011. <http://www.wlaj.com/news/group-15084-manufacturing-michigan.html>

WLAJ. "US Manufacturing Isn't Dead." 16 February 2009. Web. 15 January 2011. <http://www.wlaj.com/news/manufacturing-14353-make-month.html>

Women's Center of Greater Lansing. "Women's Equality Day." *WCGL* newsletter. August 2007. Web. 15 April 2010.

Women's Center of Greater Lansing website. 2008. Web. 15 April 2010. <www.womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org>

Wright, Elizabethada. "Reading the Cemetery: 'Lieu de Memoire par Excellance.'" *Rhetoric Society Quarterly.* 33.2 (2003): 27-44. Print.

Young, Iris Marion. "Activist Challenges to Deliberative Democracy." *Political Theory*. 29.5 (Oct., 2001): 670-690. Print.

Zaichkowsky, Judith Lynne. "Strategies for Brand Identity." *Journal of Brand Management.* 17.8 (2010): 548-560. Print.

Zurick, John. "Reengineering the (Cultural Nonprofit) Organization: The Low-Cost/High-Return Principles use at the Cincinnati Ballet to ReStart Our Engines." 2004. Web. 1 July 2011. <www.zgi-inc.com>