THE ROLE OF ART IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

By

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To my family for their love and support
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The role art plays as a form of political communication is often overlooked despite the fact that it is extremely relevant. Throughout the history of the human race, art has been used as a form of historical archiving, documenting the existence of past civilizations. As a historical record, art has served as a marker of what has happened before, providing our civilization with an established structure on which to build upon. It is logical to conclude, therefore, that art is an expression of human reality, and that socially created institutions, like government and politics, are composed of the same structural tenets as art.

Art as a form of political communication is not limited to poetry, however. Picasso’s painting, Guernica, still stands as one of the most enduring protests against Franco’s Spain. Eugène Ionesco’s play, Rhinocéros, was an absurdist piece often considered as a response to fascism, communism, and the Nazi uprising before WWII. Ernst Junger’s Die veranderte Welt, a book of photography, protested the glorification of German culture championed by the Nazis. According to Zald (1998), artists and celebrities have been used by social movements to attract popular support for their causes, enhancing their ability to raise awareness.

The author’s main concern is to prove the viability of art as a form of political communication in contemporary American society. In order to do so he shows the link between
established works of art and the content of modern political documentaries. He details concrete examples of art as political communication throughout history, from ancient through contemporary times. Once the context was established, he listed Jungian archetypes that are present throughout works of art and are present in modern political documentary and then performed a narrative analysis of two modern political documentaries, *Fahrenheit 9/11* and *An Inconvenient Truth*, in order to see if the same themes that existed in the past works of art are present in these documentaries.

The purpose of this study was to establish a link between political communication and artistic expression. The documentaries that were analyzed have been discussed as instruments for political lobbying, commercial successes, and artistic achievements in the field of documentary film making. It is through the use of artistic works like the political documentary that political ideas are now being expressed. The narrative tools used by art to distribute information are used by political documentaries to distribute information. The link between art and political messages is more clearly defined than ever before, highlighted by the amount of information distributed and the growing number of people that line up behind certain political causes.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The role art plays as a form of political communication is often overlooked despite the fact that it is extremely relevant. Throughout the history of the human race, art has been used as a form of historical archiving, documenting the existence and grandiosity of past civilizations. As a historical record, art has served as a marker of what has happened before, providing our civilization with an established structure on which to build upon. According to Gerbner (1999):

“Most of what we know, or think we know, we have never personally experienced. We live in a world erected by the stories we hear and see and tell. Unlocking incredible riches through imagery and words, conjuring up the unseen through art, creating towering works of imagination and fact through science, poetry, song, tales, reports and laws – that is the magic of human life. Through that magic we live in a world much wider than the threats and gratifications of the immediate physical environment, which is the world of other species” (p. ix).

It is logical to conclude, therefore, that art is an expression of human reality, and that socially created institutions, like government and politics, are composed of the same structural tenets as art. Gerbner (1999) went on to say:

“Fairy tales, novels, plays, comics, cartoons, and other forms of creative imagination and imagery are the basic building blocks of human understanding. They demonstrate complex causality by presenting imaginary action in total situations, coming to some conclusion that has a moral purpose and a social function. You do not have to believe the “facts” of Little Red Riding Hood to grasp the notion that big bad “wolves” victimize old women and trick little girls – a lesson in gender roles, fear, and power. Stories of this kind build, from infancy on, the fantasy we call reality. I do not suggest that the revelations are false, which they may or may not be, but that they are synthetic, selective, often mythical, and always socially constructed” (p. ix).

Our perception of reality is composed of the stories, or myths, that have been fed to our senses through the art produced by individuals who belonged to specific civilizations in the past. These stories were filled with universal narrative tools, like Jungian archetypes, that allow their messages to be disbursed to a wide audience. Jungian archetypes can be considered foundations for our stories. According to Izod (2001):
“Archetypes [are] the contents of the collective unconscious. They are not inherited ideas, but inherited modes of psychic functioning. Until activated, they are forms without content; when activated they control patterns of behavior. [They are] the centres of energy around which ideas, images, affects, and myths cohere” (p. 215).

The stories presented to us in art shape our culture and our reality. Stories like Beowulf, The Iliad, and The Odyssey were considered news stories long before they were considered literary benchmarks for their respective civilizations and the wandering minstrels who spread these stories across the land could be considered an early version of newscasters.

Though not conventional, art is undeniably a form of political output, and an influential one at that. In order to be published, art goes through the same or similar gatekeepers who decide what information is going to be put out for the public. According to Professor William Logan (personal communication, October 8, 2007) of the University of Florida English Department, despite the fact that poetry is seen now as an art form appreciated by a select few, it was once recognized as a forum for social change. It magnified the voice of the people and incited cultural revolutions. It appears that many take art for granted in contemporary times, especially in the U.S., and dismiss it as a hobby of the elite. While the U.S. has a poet laureate, the position is arguably mostly one of decorum. According to Professor Logan (personal communication, October 8, 2007), this was not the case 150 years ago. Poetry and the other arts were part of the curriculum and were inculcated in children growing up. Over the course of time, as funds for education were cut in the U.S., most notably in the 1970’s and 1980’s, the arts were the subjects that were cut first.

A possible reason for this is that the effects of art on the public are hard to quantify. You can’t measure the general effect a piece of art has on a group of people because of the very nature of art, which is monolithic and structural. Art is a concept that has a uniform or inflexible quality or character. It creates an analytical relationship between the individual and the object. It
is a cognitive device that eventually helps to provide the individual with an understanding of their environment. What complicates things even further is that art analysis does not carry with it a sense of resolution. In the sports world, the winning team is right and the losing team is wrong.

Art is not as easily packaged. A poem can be interpreted in a different way by any number of people despite having a singular text to be analyzed. Also, consumerism is more rampant than ever before in our society. In fact our society is based on consumerism. In this type of society, when the media are controlled by the existing power hierarchy, perhaps art is the only way that people can show dissent. However, this has proven difficult since art was not quelled but neutered, treated in news reports only as a consumption good, thus limiting its social impact on the public. Ideologies are maintained through normalization, and in contemporary society it is normal to think of art as a commodity reserved for a specific group of consumers.

However, art as political communication is a real phenomenon. For example, the works of Pablo Neruda are considered among the best examples of political communication to come out of South America. According to Democracy Now (2004), “Fellow Nobel Prize-winner Gabriel Garcia Marquez called Pablo Neruda the ‘greatest poet of the 20th century...in any language’” (para. 2). However, Neruda laced much of his body of work with socialist ideals and served as a mouthpiece for the socialist movement that surfaced in South America throughout the 20th century. The disaffected American youth of the 1960’s adopted Neruda as the voice for their countercultural angst. According to American poetry (2007):

“Theirselfs influenced by South-American writers such as Pablo Neruda and Cesar Vallejo...the [American] deep-image poets were, in large part, responding to what they saw as the increasing objectivity in American poetry...The U.S. social environment of the late 1950s and early 1960s helped foster such an attitude toward poetry and human consciousness. Corporate culture was on the rise, and Americans were becoming increasingly materialistic...Some Americans were becoming complacent, yet, at the same time, they more were disconnected from their emotional lives. A number of literary
movements, including the Beats and the Deep Imagists, responded to the phenomenon of the individual’s growing alienation” (para. 1-2).

In contemporary times, a repackaged, non-political Neruda is widely read in the U.S. “In the last half of the 1990’s, Neruda became immensely popular in the United States...Neruda is everywhere” (Longo, 2002, p. xvi). Neruda’s work is cemented as a form of political communication even more so due to the following incident. When the poet died, General Augusto Pinochet forbade mourners to make his funeral public:

“A long-standing Communist Party supporter, Pablo Neruda died less than two weeks after General Augusto Pinochet overthrew Salvador Allende’s government in a U.S.-backed coup. His funeral became the first public show of opposition to Chile's military rulers. His work was banned until 1990 under the Pinochet regime” (Democracy, 2007, para. 7)

Despite the threat of possible repercussions, mourners came from all around Chile and attended Neruda’s funeral as a sort of protest against the established regime. Neruda became beloved in his native Chile partly because of the political dimension of his poetry. It is this dimension of his art that gave Chileans the courage to defy a direct order prohibiting mass meetings. The political agenda of those opposed to the coup was expressed through Neruda’s poetry and mass attendance at his funeral.

Another example of art helping to diffuse political ideology is found in the life and work of Louise Bennett, one of the main proponents of the Anglophone Caribbean tradition of poetry in Caribbean mass media during the 20th century. According to Professor Leah Rosenberg (personal communication, October 8, 2007) from the English department at the University of Florida, Louise Bennett wrote her poems in Jamaican Patois, or Creole, which was the language of the people of Jamaica. By publishing her work in the Daily Gleaner during the 40’s and 50’s, Bennett did her part to give Jamaican Patois validity and helped to have it recognized as a language by the international community. A consummate artist, Bennett showcased her “dub
poetry” (poetry with music in the background) through regular newspaper publication, radio programming, and television broadcasts throughout the 20th century.

“Ms. Lou will be forever remembered as the host of a weekly televised show called "Ring Ding". It was during the telecast of this show that she was instrumental in reviving the Anancy stories and giving her renditions of Jamaican life...Her storytelling abilities has earned her the place of one of Jamaica's living legends” (Bailey, 2005, para. 3).

As a member of Pantomime, the national theater of Jamaica, Bennett helped expound the influence of art in the political media of her country. The Daily Gleaner is one of two main newspapers in Jamaica; it is the oldest and most respected established newspaper there. Bennett’s poetry was getting national attention on a daily basis and that helped establish the cultural legacy of Jamaican Patois as a language (African, 2005). She has influenced other poets who now use the media to expound the cultural and political legacy of their poetry to mass audiences. There is Linton Kwesi Johnson, for example. Professor Rosenberg (personal communication, October 8, 2007) said that Johnson is a Jamaican born poet who now resides in Britain who often uses BBC Radio as a forum for his work and the themes presented therein. Another poet who regularly uses mass media as a forum for political poetry, according to Professor Rosenberg (personal communication, October 8, 2007), is Mutabaruka, star of the 1993 film "Sankofa." He is a talk show host and usually promotes his poetry through radio shows.

However, art as a form of political communication is not limited to poetry. Picasso’s painting, Guernica, still stands as one of the most enduring protests against Franco’s Spain. Eugène Ionesco’s play, Rhinocéros, was an absurdist piece often considered as a response to fascism, communism, and the Nazi uprising before WWII. Ernst Junger’s Die veranderte Welt, a book of photography, protested the glorification of German culture championed by the Nazis. According to Zald (1998), artists and celebrities have also been used by social movements to attract popular support for their causes, enhancing their ability to raise awareness:
“Social movement organizations (SMOs) enlisted prominent popular musicians in international campaigns to raise money, attract media attention, attract new supporters and attach them to the movement, and contribute to political transformation. His four cases are (1) the Sun City album and the Artists United against Apartheid; (2) the Breakthrough and Rainbow Warrior albums and Greenpeace; (3) the Nelson Mandela birthday celebration and the British Anti-Apartheid Movement; and (4) the Human Rights Now world tour organized by Amnesty International” (p. 1096).

More and more we see celebrities taking up political causes, like human rights, and becoming the spokespeople for the transnational organizations that represent these causes. American actor Don Cheadle took part in a documentary called *Darfur Now* in 2007. In it he stated that he and fellow actor George Clooney made up the highest ranking U.S. delegation to other countries that tried to raise awareness about the genocide in Darfur. He considered this to be an embarrassment because the government should be taking more of an interest in situations where human rights were being violated (Braun, 2007). Bono, from the rock group U2, started the Product Red brand, an organization that raises funds for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. Actress Nicole Kidman is an ambassador for women’s rights for the United Nations. We have even seen celebrities founding their own transnational organizations. Colombian songstress Shakira runs the Pies Descalzos foundation, which is dedicated to providing assistance for children whose lives have been marked by violence. We can begin to see a link between the political communication and the impact of art and artists as standard bearers, mobilizing a large number of people behind a cause.

Since art supersedes the traditional levels of analysis, we must use a mixture of mass communications theories to examine its impact. Standard theories seem unable to provide a clear picture because they are rooted in a singular level of analysis. For example, if one were to study a super-national international organization, like the European Union for instance, one would probably best be served by a systemic approach. In that case, the theories of neo-realism and neo-liberalism would best apply. If one were to study institutions like nation states, then theories
that work at the state level, like realism and liberalism, would apply. Constructionist theory or the theory of dialectical realism would work best at the individual level. The trouble with art is that it supersedes the usual levels of analysis. It works at all levels and beyond. Specifically, in this age of globalization, art as a form of political communication is no longer bound by distances, the boundaries of nation states, or systems.

For the purposes of this study, I have chosen to frame my analysis within certain aspects of cultivation theory as well as the theory dialectical realism because of the personal nature of the cognitive and psychological effects audiences experience when confronted with art. Dialectical realism is the process of getting to the truth of a matter by creating a thesis, developing an antithesis in opposition to the thesis, and then creating a new coherent synthesis from the conflict of the thesis and its antithesis (Bahskar, 1993).

My main concern is to prove the viability of art as a form of political communication in contemporary American society. In order to do so I will show the link between established works of art and the content of modern political documentaries. I believe that political communications draw heavily on the content portrayed in art. In order to prove my thesis, I will invoke concrete examples of art as political communication throughout history, from ancient through contemporary times. Then, I will demonstrate that the Jungian archetypes which are present in historical works of art are also present in modern political documentaries. To prove this, I will perform a narrative analysis of two modern political documentaries, Fahrenheit 9/11 and An Inconvenient Truth, in order to show that the same Jungian archetypes that existed in past works of art are also present in these documentaries. Hopefully, this will go a long way towards proving that art is a form of political communication, and that as such, it deserves more attention by scholars in mass communication.
CHAPTER 2
ART AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

What is Art?

In order to establish art as a form of political communication for the purposes of this thesis, it is necessary to attempt to define art. Art is a concept, an imprecise and fuzzy abstract, and we must attach to it some operational definitions in order for this not to become some platonic debate about the nature of the artistic, perfect in conception but not existing within the borders of our reality. Art is defined as “the quality, production, expression, or realm, according to aesthetic principles, of what is beautiful, appealing, or of more than ordinary significance” (Art, 2008). The word art is derived from the Latin word “ars” which literally translated means “method” or “ability.” Let’s not forget, however, that there is a connotation of beauty involved in the usage of the word; take, for example, the name of Aristotle’s master work on the nature of poetry entitled “Ars Poetica.” Keeping this in mind, let’s acknowledge that something considered “artificial” is manmade and thus created by human skill. Art is exactly that. Art does not occur in nature and as such it is only through us that it comes into this world in any form. There is a creationist aspect to art that is undeniable.

Art can be divided into two fundamental aspects: its creation by the artist and its consumption by the audience. Is the process in which an artist creates a piece also to be considered art? Or is art only what the audience who consumes it deems it to be? In her 1996 Nobel lecture, poet and Nobel Laureate Wislawa Szymborska (1998) gave us an understanding of what it means to produce art:

“There is, there has been, there will always be a certain group of people whom inspiration visits. It’s made up of all those who’ve consciously chosen their calling and do their job with love and imagination” (p. xv).
We can debate all day long about how much skill is necessary to create something that can be considered art as opposed to something that is considered garbage, but that would be a value judgment. Who decreed that Picasso’s *Guernica* is a masterpiece of artistic merit and not a series of squiggles and lines? We have been conditioned as a culture to believe and accept that certain works are to be considered prime examples of art, like Shakespeare’s plays or Beethoven’s symphonies. Yet this is a westernized view. Not everyone in the world will consider this to be art because different peoples have different concepts of beauty and what is beautiful. As the old saying goes, one man’s trash is another man’s treasure.

Amy Lowell, a famous U.S. critic and poet, once wrote that “art is the desire of a man to express himself, to record the reactions of his personality to the world he lives in” (Art quotes, 2007). However, Andre Gide, a French critic, essayist, & novelist, believed that “art is a collaboration between God and the artist, and the less the artist does the better” (Art quotes, 2007). Both of these views have their merits and can be seen as valid. However, they come from two differing schools of thought. One critic believed art to stem from the recesses of a very apparent humanity while the other saw art mostly as the product of divine inspiration.

What, then, falls under the umbrella of the term art? You can separate the arts into two groupings: the performing arts, which are active, and the fine arts which are passive. Architecture, literature, sculpture, painting, photography, and computer art are typically considered fine arts while dance, drama, music, film and radio-television are typically considered performance arts.

Art can be considered a marker of our humanity. In his Nobel acceptance speech Neruda said:

“I believe that poetry is an action, ephemeral or solemn, in which there enter as equal partners solitude and solidarity, emotion and action, the nearness to oneself, the nearness to
mankind and to the secret manifestations of nature. And no less strongly I think that all this is sustained...by an ever-wider sense of community, by an effort which will forever bring together the reality and the dreams in us because it is precisely in this way that poetry unites and mingles them...” (Holman & Snyder, 2007, para. 3).

He went on to say:

“All paths lead to the same goal: to convey to others what we are. And we must pass through solitude and difficulty, isolation and silence in order to reach forth to the enchanted place where we can dance our clumsy dance and sing our sorrowful song - but in this dance or in this song there are fulfilled the most ancient rites of our conscience in the awareness of being human and of believing in a common destiny” (Holman & Snyder, 2007, para. 4).

The argument has been made that art is a bio-evolutionary urge. As human beings, we choose to leave our mark because it cements our place in history. Why else would there be prehistoric drawings of Aurochs in the Lascaux caves in France? In fact, no one can name a civilization we know about whose art we haven’t found. We know nothing of cultures that did not leave records of their art. Immediately after 9/11, as a form of therapy for the shocked and devastated citizens of New York, museums were opened to the public. This is significant to note because art is proof of our survival, a reminder that we are still here.

**Examples of Art as Political Communication**

**Polybius’s Histories**

Polybius was a Greek historian from the Hellenistic period who is most famous for his historical account of Rome, *The Histories*. While at first one might not consider this text a work of art, Polybius employed the Hellenistic style of writing to propose his ideas; Hellenism here meaning the fusion of Greek culture with other parts of the world. Polybius was a Greek living within the Roman Empire and thus subjected to its cultural norms. He was criticized in his lifetime for writing in a Hellenistic style instead of a high Attic style, which was the norm for Rome during that era. Champion (2004) stated, “I am concerned with Greek statesmen’s
politically motivated, strategic uses of Hellenism as responses to a world under Roman domination, and Polybius’s history is our richest text for studying this problem” (pp. 2-3).

*The Histories* represents Greek cultural ideals, philosophies, and stylistic narrative ideas juxtaposed against a Roman context.

Polybius used parallel narratives of Greeks and Romans which served “…to erase the ethnic-cultural division between Romans and Greeks and to reinforce the hyper-ethnic force of governmental institutions and societal characteristics” (p.6). In his work, “…Polybius ingeniously manipulated the politico-cultural language of Hellenism in response to his own political circumstances and to the realities of Roman power” (p. 235). In this manner, Polybius used Hellenism to push through his own political agenda, maintaining Greek cultural influence to document historical events within the Roman Empire, ensuring Greek culture’s longevity.

According to Champion (2004), “In our search for the Romans on a Polybian Hellenic-barbarian continuum, we have found that the Romans do not occupy a fixed position; rather they slide between the poles of Hellenism and barbarism” (p. 235). This makes his book, *The Histories*, a work of art. According to Champion (2004):

“His text affords a rich opportunity to study both the impact of political domination upon a subject and the ways in which accommodation to political subjection can also contain messages of resistance, encoded in ways that correspond to what James C. Scott calls ‘hidden transcripts’” (p.2).

**The American Constitution**


“My own argument has been that the secular authority established after the American Revolution had already depended upon a powerful sense of the revealed, suggesting that American literary culture has centrally shared in an impulse to secular revelation. The
Constitution… evades the distinction between secularity and the sanctified otherness of traditional revelation” (pp. 157-158).

In other words, when you analyze the United States Constitution, the one basic thought you will find that serves as a basis for that document is that the Constitution wishes to encompass everything, “to make the local cosmic” (p.161).

It is interesting to note that in the case of classic American literature, the Constitution helped create “…an art of uniting contradictory states or conditions of existence” (p.162). Here you have a literary style defined by a political agenda. It differed greatly from the literature of Great Britain, which helped build a new cultural identity for a new nation. A comparison between American sea novelist Herman Melville and British sea novelist Joseph Conrad highlights these differences:

“At the risk of a coarse comparison, for Conrad, the one-time captain, the dramatization of life at sea provides a natural arena for examining the central issue of the individual’s duty to a hierarchic society structure, for Melville, the former sailor ‘before the mast,’ what is central to the drama of men at sea is their facing the grandest philosophical and the logical questions, the very largest perspective on Nature, God, and the entire purpose of communal life” (p. 160).

The classic American literature that was published following the publication of the Constitution dealt primarily with the fundamental concept of unity. Take Walt Whitman’s collection of poetry entitled Leaves of Grass, for example. Throughout the collection, Whitman places particular emphasis on the individual and his place in nature. This could be likened to the Constitution’s declaration of the American desire for independence from Great Britain. However, Whitman praises the human mind and spirit as well as the physical body of the individual, implying that the sum of one’s parts, despite fundamental differences, are just as important as the unified whole, which depends on a balance of the physical and the spiritual to maximize its potential. This is not unlike the Constitution’s desire for unity within the American union of states.
It is also interesting to note that Polybius’s ideas of balanced government influenced the creation of the Constitution, “Beyond any particular doctrines and tendencies—what we refer to by such shorthand as ‘balance of powers,’ ‘consent of the governed,’ ‘rights of individuals’—the Constitution provides a kind of procedural faith for Americans, something like a covenant-to-be-covenanted” (p.157). This link further proves that the art of a past civilization influences those that come after it.

**Pablo Neruda**

Before the events of the Spanish Civil War, Neruda was considered to be a romantic poet who dabbled in surrealism. He then embarked on a diplomatic career which eventually led him to Spain. “In 1927, Neruda began his long career as a diplomat in the Latin American tradition of honoring poets with diplomatic assignments. After serving as honorary consul in Burma, Neruda was named Chilean consul in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1933” (Academy, 2007, para. 2). The relationships he built while in Argentina would go on to impact the rest of his life:

“While there, he began a friendship with the visiting Spanish poet Federico García Lorca. After transferring to Madrid later that year, Neruda also met Spanish writer Manuel Altolaguirre. Together the two men founded a literary review called *Caballo Verde Para la Poesía* in 1935. The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 interrupted Neruda's poetic and political development” (Academy, 2007, para. 2).

In order to understand Neruda’s role as an artist who used art to promote his own political agenda... in this case the advancement of the South American socialist movement...one must be familiar with the events that crafted his significant shift from love-struck surrealist to a highly politicized activist. According to Best, Hanhimaki, Maiolo, and Schulze (2004), the Spanish Civil War started on July 18, 1936:

“...as an attempted right-wing military coup led by General Francisco Franco. The coup was launched with elite troops from Spanish Morocco to topple the recently elected socialist and anti-clerical Popular Front government. Franco’s Nationalists failed to take Madrid, and the Republican government of President Azana remained in control of much of Spain” (p. 494).
According to Ealham and Richards (2005), “The Spanish tragedy, at the level of everyday life, was shaped by many tensions, both those that were formerly political and those that were to do with people’s perceptions and understanding of the society around them” (p. i).

“Both sides appealed for outside help to achieve victory. As a result, Spain became Europe’s ideological battlefield. Nazi Germany and fascist Italy intervened on the side of the Nationalists, while the Soviet Union sent aid to the Republicans. Britain and France tried to contain the war. The fighting dragged on for three terrible years, during which three-quarters of a million people perished. The civil war ended in April 1939. General Franco’s dictatorship lasted until he died in 1975” (Best et al., 2004, p. 494).

Neruda, who was serving as Consul in the Chilean embassy at the time, was caught in the middle of the Spanish Civil War.

García Lorca was a dear friend to Neruda and his execution on the night they were supposed to attend a wrestling event had a profound impact. Neruda (1976) wrote:

“For me it started on the evening of July 19, 1936...We were going to have great fun watching the truculence of the Masked Troglodyte, the Abyssinian Strangler, and the Sinister Orangutan. Federico did not show up. He was at the hour already on his way to death. We never saw each other again: he had an appointment with another strangler. And so the Spanish war, which changed my poetry, began for me with a poet’s disappearance” (p. 122).

Neruda used his time in Madrid to chronicle the events of the war in his book España en el Corazón, which had a tremendous political impact because it was published in the middle of the front during the civil war. “Neruda's outspoken sympathy for the loyalist cause during the Spanish Civil War led to his recall from Madrid in 1937” (Academy, 2007, para. 2). Perhaps Neruda associated a fascist regime with the death of poetry and saw socialism as the only system that differed enough from fascism for poetry to thrive. “The Soviet Union was for Neruda a country, where libraries, universities, and theatres were open for all” (Books, 2007, para. 7).

Toward the end of Neruda’s life, the socialist ideals he held so dear spread through Chile, infused the presidential election of 1970, and caught the attention of the United States. Because of its concerns about the possible spread of socialism and communism to Latin America, the
United States government created the Alliance for Progress. The U.S.’s Alliance for Progress can be defined as follows:

“The American assistance programme for Latin America begun in 1961, called for an annual increase of 2.5 percent in per capita income, the establishment of democratic governments, more equitable income distribution, land reform, and economic and social planning” (Best et al., 2004, p. 484).

Despite the Alliance for Progress, anti-Americanism and revolutionary ideals, took hold in Latin America, Chile included. Because of its growing involvement in Vietnam, the U.S. was reluctant to overtly intervene in Latin America with armed forces. “The reluctance to use American troops was clear in the case of Chile where Salvador Allende, the leader of the Unidad Popular movement that was supported by both communists and socialists, was elected president 1970” (Best et al., 2004, p. 374). The Nixon administration had tried to prevent the Allende presidency from taking place. “What seems to have concerned [President Richard] Nixon...was the prospect that a democratically elected socialist government would prove itself a viable political alternative in the western hemisphere” (Best et al., 2004, p. 375). If Allende’s Chile had been allowed to survive it would have proved that a socialist country could thrive in the western hemisphere (Fidel Castro’s Cuba was heavily dependent on the Soviet Union and therefore was tolerated).

Allowing socialism to spread in the western hemisphere was not an option for the U.S. and they decided to take steps to prevent this. For three years, the American government ceased economic aid to the Chilean government and instead gave generous amounts of money to Allende’s opponents. After this period of economic pressure, President Allende was assassinated and the Chilean military assumed command of the government in September 1973 (Best et al., 2004).

“Headed by General Augusto Pinochet, the junta launched a brutal crackdown to rid Chile of ‘the cancer of Marxism’. At least 3,000 Chileans and a number of foreign nationals were killed or disappeared, scores of others were detained and tortured, socialist and communist
party headquarters were raided, labour unions were dissolved, and universities were placed under close government surveillance” (Best et al., 2004, p. 374).

About the death of Allende, Neruda (1976) wrote:

“Chile has a long civil history with few revolutions and many stable governments, all of them conservative and mediocre. Many little Presidents and only two great ones: Balmaceda and Allende…As men of principles bent on making a great country out of one diminished by a mediocre oligarchy, the two were steered down the road to death. Balmaceda was driven to suicide for refusing to deliver nitrate riches to foreign companies. Allende was murdered because he nationalized the other wealth of Chile’s subsoil: copper” (p. 348).

Neruda (1976) then elaborated: “In both cases the Chilean oligarchy set bloody revolutions in motion. In both cases, the military played the bloodhounds. The English companies in Balmaceda’s time, the North Americans in Allende’s time, instigated and financed these military actions” (p. 348).

These lines show Neruda to be, in part, a product of a lifetime under imperialism, criticizing the forces of those that would make Chile a beggar sitting on a gold mine. The fact that he grew up with a feeling that his country was suffering unjustly at the hands of the world powers show a possible reason of why he embraced socialism and why his contemporaries across Latin America were so receptive to his poetry and the messages that lay therein.

Neruda died on September 23, 1973. According to Spooner (1994), “Neruda’s funeral the next day turned into the first demonstration against the new military regime...About two thousand people turned out...including members of the Chilean Communist party” (p. 54).

“Certainly the coup hastened his death...He was aware of the destruction of...his vision for a socialist Chile and, of course, the death of many friends, including Salvador Allende. So these things became inseparable: Neruda's death and the death of democracy in Chile. It's significant that when Neruda died, his widow, Matilda, brought his body to lay in state at another one of his houses called 'La Chascona' in Santiago...because the military had trashed the house and she wanted the world to see what was going on with...the coup in Chile at the time” (Democracy, 2004, para. 14).
Neruda obviously felt chafed by the influence of American imperialism in his homeland, angered by the exploitation of Chilean workers and national resources by American companies, and used his poetry to incite the Chilean national pride:

“My country has been betrayed more than any other in our time. From the nitrate deserts, from the submarine coal mines, from the terrible heights where copper lies buried and is extracted with inhuman labor at the hands our people, a freedom movement of magnificent proportions sprang up. That movement raised a man named Allende to the presidency of Chile to carry out reforms and measures of justice that could not be postponed, and to rescue our national wealth from the claws of foreigners” (Neruda, 1976, p. 347).

Neruda’s socialist views were partly crafted by living in a country that had suffered from a sort of “economic occupation” by the United States. “…the Americans dominated - and ultimately exploited - the Western Hemisphere economically through investment and ownership that effectively made American companies and individuals the key proprietors of Latin American resources” (Best et al., 2005, p. 132). Neruda used his poetry as a way to prepare his audience for an alternative to the American political and economic models. The following lines show how Neruda went about crafting poetry into an accessible, universal entity.

“… [Neruda’s] poetry does not only aim at representing social relations as they are (through the mediation of language), but also those social relations that are distorted and alienated under capitalism. Moreover, based on actual socio-historical experience, his poetry, beginning particularly with España en el Corazón, tries to capture collective and individual aspirations that portray more humane social relations that could lead to the creation of socialism” (Dawes, 2003, para. 30).

This showcases the accessibility and adaptability of Neruda’s poetry which lends itself directly to the realm of mass media and also builds a strong case for poetry as a device to promote social change.

Louise Bennett

Louise Bennett has had great success in using mass communications to enhance the reach and effect of her poetry which helped establish Jamaican Patois, or Creole, as Jamaica’s national language. According to Ramazani (2001), “...Jamaica’s national poet is arguably one of the most
significant English-language world poets in the middle decades of the twentieth century” (p. 106). She was born on September 7, 1919 in Jamaica (Jamaicans.com, 2001). According to Jamaicans.com (2001):

“Miss Lou, as she is affectionately known, received her education from Ebenezer and Calabar Elementary Schools, St. Simon’s College, Excelsior College, Friends College (Highgate). She was a resident artiste from 1945 to 1946 with the ‘Caribbean Carnival.’ She has appeared in leading humorous roles in several Jamaican Pantomimes and television shows...On Jamaica’s Independence Day 2001, the Honorable Mrs. Louise Bennett-Coverly was appointed as a Member of the Order of Merit (OM) for her invaluable and distinguished contribution to the development of the Arts and Culture” (para. 1).

In the introduction to Jamaican Labrish, a collection of Bennett’s poetry, Rex Nettleford wrote:

“In a quarter of a century she has carved designs out of the shapeless and unruly substance that is the Jamaican dialect...the language which most of the Jamaican people speak most of the time...and has raised the sing-song patter of the hills and of the towns to an art level acceptable to and appreciated by people of all classes of her country” (Bennett, 1966, p. 9).

Her usage of mass media to display her poetry, however, has put her role as a poet in question by some critics. “…There are others who would feel it improper to endow her with the name of poet, though they would generously crown her as the leading entertainer in Jamaica’s comedy-lore whether on stage, television, or radio” (Bennett, 1966, p. 10). Other critics believed her to be a poet who used the tools at her disposal to exemplify the Anglophone Caribbean tradition she was born into:

“Miss Bennett went to the basics and grasped the fact that she lived in an oral tradition where people talked and listened, cross-talked and reported and possess, almost to a fault, a high propensity for words...‘bad’ words, new words, archaic words, ‘big’, long and sonorous words” (Bennett, 1966, p. 10).

According to the African American Registry (2005):

“She has been described as Jamaica's leading comedienne, as the "only poet who has really hit the truth about her society through its own language", and as an important contributor to her country of ‘valid social documents reflecting the way Jamaicans think and feel and live’ Through her poems in Jamaican patois, she raised the dialect of the Jamaican folk to an art level which is acceptable to and appreciated by all in Jamaica” (para. 3).
The literature suggests that Bennett used language and mass media to a great extent, creating poetry with a similar quality of accessibility and universality to Neruda’s.

One must not forget how prolific Bennett was at using mass media to showcase her poetry. Ramazani (2001) wrote:

“Bennett published poetry in Jamaica’s national newspaper, the *Gleaner*, on a weekly basis through much of the 1940’s. Later she had her own regular radio show, ‘Miss Lou’s Views’ (1965-82), and a children’s television program, ‘Ring Ding’ (1970-82). Building a mass audience in Jamaica for performance genres, ‘Miss Lou’ regularly delivered dramatic renditions of plays, folk songs, and pantomime, sometimes before tens of thousands” (p. 106).

Bennett’s poetry is still widely accessible in contemporary times. According to Ramazani (2001):

“...in the year 2000, Bennett’s recitations of her poetry occupied Air Jamaica’s entire on-flight folk channel, and she was the ‘featured author’ at Sangster’s, the largest supplier of books in Jamaica. On the fiftieth anniversary of Bennett’s professional debut, Jamaica’s National Commercial Bank apostrophized her full-page image, ‘Jamaica wouldn’t be the same without you’” (p. 106).

Bennett, while still mostly a secret to the rest of the world, enjoys iconic status in Jamaica. This is in large part due to her usage of the mass media to promote her poetry and cultural heritage. Perhaps she would be more widely known in the world if Jamaican mass media had a broader reach. Still, as a controlled experiment, the results are obvious: “Although Bennett’s cultural prominence has waned in recent decades with the ascendancy of Bob Marley and other heroes of reggae and dance hall, her iconic significance has persisted...” (Ramazani, 2001, p. 106).

**Art in Documentary Film**

Documentary film has achieved legitimacy as a both a form of artistic expression and a form of political communication. According to Barsam (1976), “The very first films in the rich, varied history of motion pictures are nonfiction films...” (p. 13). The documentary has been around as long as the motion picture. However, as Barsam (1976) suggests, “Despite its rich
history, the nonfiction film is most often remembered for its often notorious power of persuasion…” (p. 13). One can see how persuasion plays an integral part in communication. In order to continue it is necessary to define the term documentary for the purposes of this paper.

Barsam (1976) delineates the typical characteristics of a documentary film:

“The nonfiction film dramatizes the factual rather than the fictional situation. The nonfiction film maker focuses his personal vision and his camera on actual situations...persons, processes, events-and attempts to render a creative interpretation of them. Traditionally, the nonfiction film originates in an immediate social situation… It is usually filmed at the actual scene…to create the feeling of ‘being there’ with as much fidelity to the fact as the situation allows. The typical nonfiction film is structured in two or three parts, with an introduction and a conclusion, and tends to follow a pattern from problem to solution” (p. 14).

Barsam believed that the documentary need not be dull:

“Although there is little disagreement with that position, the problem lies, ironically, with ‘how’ to make actual life-life as it is lived by real people, doing real things-as exciting and as stimulating as the life portrayed in the countless fictional films that comprise the bulk of film history and that, because of their almost immeasurable creativity and impact, are the major art form if the twentieth century” (Barsam, 1976, pp. 13-14).

He thought it should be one of the most stimulating and entertaining contemporary art forms.

The documentary is, nowadays, the closest type of film to be recognized as art as well as a form of political communication. It is not only commercial, but respected in society:

“The best nonfiction films are the best not because they are the most informative or the most persuasive or the most useful, but because they are the most creative, effective, and valuable human documents that can be made from the circumstances represented in them” (Barsam, 1976, p. 15).

A reason for this might be the authority implied by term documentary. It is considered a source for truth while maintaining that it is in fact a representation of reality designed by a person or a group of people. According to Rosen (1993), “The reality of an internally unified sequence was thus to be claimed on the strength of inferences from critically authenticated source documents…That is, the strongest evidence is that whose origins in the past being recounted
could be verified” (p. 68). Grierson (1946) stated, “You photograph the natural life, but you also, by your juxtaposition of detail, create an interpretation of it” (p. 23).

There are many different styles of documentary filmmaking; however, this does not exclude films that differ from the norm from being considered documentaries. On one end of the spectrum you have a man like Ken Burns, a famous American filmmaker who subscribes to the auteur school of filmmaking. He is the writer, director, editor, cameraman, music director, etc. on his multi-episodic documentaries which are really epic in scale. He hires celebrities to provide the narration over images of stills on subjects that range from the Civil War to the history of Jazz. Michael Moore is also a famous American filmmaker, but his style is completely different from Burns’ style. Despite his overwhelming control, Burns tries to hide that control from his audience, attempting to maintain an attitude of objectivity about the subjects and issues he covers. Moore is his own primary subject. He is famous for his on camera antics, using his movies as a forum for his own political ideology while instilling them with humor. While both men have different filmmaking styles, they both produce politically powerful documentaries. Photographic images are also used by special interest groups to promote their own political agenda. During the rise of the Nazi party, Ernst Junger published books of photography in which he documented the effects of WWI. When referring to Junger’s political use of photography, Werneburg and Phillips (1992) state:

“Here we find the decisive motif of Junger’s instrumentalization of aesthetics; the recognition that in using the nonliterary medium of the technical picture, aesthetic experience cannot be forced on its recipient but must be voluntarily accomplished. This takes place by means of a kind of ‘amusement’ that implies a moment of surprise: the unexpected (and cynical) punch line that offhandedly, ‘frivolously,’ delivers its ideological message. One is no longer in the realm of serious, high art, but can instead use the new media in entertaining, surprising, amusing ways to teach the masses about the modern world” (pp. 55-56).
In fact, Junger’s books of photography were a form of political protest against the established regime. According to Werneburg and Phillips (1992):

“Appearing at the moment at which the National Socialists came to power, \textit{Die veränderte Welt} proposed a utopian vision that was clearly not that of Nazis. It rejected any obvious glorification of German cultural roots and racial types, and instead looked forward to an international (or, as Junger put it, ‘planetarian’) society that would be violent, urban, and technological. And in 1933, the total absence of any picture of Hitler or other NSDHP leaders, and the juxtaposition of pictures of Mussolini and Stalin, could only have been understood by the new regime as a political statement of disapproval” (p. 62).

This same principle can be applied to modern documentary film, which is in itself a quick succession of photographs. Grierson (1946) stated:

“…realist documentary, with its streets and cities and slums and markets and exchanges and factories, has given itself the job of making poetry where no poet has gone before it, and where no ends, sufficient for the purposes of art, are easily observed. It requires not only taste but also inspiration, which is to say a very laborious, deep-seeing, deep-sympathizing creative effort indeed” (p. 25).

The U.S. government is well aware of the ability the media and art have to help promote a political agenda, despite initial resistance, “The whole notion of an information function serving world public opinion was being accepted with extreme gradualism and great reluctance by the diplomatic establishment” (MacCann, 1973, p. 175). As I stated before, the U.S. government has used art and the media to pursue U.S. political and economic interests in Latin America for some time now. According to MacCann (1973), “The changing nature of world interactions at the unofficial level has its personal symbol in the rise of the American public-affairs officer…he is primarily in charge of the ambassador’s relationship with the press, radio, television and film” (p. 173). The government created the United States Information Agency (USIA) to promote public diplomacy, though its critics said the USIA was a factory for propaganda. One of the primary ways the USIA promoted public diplomacy was through the distribution of films to other countries. MacCann (1973) quoted George Stevens Jr., head of the motion-picture arm of the USIA from a speech given at the American Film Festival in 1965:
“Selling is too simple a word for our needs. The circumstances and complexities of the civil rights involvement in the United States are not going to be sold to the people of Africa. Perhaps our adversaries have ‘sold’ the simple concept that America is a land of bigotry. This, reinforced by front page photographs from Selma, cannot be undone by selling of any kind. What is required is understanding. The over simplifications of what has been sold must be rounded out by a vigorous and unending communication with curious people of other lands. For this task the motion picture is eminently qualified” (p.195).

**Contemporary Studies of the Political Documentary**

Political documentaries have been analyzed from a variety of perspectives. James McEnteer (2006) examined the rise of documentary filmmaking and attributed it to television’s failure to sustain a commitment to the public interest and to provide an unbiased viewpoint.. According to McEnteer (2006), “Progressive documentary makers assume that the news media have failed” (p. xiii). In 2003, John Parmelee attempted to analyze the content of the 2000 presidential campaign videos. In his analysis, Parmelee (2003) stressed the importance of symbolism in political communication:

> “Graber argues that there are five functions of political language: (1) create a reality that is favorable to the candidate; (2) reconstruct the past and predict the future; (3) interpret and link a candidate with positive or negative symbols…; (4) set the agenda of the campaign; and (5) stimulate action on the part of citizens to vote and/or contribute time and money to the candidate” (p. 61).

The dependence of political communication on symbolism described by Parmelee lends itself to some of the ideas discussed in cultivation theory, which in turn suggest that our perception of reality is defined by the symbols, images, and narratives found in the works of art produced by both our own and prior civilizations.

There have also been contemporary studies conducted on the effects of political documentaries. An article written for the *Broadcasting & Cable* journal suggested that television networks should take advantage of the fact that political documentaries help the public choose the right presidential candidate by airing more political programs during election season (Play,
The suggestion is that networks should air these political programs in order to increase their audience base.

Young (2004) wrote about how presidential campaigns are being legitimately covered by guerilla-style documentary filmmaking ever since Alexandra Pelosi gained critical and commercial success with a camcorder filmed video diary that deconstructed the 2000 presidential election. Palser (2006) stated that it was dangerous to not question the legitimacy people associate to documentaries:

“If you're unnerved by the amount of *inane* video and commentary people post on the Web, consider that some of that digital detritus has been carefully crafted by advertisers and spinmasters, for whom amateurism is an art…Professional journalists should continue to graze the grassroots Web for content and story ideas…but also be aware that sometimes the real story is the agenda behind the content” (p. 90).

Palser used the example of a Republican PR firm that produced a video that spoofed Al Gore’s *An Inconvenient Truth* under the guise of a YouTube.com user. He said that special interest groups have released their ads and opinions under the guise of amateurs who blog about their opinions online.

Christensen (2007) conducted a study that mixed interviews with data analysis, hoping to prove that grassroots disbursement and online organization help maximize the distribution of information advocated by political documentaries. The production company in question was Brave New Films and Brave New Theaters. The author hoped to show that a coalition model helps documentaries bypass traditional media gatekeepers. According to Christensen (2007), the coalition model consists of 8 parts:

“… (1) using documentary as part of a larger strategy; (2) remembering that part of the impact is on the film producers; (3) being innovative in creating public spaces for viewing; (4) collaborating with other activist groups; (5) involving educational and cultural institutions; (6) being aware of opportunities to change public policy; (7) using the documentary to get media attention; and, (8), using the film to network for future action” (p. 6).
The study suggested that the power of the documentary lies in its ability to contribute to grassroots political action while reaching the maximum number of people.

According to Benson and Snee (2008), “a fascinating and unexpected development in the 2004 campaign was the reemergence of the feature-length documentary film as an outlet for partisan and polemical messages” (p. 2). The persuasive possibilities of documentaries were put to use as they seldom were before. Starting with Fahrenheit 9/11, which was released in June of 2004, a series of documentaries that focused on the issues and candidates of the 2004 election were mass produced and distributed to the public well before Election Day in November (Benson & Snee, 2008, p. 2). Benson and Snee (2008), stated:

“The films were highly partisan but typically independent—at least ostensibly—from political parties…Usually, the films were closely linked to attacking or defending the character of a candidate or engaged in historical expose. Issues of policy, when debated, usually were framed within the narrative of a person, party, or administration rather than concentrated on prudential discussion of future decision making in the realm of policy” (p. 8).

Presidential campaign documentaries that appeared during an election year and that were shown, typically, during the national nominating conventions were said to provide the most complete visual package available from one source during an election. This specific type of documentary tends to mix film footage and stock photography, employ voice-over narration, provide over the top patriotic music, and focus on talking head interviews (Benson & Snee, 2008, p. 8).

If we look back to the 2004 election, Senator John Kerry’s Vietnam War record became a topic of hot debate to the point that it became an unofficial issue of the presidential campaign. This phenomenon sparked the creation of two documentaries that respectively attacked and supported John Kerry’s character. A third-party group called the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth released Stolen Honor: Wounds That Never Heal. The purpose of this documentary was to discredit Kerry, proposing that Kerry lied about his war record and dishonored his country by opposing the Vietnam War after his honorable discharge from the United States Navy. This
documentary came out in September of 2004. In October 2004, a few weeks later, Kerry’s supporters produced the documentary Going Upriver: The Long War of John Kerry was distributed to American audiences. This documentary upheld Kerry’s status as a war hero and disputed the claims made the previous documentary (Benson & Snee, 2008, p. 12).

Though both of these films examine similar time frames and subject matters, they are very different stylistically. Stolen Honor borrows heavily from the stylistic conventions of television. According to Stahl (2008):

“The film begins with a teaser, or what might function as a ‘bumper’ between television shows, that tersely sets up the film’s central theme of betrayal. We are greeted not by opening credits but by a talking head, the central voice of the program, Carlton Sherwood…At times, Sherwood acts as an authoritative…narrator in the expository mode. At other times he injects his own experience as a marine who served in Vietnam. The resulting aesthetic is a mix of authority and personal investment in the stories of the film’s subjects…The darkly lit interviews portray a sense of identification, as if the interviewees and the viewer were having a collective living room conversation” (p. 84).

In stark contrast we have Going Upriver which is framed in the traditional narrative of the hero’s journey, tracing the steps taken from Kerry’s youth to his time in Vietnam and the fallout of his congressional declaration. This makes it more cinematic than Stolen Honor. For example, it doesn’t have a narrator in the traditional sense to mediate the story. According to Stahl (2008):

“…the story is carried by interviewees, whose words tie together photos, archival Vietnam footage, and footage of Kerry himself at various events… the first third of the film portraying Kerry’s time in Vietnam is dreamlike and surreal. There is an abundance of negative audio space in which no one is speaking. There are many quiet shots of the Vietnam countryside and wide sunsets. The camera hovers over photographs with a slow zoom…The archival footage of U.S. napalming runs over villages is a muffled, slow-motion ride over a bed of sparse Vietnamese bells or other minimalist music. The aesthetic captures a Vietnam War that is an unholy mixture of fire and water…The cumulative effect of these choices is a contemplative distance and reverence” (p. 91).

Both of these documentaries succeed in creating two different yet vivid portraits of the same candidate in the mind of the audience through varying techniques and viewpoints.
Cognitive Reasons for Documentary Influences on Audiences: The Role of Celebrity

The universal appeal of art tends to make celebrities of the artists that produce it. This applies to documentary filmmakers as well as the celebrities they use in their films to spread their message. The concept of the celebrity endorsement is now a commonplace aspect of our consumer society. We’ve seen that books tend to sell a lot of copies if they are featured in Oprah Winfrey’s book club and we’ve seen Michael Jordan, Kevin Bacon, and Cuba Gooding Jr., among others, bolster the sales of Hanes underwear products. In Biswas, Biswas, and Das’s (2006) article, “The Differential Effects of Celebrity and Expert Endorsements on Consumer Risk Perceptions: The Role of Consumer Knowledge, Perceived Congruency, and Product Technology Orientation,” the authors examine the differential effects of celebrity and expert endorsements on consumer risk perceptions in three different studies. This article provides a good definition for a celebrity endorser and the effects of that endorsement on the public.

According to Biswas, Biswas, and Das (2006):

“A celebrity endorser is defined as ‘any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement.’ In comparison with other types of endorsements, celebrity endorsements are more effective in dimensions such as trustworthiness, believability, persuasiveness, and likability” (p. 18).

They went on to say:

“The effectiveness of a celebrity endorser compared with an anonymous endorser lies in bringing a distinguishing feature in terms of personality and lifestyle meanings to an endorsement process. Consumers have a preconceived image about any celebrity endorser, and this image affect is transferred to the endorsed brand” (Biswas et al., 2006, p. 18).

The authors found that there are underlying theoretical processes of identification versus internalization and that perceived risks of the endorsed products are lessened when there is a high congruency between the product and the celebrity endorsing it. A problem with this article is that they failed to link authority figures with celebrities. Authorities on subjects become
celebrities. Take for example Stephen Hawkins’s impact on pop culture or the way President Barack Obama is said to have fans.

Why, then, is the general populace more likely to accept a political message if it is endorsed by a celebrity? In Duncombe’s (2007) article, “Taking Celebrity Seriously,” he details the public’s obsession with celebrity and the recognized importance by those in power for celebrity endorsement. According to Duncombe (2007):

“This celebration of ersatz aristocracy, as paradoxical as it sounds, is genuinely popular culture. People is the most profitable magazine in the United States, and E! (the CNN of celebrity gossip) reaches more than 89 million homes. If progressives want their politics to appeal to a majority of the population...which they should in a democracy...they ignore or misunderstand the popularity of celebrity at their peril” (p. 22).

Are there any physiological reasons the general populace is more likely to listen to a celebrity’s endorsement? According to Biswas et al. (2006):

“The effects of celebrity endorsements have also been explained using associative learning theory (ALT). Associative learning principles are based on a conception of memory as a network consisting of various nodes connected by associative links. At a conceptual level, celebrities and brands represent nodes in the memory, which become linked over time through the endorsement process. Hence, feelings toward a celebrity and/or meanings associated with the celebrity are expected to transfer to the endorsed brand through their recurring association. The repeated exposure to these two stimuli would result in simultaneous activation of memory nodes, representing those stimuli, building an associative link between the two nodes” (p. 19).

According to Duncombe (2007) there is a strong psychological effect as well:

“One answer immediately comes to mind: they have what we don’t and wish we did. Celebrities have money and beauty, but they also possess something far more important: recognition. People see them, listen to them, know about them. In psychoanalytic cant, the public’s fascination with celebrity is the sublimation of our own desire to be recognized” (p. 24).

The psychological reasons for the acceptance of celebrity leadership run deep in the public’s fascination, perhaps to the point of being dangerous. An article in New Scientist called “Fame in the Frame” (2007) asked celebrities to be careful about using their fame to spread misleading information: “Celebrities often have a real effect on how members of the public view particular
issues...They therefore have a responsibility to be well-informed before they make statements endorsing [products]” (p. 5).

In Jackson and Darrow's (2005) article “The Influence of Celebrity Endorsements on Young Adults’ Political Opinions,” they establish a link between the endorsement of a celebrity and the acceptance of a particular point of view, and note that the perceived credibility does not rest on the likelihood that the celebrity is an expert in the issue they support. Rather, there appears to be a significant correlation between the "attractiveness" of the celebrity and the acceptance of the audience. In particular, the perception of similarity between audience member and celebrity spokesperson seems to be extremely important in determining whether an audience member will find the endorsement persuasive (Jackson & Darrow, 2005). If you are promoting a political agenda, the use of celebrities as cognitive triggers for your intended audience is a sophisticated way to help increase the impact of the cause you are supporting.

In conclusion, there is not much in the literature that explores art as a form of political communication explicitly. However, by piecing together different aspects of art as a form of political communication, we begin to have an idea of art’s impact as a form of political communication. The literature shows that the political documentary is an art form that enjoys both legitimacy as a work of art and use as means of information distribution to the populace. It is imperative that we make these connections and study the impact of art as a form of political communication.

For the purposes of this study, I have chosen to conduct a narrative analysis of two political documentaries, Fahrenheit 9/11 and An Inconvenient Truth. I chose narrative analysis because it focuses on how stories help us find meaning in our lives and experiences. In this study I will establish that political documentaries use the same narrative tools, in this case Jungian
archetypes, as works of art, therefore art is a viable form of political communication due to its ability to distribute large amounts of information in a compact way. First, I will detail historical examples that establish works of art as forms of political communication, establishing a context in which to conduct a narrative analysis based on how Jungian archetypes. In this analysis, I will explore how the Jungian archetypes deployed in *The Lord of the Rings* book trilogy are redeployed characterized in these two documentaries.
CHAPTER 3
THEORETICAL GUIDES

Cultivation Theory

Only certain aspects of cultivation theory are applicable to this work. George Gerbner believed “the key to his analysis was to place special emphasis on the cultural process of storytelling” (Morgan, 2002, p.7). It is through storytelling that we as a people learn and process information. According to Morgan (2002):

“Many creatures process and exchange information, store impressions, and change their behavior as a result of learning. But only humans communicate by the manipulation of complex symbol systems...Most of what we know, or think we know, we have never personally experienced; we ‘know’ about things based on the stories we hear and the stories we tell” (p. 7).

Gerbner identified three types of stories: fiction, news, and commercials. “Together, all three kinds of stories, organically related, constitute culture; they are expressed and enacted through my theology, religion, legends, education, art, science, laws, fairy tales, and politics…” (p.7). All of these stories are increasingly packaged and distributed through visual media. Throughout the rest of this study, I won’t specifically mention Gerbner or cultivation theory as whole because it isn’t necessarily applicable. What is applicable is the following idea from cultivation theory: that narratives shape our reality. This study is shaped with this assumption in mind.

Dialectical Realism

In order to understand the role of documentary film as a form of political communication one needs to understand the theory of dialectical realism. Dialectical realism, by definition, is the process of getting to the truth of a matter by creating a thesis, developing an antithesis in opposition to the thesis, and the creation of a new coherent synthesis from the conflict of the thesis and its antithesis. (Bahskar, 1993). An example of this theory in application would be Eisenstein’s theory of montage, where a shot of a baby’s face followed by a shot of a barking
dog would end with a shot of the same baby crying. Meaning would then be created and one would assume that the barking dog caused the baby to cry (Montage, 2007).

Dialectical realism can also be applied to written text. The Chilean poet Pablo Neruda used it in his poetry. According to Dawes (2003):

“...Neruda benefited from the ideological flexibility in the [Chilean Communist] Party and carved out his own niche in its midst. And in that situation he developed what we might call his "dialectical realism": a dynamic method for understanding social and natural forces as well as human nature and the possibilities of human emancipation; a method grounded in human labor as its foundation and the Party as an imperfect yet effective vehicle for paving the way for socialism” (para. 38).

Neruda created his own form dialectical realism, which he called “guided spontaneity,” out of a refusal to completely associate himself with surrealism or realism.

“Neruda became so popular due to the quality and intelligibility of his poetry, and because of his ties to the political left. So it would not be an exaggeration to say that Neruda appears to be a "dialectical realist" poet who employs accessible vocabulary and narrations in an oral form with surprising metaphors produced by his "guided spontaneity." I say "dialectical realist" because Neruda's work attempts to express the thoughts and feelings involved in the class struggle of society as a whole while granting an exceptional vantage point to the class conscious proletariat” (Dawes, 2003, para. 30).

Setting up his poetry in this context allowed Neruda a feasible way to reach as many people as possible on a basic level. It also served to promote the creation of a practical socialist state unlike the failed Utopian models from the East that suffered from what some call “bureaucratic optimism.”

Neruda himself made reference to his theory of dialectical realism, or “guided spontaneity:”

“On the one hand, the new forms, the necessary renovation of all that exists, must break and overcome literary models. On the other hand, how could one not follow the steps of a deep and spacious revolution? How could one distance oneself from the main issues, the victories, conflicts, human problems, growth, movement, germination of an immense people who confronts a radical change in the social, economic and political regime? How could one not commit oneself with this people attacked by ferocious invasions, fenced in by implacable colonialists, obscurantists from all climates and backgrounds? Could
literature or the arts take on an air of independence knowing of these essential matters?” (Dawes, 2004, para. 34).

**Jungian Archetypes**

As I stated in the introduction, Jungian archetypes can be considered foundations for our stories. According to Izod (2001):

“Archetypes [are] the contents of the collective unconscious. They are not inherited ideas, but inherited modes of psychic functioning. Until activated, they are forms without content; when activated they control patterns of behavior. [They are] the centres of energy around which ideas, images, affects, and myths cohere” (p. 215).

These archetypes have been recreated in fiction, news, and commercial stories throughout history. An example that comes to mind in which some academic research has been conducted is J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. According to O’Neill (1979):

“My purpose is to demonstrate that the framework of Tolkien’s world is truly in harmony with ‘real myth’ and fairy tale, that they are woven of the same strand of human psychology. The common denominator of all such expression is to be found in the theoretical framework of analytical psychology—in the concepts of the collective unconscious and the search for self realization” (p. 3).

Throughout O’ Neill’s book, *The Individual Hobbit: Jung, Tolkien and the Archetypes of Middle-Earth*, we find a collection of archetypes discussed. It is from this book that I gathered the list of archetypes used in the narrative analysis of *Fahrenheit 9/11* and *An Inconvenient Truth*. These theories helped create the foundation for the methodology followed in this study.

The question may be posed, however, as to how one can reconcile the application of archetypes found in fiction to stories taken from reality. I propose that everything we know in our perceived realities has its fictional equivalent and by that token our fictional myths are grounded in our perceived reality. Even if one were to dream up a flying spaghetti monster, they would be familiar with the concepts of spaghetti, flying and monsters from their perceived reality. I contend that these obviously political films tell
their story and set up their narrative in the same manner that the previously discussed works of art do. Jungian archetypes are commonly depicted in most works of art because of their universal qualities. It seems logical that if Jungian archetypes are present in prominent literary works, such as *The Lord of the Rings*, and those same Jungian archetypes can be found in contemporary works of art that possess political messages, then the viability of art as a form of political communication will be apparent.
CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of this study, I have chosen to conduct a narrative analysis of two political documentaries, *Fahrenheit 9/11* and *An Inconvenient Truth*. These documentaries have been chosen because of their level of commercial success and their inclusion in the mainstream of American pop culture. *Fahrenheit 9/11* helped bring the Bush administration under a high level of scrutiny in the public eye while also becoming a critical and commercial success, gathering a variety of nominations and awards which cemented its status as a work of art as well as becoming the highest grossing general release political film. While President Bush was elected for a second term, the film brought to the mainstream many issues regarding the Bush administration’s role in the invasion of Iraq. *An Inconvenient Truth* won the Academy Award for Best Documentary in 2006 and became the fourth highest grossing documentary in the United States. The film focuses on the politics and economics of global warming, lobbying for the political agenda for environmental groups and others with similar ideas.

While some might suggest a dramatist, or “Burkeian” analysis is better suited to film because of the emphasis on act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose, the five elements of the dramatic pentad, I prefer a narrative analysis framed by dialectical realism theory (Burke, 1969, pp. xv-xxiii). In my view, drama is created by narrative. A subject (thesis) met by opposition (antithesis) creates dramatic tension (synthesis). Since my concern is establishing that art and political communication transfer information using the same narrative tools (Jungian archetypes), I believe that a narrative analysis would be the most effective way to prove my point.

I chose narrative analysis because it focuses on how stories help us find meaning in our lives and experiences. According to Creswell (2007):
“Narrative research has many forms, uses a variety of analytic practices, and is rooted in different social and humanities disciplines. ‘Narrative’ might be the term assigned to any text or discourse, or, it might be text used within the context of a mode of inquiry in qualitative research, with a specific focus on the stories told by individuals...As a method, it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals. Writers have provided ways of analyzing and understanding the stories lived and told” (pp. 53-54).

Fisher (1999) defined narratives as symbols or symbolic actions that have an order and a meaning for the people who create or process them. Dialectical realism theory provides the narrative with order.

I have compiled a list of Jungian archetypes from O’Neill’s (1979) book, The Individual Hobbit: Jung, Tolkien and the Archetypes of Middle-Earth. While there are is no end to the number of archetypes that can be found, I have concentrated on the eight most common ones in Jungian literature. I believe that coding these archetypes will provide a framework in which to conduct this narrative analysis. I hope to establish that, through the use of narrative tools like Jungian archetypes, art forms like political documentaries distribute political information to the public and should thus be consider a form of political communication. The list of Jungian archetypes is as follows:

- **The Self:** “An archetype whose nature is contested within Jungian Studies. Classical Jungians, like the founder of the movement himself, reckon it to be analogous to the monastic imago Dei, the central archetype in the human psyche; the image of totality achieved through the balancing out of opposites; and both the source and goal of our psychic life. Archetypical analysts like Hillman think it preferable to attend to all the voices and images that emerge from the psyche, integrating each in its own right. The resultant picture favors a multi-centered (or, where the archetypes are represented by types of god, polytheistic) image where the self is de-emphasized and the analyst seeks better insights into emotions and relationships between the parts of the psyche ...” (Creswell, 2007, pp. 219-220). An example of this would be the Ying Yang symbol, or the mandala.

- **The Shadow:** “The archetype that represents the ‘dark side’ of human nature, that is those elements of the personality which the individual does not recognize in him or herself. Sometimes appears as a dark figure” (Creswell, 2007, p. 220). Darth Vader, Ares, and Hannibal Lecter are some examples of the shadow.

- **The Persona:** “The public face or mask of an individual. It is the means by which the ego confronts the world” (Creswell, 2007, p. 218). Clark Kent would be Superman’s persona.
The Wise Old Man: “Represents knowledge, reflection, insight, wisdom, cleverness and intuition, as well as positive moral qualities. May constellate spontaneously when all the subject’s spiritual and physical forces are challenged and there is no going back” (Creswell, 2007, p. 221). An example of this archetype would be Merlin the magician or Gandalf from *The Lord of the Rings*.

The Great Mother: “(Also Earth Mother) The collective maternal imago, both a figure of benign fertility and nurture, and the devourer who pulls her children down to the abyss. For Jung the profound ambivalence of the imago signified the need for the young to break away from their mother’s embraces in order to enter adulthood. Thus the hero’s return to the world from the cave of the Earth Mother marks an early step on the way to individuation” (Creswell, 2007, pp. 216-217). An example of this would be Mother Nature.

The Trickster: “A specialized variant of the shadow typified by changeability. Can partake (like Mercurius) of the nature of both devil and savior, yet prima facie is an anti-type to the hero. His fondness for jokes, and his ability to transform himself make him a symbol of enantiodromia” (Creswell, 2007, p. 220). An example of this archetype would be the Norse god Loki.

The Hero or Heroine: “A human or quasi-human figure, symbol of the libido and ‘the ideas, forms, and forces which grip and mould the soul’… He or she ‘represents the will and capacity to undergo repeated transformations in pursuit of wholeness or meaning’ and at times appears to be ego, at times the self…” (Creswell, 2007, p. 217). Some characters that exemplify this archetype are: Theseus, Hercules, Jesus Christ, King Arthur, Robin Hood, Superman, Wonder Woman, etc.

The Child: “Archetypical image usually signaling a beneficial change of personality before it occurs, it represents to the adult instincts experienced in childhood and subsequently split off” (Creswell, 2007, p. 215). For example, the character of Flora from the Academy Award winning film, *The Piano*, represents this archetype.

First, I will detail historical examples that establish works of art as forms of political communication. By this I hope to establish a context from which to conduct a narrative analysis based on how Jungian archetypes, already established as being narrative tools used in works of art, in this instance in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy of books, are characterized in the two documentaries I’ve chosen. I will code both documentaries for the presence of the selected Jungian archetypes I’ve already listed. If these archetypes are present in the narrative structure of these documentaries, this suggests that both art and traditional means of political communication use the same narrative tools and therefore art not only is used to distribute
political information to the masses, it is still used today for the same purposes and must be investigated further to determine its true impact as a form of mass communication.
CHAPTER 5
ANALYSIS

Fahrenheit 9/11

For the documentary Fahrenheit 9/11, the Jungian archetype of the Self is represented by Michael Moore as the film’s narrator. This is because as a narrator, Moore guides us through a field of opposing personas. He provides us with an image of totality, the entire narrative of the documentary, by balancing out opposing viewpoints. Moore presents us with the Bush administration’s version of reality and then contrasts it with rebuttals. This, in effect, provides us with new reality.

The archetype of the Shadow is represented by President George W. Bush. Bush is clearly shown as the villain in Moore’s story. He is depicted as having cheated to win the presidential election of 2000 against Al Gore, vacationing for most of the first eight months of his presidency, the implication being that he did little to prevent the events of September 11, 2001. While the events of 9/11 took place, the President was shown, even after being informed of the attack on the twin towers, to have proceeded with a photo-op at an elementary school in Florida. It is also implied in the documentary that President Bush used the 9/11 terrorist attacks as an excuse to promote his own unrelated political agenda, i.e., the war with Iraq. The narrative of the Shadow is created by the depiction of a lame duck presidency being confronted by the harsh realities of September 11th, which provided Bush with the means to consolidate power.

The Jungian archetype of the Persona is represented by the Bush administration using the 9/11 crisis as a means to attack Iraq under the false pretense of weapons of mass destruction when the real reason is suggested to be economic interest, i.e., oil. Al Qaeda could also be considered to represent the persona because within the context of the documentary they were blamed for the war with Iraq. The narrative of the Persona is created when those in power (i.e.,
oil industry, the Bush administration, the Saudi elite, etc.) used the events of September 11th to disguise their own economic interests in pursuing a war in the Middle East. An example of this would be the proposed oil pipeline in Afghanistan and the contracts provided to American Corporations due to a war and the restructuring process afterwards.

Moore presents himself as the Jungian archetype of the Wise Old Man providing the audience with knowledge, reflection, insight, wisdom, cleverness and intuition about the real reasons for the Iraq war. I want to point out that this is separate from his role as narrator. He himself appears in segments of the documentary challenging members of the U.S. Congress to enlist their own children in the American armed forces to fight in Iraq in order to bring to light the alleged moral hypocrisy of the proponents of this war. His narration is infused with witty and sarcastic remarks in order to highlight the discrepancies of the Bush administration stance on the war in Iraq. By actively participating in his documentary, Moore inhabits the archetype of the Wise Old Man due to his apparent knowledge of the alleged deceptions of the Bush administration. He dug up information on the tactics employed by the Bush administration to consolidate power for the special interests of its members and thus became a moral guide to the people of America by presenting them with this information.

The Jungian archetype of the Great Mother is represented by Lila Lipscomb, mother of Sgt. Michael Pedersen. At first, she is presented as a nurturing figure; she is a patriotic supporter of the war, encouraging her children to serve in the armed forces. Later on, it is revealed that one of her children, her son, has died in Karbala, Iraq, and she takes on the role of the devourer who pulled her children into the abyss because of her enthusiastic support for war she later admits to not truly have understood. Her transformation from war supporter to war protestor is caused by the death of her child.
The Jungian archetype of the Trickster is represented by the Bush administration, notably Condoleezza Rice, Donald Rumsfeld, and Dick Cheney, among others. It is alleged in the documentary that the Bush administration created an atmosphere of fear for the American people through the manipulation of the mass media. An example of this would be their claim that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction or that the U.S. was under a constant threat of terrorist attacks. Some of the policies instituted by the Bush administration to combat terrorism in the film were the government infiltration of pacifist groups and the expansion of government powers provided by the passing of the Patriot Act. The Bush administration allegedly used the 9/11 attack and the fear it caused to effectively create a climate of more fear where its special interests could be pursued without scrutiny.

The Jungian archetype of the Hero starts off being represented by Al Gore, yet he is a failed hero. Despite being portrayed as a true winner of the 2000 presidential election, he conforms to a flawed system of bureaucracy. This act sets up the ascension to power of the Bush administration. It is revealed that the real heroes of this narrative are those enlisted in the U.S. military, fighting in the war. Moore states that the American poor are always the first to enlist in the armed forces, fighting wars so that the middle class and the elite won’t have to. Moore claims that because of their sacrifice the least we as a country owe these people is a real reason to risk their lives. One of the people representing the hero would be Corporal Henderson, a soldier who has returned from the war in order to oppose it.

The Jungian archetype of the Child is represented by the American people. Moore feels that Americans as a people need to grow up, since they accepted without question unfounded allegations by the Bush administration that led to the war in Iraq. The film ends with the clear
hope that Americans will mature to the point where they will never allow themselves to be deceived again.

**An Inconvenient Truth**

For the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, the archetype of the Self is represented by the narrator, in this case, Al Gore. He guides us through the discussion of global warming and climate change throughout the film. Gore presents us with what he calls the status quo’s version of reality and then contrasts it with the rebuttal of the scientific community. This, in effect, provides us with a new reality we must face when it comes to reducing carbon emissions to prevent global warming.

The Jungian archetype of the Shadow is represented by global warming pollution and the established American political status quo that does not wish to acknowledge global warming as a problem. When critics of global warming theory are presented with the reality of climate change they discuss it as an unproven theory, as speculation.

The Jungian archetype for the Persona is represented by the misconception that global warming is unproven. In the film, when the political status quo is presented by empirical scientific evidence in scientific journals that proves global warming to be a reality, its members use popular media outlets to dispute the facts. Gore told of a study that took a random sample of scientific journal publications to find any that disagreed with global warming theory and found zero. When the same sample was taken for popular publication around 50 percent were found to disagree with global warming theory. In this way the status quo is shown to have maintained doubt about the validity of global warming theory.

The Jungian archetype of the Wise Old Man is embodied by Gore’s Harvard professor, Roger Revelle. Professor Revelle, a climate expert, was the first person to propose measuring carbon dioxide in the Earth’s atmosphere. He found that the levels of carbon dioxide were rising
almost exponentially and that global warming was a serious problem. He set Gore on a path that would culminate with his presentation of this issue in a slideshow across the globe.

The Great Mother archetype is obviously represented by the planet Earth. She provides for us but, as shown by events like Hurricane Katrina, she could also pull us down into the abyss of death. The Earth’s climate was changed by man and now more natural disasters are occurring due to the changes we created.

Like the archetype of Shadow, the archetype of the Trickster is represented by the established political status quo. The oil industry, automakers, and energy providers among others in political and legislative positions are shown as responsible for trying to reposition global warming as a theory instead of a fact, concerned with feeding the public doubt. An example of this would be Philip Cooney, who was formerly in charge of environmental policy for the White House under the Bush administration. When the Environmental Protection Agency published a report expounding on the dangers of global warming, Cooney shown as possessing no scientific authority, edited out passages that proclaimed global warming a reality. When this came to light he was let go from his post at the White House and immediately began to work for the oil company Exxon-Mobil.

The Hero archetype is personified by Al Gore and his quest to spread the truth about global warming through a power point presentation one city at a time. Gore follows a heroic path, maturing when confronted by being exposed to the reality of global warming by his professor Roger Revelle, the death of his sister through lung cancer, and the near fatal car accident suffered by his son in the 1980’s. These events are depicted as having shaped his worldview. According to the documentary he is denied his rightful place as President of the United States through circumstantial technicalities. This defeat strengthened his sense of purpose and
thus he finally entered his role as the hero spreading his message of the realities of global warming across the world. Those who recognize the threat of global warming are also depicted as heroes. Among these are the countries who signed the Kyoto Protocol and the U.S. cities that support the Kyoto Protocol.

The Jungian archetype of the Child is represented by the American people, the significance being that Americans as a people need to mature. Because of the amount of the world’s resources that they consume, Americans are said to have a greater responsibility to reduce carbon emissions in the atmosphere and thus reduce global warming. Gore states all that Americans need is the political will to stop legislation that permits global warming. He says that while the task might seem insurmountable, Americans have faced insurmountable problems before, from the founding of this country to helping fix the hole in the ozone layer. According to Gore it is up to Americans to use their political clout to solve this issue.

This analysis has shown that both of these political documentaries have used, in one manner or another, all the Jungian archetypes discussed in the methodology section in order to establish a narrative platform from which to distribute information. Fahrenheit 9/11 attempted to persuade the American people not to re-elect President Bush in the 2004 elections. An Inconvenient Truth follows former Vice President Al Gore while he presents his PowerPoint® on the effects of global warming on a city by city tour throughout the world. Both of these films have a political purpose. They aim to institute a change in the status quo. Both of these films are also considered works of art, winning several awards for achievement in documentary filmmaking. It must be explicitly stated that works of art, i.e., documentaries, are being used by special interest groups to promote agendas, and because they are being distributed as a
commercial product these messages are not being dissected the way a political speech would or should be.
The purpose of this study was to establish a link between political communication and artistic expression. The documentaries that were analyzed have been discussed as instruments for political lobbying, commercial successes, and artistic achievements in the field of documentary film making. It is through the use of artistic works like the political documentary that political ideas are now being expressed. The truth of the matter is that I have found very little literature regarding the impact of art as a form of political communication. In my opinion this is a grave oversight by media scholars. It will become obvious in the following discussion that we in the academic community can no longer overlook art as a form of mass media because art is how we as human beings keep records of our civilizations. Stories are how we educate our young; how we pass on the lessons we have learned from our parents and their parents before them and their parents before them, etc. Stories are how information is distributed to us.

Art has the ability to make messages understandable. It has the ability to make information easily distributed to the masses. One of the reasons for this is that it employs narrative tools such as Jungian archetypes that are common to the psyche of every person on the planet. You don’t need to speak Spanish to understand that Picasso’s *Guernica* is a protest against suffering and needless loss of life regardless of your prior knowledge of the context in which it was created, i.e., in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War. You don’t need to be highly educated with an expansive vocabulary to understand Pablo Neruda’s poetry, which he hoped to make accessible to the elite as well as the members of the lowest social class, thereby promoting the Marxist idea of equality to the people of South America and their nation states. You don’t need to be American to know that Bob Dylan’s music and lyrics rally opposition against the political status quo.
For example, in order to air, a news story must have a hook, something to draw the audience’s interest. Another murder is not as news worthy as a crime of passion, where the husband murdered the wife because she was having an affair. As a people, we humans can relate more to a murder with passion as a reason than just another unexplained killing. While most of us might have not experienced the narrative of that crime of passion first hand, it is through the stories we have learned since childhood that we understand jealousy, that we understand anger, that we understand rage, and thus are more able to assimilate that story into the narrative framework of our everyday lives. Even the unexplained murder is more palatable if we look at it as evidence of a possible serial killer, thus assimilating the archetype of the Shadow and making it easier to understand.

One thing that helps the efficient distribution of information through art is the fact that art is a consumption item. A painted mural may be photographed and the prints sold to those who can afford it; plays may be performed in community theatres across the globe with a good translation; music may be downloaded anywhere in the world due to the increasing availability of the Internet; novels and books of poetry may be sold at your local bookstore conglomerate, which now means everywhere due to globalization. Art can be made available for mass consumption and thus the number of people who interpret the messages lying within is innumerable.

For this study I have established and detailed concrete documented examples of art as a form of political communication. I have done this in order to set up a context. It seems to be common knowledge that art is infused with political messages, however, again I must stress that there is very little academic research that has been conducted on this subject. I suppose I can understand why. Art is extremely difficult to quantify. You can’t assign a number or a scale to
the effects produced by art on individual people. How does one measure emotion, or artistic integrity? How does one assign a value to artistic skill? You can’t. Art creates an analytical relationship between the individual and the object and since every individual is different there can be no universal value attributed to that relationship. You can say something is “good” or “bad,” but you cannot assign it a degree of “goodness” or “badness.” A sonnet that is perfect in meter, exact in assonance, and efficient in its syntax may be forgettable, lacking the passion, the cleverness, or the flavor, for lack of a better word, that gives it universal appeal. The age old adage “beauty is in the eye of the beholder” has never held more true.

This is why I had to turn to qualitative methods of analysis in order to attempt to gauge the level of impact that art has as a form of political communication. My greatest problem was that I could not find the text I needed to validate any further quantitative study. Perhaps it exists, but I was not able to find it. Therefore I faced the challenge of trying to establish a link between art and political communication. This is why I felt that establishing a documented historical context for this study was of paramount importance. In order to defend any further study I needed certifiable published evidence of art as political communication, and I feel that I found some worthy examples. Once these examples were established, I needed to show that what was true then is true now. In my research I found that since art is a way for humans to tell their story the messages within art must employ certain narrative tools in order to get their point across. Remember, Gerbner (1999) believed that storytelling was how we as humans learn. According to Morgan (2002):

“Many creatures process and exchange information, store impressions, and change their behavior as a result of learning. But only humans communicate by the manipulation of complex symbol systems...Most of what we know, or think we know, we have never personally experienced; we ‘know’ about things based on the stories we hear and the stories we tell” (p. 7).
I compiled a list of common Jungian archetypes found in works of art throughout history and endeavored to establish that they were present in contemporary forms of art, in this case two recent and notably successful political documentaries, Fahrenheit 9/11 and An Inconvenient Truth. Fahrenheit 9/11 attempted to persuade the American people not to reelect President Bush in the 2004 elections. This was helped by the fact that the documentary was released before the 2004 elections. Bush and his administration were set up as the bad guys, or the Shadow archetype if you will, pursuing the special interests of the select few, sacrificing the general well-being of the American people in a costly war that was entered into without a valid reason. An Inconvenient Truth follows former Vice President Al Gore, the Hero archetype, while he presents his PowerPoint® on the effects of global warming on a city by city tour throughout the world. The movie is designed to incite its primary audience, the American people, to use their political will to influence legislation that affects the amount of carbon emissions sent into the atmosphere.

Both of these films have a political purpose. They aim to institute a change in the status quo. Both of these films are also considered works of art, winning several awards for achievement in documentary filmmaking. The importance of this cannot be ignored. As the world becomes more globalized and technology develops further, politicians and special interest groups are using political documentaries and the like in order to get their message across. For example, Fox News and CNN both produced separate documentaries on Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin that detailed the same information, yet produced two very different points of view. The truth is that the people who have the power to make the decisions in society have recognized the value of art as a form of political communication and are already employing it in order to sway public opinion to their cause, whatever it may be.
It is our responsibility to study the effects of art as a form of political communication. We cannot fool ourselves and say that art as a form of political communication has no effect simply because said effects are not easily quantified. For example, global warming has become part of our contemporary political lexicon due in no small part to the attention garnered by the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. This documentary helped spread the word, so to speak, to segments of the population that don’t typically read scientific journals, making the issue relevant to consumers of mass media and not just specialized media.

In terms of distribution of information, the same goes for *Fahrenheit 9/11*. This documentary, while not effectively barring Bush from a second presidential term, had a part in turning public opinion against him. His approval ratings were the lowest of any president on record and the election between President Bush and Senator Kerry was one of the closest contested elections in U.S. history. While I am not establishing causation between this documentary and the negative public opinion of Bush, *Fahrenheit 9/11* was a widely distributed show of political dissent against the established regime at a time of a divisive political climate in this country. We must remember the Parmalee described political communication as dependent on symbols. This suggests that our perception of reality is defined by the images, narratives, and symbols found in the art left behind by the civilizations of this world, those in the past as well as those that exist now.

As I stated in the introduction, more and more artists have become celebrities and have taken up political causes and have become spokespeople for the special interests groups that support these causes. People are becoming more involved with these causes; we have seen both a swell in the ranks of those who protest the war in Iraq as well as those who champion the reality of global warming. The link between art and political messages is more clearly defined than ever.
before, highlighted by the amount of information distributed and the growing number of people that line up behind certain political causes.

The implications of this in the field of education are important. Those who teach mass communications training need to be aware that information distributed through art is more easily assimilated by an audience. I have already stated that arts are overlooked in U.S. schools, being among the first subjects removed from the curriculum when budget cuts become an issue, while they are integral parts of the curriculums of other countries. How are we to interact with other countries when we can’t communicate with them on the same cognitive level? Overlooking the communicative power of art is a mistake. Art creates an analytical relationship between the individual and the object, enabling the development of cognitive processes. Traditionally, in most cultures, children are taught about life, ethics, and morality among other things through stories in the form of fairy tales, fables, parables, you name it. We as a people are assimilated into culture through the acceptance of narrative techniques, such as Jungian archetypes, into our perception of reality.

In conclusion, there should be no stigma on art as a form of political communication. There is no unspoken rule that prevents messages found in art from being political. Politics shape our present experience. Therefore, it is important to see what political messages are being distributed, how they are being distributed, by whom they are being distributed, to whom they are being distributed, and what effects come from this, if any. It would be irresponsible for us in the field of mass communications to ignore the communicative power of art. Art is shaped by the realities of the time in which it is created. It is an accurate record of what has transpired through the eyes of the individual. It is a perspective, a viewpoint; it is a message from those who create the work to their audience. Art exists because we as a people have something to say, a message
to communicate to others. Also, art exists because we as a people wish to hear that message, a testament to our universal experience as human beings on this planet. It is a symbiotic relationship. It is the purest form of communication.
LIST OF REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ernesto Del Castillo was born in Lima, Peru. Around the time he was 3 years old, his family moved to the United States. As an undergraduate, Ernesto studied English Literature, specifically poetry. Ernesto graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Florida. He is also a member of both the Golden Key and Sigma Tau Delta English honor societies. He has maintained his academic performance in graduate school and is en route to graduate with distinction from UF’s College of Journalism and Communication with an Master of Arts in Mass Communications specializing in International/Intercultural Communication.