"MY MAKYNG THOW WRYTE MORE TREWE": *RHETORICAL CHORUS* IN MEDIEVAL
AND DIGITAL SPACES

BY

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014

Urbana, Illinois

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Abstract

I argue that speech acts are artificially divided into individual (Campbell 1993) or collaborative (Biesecker 1992) work, which obscures the nuanced differences between rhetorical group activities: cooperation, concert, alliance, interface, harmony, disharmony, counterpoint, breach. Rather, the individual and the collaborative can intersect, but not only by providing direct feedback to the original speaker (LeFevre 1987) or through consensus (Bruffee 1984) or by partnering to create a single rhetorical event (Lundsford and Ede 1990). Instead, some rhetorical speech acts are distinguished as the work of both an individual speaker and a collaborative group.

Since this communicative act resembles musical and classical dramatic chorus, I utilize choral activity to create a model for describing how the ensemble comes together, responds to the original speaker, and distributes that speaker's message. Typically, a collaborative group tends to be described as homogenous, proximal, reciprocal, and synchronous. Whereas a chorus model offers the means to articulate how a collaborative group can be heterogeneous, asynchronous, diachronic and remote. This methodology is applied to a range of case studies, which have two unifying features:

First, each example represents a case of contested authority, agency, and authenticity for an individual speaker. This contestation occurs because others have contributed to the preservation and distribution of the speaker's ideas; the presence of these individuals is often used to problematize the speaker's authority on the basis of the speaker's gender, race, education or other limitations which would justify the contributors' interventions at the expense of the individual speaker's authority.

Second, these examples compare the actions of the rhetorical chorus in medieval manuscripts (Chaucer, Kempe, Pizan) to contemporary digital websites (Wikipedia, *Huffington*

Post, Gay Girl in Damascus). Both medieval manuscripts and digital sites are dynamic material spaces in which the choral actors can enter and alter the space. The materiality of the different spaces also allows for their actions to be identified, traced, and mapped.

Applying rhetorical chorus to the case studies demonstrates that the concept of collaboration can be expanded to include a group of participants, who are tools of rhetorical invention. The chorus offers a conceptual framework for discussing how a group can propagate an original speaker's message through their own agendas, mediate the message to an audience, and thus participate in the invention of social knowledge. A chorus model reveals that authority and agency are not fixed and finite entities, which can only be conferred to either an individual or a group, but can be distributed through the transmissions of one and many.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Martin Camargo for his patience and guidance as I worked through the dissertation process. I would not have been able to do this project without his expertise and excellent suggestions. I would also like to thank Dennis Baron and Ned O'Gorman who both took the time to encourage my work in class and later as I grappled with the complex questions posed in my dissertation. Spencer Schaffner and Bonnie Mak were kind enough to join my committee and have always expressed enthusiasm for the project.

A special thank you to my mentor at Florida State University, Kristie Fleckenstein, who taught me how to revise and edit my work tirelessly.

My work would not have been possible without the support offered by my parents, Lawrence and Susan Smith, and my friends, Kaitlin Marks-Dubbs, Jon Stone, Andrea Olinger, and Carla Thomas. I owe each and every one of them for reading the many versions of this project.

Funding for this project was made possible by the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Center for Writing Studies and the University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign, English Department. Lastly, I want to thank Teresa Bertram who reminded me that the important thing was to finish the dissertation.

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Chapter I: Collaborative Rhetorics and Building Theory

In 1851 at the Woman's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, a tall African American woman and ex-slave asked to speak before the convention. Despite the audience's initially negative reaction, the chair of the convention, Frances Gage, invited the now famous Sojourner Truth to speak. According to later accounts, what followed was a stirring example of sound rhetorical practice. Truth used her trademark colloquialisms, biblical knowledge, bodily gestures, and her experience both as a woman and as a slave to refute the claims made by a number of men throughout the convention (Lipscomb 1995). The eloquently crafted speech is now identifiable by the name "Arn't I a Woman?." This oration has come to signify not only Truth's rhetoric and her authority as a speaker, but also remains a crucial example of African American rhetoric during a significant era for abolitionism and women's rights[1].

This iconic speech carries with it several inherent concerns for historians of rhetoric regarding speaker authority and agency. When Truth spoke, she made no record of her speech. In fact, Truth was illiterate and had to rely on others, mostly educated white women, to help her record her narratives and letters. The only available versions of the speech come from Marius Robinson's newspaper account of the convention printed a few weeks after the event and Frances Gage's article written some ten years later. Because neither participant worked with Truth to produce her message and the two versions were written much later than the original rhetorical event, neither of these two examples comfortably adheres to standard descriptions of collaboration. In a situation such as this one, focusing exclusively on Truth as the lone voice operating is problematic, but so too is denying her any authority or agency.

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[1] On Sojourner Truth and her rhetorical influence on the history of rhetoric, see Richardson 675-704, Mandziuk 271-291, Fitch and Mandziuk, Lipscomb 227-246, Painter 461-492, and Roseann M. Mandziuk and Suzanne Pullon Fitch "The Rhetorical Construction of Sojourner Truth" 120-138 and Campbell 1-19.

The 1851 Akron speech is a good example of how other people often intervene in the construction, preservation and circulation of rhetoric using their skills with writing technologies. This example further demonstrates some of the problems that arise because of these interventions: Who should be considered the source of authority for the message? Whose agenda affects the construction of rhetoric in this speech? Truth's experience with speaking and having her words recorded by others is not a new situation; rather, most examples of historical rhetoric come mediated to us through the active interventions of other persons other than the one who originated the rhetorical act. This project intervenes by analyzing examples of contested authority in order to explore how authority gets attributed and how our understanding of collaboration might be refined. I examine specific case studies like that of Sojourner Truth in which the lines of rhetorical authority and agency for an individual speaker are blurred by the presence of other people who helped the speaker distribute her message. I identify members of this ensemble, define the actions that set them apart from the audience, and classify their positions within continuous and ongoing sequences of responses, which arises between speaker and ensemble, between members of the ensemble and between the ensemble and audience. In order to facilitate an analysis of this ensemble, I propose a theoretical model based on musical and classical dramatic chorus designed to examine how the ensemble impacts rhetorical invention and affects the speaker's authority and message.

Throughout this project, I address four questions or concerns: (1) Who participates in the production, distribution, and use of rhetoric and how might they be identified separately from an audience? (2) How do these individuals affect the creation of rhetoric and the circulation of a rhetorical message? (3) How do we attribute authority to a speaker, especially in situations where the speaker's authority might be contested based on education, gender, race or some other

limitations? (4) How do the responses by participants affect the social invention of knowledge and reflect the environment in which the rhetorical actions occur?

This project is valuable in three ways: (1) it identifies and demonstrates the mechanics of multiple people working together to mediate a message through technology to distinguish how group dynamics affect the construction of rhetorical meaning; (2) it unpacks and clarifies a particular type of group dynamics, and in doing so expands on previous understandings of 'collaboration' as an umbrella term for most group work situations; and (3) it presents a new model for identifying and analyzing the effect of group rhetorical practices on rhetorical events, especially those fraught with tensions over the speaker's authority.

Unpacking Collaboration

In studies of rhetoric, feminist scholars have been working to bring more women into the rhetorical canon. This work can be seen in anthologies and edited collections such as *Rhetoric Regendered* by Andrea Lunsford (1995), *Rhetoric Retold* by Cheryl Glenn (1997), *Man Cannot speak for Her* by Karyln Kohrs Campbell (1989) and *Available Means: An Anthology of Women's Rhetoric(s)* by Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald (2001). While these anthologies and collections disrupt the canon with the inclusion of women speakers, they also maintain the traditional Aristotelian model of rhetoric, which pervades the rhetorical canon. This model, metaphorically depicted as a triangle, has a single speaker who creates his message based on his purpose, which he then speaks to his audience. In *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle states that a single speaker addresses his rhetorical message to a specific audience; therefore, the practice of speaking begins with "a speaker and a subject on which he speaks and someone addressed, and the objective of the speech relates to the last (I mean the hearer)" (I: 3:1). A good speech reflects "three species: for some are in the character [ethos] of the speaker, and some in disposing the

listener in some way, and some in the speech [logos]" (I: 2: 3). The orator is the one who formulates the argument in response to some contentious situation in order to urge an audience into action, and his ethos is contingent on the speaker's character (See Appendix A).

With her article, "Coming to Terms with Recent Attempts to Write Women into the History of Rhetoric," Barbara Biesecker critiqued the continued use of the Aristotelian model of rhetoric and initiated a debate over how best to recover women within the history of rhetoric by arguing that the focus on women who speak in a traditional rhetorical manner (or employ rhetoric like an educated man) leaves out other moments when women produce rhetoric through collective or collaborative practices. Biesecker acknowledged the pressing need to continue to reclaim individual women, but she called out the field of rhetoric for "fetishizing" individualism as a signifier of great rhetorical practice. In response Karlyn Kohrs Campbell argued that "the rhetorical efforts of women were, with some exceptions, created by individual women, those of men, by individual men" (Campbell "Biesecker Cannot," 155). For Campbell good rhetoric comes from the craftsmanship of a single person, whether male or female, and the scholar of rhetoric needs to reclaim those women who demonstrate sound rhetorical practice.

Biesecker fired back by arguing that focusing only on the individual continued a system of patriarchy that did not acknowledge other ways women were able to speak, when the traditional system sought to silence them.

> In privileging (perhaps fetishizing would be a better choice of terms) the autonomous speaking subject who is both the origin and master of her discourse, these new histories, like those that came before, continue to efface a vast array of collective rhetorical practices to which there belongs no proper name but within which those discrete and celebrated rhetorics find their conditions to emergence (Biesecker "Negotiating," 238).

In response to Biesecker and other feminist scholars, there have been calls for inclusion and critiques of the canon, and multiple scholars have added to the rhetorical tradition by producing historical narratives which describe the collaborative and collective practices of women (Sharer 2004; Mattingly 2002; Flannery 2005; Addams 2001). As significant as these works are in reconstructing rhetorical histories to include women, they focus only on historical moments where women come together to promote rhetoric of women, by women, and for women. This method of inclusion privileges relationships which are homogenous (women working with women), proximal (everyone working together), reciprocal (everyone responding to one another), and synchronous (everyone producing the same products at the same time). In other words, the current scholarly interests of feminists tend to emphasize either the individual or the collective and collaborative practices of women's groups. These methods of constructing feminist historical narratives into the canon often require the separation of the women and their rhetorical practices from the contributions of other sources, particularly men. One exception, Lindal Buchanan's article "Forging and Firing Thunderbolts," considers the direct and indirect contributions of others in an individual speaker's rhetorical process (2003). However, Buchanan's work reinforces the binary created by Biesecker's argument that an individual speaking follows a patriarchal idealizing of rhetoric, while collaboration is the province of women's rhetorical efforts. These methods are effective for identifying women's rhetoric that occurs as disruptions and rebellions within the patriarchal system, but can cause us to disregard women in history who defy their limitations not by rebellion, but by cooperating with other people in relationships which are not readily labeled proximal, reciprocal or synchronous to establish their own authority and agency.

To further complicate the status of the individual's authority, historical work in rhetoric, writing studies, and book history has demonstrated that the individual author mythos is a relatively recent phenomenon in the history of writing, which occurred because of changes to the economic, legal, and social status of the historical author (Woodmansee and Jaszi 1994; Rose 1993). Jack Stillinger in *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius* describes how writers do not produce their works alone (1991). They rely instead on a network of editors, publishers, and immediate audience members who sometimes actively participate in shaping the text. Digital studies of authorship have further shifted to models which explore writing as a collection of social, collective, and collaborative practices (Warnick 2004, Turkle 1996). This decentering of the author means that the authority over the work and its credibility falls to the reader and the reader's agenda (Warnick 2004). These criticisms of individual authorship as well as additional research into digital writing practices have led the field of writing studies to the conclusion that "all discourse is socially constructed" (Inge "Collaboration," 623).

Collaboration has become a catch-all word for group dynamics, a trending by-word on the rhetoric and composition scene. Despite its contemporary cachet, collaboration causes consternation as well. Collaboration is a slippery term, as noted by Kathleen Yancey and Michael Spooner in their article "'A Single Good Mind': Collaboration, Cooperation, and the Writing Self" (1998). The term is difficult to define, in large part because we use the one word to designate the many ways group interactions can be characterized: by product, by actions taken, by location, by time, by group roles (hierarchical structure, committee, or consensus), by authority and agency amongst the individuals of the group, the group itself and the authority and agency of external factors to the group, and by social ideologies, which construct and constrain

group movements. In other words, the term has come to signify any and all group dynamics, a practice which does not delineate the differences between types of group activities.

The term collaboration is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "united labour, co-operation; *esp*. in literary, artistic, or scientific work" ("Collaboration") and a collaborator as "one who works in conjunction with another or others; *esp* in literary, artistic, or scientific work" ("Collaborator"). This definition of 'united labor' seems to dominate uses of the term within the field of rhetoric and composition as seen in the works of Andrea Lunsford, Lisa Ede, and Anne Ruggles Gere. In the seminal study, *Singular Texts/Plural Authors,* Lunsford and Ede raised significant questions regarding how group dynamics impact writing practices. To address these questions, Lunsford and Ede studied several group writing situations in the work place. Their analysis began with a definition of collaboration, which conflates the term collaboration with group writing: "group writing includes any writing done in collaboration with one or more persons" (Lunsford and Ede 14). Likewise, in her book *Writing Groups: History, Theory, and Implications,* Anne Ruggles Gere describes collaboration as group activity. Though Gere admits that not all collaborative groups are the same, she argues that the groups do share in some common traits. In writing groups, "authors operate in close proximity to an audience, enjoying opportunities to observe the effects of their work or to ask questions" (Gere 3). The groups have a sense of "immediacy" and reflect the "social dimension of writing" (Gere 3). In Gere's estimation, variation between collaborative groups comes from differences in authority and its origin (Gere 4). Lunsford, Ede and Gere use the term collaboration to describe group practices in which two or more people come together into a space, where work is proximal, immediate, social, a mutual activity and for a shared goal. Because of the degree of intimate work between people, the end product emerges out of group consensus and the individual voices of the group

members can be subsumed (Lunsford and Ede 30). When dealing with the history of rhetoric, it

is necessary to parse out collaboration in terms of not just product, but location and time. By

defining collaboration as group work, 'united labour,' in which 'work' occurs 'in conjunction

with another,' the term seems stretched when applied to situations where the group in a space is

separated by time, location, social ideologies, and rhetorical agendas. By exploring how group

dynamics occur within text technologies, this analysis widens the possibilities for defining

rhetorical relationships and the effect of group dynamics on rhetorical events (See Appendix B).

In their article, "A Single Good Mind": Collaboration, Cooperation, and the Writing

Self," Kathleen Yancey and Michael Spooner expand the definition of collaboration beyond

group activity where members co-author a joint endeavor using James Reither and Douglas

Vipond's work as their starting point. In an effort to unpack collaboration, Reither and Vipond

parse out three forms of collaboration: "coauthoring, workshopping, and knowledge making"

(858-60). The first two types represent the most common types of collaboration discussed by

scholars. Collaboration as coauthoring is frequently referred to when discussing either

collaborative scholarly practices or collaboration in the classroom (Lunsford and Ede 1990;

Kirsch 1997; Bruffee 1984). The last type of collaboration described by Reither and Vipond

appears designed to cover all other forms of group dynamics, since knowledge making is the one

form of group work where people harvest from existing philosophical and empirical work to

form a new discourse (Yancey and Spooner "A Single Good Mind," 48).

Because collaboration gets used to describe co-authorship and knowledge-making group

activity, some work on collaboration in the field of rhetoric and composition specifically

privileges its role in the invention of ideas. Yancey and Spooner expand on Reither and Vipond

in their description of collaboration: "one of the keys supporting collaboration has been that it

allows a constructivist, collective kind of knowledge-making process that is faithful to and takes advantage of a postmodern, multivocal, Bakhtinian understanding of how we 'create' knowledge" (Yancey "Voices," 47). They base this definition in part on the work of Mikhail Bahktin, whose literary analysis has been taken up to explain that communication a speaker occurs through a dialogic relationship between two or more people, who dialogue with one another to create meaning[2].

This perception that invention and rhetoric are collaborative and social endeavors, found in the work of Yancey, Spooner, Vipond, Reither and others, can be traced to Kenneth Bruffee's article "Conversation of Mankind." In the article Bruffee argues that "writing is a technologically displaced form of conversation. When we write, having already internalized the 'skill and partnership' of conversation, we displace it once more onto the written page" (641). According to Bruffee, knowledge building and creativity actually emerge not from the individual person, but through their conversations with others. Karen LeFevre's work *Invention as a Social Act* opens by also using conversation as a metaphor for the creation process; a metaphor which acknowledges the listener and how they intervene with the argument. LeFevre argues that "rhetorical invention is better understood as a social act, which one individual who is at the same time a social being interacts in a distinctive way with society and culture to create something" (1). LeFevre continues this line of reasoning by arguing that invention is "an act initiated by writers and completed by readers, extending over time through a series of transactions and texts" (1). She clarifies the social nature of invention by stating that a rhetor is influenced in creating

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[2] Dialogic has been taken up as a key term in explaining collaborative or group practices within writing studies. See Lunsford and Ede "Rhetoric in a New Key," 234-241; Yancey and Spooner 45-62; Bruffee 635-652, and LeFevre 35-37, 58-78. What is interesting and potentially problematic about it is its use over historical time. Dialogic relationships appear to involve one person who speaks and then the next person responds. However, in a dialogue one person initiates a ritualized communication structure, a second person answers also in ritualized form, then the first person speaks again, and this interaction continues until a socially appropriate (often times) ritualized closing to the conversation is initiated. This perspective means that I cannot dialogue with Chaucer but other models and metaphors of group work might better describe my interactions with Chaucer and his ideas.

his work by "other people as collaborators, or as reviewers whose comments aid invention, or as 'resonators' who nourish the development of ideas" (2). LeFevre specifically connects collaboration with invention, since invention occurs as the speaker or writer interacts with others, which LeFevre terms "interactive collaboration" (75-94). Correlating invention with collaboration focuses perceptions of knowledge making on the initial rhetorical acts made by an individual who is influenced and shaped by society. In this framework, social invention occurs prior to the making of the textual artifact. The textual artifact is regarded as fixed and unchanging whereas the knowledge produced can be transmitted and altered as the ideas have been taken up by active audiences. In addition, the use of conversation as a metaphor for writing and knowledge making is apt and pervasive; however it might be fruitful to consider alternative group and social metaphors to help explore how people interact, transact, and transmit ideas. The text is not always a fixed entity and group interactions can occur to affect knowledge-making practices after initial rhetorical events.

In her 1997 article "Multivocal Texts and Interpretive Responsibility," Gesa Kirsch takes up the view that knowledge is invented through collaborative actions and points out some of the problems with viewing collaboration as a knowledge-making practice when she advocates a skeptical acceptance of the 'new' phenomenon of multi-vocal scholarly articles and reviews produced in the field of rhetoric and composition. Kirsch argues that the 'newness' of these scholarly activities provides enthusiasm for a system of composing that would allow for more voices to engage in dialogue on the page, but at the same time, these writings mask the cultural and social power dynamics that continue to constrain voices in the field. Her concern focuses largely on the appropriation and misappropriation of others' voices by a central author who ultimately has control over what is produced, such as occurs in many forms of collaboration. She

advocates a move to remain critical of these 'new' practices and to encourage more critical analysis and interpretation of the information provided by the multiple voices. So while multi-vocal scholarly writings encourage the entrance of more voices from different perspectives into the field, they also raise central questions about the nature of authorship---especially in collaborative relationships---and the power dynamics between the different voices in the text. As these arguments on knowledge making and collaboration demonstrate, collaboration and group activity occur as a speaker invents his message. The metaphors of conversation in both works require answerability and reciprocity from both speaker and audience, two characteristics that might not always be present. So, the focus on invention leaves out other moments where other people are involved in the production of rhetoric within a rhetorical artifact and the distribution of rhetoric to other spaces and locations.

Speaker, Speakers, Chorus

The moves to decenter the individual speaker have resulted in a false binary in which individual authority and agency are positioned against the collaborative and social authority and agency of a group. A prime example of this false binary occurs when focusing only on the woman's contributions to the exclusion of any other participant, since this focus limits the scope of the rhetorical context. As Laurie A. Finke in "The Politics of the Canon: Christine de Pizan and the Fifteenth-Century Chaucerians," notes "the critique of the author has been disturbing to many feminists: to declare the author dead just when research was beginning to attribute authorship to women seems to many yet another means of obscuring women's participation in culture" (Finke 17). The 'death of the author' denigrates an individual who has authority over what he has created. This devaluing of individual authority makes it possible for women like Sojourner Truth to be dismissed, silenced, or denigrated because other people were involved in

the preservation and distribution of their rhetoric. In contrast, examples of men engaged in

similar rhetorical and literary practices, such as Ferdinand de Saussure, John Milton, and

Geoffrey Chaucer, continue to have uncontested rhetorical authority despite the fact that we only

have texts produced by others in their name. Despite the demonstrable gendered difference in

reception and perception of speaker authority found throughout the historical canon of rhetoric,

no one is able to preserve their rhetorical ideas within the history of rhetoric without the

interventions of other people.

Sometimes speakers do not fall into one of three categories commonly recognized by

historians of rhetoric: (1) the orator, the lone speaker in a situation who has the authority and

skill to use recognized rhetorical devices in order to elicit a response from her audience; (2) the

collaborator, an individual who works directly with another person (male or female) for a shared

rhetorical agenda; (3) the member of a collective, a more generally homogeneous group of

individuals working together for a common goal—often distinguished in the history of rhetoric

as consciousness raising—through their use of rhetoric. I propose adding to these categories of

rhetors by offering another, a meta-category: (4) the member of a chorus, an ensemble consisting

of individual members who contribute their own voices to that of the main rhetorical event as

they participate in the construction, distribution, and use of technology, the site of rhetorical

space. Thus, the goal here is to elaborate on definitions of group work and rhetoric in order to

view the production of rhetoric as a system of various communal practices.

Chorus affords us a new model for describing and analyzing group dynamics.

Specifically, a chorus model facilitates the means for bridging the artificial divide between

individual and collaborative social group discussed by Karen LeFevre (1987). While LeFevre

points out and describes the artificial binary between individual and societal influences on

invention, her argument still positions the writer as the focal point for invention. Invention is

social through the writer's interactions with society. The chorus model provides the means for

extending Lefvre's argument further into studies of rhetorical history by providing a

methodology for taking into account both individual and collaborative groups when analyzing

the distribution of a rhetorical message (See Appendix D). In the simplest of terms, chorus is a

group of people who have come together usually for the purpose of singing and dancing, though

chorus has been applied as a model to various group activities across disciplines[3]. The use of

chorus as a metaphoric premise originates in part from the article by Kathleen Blake Yancey and

Michael Spooner entitled "'A Single Good Mind': Collaboration, Cooperation, and the Writing

Self." In the article, Yancey and Spooner describe "the collaborative organism as a functional

collage of connected awareness: I think of a string quartet, for example" (52). They use the

metaphor of a quartet metaphor to explain the collaborative process, as in "you always think of a

string quartet, but the musical group as exemplar makes some sense. Same piece, multiple

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[3] In her article, "The Greek Chorus and Other Techniques of Paradoxical Therapy," Peggy Papp describes the use of an outside group of therapists who observe the interactions between a therapist and her clients in order to give voice to their own opinions and suggestions (1980). This group does not mitigate the therapist's authority in the sessions, but can be used to create paradoxes in therapeutic sessions, so that the clients are able to see their own destructive patterns of behavior. In addition, medical communities occasionally use the Greek chorus to explain the role of the ethics committee, whose purpose is not to subvert the authority of the primary caregivers or the family in making health decisions, but who can offer their own experience, education, and emotional responses to advise about a course of action. "The ethics committee as Greek chorus shows why and how the professionalization of the work of committees is wrongheaded, and provides committee members with at least some sense of what it is they really ought to be doing: listening, with all their heart, to stories about tragic choices, and working, as a moral community, to support and memorialize the process of choosing" (King 353). In contrast, Carol Strohecker in her article "Tired of Giving In: An Experiment in Narrative Unfolding," discusses the use of the Greek chorus as a literary device in the construction of a multi-user historical narrative program. In this scenario, the user is able to engage in the story of Rosa Parks from a variety of vantage points including the use of outside speakers, the chorus, who comment and expand on the implications of the narrative from the perspectives of the past, present, and future as well as the central players to the story such as the bus driver who had Rosa Parks arrested (1999). "Players interact mainly by querying representations of chorus members, who comment on the narrative from different perspectives" (Strohecker "The Chorus"). These choral members facilitate the story and allow the user to choose how they engage with the material. They mediate between the designers of the program—their agenda in creating this narrative framework—and the users—who engage with the story for their own purposes. However, unlike the previous examples, this chorus is artificially constructed by the authors of the program, like the Greek choruses found in plays, and its members actually represent the authors' perspectives.

voices, integrated roles, one name." (Yancey and Spooner 52). They go on to dismiss the quartet since the writing group may only have one performance together. However, as this project will elaborate, chorus can actually provide a much more robust framework and model for discussing group actions and effects on rhetoric. Because of its nature, the chorus model demonstrates how a particular group of collaborating members come together, interact, and participate in the social invention of rhetoric.

The chorus is an ensemble of individuals who have come together for a purpose. This purpose typically has an inherently rhetorical function. In the act of coming together, the chorus forms a community, a constituency of the audience. The chorus has authority to speak because of its status as a group, authority that the individuals making up the chorus might not have otherwise. The ensemble's characteristics of purpose, authority and community all occur because of the chorus' evolution as a social group.

The original chorus in Western civilization occurred in ancient Greece as a means to worship the gods. These first choruses performed rituals of singing and dancing designed for the purpose of mediating messages between god and man. Over time these choruses began competing with one another at religious festivals and eventually the competing choruses were written into Greek plays. As central characters in Greek plays, the chorus served as an intermediary between the actors and the audience and the playwright and the audience. They took on a distinctly civic role in their performances.

> A poet who wished to produce a play went before an Athenian magistrate and, in the official phrase, 'asked for a chorus.' If his play (in the case of tragedy usually four plays) was approved, he was 'granted a chorus,' financed by a wealthy citizen to whom the city assigned this task as a civic obligation (H. Bacon 6).

These civic performances gave events (historical or religious) context and cohesion for the audience and helped to create public discourse (H. Bacon 11). While groups of people sang together in both religious and civic settings after the classical Greek era, the term chorus was not put to use again till "chorus came into use during the sixteenth century directly from the Greek" when the Christian church which had incorporated a singing ensemble into church services began to use the Greek term (Hillier 61). These musical choruses sing together or in parts (depending on the music of the era) and participate in the religious ceremonies within the church. Again the musical chorus took on the role of mediating between god and man as well as using song to articulate specific religious messages. Present day musical choruses sometimes sing outside of church settings, but like their Greek predecessors they often fulfill religious or civic functions. For example, chorus groups like Voices Rising, Sing OUT! The Lesbian and Gay Chorus of Toronto, and Rainbow Chorale of Delaware offer communities which are enclaves of LGBT community outreach and activism with mission statements such as "we sing together to give voice to our lives, identities, and beliefs, and to celebrate the diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and women's communities in and around Boston" ("Voices Rising"). The African Children's Choir "made up of some of the neediest and most vulnerable children" offers camps for children to learn more about music and then selects some to join the choir for tours and outreach. The group Anna Crusis describes itself as "committed to reaching diverse audiences, including people who have little access to the arts, and its supports the work of other progressive social justice organizations by singing at benefits and fundraisers" ("Anna Crusis"). The inherently rhetorical nature of chorus forms the foundation of the chorus model. The chorus is observable as an ensemble because it becomes a group only when people have come together for some purpose, usually religious or civic. Unlike other collaborative groups, the chorus come

together to serve as mediators between a speaker and the audience in order to invent and distribute a civic or religious message.

Voice

The chorus communicates using voice. Voices form the materiality of the communicative act. Voice provides a means for tracing the complexity of responses made by individuals of the ensemble. Voice can be observed as a single homogenous utterance of the group, a characteristic that gives the impression of homogeneity within the group. However, voice can also be multi-vocal, multi-directional and complex. In either circumstance each voice can be mapped to reveal the presence of a member of the group and their responses to one another. Because of voice, chorus can be perceived and examined simultaneously as a cohesive whole and as a collection of individuals.

Music theory maintains that the human voice is unique to each person: "the human voice is a marker of individual personality: no two voices sound the same" (Potter 1). In music this individuality of speech and voice is a function of the original tool of communication: the mouth.

> The musculature of the human voice is so complex that the chances of any two voices sounding the same are extremely small. Yet the cues given by an individual voice are sufficient to enable many judgments to be made by listeners both in terms of the individual and the set or sets of voices to which he or she may belong. Individual voices may be differentiated by tone colour (or voice quality) and groups of similar sets of voices (opera singers or pop singers…) may also be differentiated as groups by perceived differences in voice quality (Potter 169).

This belief in the uniqueness of the human voice has been taken up and readily embraced in rhetoric, because the premise gives authority and agency to the speaker. We can view someone's

oral transmission as evidence of their views, their arguments, their bodies, their selves. "The metaphor of voice has its most immediate reference in our physical voice, the medium that enables talk, through which we speak to each other and through which we learn about ourselves, language and the world" (Yancey "Voices," viii). Through this metaphor we are able to personalize, individualize, and humanize utterances as signifiers of the people they come from, which means "the notion of the individual human voice to talk about writing allows us to humanize or personify the text" (Yancey "Voices," ix). Like collaboration, voice tends to be a slippery concept when applied to textual artifacts or writing. Expressivists like Peter Elbow and Donald Graves view voice as the driving force of textual invention and an imprinting of the student's 'self' into the writing (Yancey "Voices," xv). Those who follow a Bakhtinian view of voice perceive writing to have a multivocality, a multi-voicedness, housed within the individual speaker and compiled from all the voices that the speaker encounters and experiences in his or her context. The speaker then adapts these voices for his or her own purposes (Yancey "Voices," xii-xiii). And, "poets show us one way of thinking about voice and sources of authority. They remind us that for some writers, voice is created quite deliberately by reference to others, by making them anew" (Yancey "Voices," xiv). Chorus reframes this discussion of voice back to its signifying function as an indication of human existence and oral communicative properties even when applied to textual artifacts.

Choral voices and their transmissions and contributions can be traced. This ability to map the relationships between members can be applied to furthering an understanding of how writing works[4]. "Although writing is a way of controlling one's own physical disappearance, it also

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[4] "Writing (just as much as speech, although in different ways) has been mythologized in Western cultures as a natural, presence-bearing trace, a signifier that partakes of the very essence of the signifying subject: a Signifier" (Kendrick 14).

denies that disappearance by substituting for the body the continuity of the line in space, the line imagined as the trace of the body, the body's presence implicit in the linear trace" (Yancey "Voices," viii). Yet, I am not arguing that the traces left behind give us a full picture or even a partial picture of an individual, his experiences, beliefs, ideas, history; rather the traces act as signifiers of 'presence,' the existence of a person. A human on the other end of the writing implement who left a sign of their passing like a student carving "S—was here" or "Greek Sucks" on his desk. These carvings only tell us that someone did the carving and that he or she existed, had a reason to leave behind the sign, and perhaps, had a message to convey. The carvings tell us little else.

In *Animating the Letter*, Kendrick explores this view of voice and writing as being intrinsic signifiers of human individuality. She argues that "the high value we place on autography manuscripts of the works of famous authors or their correspondence stems in part from this belief that something of the person is preserved in the trace of his or her handwriting" (Kendrick 12). However, as will be seen throughout this project, medieval manuscripts and digital artifacts actually encourage a view of the human presence in the traces left behind. "One of the pleasures of handing and reading medieval manuscripts…as compared, for example, to modern paperbacks—is the relatively greater sense of living presence they give us" (Kendrick 12). In contrast, print texts and the editors who create them have a reductive role which scrubs the personal and individual from the manuscript (Kendrick 13). Digital texts return to a 'greater sense of living presence' since each website can be constructed individually, reflective of the people creating or using the space, and while not made of living material like the skin of a manuscript, the digital space allows for the traces of individual voices, signs of the human beings behind the writing implements. Kendrick gives the example of graffiti artists who leave specific

tag symbols on walls to indicate that a piece of art is theirs. These tag symbols carry significance for the signer and are identifiable by an audience, but are abstractions of the Greek alphabet rather than clearly readable writing. The signs show someone was there: "we can never for a moment forget the human being whose voice we listen to" (Hillier 63). Thus, this use of voice through a chorus lens means that the existence of individuals participating in constructing meaning in a space has been recorded and the roles of different members are identifiable and mappable.

Chorus might be dismissed as a method for discussing collaboration since the chorus appears to speak in one voice, through one synchronous performance, to an audience. In a Greek choral situation, the chorus may speak in parts or contribute to the actions of the play through a choral leader. In his article "Choral Identity and the Chorus of Elders in Greek Tragedy," U.S Dhuga explains that choruses have a choral identity, which provides "an examination of the chorus' physical, political and social identity, focusing on the ways in which the chorus exercises thorough going authority" (Dhuga 335). In a Greek play the group is typically made up of homogenous characters. Yet, in Greek plays, the homogeneity of the group carries with it a great deal of the authority of the chorus as speakers, since the group tends to consist of marginalized characters who would not otherwise be able to speak publicly in Greek society: "the typical position of choral identity is somewhere along the social margins" and the chorus is "made up of women, slaves, and foreigners" (Hawthorne 25). According to Kevin Hawthorne in "The Chorus as Rhetorical Audience," the "social otherness allows the chorus to have a different perspective on the events of the play from that of the heroic characters" (Hawthorne 26). When the chorus comes together they have the authority to mediate between the audience and the gods or the

audience and the main events taking place, because of their unique position outside of the events unfolding and while, at the same time, they are participants, responders, to the action.

Yet, the perception of a synchronous and homogenous performance does not accurately represent the rhetorical context of a choral performance. While an audience hears a harmonized group or a single voiced group performing on the stage, the chorus does not experience their actions as a single voice, nor do the voices all vocalize at exactly the same time throughout the performance. "A piece of music is experienced by listeners as a whole, not an aggregation of parts; what individual singers might experience as separate lines, the audience hears as harmonies" (Brewer and Garnett 259). In their article, "The making of a choir: individuality and consensus in choral singing," Mike Brewer and Liz Garnett suggest that the conductor give different individuals within the chorus responsibilities to mentor others or choose how vocal contributions might be made. A chorus consists of members who each contribute; each member of the chorus has their own purpose, voice, and contribution to be made. All of the members "bring their own experience, needs, 'shared social habits,' and 'social validation'" (Brewer and Garnett 266). Because of this, an effective music conductor is asked to take the needs of his individual singers into account as well as the needs of the whole. According to Brewer and Garnett, a single singer can affect a performance based on personality or experience by overriding or even bullying those around them.

A chorus becomes a body of individuals, a community, because of shared qualities that make them a constituency of the audience, but also set them apart from the audience and from a main speaker. Rather than only seeing the single text in front of us, the manuscript or a web page, a mapping of the different voices reveals that the communication before us contains a layering of many voices, many speakers. In the case of a chorus when voices come together, they

form the materiality of music identified in musicology as musical texture. Musical texture

provides a foundation for a collaborative model, since it facilitates the categorization of different

voices into lead voice, homophony, and polyphony. These categories help to explain how

different voices can operate both separately and together at various points as well as how voices

can be layered into a space at different points in time.

Ritualized Performance

The chorus uses repeated ritualized performances in order to convey meaning and

respond to the rhetorical situation they are observing. Through ritual, the chorus mediates in

these situations between god and man, playwright and audience, speaker and audience. Rituals

are the repeated patterns of gesture and voice, which the audience recognizes. In "'Homeric

Hymn to Apollo': Prototype and Paradigm of Choral Performance," Steven H. Lonsdale explains

"the ritual function of the chorus was closely tied to technique and excellence in performance"

(Lonsdale 38). The rituals of Greek chorus have often been described as rhetorical in nature

(Bierl 2009, Hawthorne 2009), since "ritual is above all a program of actions that is set into

action by speech among other things" (Bierl 15). Rituals become the vehicles for communicating

the message, engaging in the actions occurring on stage, and mediating the experiences to an

outside audience, since the audience is familiar with the meaning and symbolism of the rituals.

Through the use of ritual, the chorus performs the role of witness to the initial rhetorical event. In

Kevin Hawthorne's article, flyting is cited as a good example of ritual patterns that a chorus can

utilize in order to bear witness to events by watching them unfold, responding to them, and then

making judgments about actions they perceive. In flyting two characters engage in verbal battle

with one another. "Flyting in its ideal form assumes public display; each opponent attempts to

verbally outmaneuver and thus to shame his opponent before a watching community"

(Hawthorne 29). The chorus functions as the audience for this flyting and judges who the winner of the battle is through their own responses and actions. In Hawthorne's examples, the chorus is used to offset the power and authority demonstrated by one participant in the flyting against another. The participants speak directly to the chorus asking for judgment on the merits of the actor's experience, strength, and ideas. "These discursive forms—threats, commands, and instruction—all belong to a performance of hierarchical power" (Hawthorne 30). For example in discussing *Antigone*, Hawthorne argues that "The chorus is again appealed to by both characters, through the language of seeing…as a judging audience" (Hawthorne 42). The chorus bears witness to the events not only by viewing them, but by remembering them, sharing them, and judging them. They engage in discursive practices in order to arbitrate, create, and maintain power structures.

Environment

Chorus has spatial and geographical significance. Chorus has traditionally and typically operated on the margins of the main stage. The chorus performs from either the orchestra (in Greek plays) or the choir loft (in Christian churches). From these positions in a space, the chorus witnesses and responds to the main actions occurring on the stage, such as in the flyting example discussed above. The Greek chorus performed on stage in an area called the orchestra and they remained on stage throughout the entire production. In his article, "The Nature of Chorus," Paul Hillier describes how the "choir refers originally to the place in the church where the service is sung and by extension to those who sing it" (Hillier 61). Even the later iterations of the chorus, the church choir, have a particular location, the choir loft or seats, which are an established and fixed location within the church space for their use. These locations are often just to the side of the main action such as the choir seats on the sides of alongside the altar or the choir space in the

back of the church from which the religious leaders process in and out to signify the opening and

closing rituals. This placement both near the main action but to the side of it carries enormous

significance in terms of the chorus' authority and agency. They are always participating, but not

the main players[5].

The chorus model offers a means to map the individual contributions of each participant

while still taking into account the contributions of the group. The model also affords a way to

recognize ritual performances which impact the construction and distribution of rhetorical

messages. Using the model multiple I will argue that multiple people participate in developing

and distributing rhetorical messages throughout the history of rhetoric and their agendas vary. In

order to make their designation clear and to better communicate who they are and how they

affect rhetoric, I am calling these people the *Rhetorical Chorus.* The simultaneous individuality

and multiplicity of the chorus provides a framework for discussing how a main speaker can

retain his or her authority even while acknowledging the authority of the ensemble that preserves

and imparts the message. The chorus model takes into account the environment in which the

chorus participates and how they are able to contribute from the margins of the actions rather

than from the main stage. In short, the chorus model provides a means to nuance and expand on

previous studies of collaborative practices beyond the Aristotelian model or the collaborative

models of partnership and dialogue.

A Process and Progression

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[5] Besides the physical and temporal space occupied by the chorus, space and chorus have other correlations. In *Timaeus*, Plato refers to a concept called khôra, which he treats "as a formless, fluctuating, and generative place or receptacle" (Ott and Keeling 366). This concept of khôra has been taken up by Julia Kristeva to describe semiotics: "Kristeva understands the chōra as the undifferentiated state between mother and infant prior to the acquisition of language and paternal law" (Ott and Keeling 366). Other scholars such as Jeff Rice (2007) and Ulmer (1994) conceive of khôra as a way to describe the possible multiplicity of topoi, a potentially better way to describe the multiplicity of digital topoi. Despite the tantalizing possibilities of describing choral space as 'a generative space,' there is limited evidence that khôra and chorus have any connection.

To address issues of authority, social invention and collaboration, this project applies the chorus model to case studies in which the speaker's authority is contested or could be contested based on the interventions of other people. The case studies are medieval and contemporary examples juxtaposed in order to explore how authority gets constructed and attributed by the transmissions from a main speaker to a collaborative ensemble: Geoffrey Chaucer and Jimmy Wales, Margery Kempe and Tom MacMasters, Christine de Pizan and Arianna Huffington. These examples may seem distant and different, but rather than perceiving history as a linear continuum, which would be difficult given the multiple historical moments I am combining, historiography can be viewed as a constellation of events, which have shared causal relationships and outcomes. Walter Benjamin provides the historiography informing this juxtaposition of these disparate examples from rhetorical history.

> Historicism contents itself with establishing a causal connection between various moments in history. But no fact that is cause is for that very reason historical. It became historical posthumously, as it were, through events that may be separated from it by thousands of years. A historian who takes this as his point of departure stops telling the sequence of events like the beads of a rosary. Instead, he grasps the constellation which his own era has formed with a definite earlier one. Thus he establishes a conception of the present as the 'time of the now' which is shot through with chips of Messianic time (Benjamin 263).

Examining these case studies in relation to one another reveals patterns of group behaviors, which might otherwise be left unobserved or their significance as rhetorical analysis might go unacknowledged. For example, Margery Kempe, a fifteenth-century woman writer, is compared to Tom MacMasters, a man who wrote a blog pretending to be Syrian-American lesbian living in

Syria. At first these two situations seem quite incongruous. However, both figures relied heavily

on others to help them construct their authority, develop their messages, and distribute their

ideas. In addition, Kempe's authority has been contested because she relied on men to write

down her memories. Her strange text raises questions and theories about her purpose, authority,

and historical existence, which have included the idea that perhaps a man wrote the text to

ventriloquize a woman's religious experience (Jones 2000). According to Benjamin, placing

these two different moments in history and context in relation to each other allows for specific

circumstances, historical moments, to be illuminated. In this case the illumination reveals the

extent to which authority comes to be constructed or destroyed by a group of people who

collaborate distantly from the main speaker (they don't work directly with the person to record,

promote, adapt, and distribute the original message). And both examples demonstrate how

authority has been affected by social expectations regarding gender and gendered roles.

It is necessary for this project to acknowledge and draw boundaries on the possible

samples for analysis as well as determining the possible limitations for the theory of rhetorical

chorus. The first boundary issue arises because of the nature of the book (or text) production.

According to Robert Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" book historians have long

realized that book production is a long cyclical process where the author deals with the editor,

then the publisher (if they aren't the same person), then an audience.

> But printed books generally pass through roughly the same life cycle. It could be
>
> described as a communications circuit that runs from the author to the publisher
>
> (if the bookseller does not assume the role), the printer, the shipper, the
>
> bookseller, and the reader. The reader completes the circuit because he influences
>
> the author both before and after the act of composition. Authors are readers

themselves. By reading and associating with other readers and writers, they form

notions of genre and style and a general sense of the literary enterprise, which

affects their texts, whether they are composing Shakespearean sonnets or

directions for assembling radio kits. A writer may respond in his writing to the

criticisms of his previous work or anticipate reactions that his text will elicit. He

addresses implicit readers and hears from explicit reviewers. So the circuit runs

full cycle. It transmits messages, transforming them en route, as they pass from

thought to writing to printed characters and back to thought again. Book history

concerns each phase of this process and the process as a whole, in all its variations

over space and time and in all its relations with other systems, economic, social,

political, and cultural, in the surrounding environment. (Darnton 10-11)

Examining this cyclical process opens up new avenues for exploring history, society, economics.

However, this process is quite complex and therefore leaves open multiple places where a

historian of the book can further intervene to learn new aspects and these historians often have to

focus on just one part of the process in order to discuss it with any real competence or depth

(Darnton 11). To address this concern, I focus only on examples of rhetorical chorus where the

members of the chorus have left behind textual evidence or traces of their presence, which is

why I use medieval manuscripts where the interventions of the chorus can be seen throughout the

artifact and digital examples where the interventions can be mapped across Web 2.0.

Chapter 2, *Chaucer and Wikipedia: The Chorus in Multi-vocal Spaces*, defines a

phenomenon found in the history of rhetoric, the rhetorical chorus, by identifying the people who

mediate between the originating speaker/s and the technology being used to express a message.

These individuals constitute a social system which participates in the creation, use, and

dissemination of rhetoric. The individuals can be identified not only through their technical skills in shaping the technology that houses the rhetoric, but their abilities to use rhetoric as well. To parse out who these individuals are, I turn to a historical example to describe the chorus' roles in rhetoric production, Chaucer's manuscript, known as Ellesmere MS, which was written after Chaucer's death, and bears witness to the impact of multi-vocal discourses on the utilization of technology as a rhetorical space. Ultimately, the people who engaged in the Ellesmere MS affected not only how his work would be produced, but also how it was received and appropriated by later generations. Next, I explore how a chorus affects the construction of rhetorical events in current technologies by comparing the multi-vocality of Chaucer's manuscript to Wikipedia. The rhetorical chorus and its roles become transparent in Wikipedia's efforts to create a communal and collaborative environment in order to build knowledge based on consensus. Yet, Wikipedia's rhetorical spaces based on consensus have also created combative spaces. Thus, this chapter examines how multi-vocal discourse occurs within the rhetorical spaces of medieval manuscripts and digital spaces in order to explore who is able to speak and how they impact the construction of rhetorical meaning.

Chapter 3, *The Mystic, the Fraud, and the Chorus*, analyzes how the phenomenon rhetorical chorus can be classified into specific relationships between a lead speaker and her chorus. The rhetorical chorus is able to create and function as a social system by enacting specific relationships: homophonic and polyphonic. The main speaker is the lead voice and the others respond in various manners to that lead voice. Through homophonic and polyphonic relationships, the rhetorical chorus affects how rhetoric gets created, preserved, and distributed by contributing their own voices to participate in the construction of authority. Through these vocal mechanics, the rhetorical chorus accentuates, acquiesces to, and alters the performance of

gendered voices. First, I discuss how Margery Kempe, a medieval woman mystic, must count on her rhetorical chorus to facilitate her authority as a speaker. Second, I examine the role of these relationships between the rhetorical chorus and a lead voice in the distribution of rhetoric from a blog entitled *Gay Girl in Damascus*, an example of contested authorship and rhetorical authority. This blog was taken up by a number of communities who sought to promote the rhetoric the blog promoted because these communities wanted to believe in the authenticity of the author, Amina, a lesbian Syrian-American activist living in Syria. However, "Amina" was actually a persona created by a white American man, Tom MacMaster. By applying these classifications to these two examples of contested authority, this project offers a feminist methodology for analyzing rhetorical situations where gender and gender performances make authority and authorship problematic.

Chapter 4, *Pizan, Huffington, Chorus*, addresses the question: how does the rhetorical chorus when it comes together affect the mediation of rhetoric to an audience? To answer this question, I apply the rhetorical chorus model to two case studies in order to see what repeated outcomes occur when a chorus participates in the invention of rhetoric. Unlike previous case studies, these two examples represent women composers who have acknowledged authority and agency, but who still face limitations based on the presence of the chorus. First, I examine Christine de Pizan and her scriptorium, a group of people involved in the book trade who helped Pizan produce and distribute her rhetorical arguments. For the study, I focus my analysis on the production and distribution of Pizan's manuscript Harley MS 4431, a presentation copy designed for the Queen of France. Second, I analyze why a rhetorical chorus comes together to bolster the rhetorical authority and agenda of Arianna Huffington and her digital news aggregator, the

Huffington Post. Like the Pizan example, this chorus consists of early participants in the construction and dissemination of the *Huffington Post* as a news blog from a liberal perspective.

My conclusion, *Speak Truth: Authority, Invention, and Chorus,* considers the implications, applications, and limitations of using a rhetorical chorus model for examples where the speaker's authority is contested. Applying rhetorical chorus to the case studies demonstrates that the concept of collaboration can be expanded to include a group of participants, who are tools of rhetorical invention. The chorus offers a conceptual framework for discussing how a group can propagate an original speaker's message through their own agendas, mediate the message to an audience, and thus participate in the invention of social knowledge. Chorus also reveals that authority and agency are not fixed and finite entities, which can only be conferred to either an individual or a group, but can be distributed through the actions of one and many.

Chapter II: Chaucer, Wikipedia, and Multi-Vocal Rhetorical Spaces

On July 31, 2006, the satirical political news show *The Colbert Report* did a news segment that reinforced the idea that the preservation of rhetoric is dependent on at least two things: a technology to preserve the rhetorical messages and people to produce, use, and circulate the rhetorical message using that technology. During the segment, Stephen Colbert described Wikipedia as a website, where "any user can change any entry and if enough other users agree with them then it becomes true." He coined the term "Wikiality" to explain how people co-create a new reality through consensus on Wikipedia and he demonstrated this ability by asking his viewers to change the Wikipedia entry on African elephants to say that there are now more elephants in Africa. Because of this call-to-action, Wikipedia had to shut down access to the elephant page in order to prevent the collaborative effort of Colbert viewers from changing the (online) status of elephants[6].

Colbert's action lampoons the notion that knowledge—and reality—can be co-constructed by technology users. Though the move to alter the elephant page was collaborative in nature, Colbert initiated the first rhetorical event and his agenda was not so much to alter the page, but to humorously satirize the communal construction of knowledge allowed by wiki technology. His rhetorical chorus, made up of a portion of his viewers, chose to perpetuate that initial event for their own reasons. Their actions demonstrate how some participants can perform a mediatory role between the main speaker and an audience. In this choral system, a speaker is attributed authority through the actions of these participants—the rhetorical chorus—who occupy specific roles, which allow them to intervene in the distribution and preservation of ideas and

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[6] For more information on the elephant hoax, see, McCarthy "Colbert speaks" and and Frank Ahrens "It's on Wikipedia, So It Must Be."

share in the creation of authority and social responsibility for distributing the message to an audience.

This chapter begins by observing the roles of this particular group of people involved in the invention of rhetorical arguments. Rather than directly helping the speaker come up with his or her initial message, invention occurs when people intervene with the construction of rhetoric over time by initiating social processes for remembering, safeguarding, and appropriating historical rhetorical events resulting in the invention of social or communal knowledge. In order to observe the influence of these people on rhetoric, I compare two historicized speakers— Geoffrey Chaucer and Jimmy Wales—and artifacts which represent their work— the Ellesmere MS and the "Chaucer" page on *Wikipedia*. The rhetorical chorus members of both Chaucer and Wales occupy multiple roles, which allow them to enter into the rhetorical space and make their own contributions: technician (hardware/software), writer, composer, illuminator, editor, designer (scribe, rubricator, and web designer), patron (individual/corporate), book trader (distributor/ publisher), compiler, transcriber, and discourse communities. In order to identify who participates in the chorus, the entire system of rhetorical production can be viewed as a metaphoric stage. On this stage, a chorus consists of at least one main speaker, the person we usually view as the individual speaker, as well as a possible chorus leader and a number of other contributors. The ensemble can be classified into three distinct groups. First, some members of the chorus act as *producers*. These producers come together to build the stage itself or rather they use their technical skills to put together the materials which create the medieval manuscript or online webpages. Second, members of the chorus can function as *designers*. These designers arrange or organize the stage in order to affect how the audience navigates the space. Third, members of the chorus distribute and appropriate the rhetoric produced through their role as

agents. These agents respond to the main events of an individual speaker, contribute their own ideas to the message and distribute the messages created to other audience members.

The Speakers

The two case studies for this chapter are distinct from the others because both Geoffrey Chaucer and Jimmy Wales of *Wikipedia* generally do not have their authority as speakers challenged. Because of their authoritative status, the two act as a sort of control group for demonstrating the presence of the rhetorical chorus as well as beginning the inquiry into how the chorus participates in the invention of rhetoric. In addition, both men exercise authority in completely different manners within markedly different systems of production and within very different material artifacts.

The first case study, Geoffrey Chaucer, is famously known as the "Father of English Literature."[7] While biographical data from the Middle Ages is limited, we can trace a great deal of Chaucer's career because of his political work and his connections to John of Gaunt and the courts of King Edward III, King Richard II and King Henry IV. Chaucer went to war in France, acted as an ambassador for the English crown, worked as a Comptroller of the Customs of Wool and later the Comptroller of petty customs for the Port of London and a justice of the peace in Kent. Throughout his adult life, Chaucer also wrote numerous poems including the *House of Fame*, the *Book of the Duchess*, *Troilus and Criseyde* and the *Canterbury Tales*. His work influenced contemporaries such as John Lydgate, John Gower, and Thomas Hoccleve as well as other writers who are often referred to as Chaucerians. Because of his influence, the texts left of his work are usually regarded as his and his alone. However, Chaucer's texts come to us within medieval manuscripts which were written after his lifetime. These texts were then edited and

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[7] See Gardner and Pearsall.

published into new print editions within each subsequent era since Chaucer[8]. While not typically

challenged, Chaucer's authority over his work could be contested because of the number of

people involved in the production of his manuscripts and the subsequent transmission processes

used to bring his work to print and digital texts.

In the case of the second study, Jimmy Wales, affectionately known in the Wikipedian

community by the title "Benevolent Dictator for Life," does not face concerns regarding his

authority, even though his site, Wikipedia, is often criticized for its inaccuracies and issues of

textual authority (Chozick). Wales' authority over the site is extremely different than Chaucer's

authority over his manuscripts. Wales does not write or participate in writing the majority of the

text produced on Wikipedia. Even the programming for Wikipedia was created by other people.

Despite the lack of hands-on production, Jimmy Wales is the primary rhetor, the individual

speaker, for the site since he serves as the impetus for the site's mission statement. The

Wikipedia community and the website's agenda adhere to Wales' personal beliefs and mission

for first Nupedia and later, Wikipedia: "My dream is that someday this encyclopedia will be

available for just the cost of printing to schoolhouses across the world, including '3rd world'

countries that won't be able to afford widespread internet access for years. How many African

villages can afford a set of Britannicas? I suppose not many..." (Wales "Founder's Letter"). In

addition, Wales calls for the members of his community to "love our work and to love each

other, even when we disagree," and "each of us can try each day, in our editing, in our mailing

list posts, in our irc chats, and in our private emails, to reach for a higher standard than the

Internet usually encourages, a standard of rational benevolence and love" (Wales "Founder's

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[8] Seth Lerer. *Chaucer and his Readers: Imagining the Author in Late-Medieval England*. Princeton UP, Princeton: 1993. Thomas A. Prendergast and Barbara Kline. *Rewriting Chaucer: Culture, Authority, and the Idea of the Authentic Text, 1400-1602*. Ohio State UP: Columbus, 1999. Tim William Machan. 1995. "Speght's Works and the Invention of Chaucer." *Text*. 8: 145-170. 1995. "Proverbial Chaucer and the Chaucer Canon." *Huntington Library Quarterly*. 58. 1. Reading from the Margins: Textual Studies, Chaucer, and Medieval Literature: 37-47.

Letter"). As Larry Sanger, an early editor and director for Wikipedia, describes, "to be clear, the idea of an open source, collaborative encyclopedia, open to contribution by ordinary people, was *entirely* Jimmy's, not mine, and the funding was entirely by Bomis [Wales' company]" (Sanger 312). While Wales continues to influence the site, his role as main speaker is balanced between his efforts to maintain a hands-off management style (Sanger 2005) and his occasional direct interventions in events occurring on the site (Reagle 2011). Unlike Chaucer who was dead before his work became recorded into the medieval manuscripts we still have, Wales remains an active part of the Wikipedian community. Wikipedia's page on administrators describes his role as "Jimmy Wales, the founder of Wikipedia, has several special roles and privileges. In most instances, however, he does not expect to be treated differently than any other editor or administrator" ("About"). Despite this stated objective to not manage the site directly, Wales does occasionally intervene such as his May 24, 2007 visit to the Colbert show after the "Elephant Issue" to explain how Wikipedia works and his vision for its use . Additionally, in June 2009, Wales worked with the *New York Times* to suppress the story that one of their journalists, David Rohde, had been kidnapped and held in Afghanistan by the Taliban. In his book *Good Faith Collaboration: The Culture of Wikipedia*, Joseph Reagle describes this particular incident as one where Wales chose to actively intervene on Wikipedia's content. While one contributing editor kept trying to put the information onto Wikipedia's biography page for Rohde, Wales worked with his staff to remove the information and prevent further changes to the page. The idea was that suppressing the information would help keep publicity down and keep Rohde from being killed (Reagle).

Despite Wales' occasional interventions into the site and the pervasiveness of Wales' philosophy for the creation and maintenance of the site, like Chaucer's manuscript Wikipedia

serves as an example of rhetorical chorus because other people continue to implement his views through their own rhetorical agendas for the site. For example, current Wikipedia programmer, Brandon Harris, wrote "I don't think there will be anything else that I do in my life as important as what I do now for Wikipedia. We're not just building an encyclopedia, we're working to make people free. When we have access to free knowledge, we are better people" ("From Wikipedia programmer Brandon Harris"). However, participants on the site do not always follow Wales' vision of how the site should function; Larry Sanger had a similar but separate rhetorical agenda in constructing Wikipedia: "I recall saying casually, but repeatedly, in the project's first nine months or so, that experts and specialists should be given some particular respect when writing in their areas of expertise" (Sanger 318). Sanger's call for the privileging of experts was virtually ignored by Wales and other Wikipedians for the first few years of the site, in favor of encouraging the composing activities of the average person. Yet today, Wikipedia requires all facts to be backed by source materials produced by experts in respective fields.

While Wales' role as rhetor is extremely different from that of Chaucer, the situations do have a couple of similarities which facilitate an examination of how a rhetorical chorus attributes authority and participates in the invention of rhetoric. Both men have put forth the philosophical and rhetorical agenda for their work, agendas that continue to be maintained by other people even when the initial speaker no longer directly intervenes in the construction and distribution of the agenda or rhetorical artifact. In both cases, these choral members occupy roles in the production, use, and distribution of a material artifact, which facilitate their ability to mediate the ideas of the original speakers to an audience. Through these roles, the chorus is able to attribute authority to the speakers and to share in the responsibility for inventing the rhetorical messages.

The Stage

Throughout the rest of this chapter I compare the Ellesmere MS to the early history of

Wikipedia's *Chaucer* page from 2001- 2007 as the material "stages" on which the rhetorical

choruses perform within manuscript and digital spaces. I turn to Chaucer's manuscript, known as

the Ellesmere MS, which bears witness to the impact that multiple people play on the shaping of

technology into a rhetorical space. The producers and users of the Ellesmere MS not only

directly affected how Chaucer's work was produced, but also how the manuscript and Chaucer

were received by different generations. The Ellesmere MS is the nickname of the manuscript

whose shelf mark is Huntington Library MS El. 26 C 9 and contains one of the earliest

compilations of the *Canterbury Tales*. This beautiful, well-designed and richly illuminated

manuscript occupies 232 pages of good quality vellum. The pages have a single column of ruled

lines, elaborate incipit initials, ornate marginalia, and 23 paintings of the pilgrims described in

the *Canterbury Tales*. These artistic designs were produced by rubricators, limners, and at least

three illuminators. The script of the Ellesmere MS indicates that it was written in the Southeast

Midlands or London by a scribe frequently referred to as Scribe B in a clear strong *Anglicana*

Formata hand (Seymour 34). The design of the Ellesmere MS reflects wealth and nobility:

> the decoration, the elaborate division and subdivision of the text, the glossarial
>
> apparatus, and even the spaciousness of the margins when empty (in the case of
>
> tales where the compilers lacked impressive-looking Latin sources) combine to
>
> give the manuscript a sumptuous appearance that surely was meant to reflect the
>
> wealth and status of the owners for whom it was intended (David 310).

Because of the care taken by those who made the manuscript, the Ellesmere manuscript has been

examined extensively by medievalists to establish Chaucer's intention for the arrangement of the

Tales, to argue how much influence Chaucer may have had over the production of the manuscript, and to examine the manuscript's audience[9]. The intense scrutiny of this manuscript facilitates an analysis of the series of responses produced by the rhetorical chorus, because the studies have closely examined the various actions of those who have participated in shaping the space. They have demonstrated the training and skill needed by the scribal community to produce such manuscripts as well as the interactions between the scribes and illuminators required to carefully design the space.

Like the medieval manuscript, Wikipedia's "Chaucer" page contains traces of the interventions made by various occupants to the space: "the site is only the most visible artifact of an active community" (Reagle). The first version of the "Chaucer" page was made on October 30, 2001 by the contributing editor identified as Trimalchio. According to Trimalchio's user page, his name is Fritz Swanson and he works as a lecturer of creative writing and composition at the University of Michigan. This first page consisted of little more than a brief two- line description of who Chaucer was. Since that time, the page has grown extensively in length though only a small number of the contributors have actually added the bulk of the information such as Clevelander96, Tedickey, LeonTheCleaner, Dpknauss and Improve (each of these editors added twenty or more edits to the page). At last count on February 4, 2014, the "Chaucer" page had 2,249 revisions made by as many as 1, 176 users. The page also has 201 watchers, Wikipedian contributors who receive updates every time a change is made to the page. These watchers help to monitor the page's information and credibility. Many of these occupants of the site spend their time either editing what had existed previously or adding short bits of

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[9] For discussions of Chaucerian studies, see Blake *The Textual tradition of the Canterbury Tales*; Doyle "The Copyist of the Ellesmere 'Canterbury Tales," 49-67; Stubbs "'Here's One I Prepared Earlier': The Work of Scribe D on Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 198;" Parkes "The Planning and Construction of the Ellesmere Manuscript," 41-47.

information, such as place names, people Chaucer knew, or information about his body of work including his civic duties to the crown. Throughout Wikipedia, contributors are ranked according to the amount of edits and contributions they make to the site, so that some people just make edits while others are raised to different levels of administration whose authority is further ranked according to the role they fulfill and who censor content made on the site.

It may appear odd to compare the Ellesmere MS to Wikipedia's "Chaucer" page rather than to Wikipedia's "Ellesmere Chaucer" page (the page describing the Ellesmere MS). However, the "Ellesmere Chaucer" page has only 89 revisions made by 51 users and less than thirty watchers. These smaller numbers might appear to make analysis easier, but in actuality they indicate a much tighter discourse community and limited audience. Because of the limited audience, the page is not subjected to the same amount of vandalism, usage, and argumentation which occurs on the "Chaucer" page. To explore how the rhetorical chorus participates in the preservation and distribution of rhetoric, the "Chaucer" page offers more variation in the type of interventions made by the chorus, interventions that more closely model those seen beyond the Wikipedia pages on Chaucer or the manuscripts of his work.

An Analogous Relationship

In keeping with the view that history operates as a constellation of events rather than a linear time line, this project juxtaposes medieval manuscripts and digital websites as case studies for observing and analyzing the phenomenon of rhetorical chorus. These two forms of text technology appear radically different, but as will be discussed throughout the chapter, both manuscripts and digital websites have similar characteristics as multi-vocal rhetorical spaces. Both technologies are produced and designed by people who occupy designated roles, which enable them to participate in mediating rhetoric. Medieval manuscripts and modern digital

technology are two productive locations for identifying how individuals intervene in the

production, distribution, and use of rhetoric and technology. While the two technologies are

significantly materially different and constitute separate social processes of production, they

ultimately have several comparable features which make them suitable subjects for building

towards additional theories of collaborative rhetorical practices. In fact the analogous

relationships between the two technologies have been noted by theorists of New Media and

Medieval Studies. In *Writing Space: Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print*, J.

Bolter (1991) notes a comparative relationship between manuscripts and digital technology.

While not making explicit statements concerning any direct relationship between manuscript and

digital technology, Bolter does juxtapose their similarities frequently: the lack of unity and

homogeneity that allows for different voices to be expressed to different audiences (7); the 'web'

of text interpretation (39); the practice of more ephemeral forms of communication such as the

ease of erasing a computer document or the use of a wax tablet for writing (55); and the visual

structure of the page, especially the use of space for marginal notes and responses by the reading

audience (68). He describes medieval writing as "multimedia" (86). Lastly, he writes that

"medieval manuscripts presented a complex space of words, pictures, illustration, and

ornamentation—the most complex prior to the electronic medium" (72). Through these

connections, Bolter has paved the way for more scholarly work to be done which bridges these

two systems of communication and allows for the potential of new and insightful discourse and

language to discuss both manuscript and digital technologies.

Notably, it is medievalists who have sought to make the analogous relationship between

manuscript and digital cultures more explicit. As Martin Foys reflects in his book, *Virtually*

Anglo-Saxon: Old Media, New Media, and Early Medieval Studies in the Late Age of Print, "the

critical frontier of how New Media theories and methodologies present alternative ways of

interpreting early medieval expressions, literary, artistic, or otherwise remains terra incognita—a

tantalizing world awaiting further exploration" (2). The discourse emerging from New Media

scholarship is providing some necessary language for describing relationships within medieval

manuscripts and their productions that previous work within the confines of print is not able to

address properly. In addition, Foys states, "like more recent forms of New Media," medieval

writing was conceived by readers of the medieval period as a "blend [of] the 'real world' of the

individual user with a virtual one, distanced from but assembled out of a sensory palette" (52).

As an example Foys discusses the devotional works of Anselm, who Foys argues remediated

"real and virtual spaces" and therefore demonstrated "the issues of immediacy, transparent

technology, and hypermediacy" (52). In other words, medieval manuscripts and digital

technologies of communication often share a number of similarities that allow speakers and

audiences to interact with one another and the messages being created. The pages are dynamic

spaces and not fixed. Both spaces hold textual and visual meaning on the page, but the messages

themselves often occur between the page and the viewer (the virtual spaces between).

Medievalists have also been prompt to draw connections between the digital age and

manuscript production through their work in digitalizing medieval manuscripts. These projects

began as opportunities to make medieval manuscripts more accessible to scholars around the

world but as Stephen G. Nichols describes in his article "'Born Medieval': MSS. In the Digital

Scriptorium," the process also reveals and emphasizes some startling similarities between the

two forms of communication. First, Nichols points out that medieval texts, like current digital

communication, often presented the same information in a wide assortment of versions, so "it is

historically incorrect to pretend that this literature, like modern fiction, circulated in a single,

'authoritative' fixed text" (Nichols). Second, Nichols finds that the process of digitalizing a medieval manuscript was itself very similar to the process of making the original manuscript: "What became apparent was that with the digital technology we were re-creating the medieval stationer's shop. Just as a team of diversely trained artisans produced each original manuscript, so must a group of specialists, each with a different competence, produce each new digital version. And as with each medieval manuscript, each digital surrogate is a unique object" (Nichols). People, particularly specialists, are needed to produce technology. Manuscripts and digital media require numerous people to each contribute some smaller share in the larger projects in order to complete the projects successfully. Both forms of communication reject the idea of a single official author who has sole control over the work being created. Instead they are open forms of communication where multiple people contribute. Also neither process results in one definitive authoritative product, but rather the processes create dynamic spaces inhabited and occupied by many people who help to preserve rhetorical messages and contribute their own.

While an analogous relationship between digital and manuscript media can be demonstrated in a number of ways, there are significant differences between the two media such as the number of people involved in the production and use of the media, the boundaries of space, and the ability to synchronously access the space. However, for this project three features will be closely marked in order to help identify and observe the individuals involved in affecting the preservation of rhetoric. Both medieval manuscripts and digital media constitute (1) fluid and dynamic spaces, (2) allow for the entrance of multiple people into the constructing of the space, rather than a purposeful (and false) focus on a single author and (3) the movements of the rhetorical chorus are transparent, which means their movements and actions can be identified and mapped within the technological space.

Dynamic Spaces

Lev Manovich in the *Language of New Media* characterizes the computer screen as both physical and virtual space (2001). This concept of technology as a site of different types of space can also be applied to the medieval manuscript (Rust 2007), since a user is affected not just by the materiality of the space but is also affected by the process of uptake that occurs between the user and the information provided in the space. Since the technologies operate as material locations and conceptual space, rhetoric is built through the fluidity between the two. In her article "Space and Place in Medieval Contexts," Megan Cassidy-Welch rearticulates Henry Lefebvre's description of space[10], by stating that spaces are "continually generated and shaped by action, by movement, by use...space is dynamic and fluid and not always demarcated by fixed material or imagined boundaries" (Cassidy-Welch 2). For example, according to Mary Carruthers in the *Book of Memory*, the people of the medieval era perceived the manuscript as a fluid and dynamic space rather than just a receptacle or storage space of ideas (Carruthers 234-73). The manuscript allowed for different people to enter into the space and layer in their own messages. This view of the manuscript may be difficult for us to imagine, because medieval manuscripts come to us as artifacts that capture a version of the texts contained within them. Viewed from this perspective, the manuscript is a fixed material location, a site of rhetorical discourse, which contains the work of individuals. Yet, the manuscript is also a space that is fluid and dynamic. The space of the manuscript contains a series of rhetorical events marked within the space, which reveals traces which indicate the movements of individuals into and out of the space.

The manuscript and later digital spaces allow for the mapping of communication transmissions and power dynamics between participants because the rhetorical space exists for us

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[10] See Lefebvre.

as both an object (the historical artifact) and events (the processes of production, dissemination, and use). To borrow from Roxanne Mountford, the manuscript and digital media act as object/events, which function as "the geography of a communicative event and, like all landscapes, may include both cultural and material arrangement, whether intended or fortuitous, of space" (Mountford 17). In order to view the layers of meaning made by an artifact that is also a rhetorical event (or series of rhetorical events), both the product and the act of production should be mapped. In a *New York Times* article "Digital Keys for Unlocking the Humanities' Riches," Patricia Cohen interviews Martin Foys about the new work being done in the digital humanities in which mapping is utilized to help scholars see not just the product but also the total rhetorical context in which the product was produced (P. Cohen). Foys describes his project of digitally mapping the Bayeux Tapestry as an example to demonstrate not just the images of the tapestry but also to see what sort of rhetorical events contributed to its production. This type of mapping has become more common in the humanities, according to the *New York Times* article, because it allows scholars to visualize the layers of complexities behind the production and use of an artifact.

In mapping both manuscripts and digital technologies, the first layer of meaning is embedded in the physical or material space created. The technologies are shaped by producers and altered by users to fulfill certain rhetorical agendas. These alterations are dependent on social expectations of those involved in the processes of creation and use and on the materiality of the space. This materiality affects perceptions. As Roxanne Mountford states, "spaces have heuristic power over their inhabitants and spectators by forcing them to change both their behavior (walls cause us to turn right or left; skyscrapers draw the eye up) and sometimes their view of themselves" (Mountford 50). The physical space denotes boundaries and encourages

certain behaviors or views of the occupants. Yet, space is not rigidly fixed, but can be mutable based on the shaping of its internal material core. The New York nightclub—the Limelight—is a good analogy to explain how a physical space can be materially constructed to both shape the movements occurring within the space and be shaped by movement in turn. The Limelight was a dance club, which was open through the 1970s to 1990s. The owner and his party planners frequently shifted the lighting, dance floors, and music in accordance to different social and musical trends. These alterations sometimes occurred as often as the days of the week. Despite the frequent changes within the building, the overall structure of the space still remained that of the old Church of the Holy Communion, an Episcopal Church built in 1844[11]. This church is a historical landmark: the outside remains unaltered and parts of the inside space still have many of the designs, woodwork, shape of the space itself, flow of the space, and the stained glass windows. Even the movement through the space is still mediated by the church design of the building, with the smaller room built originally as a chapel. So while the space underwent changes inside in how it was used and how people moved through it, parts of the space also remained the same, affecting how people shaped the space. The changes to the materiality of the space occurred through the use of technologies, but some aspects of the material space and the movement that occurred within it remained consistent, while others fluctuated according to the agendas of those involved in the space.

Technology, as demonstrated by the medieval manuscript and digital websites, can be altered into a rhetorical space. This space is fluid and dynamic and not a fixed artifact as we usually perceive it. It is not just a storage space of ideas even though it is a site of preservation. In this case, preservation does not refer to preventing meaning from changing at all, but rather maintaining or preventing the destruction of ideas ("Preservation"). The rhetorical spaces house

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[11] Limelight. Film. and Hughes "Church Turned Club Is Now a Market."

and preserve social memories, which are alterable depending on the social and cultural

perceptions and demands of technicians, who produce and use technologies, and the audience.

The social memories keep for the community the thoughts of individuals and groups who

represent the community at large. The spaces are materially constructed, but this materiality is

mutable depending on the needs or agendas of those who produce, use, and consume this space.

Thus, the manuscript can be studied as a location, a site of rhetorical discourse. The places the

manuscript occupies over time, where it was produced and used, can also be sites of rhetorical

discourse. By acknowledging the rhetorical space as both object and event, we can see how the

actions of individuals create a social system of networked relationships—a system of multi-vocal

discourses—constructed in a manner designed not just to mediate the work of a single individual

to his audience, but to allow for the entrance of multiple people with varying degrees of technical

skill, access, social power and divergent rhetorical agendas.

   The individual speaker has composed his or her message and the chorus then intervenes

in the effort to preserve and distribute that message to the audience. Therefore, the rhetorical

chorus can be found as they enter the space of rhetorical artifact and mediate the message to an

audience within that shared technological space (the website, the manuscript page, the printed

book). They can be located through the marks they have left behind within the fixed artifact. For

example, in a medieval manuscript we can see these movements at fixed points (rubrics,

illuminations, text), because the entrances of the different individuals occurred in the past and are

located together on the page for us in the present. While some of members of the audience

simply travel through the space (readers), others—the chorus—leave behind marks of their own

rhetorical agendas and responses to the space and come to dwell in the space (Reynolds 142-3).

For example, in Chaucer's manuscript, Ellesmere MS, someone with the skill to write

contributed his or her own material, such as writing "aaabbcdeeff" on folio 48, a blank page after the Cook's tale. Someone also altered the space by contributing his or her own messages such as the signed Latin couplet: "*dum sumus in mundo vivamus corde jocundo Amen ffinis quod willm sayer*" written into the middle of the same page. Though these are minor additions to the page and do not really reflect much if any change to the rhetorical meaning, they do demonstrate that some members of the audience had the technical skill to enter into the space and the potential to both preserve and add their own symbols.

With Wikipedia, the markings left behind are records of edits made by individuals passing through the space as well as ongoing conversations and feuds between people recorded on the site. Each page on Wikipedia has a history tab which links to a list of all the edits and revisions made to that page. A viewer can thus see the movements of different individuals as they leave behind evidence of their passing through the space. These markings help to identify members of the rhetorical chorus and their interventions. For example on January 28, 2007, a contributing editor "82.33.193.243" added the line: "He [Chaucer] was also convicted of sexually harassing a boy of 13. He was put on trial but was released as the boy had wanted it done up the bum in the first place." After this act of vandalism was removed another editor on July 25, 2007, "209.203.103.2" wrote in the lines: "He [Chaucer] was also convicted of sexually harassing a boy of 13. He was put on trial but was released." This blatantly false bit of information was left on the page despite multiple reverts made by editors to combat continuous vandalism. Finally one editor, 68.188.31.222, changed the lines, only to have another editor, Mlouns, change it back claiming that it was a true statement, but needed to have citation verification on November 20, 2007. On the following day, November 21 2007, a third editor, Tedickey, writes "I'm not able to find a reference- mark first" and later that day he finally

removed the remark. Like the practice writings added throughout the Ellesmere MS, these interventions represent a bi-play occurring within Wikipedia. The edits are the marks and traces left behind by the movements of different people engaged in creating and distributing knowledge. Therefore, these interventions demonstrate not only the acts of collaboration occurring on Wikipedia, but the interventions of a chorus as well. In this case, the chorus mediated a false message regarding Chaucer for their purposes, and by doing so, affected the overall reception of both Wikipedia and Chaucer to Wikipedia's audience.

The case studies of this chapter, Chaucer's Ellesmere MS and Wikipedia's "Chaucer" page, show how a chorus intervenes in a space which acts as "a location…an act of inhabiting one's words; location is a struggle as well as a place, an act of coming into being and taking responsibility" (Reynolds 11). In digital and manuscript spaces, some people come to inhabit the space, altering it to fulfill rhetorical agendas. The location is not just a fixed place, but a space of coming into being, of struggle, and of responsibility for those who enter into the space. Through their skills in altering the materiality of the spaces and their rhetorical *techne* the chorus is able to impact the space by creating order and arranging the space. Since they take part in the construction of the artifact and mediate its use, the chorus shares in the construction of rhetorical authority and shares in the responsibility over the arguments presented.

Chorus as Producers

In a situation of choral rhetoric, the chorus enters into the distribution and preservation of rhetoric first as producers of the space. If the rhetorical artifact is like a stage, then the producers are the production crew of a stage performance who need the technical skills to arrange the materiality of the space and construct the mechanical features. With this staging metaphor, they would be the persons in charge of building the stage, lighting, and other mechanical features of

the stage performance. For a medieval manuscript these people would be the parchmenters, rubricators, scribes, book traders, patrons and other figures who contributed the materials needed to build the artifact into a rhetorical space. For Wikipedia or other digital spaces, these people would be the patrons, computer engineers and programmers—either individuals or hired personnel of a corporation—who build the computer terminals, servers, and code needed to create the digital space onto which the main speaker and other members of the chorus will leave their own rhetorical contributions.

According to medieval writers, even the definition of authorship varies to describe a wide range of participants in the invention of ideas. The multiple types of authorship allow for the rhetorical chorus to occupy different authoritative roles within the composing and production process. St. Bonaventure describes some of these roles, which now get subsumed under the label 'author,' in his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Libri sententiarum*.

> The method of making a book is fourfold. For someone writing the materials of others, adding or changing nothing, and this person is said to be merely the scribe. Someone else writes the materials of others, adding, but nothing of his own, and this person is said to be the compiler. Someone else writes both the materials of other men, and of his own, but the materials of others as the principal materials, and his own annexed for the purpose of clarifying them, and this person is said to be the commentator, not the author. Someone else writes both his own materials and those of others, but his own as the principal materials, and the materials of others annexed for the purpose of confirming his own, and such must be called the author (Minnis 94).

While Bonaventure attributes most of the authority to the person who writes his own material, the *auctor* rarely wrote a medieval manuscript and instead composed the ideas, while someone else did the writing. In this systemic process of production, a speaker, like Geoffrey Chaucer did not need to be able to write, which was a specialized technical skill at the time, in order to speak. For example, even though Chaucer was highly skilled himself, fluent in at least four languages, and able to participate actively in the production of manuscripts if he so chose, he instead relied on scribes to produce his work.

To add to the complexity, most writers used scribes in order to compose whether out of necessity (illiteracy and lack of skill in writing) or convenience (a common practice within the system regardless of the writer's own skill level). Chaucer's poem "Chaucers words unto Adam, His Own Scriveyn" serves as an example of the relationship between the composer and his skilled scribe.

> Adam scriveyn, if ever it thee bifalle
>
> Boece or Troylus for to wryten newe,
>
> Under thy long lokkes thou most have the scalle,
>
> But after my makyng thow wryte more trewe;
>
> So ofte adaye I mot thy werk renewe,
>
> It to correcte and eke to rubbe and scrape,
>
> And al is thorugh thy negligence and rape. (Chaucer 650)

In this poem, Chaucer informs his scribe, Adam, that if he fails to copy his work properly he will curse Adam to scratch his scalp just as Chaucer must scrape away the errors made on the vellum. This relationship between Adam and Chaucer reflects the often dependent and sometimes

contentious relationship likely to occur between the scribe and author, when they directly worked together in a collaborative relationship.

A reliance on scribes was a norm of medieval manuscript production (Benedict 2004). A.J Minnis in his book *Medieval Authorship* (1984) and Mary Carruthers in her book *The Book of Memory* (2009) detail how medieval authors such as Geoffrey Chaucer, Christine de Pizan, and Thomas Aquinas, who continue to have authority as speakers and had the ability to write, made use of scribes as they composed their works. The manuscript production process begins when the speaker, the composer, first dictated to a scribe, the writer, who wrote the words quickly on parchment or wax tablet. Then the words would be recopied into an exemplar or careful copy to be copied yet again for different audiences. Sometimes these relationships were directly collaborative where the scribe might read back the text to an illiterate speaker, effectively making that composer part of the audience, or the literate speaker might act as audience by writing responses or editing what the scribe composed. A composer could not entirely rely on scribes not to make mistakes or to appropriate the work for their own purposes, and the manuscript was later subject to recopying, alterations, additions, glosses and translations by active reading audiences. Other times different voices entered into the manuscript space long after the original composer and scribe and they often edited, commented, or added their own rhetorical agendas to the space (Carruthers 2009, Hamel 2009, and Minnis 1984).

While there are a number of skilled technicians who participate in manuscript production, this section will focus only on one very important example: the scribe. From the very beginning, writing required technical skills that the scribe had to learn and only a limited number of people had access to the medium and received the training. Because medieval manuscript production required training and the time to do the craft, at first only monastic communities were able to

produce them. In these monastic houses, scribes chose to learn the craft, worked on it all day, and were able to make elaborate and ornate manuscripts (Parkes "Their Hands," 7). By the later Middle Ages, fewer monks were trained in writing and even monastic communities had to engage secular craftsmen to complete their collections (Parkes "Their Hands," 39). These craftsmen or lay clerks received varying levels of training depending on their level of education and their use of writing in their careers. Professional clerks who worked for the city of London were likely to be more skilled than a priest who occasionally wrote in his occupation.

After the initial production of a manuscript, the first manuscript becomes an exemplum used to create new manuscripts. Though the manuscript trade was largely second hand, manuscripts were produced with a specific purchaser/audience in mind. At this point, multiple voices entered into the manuscript space long after the original composer and scribe and these people often edited, commented, or added their own rhetorical agendas to the space. Some of these contributors have an economic role in the production: the patron may pay for the manuscript prior to its production, but is just as likely to do so after. Once he has been commissioned to produce a specific book, the book seller would then divide the work amongst different scribes to get the work done in a timely manner or would hand the project over to one scribe in particular. The scribe then receives parchment from a skilled trader, the parchmenter. This parchment is made by a parchmenter who would stretch and treat the skins. This material process was integral to the creation of the manuscript as described in Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*: "the leaves (*folia*, i.e. *folium*) of books are so called from their likeness to the leaves (*folium*) of trees, or because they are made of leather sacks (*follis*), that is, of the skins that are customarily stripped from slaughtered livestock" (*Etymologies* VI. xiv). The scribe prepares the parchment by pricking the page and then ruling the lines. This preparation of the page means

that the scribe decides how the page will be arranged (or is told how to order the page). After the scribe writes out the text and rubrics, the parchment is sent to an illuminator, who paints the images and the ornate letters and the rubricator, who adds the red ink and headings. The completed quires are then given to an owner or back to the composer/author, so that either person can contribute to the preparation of the manuscript themselves. The owner or owners (if he can write) may gloss the text, add his own commentary, contribute interlinear corrections and responses, write *notas* or marks in the margins, or pass the manuscript on to its next home. Any copies made of this marked manuscript may include the glosses and interlinear notes added by a previous person. This community of writers, readers, and book producers utilize their technical skills to produce the manuscript. They also use these skills to make the changes needed to meet their rhetorical needs, especially as their communities' makeup shifted from the monastery to more public bureaucratic or literary concerns.

The scribe's technical skills begin with his expertise in choosing the proper ink and cut of pen/reed or quill (*Etymologies* VI: xiv). On his table, the scribe would have all the tools he needed to perform his role: an ink horn, parchment, quill, and knife. Besides the appropriate use of tools, the professional scribe would need to know how to write in a number of languages using a variety of scripts. The use of various scripts directly affected the creation of meaning. For example, writing down Latin from dictation would require significantly different script forms than copying a text from a vernacular edition of an exemplar (Clanchy 129). In order to produce the script forms he wanted on the page, the scribe would need to know how to hold his pen at diverse angles depending on the script form he sought to produce. While the professional scribe could produce multiple forms, he would often specialize in one form to make him or herself more marketable (Parkes "The Planning," 44).

The Ellesmere MS was produced by a highly skilled scribe known as Scribe B, who may have been the scribe, Adam Scriveyn, of the poem. Scribe B is notable for a number of traits which points to his authority and agency in producing the Ellesmere MS: his technical skills as a scribe, his possible prior relationship to Geoffrey Chaucer, his work on an earlier version of the *Tales*, and his obvious education as a scribe. In her 2006 article "Chaucer's Scribe," Linne Mooney declared that she had found Chaucer's most famous scribe, Adam.[12] Scribe B, known for writing the Hengwrt and Ellesmere manuscripts, "may now be given a name, Adam Pinkhurst, from identification of his hand in the oath and signature of 'Adam Pynkhurst' made when he formally joined the Scriveners' Company of London in about 1392" (Mooney 98). Through the evidence of Adam's mastery of several script forms, Mooney was able to show that Adam worked for the Mercer's company as a professional scribe and most likely came in contact with Chaucer through these connections.

Specifically, Scribe B, or Adam Pinkhurst, was well known for his distinctive use of the *Anglicana Formata* hand and he has been described by various scholars as "an accurate copyist" and professional scribe[13]. To create his singular scripts, Pinkhurst required extensive training and experience to have the technical skill to engage in manuscript production, a skill that also gave him the ability to potentially intervene in the manuscript as a rhetorical space.

> The script used for the oath differs slightly from the scribe's more consistently *Anglicana Formata* hand in Hengwrt and Ellesmere, being less rounded, more angular…showing more influence from the new Secretary script…this more angular script appears to be the one with which the scribe was more comfortable,

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[13] See Mooney "Chaucer's Scribe," 97-138.

perhaps because it was more like the script he used in his everyday work (Mooney 100).

Because of the distinctiveness of this hand, A.I Doyle and M.B. Parkes have identified the scribal hand of Ellesmere MS in at least three other manuscripts: the Hengrwt, the Trinity Gower, and the Hatfield fragments (Parkes and Doyle "The Production," 186). The *Anglicana Formata* script is a hand, which Doyle in his article "The Copyist of the Ellesmere" describes as "in our very extensive experience this particular type of Anglicana Formata is not common in vernacular books. Its occurrence must therefore occasion the question of whether it is peculiar to one scribe or to a school" (Doyle 50). This script appears to be unique to Scribe B and denotes his training as a clerk of legal documents. Through his skill, Scribe B played a large role in the construction and distribution of Chaucer's rhetoric.

Wikipedia is a much larger and more dynamic space with thousands of contributors, unlike the medieval manuscript, which only had a few members of the chorus to influence the preservation of information or the rhetorical message. In other words, "Wikipedia is a live collaboration differing from paper-based reference sources…wikipedia is continually created and updated, with articles on historical events appearing within minutes, rather than months or years" ("About"). Besides the numerous editors and administrators contributing to the site's content, Wikipedia is created into a rhetorical artifact through the work of multiple participants around the world. Wikipedia is produced initially through the work of server operators, programmers, and corporate and individual patrons just as the medieval manuscript is produced through the work of book traders, patrons, and scribes.

In 1999 Jimmy Wales hired Larry Sanger to serve as editor and director of Nupedia, the early predecessor of Wikipedia. Nupedia was an online encyclopedia with articles written by

experts in their respective fields and "had an elaborate system of peer review and required highly qualified contributors" ("About"). Because Nupedia and its system of peer review proved to be incredibly cumbersome and slow to create, Sanger and Wales decided to shift their attention to Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia which could be written by anyone using wiki programming. Larry Sanger with the help of programmer Toan Vol and systems administrator Jason Richey used the wiki software, UseModWiki, to create an open source and collaborative online encyclopedia (Sanger 314).

Wikipedia has corporate patrons and like a medieval manuscript, the content of the artifact may be determined by the patron who pays for it. Regardless of how Wales intervenes based on his own rhetorical agendas, the site is also influenced by the presence of these corporate patrons. Wikipedia's first patrons were Wales' business partners at Bomis, a dotcom—Tim Shell and Michael Davis. This corporation funded the project until the tech market bubble burst in 2000. At that point, Wales created Wikimedia, a non-profit corporation, designed to be a "global movement whose mission is to bring free educational content to the world" ("Wikimedia"). WikiMedia now serves as Wikipedia's patron in the medieval sense. Through the financial means the company acquires through charitable contributions, WikiMedia funds the activities which maintain Wikipedia's programming, server system, and networks of volunteers who contribute to the content of the site. This not-for-profit corporation appears at first to have only limited means to intervene on the site, since initially Wikimedia consisted of just two volunteer employees. However, now Wikimedia has approximately 190 employees ("Wikimedia"). In addition, WikiMedia has hired programmers and brought together other volunteers who help to build Wikipedia's interfaces, thus affecting how messages get composed and mediated to

audiences. While WikiMedia claims no control over what is being produced on Wikipedia[14] ("Wikipedia: Wikimedia Foundation"), a German court says differently and made WikiMedia liable for Wikipedia's content (Essers 2013).

Lastly, Wales would be unable to promote his rhetorical agenda without the intercessions of skilled technicians who are able to create the site. Just like Chaucer needed his medieval scribes to document his works, Wales uses programmers who make use of their technical skills to create the staging and materiality of Wikipedia as a rhetorical artifact. "When Wikipedia was first launched in January 2001, it ran on existing wiki software UseModWiki, which was written in Perl and stored all wiki pages in text files" ("MediaWiki"). This initial wiki software was created by Clifford Adams. The system proved cumbersome and difficult to maintain as the numbers of viewers and contributors to Wikipedia increased. In response, Magnus Manske, "a developer and student at the University of Cologne," rewrote the code to allow for more traffic on the website ("MediaWiki"). Later, Lee Daniel Crocker further changed the software code to combat issues from increased usage; "this new software was also written in PHP with a MySQL backend and kept the basic interface of the phase II software, but was meant to be more scalable" ("MediaWiki"). This new software is called MediaWiki and can be downloaded for free online to be used by anyone interested in developing "very high traffic websites such as Wikipedia" and designed to be "run on a large server farm for a website that gets millions of hits per day" ("What is MediaWiki?"). The new wiki structure was designed to keep a database for each Wikipedia page, "without deleting the previous versions of the page, thus allowing easy reverts in case of vandalism or spamming" and the software "can manage image and multimedia files, too, which are stored in the filesystem" ("What is MediaWiki?").

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[14] "The WMF does not edit Wikipedia content. The community handles content, because if the WMF did take responsibility for content, it would introduce liability issues per Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act" ("Wikipedia: Wikimedia Foundation")

The presence of programmers demonstrates just how different the number of producers of medieval manuscripts and producers of Wikipedia are. While only three programmers are given credit for the main changes made to Wikipedia's code and design, WikiMedia foundation has services for MediaWiki hackers, a group of unpaid volunteers who are able to use their training in code to fix bugs or make other changes. The MediaWiki site boasts that "even you can become a MediaWiki hacker" ("MediaWiki"). Though the language of site indicates that 'anyone' can make code changes, these actions require an expertise and literacy in particular types of coding practices, which the average user of Wikipedia is unlikely to have. A hacker requires a literacy in PHP, MySQL, JavaScript and CSS. Despite claims that "even you can become a MediaWiki hacker", the site cautions that "you do not want to hack MediaWiki core unless you really know what you're doing" ("How to become a MediaWiki hacker"). A person with a computer, time, and the right educational materials can conceivably learn to do these activities. Yet, this level of literacy education is similar to the institutionalized learning required to produce scripts and manuscripts during the Middle Ages. Coding is not a common literacy; the average person does not learn these skills without seeking out either educational materials or classes. WikiMedia promotes this type of institutionalized education for their 'hackers' by stating that "Wikimedia participates in the Google Summer of Code by facilitating the assignment of mentors to students wishing to work on MediaWiki core and extension projects" ("How to become a MediaWiki hacker"). The hackers do not necessarily need to live in a medieval monastery, take classes through the Church, or apprentice with a fellow booktrader like a medieval scribe in order to make these alterations, but they still do need specialized training in contemporary digital literate practices.

As these two examples, the Ellesmere MS and Wikipedia, demonstrate, the rhetorical chorus act as the producers of the rhetorical artifact which houses the rhetorical message of at least one major speaker, but often also contains the further interventions of other members of the chorus. These rhetorical artifacts are created separately from the main speaker. As in the case of Chaucer, the main speaker may already be dead or in the case of Jimmy Wales, the main speaker may just take a mostly hands off approach to the management of the artifacts. Instead, both main speakers must rely on the technical skills of others to produce and preserve their initial rhetorical messages. These producers are able to contribute their own rhetorical agendas to the building of the artifact even as they continue to reinforce the initial rhetorical messages.

Chorus as Designers

In keeping with the stage metaphor, the next role of the rhetorical chorus is the uptake of rhetoric by arranging and designing how the artifact gets navigated by its audience. This component of the chorus metaphorically represents the artists who do the set designs for a play production. In other words, the chorus decorates and arranges the main stage in order to affect how the audience will encounter the materials presented and how actors will move through the space. In a medieval manuscript, these 'set designers' are mainly scribes, limners, and illuminators who artistically design the layout of the pages, so that the text and images correlate. For a Wikipedia page, these 'set designers' are the editors and administrators who actively contribute and shape how the texts and images found on the page affect meaning. According to Wikipedian culture, these editors can be 'anyone', but as will be discussed this notion of 'anyone' is not a straightforward concept and the contributions of the administrators reveal that the system of design for Wikipedia is actually incredibly hierarchical and the material presented heavily censored.

In order to affect the rhetoric of a manuscript the chorus not only must have access to technology or the ability to manipulate the materiality of a space, they also must blend that operation with the *techne* of rhetoric. A rhetorician demonstrates *techne* by engaging in an "artistry or craft" through the development of "heuristic skills. . .for which there are no precise or universal precepts, although skilled practitioners are alert to recurring patterns" (Campbell "Agency," 7). The rhetorician makes use of emerging patterns, which become "stylized repetition" (Campbell "Agency," 7). These patterns repeat and "fix meaning through sedimentation. Agency equally emerges in performances that repeat with a difference, altering meaning" (Campbell "Agency," 7). The rhetorical chorus who produce manuscripts or digital spaces are craftsmen of both rhetoric and technology who use "materially embodied symbolic tools" to produce "goal-directed" work "that is communicative, economic, or intellectual, or, more likely, work that is all of these at once" (C. Haas 6). While these craftsmen often worked at the behest of an author (composer of the work) or a patron, they also had their own cultural expectations regarding the implementation of materials and tools to strategically create ordered spaces and layer in rhetorical meanings. These craftsmen create 'habitual spatial practices' using "their memories of other texts" to "influence, for example, the style, shape and arrangement of new ones" (Reynolds 167). Gradually, the way readers and writers make use of the manuscript space, their 'habitual spatial practices,' alter the tools and materials used to shape the space and how they were implemented. For example, red rubrics were added to medieval manuscripts by writers to denote chapter titles and text sections for the reader and marginal glosses and notations were contributed to mark sections of interest. To gain access to the rhetorical space of the manuscript, a member of the rhetorical chorus would need to learn these 'habitual spatial

practices' and skills that can facilitate a composer's access (the originator of the text) to the technological space.

Chaucer appears to be acutely aware of people who will be involved in the construction and distribution of his works. To compensate for his inability to follow his text into manuscript form, Chaucer attempts to speak through asides to his readers in order to communicate with later scribes and audience members who will affect how his work will be produced and distributed. At the end of *Troilus and Crisyede*, Geoffrey Chaucer offers up a prayer to prevent his story from being written incorrectly.

> So prey I God that non miswryte the,
>
> Ne the mysmetre for defaute of tonge;
>
> And red whereso thow be, or ells songe
>
> That thow be understonde, God I biseche!
>
> (Chaucer, Troilus V: 1795-8)

This stanza and others like it serve as admonishments to Chaucer's scribes and learned readers who will not only be reading Chaucer's work but using it, copying it, and appropriating it for their own purposes. Of course these admonishments only changed things for a scribe if he paid any attention to what Chaucer actually wrote, or if he could read with any proficiency. Chaucer's fears regarding the transmission of his work are not surprising given the fact that no two manuscripts were ever exactly alike. This medieval condition, called *mouvance* by medievalists, meant that each manuscript was independently affected by its producers—scribes, illuminators, booktraders, patrons; by its locations, the spaces it occupied over time; and by the language and social ideologies of those who engaged in its space. While later readers sought to name the author and privilege autograph manuscripts over other texts, most medieval manuscripts often

embraced the anonymity of the text's composer (Kendrick 12). The distribution of ideas within these manuscripts relied not on the writer's name, but on the ideas, and whether the chorus chose to record, preserve, and distribute the ideas.

The organizing of materials by a rhetorical chorus could occur in one of two ways: *ordinatio* and *compilatio*. Both of these organizing techniques have been examined by scholars to explain how a book was modified to meet reader needs; the "book always aims at installing order" (Chartier viii). These techniques also allow the scribe and others to exercise their familiarity and skill with habitual spatial practices on the page based on social ideologies and conventions. As more people learned to read, more organization and order were needed to help them to understand what they were reading and to act as reference points within the space for easier navigation. Since the scribe and other members of the rhetorical chorus were also readers, professional readers at that, they would have as much at stake in making the work more organized to fit their own needs.

Design and order are key contributions made by the rhetorical chorus as they mediate between speaker and audience, because the arrangement of the material space dictates how the user of the space will move within it. Each manuscript and digital space has a separate arrangement, a design which delineates different boundaries and new ways of moving through the space for the audience. One of the major ways the rhetorical chorus demonstrates rhetorical *techne* appears to be through spatial design. Through spatial design, they are able to reflect and alter habitual bodily practices of those using the space. People who move within the space of the manuscript manipulate the material building blocks used to shape the space even as the "space commands bodies, prescribing or proscribing gestures, routes, and distances to be covered. It is produced with this purpose in mind; this is its *raison d'etre*" (Lefebvre 143). These bodies—the

scribes, illuminators, glossers, compilers, patrons and audience members—can move through the space, occupy the space momentarily or come to dwell within the space. The habitual spatial practices of manuscript production caused the medieval writer-scribe to have a particular relationship to his body, a relationship distinctive to his role as a craftsman and determined by his skilled use of certain tools. Thomas Hoccleve in *Regiment of Princes* further elaborates on his experiences as a scribe in terms of his body: "My bak unbuxum hath swich thyng forsworn" (985). He compares the bending of his back as he toils to produce a manuscript to the backbreaking work of plowing or harrowing a field (981-5). As Hoccleve describes and medieval illuminations often depict, the scribe sat stooped over his sloped table holding a quill or reed and a knife for cutting the quill to a double point.

Developing social space "presupposes the use of the body: the use of the hands, members and sensory organs, and the gestures of work as of activity unrelated to work" (Lefebvre 40). As Nedra Reynolds describes, people affect space "through both movement and dwelling," which for Reynolds means seeing "writing as a set of spatial practices informed by everyday negotiations of space" (Reynolds 6). Even when the space is re-appropriated, these marks remain in the space, layering into the space new voices and rhetorical stances. At other times members of the audience may only be moving through the space and do not leave behind specific signs of their passing. However, it is difficult to really speculate about those movements since we have no absolute or clear record of who used the text and which contributions on the page may be an overt sign of an individual member of the chorus.

Ordinatio

Ordinatio functions as "a complex page design or ordination that combines the visual and verbal components of reading" (Desmond and Sheingorn 3). In the case of a medieval

manuscript, the *ordinatio* comprises the physical markers and labels that scribes and other members of the book trade added to the manuscript to create indexing and ordering of the material in a more manageable manner than just copying the words down would allow for: majuscule incipit initials, rubrics, titles, and marginal comments. The markers direct "the reader's attention to the visual organization of meaning" (Desmond and Sheingorn 15). The inclination when examining order is to think about how the rhetorical chorus was directing the reader through the space, but this is only part of the cultural expectations built into the space through rubrication. As A.I Doyle and M.B. Parkes say about the Hengwrt and Ellesmere Mss. of the *Canterbury Tales*,

> There are also important differences between the two manuscripts as books, between the ways in which Scribe B handled the *ordinatio* of the text in the two copies…with the development of the mise-en-page of texts in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, layout and decoration became more important: they not only facilitated use by readers but also interpreted the text transmitted to the scribe (Doyle and Parkes "The Production," 186).

As the scribe produced a manuscript, he had to take the time to determine where and how he would create signposts for readers to guide their experience. For example, Scribe D, who wrote the text for the manuscript Corpus Christi MS 198, also created the "impression of seamless continuity" by writing "many of the glosses, incipits, explicits, chapter numbers and corrections" (Stubbs 144). In *The Manuscripts of the Canterbury Tales*, Charles Owen argues that we can attribute most of the text that we have received to Chaucer, because the scribes mainly contributed by arranging signifiers of order and design: "this new way of accounting for the very complex interrelationships between the manuscripts reinforces Manly-Ricket's conclusion that

the editors and scribes were responsible for all but Chaucer's text—the headings, the explicits and incipits, the ordering of the tales, the marginalia" (Owen 2). In other words, there is evidence that the scribe and other members of the book trade were able to affect at the very least the arrangement of the manuscript. While this evidence has been used to dismiss scribal authority and agency over a work, the inclusion of headings, explicits, marginalia, and other paratext features (chapter headings, introductions, and page numbers) served to help the audience navigate how they received the information being presented to them.

The Ellesmere MS is not the first manuscript of the *Canterbury Tales* produced in Scribe B's hand. A much rougher version was done close to Chaucer's death, which is National Library of Wales MS Peniarth 392 D, or more commonly known as Hengrwt. "In Hengrwt, and in the Trinity Gower, Scribe B appears to be an accurate as well as proficient copyist, and the difference between the texts of Hengrwt and Ellesmere can only be explained by the fact that B was copying from different exemplars, and that Ellesmere's exemplar had been prepared by an editor" (Doyle "The Copyist," 186). Though Scribe B copied two manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*, there is proof that he copied them very differently. While the Ellesmere MS is a mostly complete and beautifully designed manuscript, the other manuscript, Hengrwt, is now defective at the end and more roughly produced. Even allowing for this discrepancy, the two manuscripts are very different both as witnesses of Chaucer's text and as physical artifacts. Through the differences in the two manuscripts and the use of separate exemplars, Scribe B demonstrates that he has some measure of authority over how the text and images are shaped within the space. Even as well designed as the Ellesmere MS was, Scribe B left gaps in the text which suggests that either he found gaps in his exemplar, or that at such points in the text his exemplar was damaged. The scribe appears aware of what was missing and sought to bring together as

complete a text as possible to represent Chaucer's words. In doing so, the scribe shows that he is

participating in the construction and preservation of Chaucer's rhetoric through his technical

skills in manipulating the technology and his influence over the order and arrangement of the

work[15].

In "Creating Comfortable Boundaries: Scribes, Editors, and the Invention of the *Parson's*

Tale," Míċeál F. Vaughan points out the irony that many editors "who explicitly admit that most

rubrics are scribal, nevertheless incorporate many of them into their text, lending them

approximate, if not actual, authorial warrant" (Vaughan 48). This ability to affect order opens up

space to potentially allow members of the rhetorical chorus to intervene with their own rhetorical

agendas, even as they seek to preserve the arguments of the original speaker. Specifically, the

Ellesmere manuscript "was a collaborative venture, in this case involving not only a scribe and

limners but also probably three artists, who painted the miniatures" (Emmerson 151). Doyle

argues that Ellesmere MS must have had an editor, which would explain the differences between

Scribe B's two manuscripts (186). In fact, the Ellesmere MS has markings indicating that

someone oversaw the creation of the manuscript. This description of the scribe makes him sound

as little more than a mechanical copier, rather than an agent. However, "in addition to the

author's own changes of intention, the fifteenth-century compilers who undertook to arrange and

copy the unconnected fragments of the Tales provide a variety of interpretations in their

reactions to Chaucer's omissions" (Bowers 14). Even with an editor, the scribe has the

potentiality to arrange and alter the space since he was the one with the technical skill. For a

modern analogy, a web designer might be given direction on how to make a website by the

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[15] The differences between the Ellesmere MS and Hengwrt MS are seen in the ordering of the tales, which reflects the incomplete nature of the Canterbury Tales at the time of Chaucer's death. For a thorough discussion, see Manly and Rickert 1940; Charles A. Owen Jr. 1991; Blake 1985; Stubbs 2006.

client, but the client does not necessarily have the technical skills to implement the design. The

web designer would have some agency in the development of the site just as the client does.

Within the rhetorical space of the manuscript, the scribe was able to have agency (albeit

potentially limited agency) in determining how the manuscript would convey rhetorical meaning.

This agency had limitations, because the "activity in space" was "restricted by that space; space

'decides' what activity may occur, but even this 'decision' has limits placed on it" (Lefebvre

143). Though the scribe may not have intended to drastically alter the author's text, he might

make choices depending on his own era's conventions regarding the design and layout of books.

So while the scribes and other designers of the manuscript space may not have any direct

authority over the recording of text, they do appear to have some agency to shape the space

through their technical skills.

In addition to the scribe, the illuminators had the potential to affect the construction and

uptake of rhetoric through their skills in painting and their contributions to the space, because

they were skilled technicians whose work could only be fully understood or directed by someone

familiar with the techniques needed to produce the images in the space of the manuscript. This

form of arrangement means that the rhetorical chorus institutes habitual spatial practices

according to their rhetorical agendas and that of their audiences (patrons, book traders, and

readers).

A crucial part of *ordinatio* is the relationship between text and image. The illuminators

and limners of Ellesmere are good examples of how the rhetorical chorus could use their

technical skills to potentially alter the space through 'habitual spatial practices.' As members of

the rhetorical chorus, the illuminators worked together to provide visual coherence between their

individual works and the text of the manuscript. "This kind of instruction would have left the

artists leeway to work from their traditional stock in trade, permitting them to draw on the

iconography of various occupations and their observation of contemporary life" (Emmerson

154). Yet, the images are not direct representations of the pilgrims as they are described in the

text. Instead, they demonstrate "relatively independent images of the tale-tellers—four of whom

lack verbal portraits in the General Prologue" (Emmerson 144). As Richard K. Emmerson

describes them, the images were mainly used to help reinforce the *ordinatio* of the text.

Specifically, the images were an easy visual aid for the reader to follow what was occurring in

the manuscript structure: "the chief purpose of the Ellesmere pilgrim portraits is to facilitate

reading by making explicit and visible the manuscript's *ordinatio*: they classify the tales

according to their speakers" (Emmerson 144). The illuminations create visual and rhetorical

links between each image and the text[16].

The border design for the Ellesmere MS was made by three people who maintained a

fixed border design throughout the manuscript, which indicates that "the designer was striving

for coherence of visual presentation, and that he was therefore unwilling to make major

decorative distinctions between tales and prologues, or that he had been instructed not to" (Scott

90). While each of these people, called Hand A, B, and C, was working towards consistency,

they were also acting as part of the rhetorical chorus by reinforcing the order and design of the

overall manuscript (Scott 92). They show proficiency with their *techne*, since they were able to

maintain consistency even though they worked independently of one another (Scott 94). Hand A

represents the most active member of the rhetorical chorus among the limners, because he "was

probably the directing limner of several artists who worked on the book, to judge from the early

position of most of his work in Ellesmere and from his execution of the more elaborate border at

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[16] For a discussion of the relationship between text and image and their impact on rhetorical memory, see Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*.

the Knight's Tale" (Scott 92). These limners contribute to the overall rhetorical message by

providing a visual consistency throughout the manuscript and creating an atmosphere of

completion (despite the gaps and incompleteness within the texts of the *Tales* themselves). In

order to gain this level of consistency, the limners had to coordinate their efforts and

communicate with one another even if they worked separately from one another.

In medieval manuscript culture, the *ordinatio* is implemented in order to help the reader

or audience navigate the page by making use of socially accepted and institutionalized practices

the reader is familiar with. In the case of Wikipedia, the use of wiki software as the basis of the

encyclopedia introduces a similar sort of *ordinatio* because the use of wiki software denotes the

creation of a particular type of community culture and writing production. "As we set it up,

Wikipedia *did* have some minimal wiki cultural features: it *was* wide open and extremely

decentralized, and (provisionally, anyway) featured very little attempt to exercise authority"

(Sanger 319). Specifically, the wiki can be defined as "an online platform that allows many

users to create and edit a simple webpage or several linked pages" (Weingarten 48). Wiki

software creates an *ordinatio* where image and text are united to promote a type of knowledge

making which is free and open: "Wikis were intended to create open-source knowledge through

an open-source model, meaning that the software is available for free and was often itself

designed through collaborative work" (Weingarten 48). The wiki is also characterized as a

technology which is easy to acquire and use. "Access to content is free, and technological

barriers to entry are low; thus, anyone with minimal computer skills can start editing wiki articles

immediately" (Matei 40). In principal, the wiki is not a difficult technology for a society already

schooled in various digital literacies. Thus, the audience expects a site made through a wiki to be

arranged as an open source of knowledge produced by everyday computer users. The wiki is easy to acquire, easy to use, and easy to arrange according to the needs of those using the site.

In the case of the *Chaucer* page, one editor, MeltBanana, eventually set up a template for others to use specific to the Wikipedia *Chaucer* page. This template set up a short bio at the top of the page, followed by a section on Chaucer's life, then descriptions of his works, influence, and a list of his major works with links (October 3, 2005). This template remains mostly in effect to this day. Though the page originated as a block of text describing Geoffrey Chaucer, his life and works, the page was eventually given sections to break up the material provided. For example, on March 8, 2004 editor Schopenhauer added new sections to the page including one for "Electronic Texts" to provide external source evidence from the Gutenberg Project. These sections follow a familiar format for an audience because they resemble the type of divisions, headings, and images one would find in a printed encyclopedia entry. The sections include his life, his works, his critical reception, and his appearances in popular culture. The main difference between these sections and the *ordinatio* of a printed encyclopedia is the presence of hyperlinks between entries. For example, early editor Mav made the decision to place the description of the *Canterbury Tales* in its own article on January 2, 2002. This type of page design allows editors to organize the content according to conventions both encyclopedic and wiki that the audience would find familiar.

In addition to the sections, the page consists of a few images of Chaucer from early 19th century printed collections of his work; editor Brion VIBBER, who is now the "Lead Software Architect for the Wikimedia Foundation," was the first to contribute a picture to Chaucer's page. Unlike the medieval *ordinatio* which uses images to help promote the message of the text for an audience, the images of the *Chaucer* page act more like icons to represent how Chaucer and his

characters have been depicted in other sources. So rather than having images which gesture to the text and help the reader follow where they are in the arrangement of the content on a page, the images help the reader know which page they are on, but might not serve a further function. This placement means the *ordinatio* of Wikipedia gestures to preconceived notions of how image and text should function in an encyclopedia, where the images are used like medieval incipit initials or bold words found in a dictionary; place markers designed to help the reader know what page they are looking at.

One of the promises of Wikipedia and other digital media is that new media provides "new tools that enable communicators to have more control over their communication experience" (McMillan 212). With wikis the rhetorical chorus appears to need far fewer skills to be able to enter into the space and shape how the information gets arranged. These people do not have to have extensive artistic or technical skills to contribute. Each person adds a few sentences, lines, or images or they edit what is already present to shape the message being composed. "Wikis often are thought of as potent collaborative tools because they permit asynchronous, incremental, and transparent contributions from many individuals" (Reagle). On the *Chaucer* page, most editors early on added information about Chaucer's life such as his marriage to Philippa (de) Roet and his travels; "He traveled from England to France, Spain, Flanders, and Italy (Genoa and Florence), where he came into contact with medieval continental poetry" (September 14, 2002). Each editor only added a small amount of information, which eventually created a much longer entry. Editors also correct the grammar and sentence mechanics of other editors. These corrections sometimes led to debates regarding the use of language such as whether or not to use "honor" or "honour" or literary concerns regarding Chaucer. This chorus could be considered the 'authors' of the work with the exception that their

authority in the space is limited and circumscribed by a number of issues: who they are, the

social structure in place, and the protocols of the space.

Compilatio

Compilatio involves the copying, gathering and rearranging of materials from at least one

source with *auctoritas*. In the Middle Ages, people who knew how to write would compile

material or gather together information into *florilegia*. These collections of quotes came from

various composers which a professional or skilled reader would bring together within a text

sometimes over generations. In a similar fashion, each version of Chaucer's *Tales* is different,

because of the way a scribe or other member of the book trade gathered together Chaucer's

earlier work, even the ones produced by the same people. For example, Scribe B functions as a

compiler in the Ellesmere MS by tidying up and editing the work (Doyle and Parkes "The

Copyist," 191-2). In the case of the *Canterbury Tales*, these actions appear to have been

necessary since several versions of the tales were circulating and not all of the tales were

complete. When Scribe D produced Corpus Christi 198, he "left gaps in the text, which have

been filled by later hands" (Doyle and Parkes "The Copyist," 192-3). As Scribe B and D

demonstrate the members of the rhetorical chorus used their skills to gather together what

Chaucer material they could find, and since they knew that they were sifting through different

versions, they left space for amending and reshaping the rhetorical space. The two scribes

preserved Chaucer's work to the best of their abilities, which is evident by the progressively

nicer and more professional copies they both made.

Like a medieval manuscript, wikis and Wikipedia are composed by compilers, or what

Wikipedia calls editors and administrators, who contribute text to the site by arranging the space

in order to help the audience navigate the material provided. Their role as compilers is facilitated

by the wiki software of the site and its accompanying community culture. These editors and administrators contribute to the space by adding the content and images which help to build the encyclopedia design of the website. Unlike the medieval manuscript system, the designers of Wikipedia follow a very hierarchical structure of administrators beginning with editors, administrators, bureaucrats, stewards, and an arbitration committee. Each of these members designs the site to enforce the community expectations and protocols of the Wikipedia community.

The first content contributors to Wikipedia are called editors but act much like medieval compilers or scribes. On October 30, 2001, Trimalchio wrote the first short entry or stub for the "Chaucer" page:

> "Geoffrey Chaucer, English author, thinker and sometimes spy is most famous for writing (though not completing) Canterbury Tales which is a classic example of a frame tale dealing with pilgrims on their way to the city of Canterbury. Along the journey each pilgrim tells a tale of their past to pass the time."

Many of the edits made are simple contributions to change words, commas, or correct information on the page and participants are asked to leave a note explaining what changes they are making or why they are altering the space. Ostensibly the movements of this group create the content for the individual page by arranging the information and images.

As writers and editors contributing to an encyclopedia, Wikipedians are compilers of knowledge, who bring together these bits of information to form their own perceptions of what constitutes knowledge, and designers of the space. This act of compiling allows Wikipedians to blend their technical skills and their rhetorical agendas. J. Bolter in *Writing Spaces* describes Wikipedia's encyclopedia as an example of the human impulse to gather together the sum of

human knowledge, which is not a new impulse (2001). Rather, this movement occurred as early as the libraries of the ancient world, which held many of the texts that had been written to that point. The gathering together of human knowledge is an impulse to create a reflection of the natural world within a book (Bolter 77-98). In the case of Wikipedia, the rhetorical chorus makes conscious choices about what they will include and how it will be designed for appropriateness. The rhetorical chorus gathers knowledge and arranges the space to create their own rhetorical messages. As compilers, Wikipedians can also shift any direct responsibility for what is being produced away from any one individual. They have developed a social system where the voices appear to have commingled and therefore responsibility is shared by all "Knowledge in this context is not a static object but a public good collaboratively built, shared, and managed by the collective" (Cho 1198). Yet as was described previously, this responsibility does not take away from the fact that individuals are still present within the ensemble. Wikipedia is the result of multiple people working together who take a share in the responsibility over the production, use and circulation of rhetoric like those members of the rhetorical chorus who helped make meaning in a medieval manuscript. In "Writing for a Living: Literacy and the Knowledge Economy," Deborah Brandt defines writers as "mediators and mediational means, which covers instances in which writers voiced the interests of others (e.g., in ghostwriting) or performed writing to transform commercial or bureaucratic needs into transactional (written) texts" (5). Although Brandt is correct in identifying instances where composing individuals act as mediators, the rhetorical chorus does not have to have the interests of others or commercial or bureaucratic transactions in mind. They can also have individual and collective rhetorical agendas which they are participating in developing through their mediation.

Since its inception in the early 2000s, Wikipedia has both been villainized and praised because anyone can shape the space and affect how human knowledge is gathered. The site's description states that "it incorporates elements of general and special encyclopedias, almanacs and gazetteers" ("Five Pillars"). This move allows more people to participate, but also removes the production of 'original' work since the information must exclude the editor's opinions and beliefs or 'unreviewed research'. Since it is not peer-reviewed academic work these stipulations raise questions regarding who is actually responsible for reviewing the material presented. In this social system, "the author function" based on Foucault, "conceals the work (in the sense of labor) that creates the text, by assigning the profit from the labor—the credit—to a kind of incorporated entity" (Weingarten 50-1). However, in this system Wikipedia moves away not only from the single author but also from the creation of 'original' material. "Members in these social environments consist of a larger, loosely knit, geographically distributed group of people who often exchange information with 'electronic weak ties'" (Chen 1200). Though Wikipedia has abandoned an author-centered or single speaker approach, it has progressively gained a heavily hierarchical structure for creating ethos and distributing responsibility over what it produces, so it relies on editors to censor the work of others in the community (Matei 41). This system appears to be user-centered or driven with multiple persons involved in the making of articles and the distribution of knowledge. Ironically, this information still comes from pre-existing sources with often more conventional systems of production and review over the information presented. Wikipedia is really a product of a system that has spliced information and entered into the space according to the perceptions of those who do the work.

The next layer of the rhetorical chorus, admins or 'sysops', mediates by operating as the control feature of the space. They are the editors who have been given authority by the owner of

the site to rein in and arbitrate issues between chorus members in an effort to keep the collective voice singular. Unlike medieval scribes and other book traders, these administrative groups are hierarchical and ranked according to the amount of time they spend on Wikipedia, and the number of arbitrations or decisions they make for the overall community. The administrators are chosen based on their level of activity editing on the site and by the community. Their role is to enforce communal standards of behavior by deleting articles, blocking accounts or IP addresses and editing fully protected articles ("Administrators"). The group answers to the owner of the site, Jimmy Wales, who has oversight regarding the results of different disputes. "In October, 2001, Wales appointed a small team of administrators, called admins, to monitor the site of abuse. Admins are users who have access to technical features that help with maintenance such as deleting articles or protecting them from further changes as well blocking users from editing" (Baytiyeh 129). Some of these administrators have more authority than others to alter the space and these exercise that authority in the form of censorship; they seek to maintain the values of the Wikipedia by removing unwanted arguments or controversial contributions. New editors may fail to follow social protocols and rituals which entail 'proper' Wikipedia behavior and have to be corrected by more experienced editors.

The first objective of the administrators is to maintain the Wikipedia community and its protocols of behavior. Though Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia, it can also be labeled as a social community, whose members consist of "a larger, loosely knit, geographically distributed group of people who often exchange information with 'electronic weak ties'" (Cho 1200). This group conceives of themselves as a community—an abstract digital nation state—identifying themselves as Wikipedians and operating within the space according to the policies and protocols they have set forth and under the guidance of their founder, Jimmy Wales. The

administrators also enforce Wikipedia's mission to maintain a site based on 'collaborative' knowledge building through consensus, a practice that requires the mediation and regulation of a number of watchers who monitor changes made to the page and constrain or oust offenders who deviate from the norms set forth within the technological space. Of primary importance for the site is to "find consensus, avoid edit wars…act in good faith and never disrupt Wikipedia to illustrate a point" ("Five Pillars"). This governance comes from the rhetorical chorus. The chorus does not just enter into the pre-existing rhetorical space of Wikipedia, but rather it also monitors and schools those who try to move outside the boundaries of the social infrastructure in place to guide the community.

In fact, rather than *compilatio* or *ordinatio*, the main function of the rhetorical chorus in a social system like Wikipedia is to maintain the operation based on protocols of the community. First and foremost, the administrators manage the community standards by trying to maintain the operating premise of a wiki site that 'anyone' can contribute material.

> People of all ages, cultures and backgrounds can add or edit article prose, references, images, and other media here. What is contributed is more important than the expertise or qualifications of the contributors. What will remain depends upon whether it fits within Wikipedia's policies, including being verifiable against published reliable source[s], so excluding editor's opinions and beliefs and unreviewed research, and is free of copyright restrictions and contentious material about living people ("About").

Though the space is open to anyone to make contributions regardless of expertise, the site requires information which is "verifiable against published reliable source[s]."

Despite the "People of all ages, cultures and backgrounds" ideal, the rhetorical chorus of Wikipedia is predominately American men. Of the top 20 editors to the page, only two self-identified as women and two were bots designed to find and stop vandalism. Only two contributors claim a MA or PhD education; Clevelander96 has a PhD from Brown University and has made 69 edits to the Chaucer page. Another contributor, Dknauss is most likely male, who "lives with my wife and our four children," has a BA, MA and ABD in Medieval and Renaissance literature and has contributed thirty eight edits. At the moment, the page has 170 watchers, who are informed via email whenever the Chaucer page undergoes some alteration ("Chaucer Watchers"). As an August 31, 2009, *Wall Street Journal* article reported that only 13% of contributors to Wikipeida are women, most of the contributors were in their mid-twenties; however, the ratio of women to men who read Wikipedia is closer to 1:2.

Through their acts of compiling, Wikipedians shape their own rhetorical messages and also create a particular social agenda that shapes the space itself. For example, in an article entitled "How Kate Middleton's Wedding Gown demonstrates Wikipedia's Woman Problem," Torie Bosch writes that a debate raged on Wikipedia regarding whether or not to include an article about the royal wedding gown. Despite numerous requests to have the article deleted by members of the community, co-founder Jimmy Wales has insisted that it stay because of gender bias (with women representing only 9-11% of the editors). As Bosch observes, "the community's geek-colored glasses mean that they may overestimate the value of some articles and underestimate that of others." This debate reflects not just issues of gender bias but also the issues arising from communal choices regarding what is important enough to include in an encyclopedia.

Second, the administrators censor editors and content in an effort to adhere to the protocol which calls for the NPOV, neutral point of view. Ideally, in keeping with the tradition of print encyclopedia writing practices, the text and space should not demonstrate multiple voices, but a single collective voice; "we strive for articles that document and explain the major points of view in a balanced and impartial manner" ("Five Pillars"). This protocol is difficult to maintain as evidenced by sentences like this one: "Chaucer wrote poetry as a diversion from his job as Comptroller of the Customs for the port of London" ("Chaucer"). Though the sentence is correct in its description, the use of the word 'diversion' indicates an opinion on how Chaucer felt about his work as Comptroller, an opinion which is highly speculative (even if it is commonly accepted by literary scholars). On October 21, 2003, editor 216.67.198.204 added "he is sometimes credited with being the first author to demonstrate the artistic legitimacy of the English language." Again this sentence is speculative without providing any source material or citing places where this statement has been made by knowledgeable scholars in the field. These statements were later modified to make them less speculative and more specific.

Administrators are also asked to enforce the requirement that all participants, "respect and be polite to your fellow Wikipedians" ("Five Pillars"). This body of individuals participates in debates, but relies heavily on Wikipedia's procedures to maintain balance. When they mediate they are asked to "assume good faith" and be "welcoming" ("Five Pillars"). This particular communal protocol is difficult to maintain on the "Chaucer" page, which has been subjected to a wide range of vandalism since it was first produced. Starting on September 12, 2008, administrator Gonzo fan2007 protected the Geoffrey Chaucer page to prevent reoccurring vandalism to the page. Since that date other administrators have removed the protection which has resulted in still other administrators reinstating the partial protection of the page to prevent

vandals. This partial protection means that the page can be modified but not by just any editor; only editors who have been ranked high enough can change the page. In other words only people with administrative standing because of their continued contributions to Wikipedia are able to modify the page.

Lastly, administrators rely on what Matei calls ambiguity. "Ambiguity, in this context, is the situation in which more than one meaning is accepted for any given narrative or concept….while pretending to use the same words or concepts or to abide by the same rules, actors make the mental reservation that the true meaning of everything they say or do is ultimately interpretable from their own perspective" (Matei 41). Though all administrative decisions for the *Chaucer* page and its edits can be seen through the history archives on the website, the decisions and rules of Wikipedia are not uniform or terribly transparent. This ambiguity is purposeful, so that Wikipedia maintains the type of communal openness found in wiki websites. They make their own rhetorical moves through their interpretations of the law; "Rules in Wikipedia are not carved in stone, as their wording and interpretation are likely to change over time" ("Five Pillars"). Despite this desire to keep everything on the site open and dynamic, the ambiguity of the rules clashes with the desire to create a trustworthy encyclopedia online. As an example, editor QuentinObis, decided to clean up the language used throughout the page on March 3, 2011. In his explanation of why he was making so many changes, he stated "I'm going to give Chaucer the page he deserves—without original research" and "This article is terribly written and inaccurate. Needs substantial revision." This editor demonstrates the irritation which occurs when the mission to create a good encyclopedia online clashes with the other communal protocols.

Medieval scribes and illuminators design a manuscript based on the conventions of manuscript production, which is directly affected by the materiality of the manuscript and how an audience navigates the space. Likewise, Wikipedian editors and administrators design and arrange the space based on the wiki software and the social protocols which accompany its use. While scribes and illuminators need training to order the page and create a connection between image and text, Wikipedia editors are able to manipulate the software without specific training. However, despite the perception of easy use, Wikipedia is not a simple wiki where anyone in a particular group can enter into and shape the space. And while members of the rhetorical chorus skilled in using computers and wikis in particular may be more numerous than with a medieval manuscript, the chorus still requires early training and technical skills in order to navigate the infrastructures and norms of behavior expected in using digital communication software. Even students familiar with blogging or other digital communication might hesitate to enter into a collaborative space with unknown expectations of behavior. In the case of both medieval and Wikipedian members of the rhetorical chorus, the navigation and arrangement of the space requires a knowledge of the social system for each material artifact. A person wishing to enter into the space must know how to intervene, what is allowed, and how to initiate a dispute if a disagreement arises. The social system of the manuscript allows chorus members to dictate how the audience will perceive the relationship between image and text and what information will be provided to them. The manuscript chorus also provides space for others to engage with the material artifact later. In contrast, the social system afford by wiki software has a complex effect: on the one hand, it is fluid and allows for multiple people to enter into the space and make changes to it. The system also allows for discussion about changes to the information contained

in it; on the other hand, the system has the effect of censoring and constraining those who chose to disrupt or move against the system at large.

Chorus as Agents

This last group of chorus members consists of agents in their own right who enter the material artifact after its initial production and design. In keeping with the stage metaphor from before, these members of the rhetorical chorus are co-actors with the main speaker. They contribute their own messages and agendas, which sometimes reinforce the individual speaker's message and sometimes negate the original message in order to argue for a different perspective. They tend to act on the margins of the main action, where they operate through their own rhetorical agenda. This chorus can repeat a main speaker's message, appropriate it for their own needs; or contribute their own separate messages.

In medieval manuscripts, these agents would be owners of the manuscript, who contribute their own messages to the stage such as the R. North who added his own poems to the Ellesmere. They would be glossers and commentators who alter the space as they pass through it. Some members of the chorus have used the space of Ellesmere to respond to Chaucer's work. As Alfred David writes in his article, "The Ownership and Use of Ellesmere Manuscript," "the signatures, mottoes, maxims, and poems in English, French, and Latin written on the eight flyleaves, in the margins, and in blank spaces of Ellesmere have become in turn, additional texts in which we can read not only a record of ownership but something of the manuscript's social history" (David 308). For example, a member of the rhetorical chorus intervened in the rhetorical space of the manuscript through separate rhetorical moves with the 192-line poem written in a late fifteenth-century hand on folios iiv-ivr. The poem was signed by one Rothley, and the content of the poem indicates Rotheley is a retainer of the de Veres, a noble family who

eventually inherited the Ellesmere manuscript (David 311). In this poem, "Rotheley is adapting literary devices felt to be 'courtly' and 'Chaucerian' to make a political statement about the house of de Vere in a time of trouble" (David 311). He draws connections between his own poem and that of Chaucer by mimicking the Monk's Tale rhyme scheme, drawing similar inferences regarding fortune, and making allusions to Chaucer's "popular ballad Truth, which someone entered on the last leaf of Ellesmere in an earlier hand" (David 313). The poem appears to build on Chaucer's authority by entering into the space in order to speak to the current social and political climate that the de Veres found themselves facing at the end of the fifteenth century. The poem plays "upon the name of Vere, praise[s] his support of the House of Lancaster, and relate[s] a legendary history of the family's coat of arms" (David 311). Two additional poems are signed "r north" and "rn", indicating that Roger, Lord North might have been the member of the audience skilled in writing who wrote these original poems (David 318-9). In addition, Roger, Lord North, demonstrated his ownership over the Ellesmere MS and the cultural capital that it carries by adding his name and his motto to manuscript space (David 317). By using their technical skills, some members of the audience such as Rothely add their own rhetorical events to the space, while also invoking Chaucer's authority. These moves are always for the simultaneous social and individual needs of those who engage in the space in moving both with and against Chaucer as an ideal voice to represent social and cultural agendas.

While any number of individuals on Wikipedia may be operating through their own rhetorical agendas, separate from that of the main agenda of the site, the most obvious examples are the acts of vandals to the site. In his book Joseph Reagle describes how a group may use Wikipedia to promote their own rhetorical agendas separate from that of the site:

In early 2005 members of Stormfront, a 'white pride' online forum, focused their sights on Wikipedia. In February, they sought to marshal their members to vote against the deletion of the article 'Jewish Ethnocentrism,' one favored by some 'white nationalists' and that made use of controversial theories of a Jewish people in competition with and subjugating other ethnic groups. Stormfront's alert was surprisingly sensitive to the culture of Wikipedia by warning recipients 'you must give your reason as to why you voted to keep the article—needless to say you should do so in a cordial manner, those wishing to delete the article will latch onto anything they can as an excuse to be hostile towards anybody criticizing Jewish culture' (Reagle).

The movements of this group demonstrate how rhetoric occurs through Wikipedia's efforts to be a communal and collaborative space, which has resulted in the creation of combative spaces as illustrated by a qualifier to one of Wikipedia's five pillars of operation: "never disrupt Wikipedia to illustrate a point." Any violations of protocols result in the offending movements being restored to an accepted form and then for the violator to be issued a warning. Playing with or adjusting the space for one's immediate purposes is limited to a section they call the Sandbox. Violators receive additional warnings if they continue to violate the norms and are finally blocked for some period of time as punishment for moving against the infrastructure.

The violators of the social system, called vandals, demonstrate some of the more interesting variants to the rhetorical chorus, because they signify not consensus and assent, but disruptions and rebellions. For the *Chaucer* page, most of the vandalism entails the use of vulgar or sexual references to disrupt either the social system the vandals are operating within (Wikipedia) or disparage Geoffrey Chaucer as a social institution. Rebellions or social graffiti

against Wikipedia as a social system can been seen, for example, on Sept 26, 2005, when a vandal 216.146.122.66 added 'the penis' and 'motherfucker' at random points to the text. Other vandals specifically or subtly point out the flaws and hypocrisy of the 'open access' system of Wikipedia. On October 6 2006, 71.112.119.73 wrote within the Chaucer page, "I really hope that none of you seniors are searching on this page for your British Literature Assignment. You know how easy it is for people to come in here and change stuff", which is replied to by 24.83.235.65 who writes "OF COURSE NOT IDIOT." These interjections appear to be demonstrating boundaries of Wikipedia usage. The rhetorical chorus here points to the fact that anyone can make changes to the page and can affect how knowledge or rhetorical meaning is being constructed. By vandalizing the page, these individuals make this problem clear.

However most of the vandals appear to be responding against Chaucer as a social structure. On February 19, 2007, 86.4.202.185 writes "I HATE STUDYING GEOFFREY CHAUCER!!!!! HE TALKS GIBBERISH!!!" On October 17 2005 207.105.34.102 writes "The Great Gatsby" as one of Chaucer's works which was fixed and then reverted again later that day. These disruptions can show the constraints of Wikipedia as a social institution so that when correcting the great Gatsby error, editor Hallmoniter put back the 'ur mom' error on October 17 2005. In a rather creative move that demonstrates a rejection of Chaucer's social and cultural canonical role, on Jan 5 2006 207.74.115.23 removed information about Chaucer's life story and added "Geoffrey Chaucer was a very good person and such. At the age of just 12 he chopped down a cherry tree and when his dad was like…Hey boy, you chop down that tree?...He said no, but felt bad about it…The moral of the story is, don't tell that you were the one who down the tree or else you will not be famous like Chaucer was." A great many of the remarks, especially the juvenile ones can be traced back to IP addresses that belong to middle or high schools in

America, England, or Australia: Grand Blanc West Middle School, East Lyme Public Schools, Manatee County Public Schools, and John Winthrop Junior High and Bishop Dubourg High School. Finally on January 8, 2008, DMacks sets a protection on the Geoffrey Chaucer page to prevent vandalism through the school year designed to expire July 8, 2008.

As Sita Popat in *Invisible Connections: Dance, Choreography, and Internet Communities* states, "In a truly interactive work nobody, not even the designer or the performer, can predict the outcome that is the product of this communication" (Popat 2001a). The chorus members who functions as agents are able to contribute their own rhetorical stances on the messages contained within a rhetorical artifact. They do so either to promote the already present message, build on the message and speaker who have come before them, or disrupt the message for their own reasons. These co-actors do not appear to share in the same sort of responsibility for maintaining the message as the producers or designers, but they do use their rhetorical *techne* and technical skills to contribute. While the agents of the manuscript appear to by and large be building on the authority and agency of Chaucer and the other members of the chorus who have come before, the Wikipedia agents appear to be using the platform for disruptive and contentious reasons.

Conclusion

When Stephen Colbert encouraged his audience to take part in altering the Wikipedia page on elephants, he initiated an original rhetorical event, his show which perpetuated an ongoing reaction by certain individuals. These individuals can be observed within the chorus model. They responded to his initial message and altered the text for their own purposes. This type of communicative action demonstrates that speaking and composing are not fixed roles. Instead, a person contributing to a rhetorical situation can occupy any number of different roles as he chooses to make changes. Both manuscript production and digital spaces constitute

complex systems of production and use. Chorus members make choices about how the original messages are to be preserved and what materials will be kept. They mediate how the message will be distributed to the audience and often, who the audience will actually be. In the case of a rhetorical chorus model, the chorus occupies roles, which are fluid variations of producers, designers, and agents. The roles broaden the chorus model to explain how a participant has agency and purpose beyond that of the original speaker, how the participant is able to make use of rhetorical *techne* as repeated ritualized performances which affect how the message gets conveyed and how the participant uses technical skills to physically affect the materiality of the artifact which preserves the message.

The chorus model helps to show how rhetorical meaning is layered into an artifact. These practices create sedimentations of meaning over time. In other words, when I read Geoffrey Chaucer, I am not responding to his rhetorical meaning alone. Rather, I am reading and responding to Chaucer and everyone who has read Chaucer and made their own mark on the manuscripts, books, and websites between him and me. While it would be impossible to closely examine all of the contributions between Chaucer and me, it is fruitful to remember the existence of those who mediated his work and consider how they intervene through their relationships with Chaucer as the initial speaker, with other skilled participants, with a more removed audience, and with the technology used as the location for rhetorical acts. Examining who these people are and how they influence the production of rhetoric also reveals how they preserve the work of a speaker, build that speaker's authority and agency, and at the same time, intervene within the space with their own rhetorical agendas.

This chorus contributes to rhetorical meaning making by occupying and mediating the imaginative space between the technology and part of the audience. The presence of other people

in a rhetorical event often is used to constrain the potential authority and agency of the originary speaker, the rhetor who can be attributed invention. This argument occurs especially when discussing speakers from the margins-- women, minorities, and others-- whose ability to speak is repressed. However, all historical rhetorical events come to us mediated by other people. We do not get the argument directly from the person. The rhetoric is preserved through some technology and this technology gets utilized through a complex system of actions amongst people who produce both the technology and the rhetorical message. Thus, there is a group of people who have a direct connection to the technology which acts as a site of preservation for a rhetorical event and these people mediate the speaker's message.

The model also begins to account for how knowledge gets invented by society. This type of knowledge creation, coined by Colbert as "Wikiality," does not occur in the mind of the speaker through the interventions of others, but through interactions between members of society. These members are audience members who take on an active role in taking up a message and in doing so, they validate the message (or at least parts of the message) while also taking responsibility for what is being produced and used. In contemporary times, the responsibility over the message results in censorship over the text not only by institutions but also by the chorus—as was seen in the actions of the Wikipedia chorus. The rhetorical chorus and their rhetorical moves occur in the space between the artifact and the audience. The evidence of the chorus' passing can be seen within the artifact when they come to dwell and occupy the space. This view of rhetorical chorus and the production and dissemination of technologies as sites of preservation for rhetoric follows Miller's statement "that cultural work is… more comprehensible if we not only imagine rhetoric as many varying metadiscourses but also account for material conditions that produce and circulate texts" (S. Miller 79). These transmissions by

chorus members such as authors, technicians, and audience are multidirectional communications through space, which make relationships between people and the rhetoric they are articulating multiple communicative transmissions. This multi-directionality is not really a dialogue, because the transmissions of meaning occur over time which displaces the notion that the people are really responding to one another. The communication is not really a mutual move: each person is responding to what they *think* the other people are saying or how the message is being taken up perceived. Multidirectional communication indicates that the rhetorical chorus is not just communicating amongst itself but outward and inward and most importantly diachronically.

Chapter III: The Mystic, the Fraud, and the Chorus

Multiple people contribute to the production and preservation of rhetoric. Just acknowledging the multiplicity of rhetoric is not enough to explain how the different contributors actually participate. Instead, the model being built throughout this project provides the means to explain a specific type of collaborative interaction. This theory building requires first an observation of the phenomenon. In this case, the phenomenon usually occurs in situations in which a speaker's authority can be contested based on the presence of other people who can affect changes because of their rhetorical and technical abilities. The model then accounts for who these people are, what roles they take. Collaborators who act as producers, designers, and agents each contribute their technical skills to facilitate the creation and distribution of a rhetorical message. However, the presence of these collaborators in a rhetorical situation does not mean that the individual speaker's contributions should be ignored. Therefore, the next task is to analyze how the speaker and collaborators relate to one another, to classify the transmissions and interactions that lead to the invention of rhetoric.

To explore how the rhetorical chorus affects collaborative rhetorical practices, I build on to the chorus model using language developed from musicology, specifically musical texture. To begin, I explicate an episode of *Glee* to demonstrate how the individual parts of a choral group can be parsed to reveal interactions within a rhetorical context. I then examine two different case studies where gender and authority are problematic and contested constructions. First, I discuss how Margery Kempe, a medieval woman mystic, must count on her rhetorical chorus to facilitate her authority as a speaker. Kempe's authority and rhetorical agenda are frequently contested because of the problematic interventions of this rhetorical chorus. Second, I consider the impact of the rhetorical chorus on situations where men ventriloquize feminine voices within sites of

multi-vocal discourses by examining a blog entitled *Gay Girl in Damascus*, where a white American man Tom MacMaster took on the voice of a Syrian lesbian woman. When multiple voices occur within a space, the speaker who ventriloquizes does not take on the voice of a woman by himself. Rather, those who likewise engage in the space participate in the gendered performance by lending their voices to the rhetorical space. Both situations rely on the rhetorical chorus to facilitate the performance of gender and authority as major components of the rhetorical agenda of the works. Because the internet is a much larger space than a manuscript, the number of people involved in the rhetorical chorus and in the production and distribution of a rhetorical message is much larger and very complex. With the unveiling of the hoax, the concept of chorus becomes convoluted with issues of audience, responses within discourse, and perceptions of truth. Instead, this section attempts to demonstrate the interactivity of relationships with their own rhetorical agendas as members of the chorus respond to MacMaster by tracing a few examples of how MacMaster's arguments were taken up, reclaimed, or outright refuted by different participants.

Musical Texture and Chorus

The musical show *Glee* illustrates how musical texture and choral dynamics can contribute to a model of collaboration and can provide a means to treat the individual speaker and each member of the collaborative group as separate lines of rhetoric. *Glee* amuses audiences by using musical numbers to accompany the drama of the high school experience. Most episodes begin as buzzing music accompanies the journey of a slushy through the crowded halls of a high school. Periodically, the camera's journey stops as students flee from the person carrying the slushy. As the music crescendos, the slushy is flung into a student's face. The dripping student is always a member of New Directions, a high school show choir at fictional William McKinley

High School. The slushy signifies glee club members' status within the hierarchy of the school where the show choir is treated as the pariahs even though at least half the group is composed of 'popular' students from the football and cheerleading squads. The mix of students and their different social statuses reproduce the hotbed of emotion and angst familiar to the show's audience's own high school experiences.

Throughout the show music serves as a rhetorical response to events the characters are facing. For example, when Quinn (Dianna Agron) the quintessential queen bee and head cheerleader of the school, finds out she is pregnant and has to break the news at school, the choir sings "Lean on Me" moving Quinn to tears as they tell her through music that they will do what they can to help her. The purpose of the chorus in responding to events aptly provides an analogy for building a model of collaborative group responses to the actions of an original speaker who acts as a focal point for a rhetorical message. In this first example, the focal point is Quinn and the circumstances surrounding the events in her life, circumstances that draw attention to issues of social status, teen pregnancy, adoption and fidelity.

The musical chorus in the show also exhibits the complexity of group dynamics in response to a rhetorical event. On the episode "Mash Off" which aired on November 15, 2011, the show choir is divided because of internal tensions and has split into two, New Directions and the Troubletones. Two characters, Mercedes Jones (Amber Riley) and Santana Lopez (Naya Rivera) represent the reason some of the glee club wish to leave New Directions. Mercedes is angered because while she is an exceptional singer, she is frequently overlooked for solos, a situation which has racial implications since the two lead singers of the group are white and the director is white, while Mercedes is black. Santana leaves New Directions and becomes very confrontational and competitive. She insults members of New Directions. Finally goaded too far,

Finn Hudson (Cory Monteith) tells Santana that she is actually a coward because she is a lesbian and too afraid to admit who she cares for.

The tensions between the two groups culminate in a very rhetorical event. In a mash off, a competition where both choirs sing their own mashups, the group let out their anger at one another through a competition to determine which is the better musical group. The two competing high school choral groups come together on their high school's stage to perform their own renditions of mashed up songs, a song made by taking two or more songs and blending them together. The blend is supposed to be relatively seamless so that a new song is created, a new rhetorical artifact out of the integration of previously existing materials.

As the all-girl group the Troubletones performs their mashup, the two choir directors and the New Directions watch. At the same time, the viewing audience experiences the musical performance as a cohesive and synchronous single event. The transparency of the television viewing experience allows the external audience to ignore the interventions of different people such as the director, choreographer, videographer, sound technician. However, an examination of the performance using musicology reveals the intricacies of group responses and rhetorical invention. Musical discourse acknowledges the role of timing and participation in group activities, which offers the opportunity to expand already held understandings of collaboration. Therefore, I add to the chorus model by including the terminology of musical texture and chorus in order to discuss "the way in which individual parts or voices are put together" ("Texture"). Musical texture explains how a soprano's high range floats above the other voices or the deep low bass creates an effect of depth in a song. Even at times when the individual voices blend together as a choral event, it is possible to distinguish the movements of certain voices from others at different points in the space. Musical texture can be used to illustrate the complexity of

a performance like the one done by Mercedes and Santana who each perform solos based on two different songs by Adele: "Someone Like You" and "Rumour Has It." They sing separate and distinctive melodies, which act as responses to one another. They are accompanied by the other choral members who respond to the solos with a third melody. Each member contributes to the song separately and enters into the performance at different times. Despite the variations, the result is an entirely new song[17].

The resulting song and performance are a way for the characters to communicate and not all of these interactions are synchronous. Rather than being a homogenous group, the show choir's performance results from individual contributions of varying skill level, import, and pacing. In addition the show's viewers can identify the fictional background stories of at least half of the performing group nuancing the reception of the music and its rhetorical import. These contributions exist within the conflict between the two groups and between the characters within the show. The contributions respond to events and cause changes in how the characters perceive their circumstances. For example, Santana moved by the emotion of the song and its message of love and loss gets off the stage after her performance to slap Finn for outing her publicly. This type of group activity has discernible rhetorical implications and can function as an analogy for explaining certain collaborative group interactions, especially those where authority is contested, agendas diverge and responses are not synchronous or proximal.

The mechanics of these vocal movements reveal how the multiple voices are able to engage within a space to create rhetorical meaning: how the voices enter, move, interact, and occupy the space. The vocal movements are classified in musical texture as lead voice, homophony, and polyphony. In rhetoric, the movements of the chorus can be categorized as lead voice (the individual speaker), homophonic relationships (instrumental collaborators), and

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[17] See performance on youtube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=roAmRztQsbU

polyphonic relationships (contrapuntal collaborators and asynchronous collaborators). Instead of focusing only on the individual singer, music texture describes musical lines that add to or bolster the original melody as homophony. In the *Glee* example at the beginning of the chapter, the background singers take on this role as they amplify the two melodies with their own musical responses. When Mercedes and Santana sing two different songs as solos which respond and blend to form a third song, they are engaging in polyphony. The rhetorical chorus affects the events by contributing their own voices to participate in the construction of authority and rhetoric. Through these vocal mechanics, the rhetorical chorus accentuates, acquiesces to, and alters the performance of the lead voice. The transmissions between a main speaker and her rhetorical chorus can be classified by relationships one to another that reveals how authority is diffused amongst one and many speakers (rather than limited to one or many speakers).

The Case Study: Margery Kempe

Margery Kempe, who lived in King's Lynn, England until around 1437, composed an autobiographical narrative that described a strong-willed woman who performed saintly deeds and who dictated her story to at least three scribes (Butler-Bowden 1936 and Stokes 1999). Kempe spoke out against abuses by church officials, including criticisms of her as a woman practicing sainthood. Unlike typical women mystics, Kempe was not enclosed in a convent or anchorage, but lived in the world as a married and propertied woman. She describes profound visions of Christ, who encouraged her to adopt some unusual practices such as wearing white, abstaining from eating meat, and fasting, and who gave her the grace of weeping continuously. In true saintly fashion she argued with church officials, traveled on pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and convinced her husband to abstain from a sexual relationship with her (after she had 14 children).

In addition to a description of Margery's life story and visions, the narrative describes how she sought out the help of three scribes to compensate for her inability to write down her own story. The opening proem of the text describes how Margery came to have her story written down: "first by a man who could neither well write English or Dutch, so it was unable to be read save only by special grace" (Butler-Bowden 21). Later in the composing process, another man took her money but only rewrote a page or two, and so the completion of the *Book* fell to her second amanuensis, a priest who worked with Kempe (Butler-Bowden 1936, 21). Because of the complexity of Kempe's situation as an illiterate medieval lay woman attempting to construct her life as a saint or mystic, reception of her authority remains divided.

In an effort to reclaim Kempe for the rhetorical and literary canons, arguments have been put forward advocating Kempe as the sole authority responsible for this narrative, which relegate her scribes to little more than literary tropes (Staley 1991 and Glenn 1997). Cheryl Glenn in *Rhetoric Retold* (1997) argues that Kempe, the historical author, created a character, Margery. The character, Margery, speaks and interacts with diverse audiences within the narrative, such as secular and church officials as well as crowds of townspeople whereever she traveled. The separation of the historical person, Kempe, from her character, Margery, allowed Kempe to affect her audience's responses to her message. Because the narrative audience is mostly hostile to Margery's performance as a saint (the character) and rejects her, the audience reading the text is asked to feel pity for her and view this rejection as evidence of her sainthood. Though the interaction between Margery and her narrative audience comes from the conscious shaping of Kempe's memories designed to elicit an emotional response from her audience, this medieval narrative structure also can be found in works by Christine de Pizan and Geoffrey Chaucer, among other writers, as a means of using personal experience to establish authority as an author.

If the text is not entirely fiction—and we do have historical evidence to back it up—then Kempe's work could be considered a memoir or autobiography (Ross 1991 and Holbrook 1985). This autobiography would be shaped by the oral recitation of Kempe's memories (Ross 1992 and Uhlman 1994), and authenticated through historical evidence. This evidence identifies the Kempe family of Lynn as well as other historical documentation confirming the existence of people, locations, and events mentioned throughout the text, including a historical record of one Margery Kempe entering into the prestigious merchant's Guild of the Trinity Lynn (Stokes 1999 and Myers 1999).

In contrast, the relationship between Kempe and her second scribe in the narrative has been proposed as evidence that the text was the result of a collaborative partnership between the two (Hirsh 1975, Benedict 2004, and Riddy 2005). This collaborative relationship distributes the authority between both Kempe and her scribe or limits Kempe's authority in favor of her male and literate scribe. Some scholars, such as Sanford Meech, believe that "Margery Kempe, no doubt, saw to it that the result of this revision as read to her was satisfactory, as far as content was concerned" (Meech ix). Other scholars, like John Hirsh, believe this collaborative relationship "suggests that the second scribe did more than transcribe the earlier text, rather he rewrote it, from start to finish" (Hirsh 147). These conflicting theories about the authority of the speaker or speakers of the *Book of Margery Kempe* demonstrate the complexity of analyzing Kempe as a rhetor and attributing authority to her.

The Stage: Manuscript and Chorus

To compound the problem of authority, Kempe's autobiographical text comes to us through only one known manuscript copy of her work, *Book of Margery Kempe* found in British Library *Additional MS 61823*, written between 1440 and 1450 (Parsons 143 and Staley "Book of

Margery," 3). This manuscript was written by a single hand (one scribe) in an English Cursive

Book script and in a single column on paper (a newly prolific and inexpensive material for

writing). The manuscript appears to have resided after its creation in the library of Mount Grace

Priory in Yorkshire, a Carthusian monastery, and was recovered by Hope Emily Allen in 1934

from the library of Colonel William Butler-Bowden. While the narrative describes how three

unnamed scribes helped Margery record her memories and compose her work, the one remaining

manuscript was written out from an exemplar by the scribe called Salthouse. This scribe

Salthouse later made changes to the text after he recorded Kempe's words. The manuscript also

contains the interventions of a number of active readers who had the technical skills to write.

Each of these contributors can be distinguished by their hands (different scripts present in the

manuscript). The hands are named based on distinguishing characteristics to facilitate a

paleographer's and codicologist's ability to discuss how various people have contributed and

altered the text (Parkes "Their Hands"). For example, the hand written boldly in a dark black ink

is called Big Black Hand and the faint small script of brown ink has been labelled Little Brown

Hand. The late-fifteenth century or early sixteenth-century hand in red ink is called the Red Ink

Annotator (Fredell 2009, Parsons 2001, Meech 1940, and Staley 1996). These distinctions in

scripts reveal how and when different individuals contributed to the space, a great asset for

determining how the rhetorical chorus participates in the distribution of a rhetorical message.

Act I: Margery Kempe as Lead Voice

Kempe positions herself as the lead voice within the rhetorical context of both the

manuscript and the text. This lead speaker does not perform as the solitary speaker often

described by traditional rhetorical historiographies. In music, the lead voice is the voice which

prevails over the others, the voice that the other voices respond to. The lead voice functions as

"perceptually independent musical lines" (Huron 2). The lead voice is the one that articulates the melody of a song. Like the melody, Kempe's message is the focal point of both the narrative and the later responses to the narrative within the manuscript. Kempe articulates her message by eliciting an emotional response from the audience, by organizing her points through cultural conventions of communication, and by placing melodic inflection on specific aspects of her argument.

Modeling musical theory, the main message articulated by the lead voice functions like a melody as "a form of emotional expression" (Ringer 2011). Thus, the 'melody' in Kempe's manuscript and text is the main rhetorical message, which is arranged according to cultural conventions as a 'form of emotional expression'[18]. Kempe uses personal memories to create scenes within the narrative, which invoke an emotional response in her audience, so that she can convince her audience that she is a mystic and a good model of saintly behavior. From the very beginning of the narrative, after the opening proem, Kempe begins with her memory of going mad after the birth of her first child. "This creature went out of her mind and was wonderously vexed and labored with spirits for half a year, eight weeks and odd days" (Butler-Bowden 1936, 24). After prayers and the misguided intervention of a priest, Margery has her first reported vision of Christ. In the vision, Christ questions her Christian fortitude, "Daughter, why has thou forsaken Me, and I forsook never thee?" (Butler-Bowden 25). Throughout the text, Kempe recounts memories designed as emotional expressions using specific rhetorical conventions: wearing white and her female experiences and body. Like other women saints, she describes her persecution and her attempts to get church officials to sanction her behavior, circumstances her audience would recognize as evidence of a saint's life. For example, she describes her request to a bishop that she might wear white even though the color symbolizes virginity (she is neither

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[18] For a discussion of affective rhetorics and their relationship to texts, see S. Miller, *Trust in Texts*.

virgin nor widow), and her passionate crying and wailing in Church, which was an outward sign that God had given her the grace of weeping, is behavior that protests against the silencing of women in Church. She further enforces her rhetorical message of saintly behavior by using specific memories to contrast her earthly existence and her female body with her heavenly interactions with Christ, because it is through her experiences as a woman that she has the most authority. "On a night, as this creature lay in her bed with her husband, she heard a sound of melody so sweet and delectable, that she thought she had been in Paradise and therewith she started out of her bed" (Butler-Bowden 23). These personal and gendered memories create an emotional connection between Kempe and her manuscript audience through her experiences as a woman. As Liz Herbert McAvoy argues in *Authority and the Female Body in the Writings of Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe* (2004), this invocation of bodily experiences allowed medieval women and mystics to create authority: "if the female body, albeit one constructed by cultural narratives and mediated by systems of patriarchal power, was what was 'known' and 'experienced' by the woman, then regardless of the origins of that construction, it could present her with an experiential 'authority' or 'knowledge' of that body which was ultimately unavailable to men" (30). Through these affective memories, Kempe establishes her position as the lead voice, since these memories form the core of the narrative and the core of her message. Her later audience responds to her memories as evidenced by the responses written throughout the margins of the text, a point that will be returned to later.

Kempe's role as the lead voice can be further identified the same way a melody can be found in music. Just like a melody consists of "organized sequences of pitches…arranged in musical time in accordance with cultural conventions and constraints," a main rhetorical argument is organized according to cultural conventions and constraints that would be familiar to

an audience (Ringer 2011). Throughout the narrative, Kempe organizes her message through traditions of mystic writing, cultural conventions familiar to her audience. For example, "When the said creature had first her wonderful cries and, on a time, was in ghostly dalliance with her Sovereign Lord Christ, she said: 'Lord, why wilt Thou give such crying that people wonder at me therefore?" (Butler-Bowden 359). Kempe's loud and boisterous crying described throughout her narrative was a rhetorical move to demonstrate God had bestowed grace upon the crier, which originated in the mystic Richard Rolle's own description of God giving him the grace of weeping (Erskine 75). Specifically, she follows the cultural conventions of discourse laid out by other medieval mystics who recorded their experiences in order to articulate their personal and spiritual experience as an exemplar of saintly life for an audience. So like other mystics, Kempe wept copious tears, had visions of Christ, described her spiritual growth, reprimanded wayward clergymen, traveled to holy lands, served the poor, and made self-aggrandizing claims to sainthood (Harvey 1992, Torn 2008, Lavinsky 2013, Despres 1985, and Akel 2001). Even Kempe's use of the third person "creature" to identifying herself designates her as a 'created being' of God. Though the use of "creature" was not a common feature of mystical writing, the device comes from St Paul's epistles (Akel 9) and is used by the English mystic Julian of Norwich (Harvey 180). The very act of recording her visions and religious experiences marks her text as an example of medieval mystical traditions. By following these conventions, Kempe establishes that she is a credible speaker, since she speaks from her personal experiences as someone who communicates with God for the benefit of her listeners much like Catherine of Siena, Julian of Norwich, and Hildegard of Bingen.

Kempe's leading voice places melodic inflection, or rhetorical emphasis, on certain points in the story to reveal her authority. As noted by John Erskine (1989) and Mary Carruthers

(2009), authority in the Middle Ages did not reside in the person of the author, but in the sources they used. Kempe demonstrates her authority and places inflection at key points of her story by using source material to place emphasis on her message and establish her authority in three ways: (1) she mediates between God and man as seen in one of her visions where God says "I am in thee and thou in Me, and they that hear thee, hear the voice of God" (Butler-Bowden 46); (2) she seeks out authority figures to validate her experiences: "many worshipful clerks, both archbishops and bishops…she spoke also with many anchors and showed them her manner of living and such grace as the Holy Ghost of his goodness wrought in her mind and in her soul as her wit would serve her to express it" (Butler-Bowden 346); and (3) she demonstrates a knowledge of scriptures, parables, and other spiritual narratives from well-known sources, such as when she says she finds God's love to be greater than spoken of in "Hylton's book or Bride's book [St Bridget of Sweden] or *Stimulus Amoris* or any other that she ever heard read" (Butler-Bowden 68-9). Kempe's voice prevails in the manuscript space as she reveals herself to have authority within the narrative and shows an awareness of her immediate reading audience and later audiences who will encounter her work.

Within the narrative, Kempe firmly articulates her authority as a mystic: "I preach not, sir; I come into no pulpit. I use but communication and good words, and that I will do while I live" she declares when explaining to a bishop why she is able to speak about God even while she is banned from preaching by the Church (Butler-Bowden 189). In her response to accusations of preaching by a bishop, Kempe demonstrates not only that she is mindful of the sanctions against preaching placed on her by the Church, but also that she knows what cultural conventions and constraints she can utilize to speak. Kempe is established as lead voice: one voice which stands out amongst many. Through her own rhetorical moves as the lead voice, the

rhetorical agenda of the text and manuscript remains centered on Kempe as she speaks to her audience about her experiences as both a woman and mystic. Kempe demonstrates a strong knowledge of source material and the rhetorical conventions she needed to speak. These moves reveal that her rhetorical message is present and it seems inappropriate to discount her, just because she is not the only speaker in the manuscript space.

Act II: A Homophonic Relationship

Like most other medieval composers, Kempe found it necessary to work with men who had the skills to write. While the lead voice belongs to a group, the lead voice stands out independently of the other voices in a composition. At the same time, much of the power of the lead voice is derived from the response of the other speakers present in the rhetorical artifact. The other speakers in the space respond to her message and articulate their own rhetorical agendas through homophonic and polyphonic relationships. As Kempe composed her work, she sought an audience and her scribes acted as her initial one. "Some of these worthy and worshipful clerks averred, at the peril of their souls and they would answer to God, that this creature was inspired with the Holy Ghost, and bade her that she should have them written down and make a book of her feelings and revelations" (Butler-Bowden 346). These other participants actually helped her validate her experiences much like her desire within the narrative to seek out the approval of a number of religious and secular leaders, both male and female. The later interjections and interlinear moves made by the Big Black Hand, Little Brown Hand, and the Red Ink Annotator could be considered to be altering or constraining Kempe's voice, and the interventions of the Second Scribe could be seen as dominating Kempe's memories—which they certainly do to a degree. Yet, viewed through the lens of the rhetorical chorus, these members of the rhetorical chorus actually participate in the construction of rhetoric by developing

homophonic and polyphonic relationships with Kempe's voice within the space of the rhetorical artifact.

Besides the character, Margery, the text of the *Book of Margery Kempe* contains another voice, the second scribe, whose comments frame Kempe's memories in order to promote her message to her readers. In the narrative, the second scribe acknowledges his role of working with Kempe to promote her message: "he, in his manner of writing and spelling made true sense, which, through the help of God and of herself that had all this treatise in feeling and working, is truly drawn out of the copy into this little book" (Butler-Bowden 300). This second scribe was a priest, who worked closely with Kempe to help her compose her story after the first one died leaving behind a hard to read and unfinished copy. As a historical figure, his voice enters into the manuscript at the same point as Kempe's and his voice takes on an instrumental role to accentuate Kempe's. To maintain a balancing act between his rhetorical agenda and hers, the scribe enters into the rhetorical space as a narrator with a particular rhetorical purpose; as a character mediating between the character, Margery, and her narrative audience and the historical speaker, Kempe, and her authorial audience; and as a historical figure, a scribe writing down Kempe's narrative.

This second scribe has been viewed as a literary device created by Kempe, a typical convention within medieval mystical writings (Staley 1994 and Benedict 2004). The characters acting as scribes take on the role of the mystic's initial interlocutor. In *Empowering Collaborations: Writing Partnerships between Religious Women and Scribes in the Middle Ages*, Kimberley Benedict argues that the collaborative relationship between scribe and mystic can be regarded only as literary devices within the genre of medieval spiritual memoirs (2004). However, within medieval manuscript production, these scribes were also historical persons who

helped the composer write down their visions and experiences (Minnis 1984), so the collaborative relationships described in the medieval spiritual memoir genres might also describe how medieval composers viewed their relationships with their scribes. Since Kempe can be both a historical figure and a literary character in her memoir, it is possible that her second scribe likewise is able to intervene as a character as well. Her scribe would have had the technical and rhetorical skills necessary to actively participate in the shaping of Kempe's text.

Evidence for Kempe's homophonic relationship with her scribe comes from the narrative and from the process of manuscript production. Rather than suppress Kempe, the second scribe engages in a homophonic relationship with Kempe. Specifically, the relationship explains how Kempe can both work in partnership with her scribe and at the same time, how her ideas guide the composition. The homophonic vocal relationship emerges from discussions of musical texture. Aural examples of homophony include Thomas Tallis' "If Ye Love Me" or The Verve's "Bittersweet Symphony." The homophonic relationship signifies how Kempe as lead voice comes to be mediated to later audiences by individuals who take an instrumental or supportive role.

When the scribe's voice acts as the narrator, he reveals his separate, but similar agenda even as he frames, disseminates, and accentuates Kempe's narrative. Because of his own rhetorical agenda, he opens the two books of her story with sermonizing proems. The first book begins with "here beginneth a short treatise and a comfort, for sinful wretches, wherein they may have a great solace and comfort to themselves and understand the high and unspeakable mercy of our Sovereign Christ Jesus" (Butler-Bowden 345). In constructing these proems, the scribe both furthers Kempe's desire to be considered a mystic by her audience and refocuses the claim of the narrative away from Kempe's more earthly memories to her heavenly visions. "Our merciful

Lord Jesus Christ, seeing this creature's presumption, sent her, as is written before, three years of great temptations, one of the hardest of which I propose to write as an example to those who come after" (Butler-Bowden 34). He mediates the audience's reception of Kempe's memories by writing asides to the reader to reinforce the tropes of a hagiography familiar to her reading audience. The scribe's voice acts in harmony with Kempe's overall rhetorical agenda by balancing between agreement with her status as saint (consonance) and contradiction to Kempe's agenda (dissonance).The audience and their reception of the rhetorical agendas voiced in the manuscript space are impacted directly by the continued balancing of this agreement and discord between Kempe and her scribe, since the technique further facilitates the audience's engagement with the rhetorical artifact. "The scribe is, in fact, keen to establish for her readers that Margery is writing the story of her extraordinary body with her extraordinary body, an assertion which not only adds to the status of Margery as holy woman but also enhances his own position as scribe who is privileged enough to be asked to turn oral text into scripted treatise" (McAvoy 176). So, the scribe enacts a homophonic relationship by reinforcing his own authority to speak in the space because he has the honor of working with this holy woman, while maintaining her authority as speaker.

In other places within the text, the scribe acts as a character. The scribe-character is the confused and doubtful priest, who constantly questions Margery and her sainthood. This role is a stock character found in some mystical writing (Staley "Dissenting Fictions" 1991). He tests her and vacillates between believing in her and giving into the narrative audience's fear of her. "Then the priest who afterwards wrote this book, went to the creature of whom this treatise maketh mention…asked her how she felt in her soul on this matter, whether they should have a font in the chapel or not" (Butler-Bowden 94). As he speaks to her and tests her, the reading

audience is able to journey with the scribe. When the scribe-character eventually comes to terms with her sainthood and agrees to help her write her story, so can the audience.

Lastly, the homophonic relationship places emphasis on Kempe's original message, even as the scribe makes his own contributions. The type of homophony demonstrated here consists of "one voice" which "dominates while the others articulate their underlying harmony; the support is often instrumental" (Benward 401). In particular, one scene in the narrative captures this instrumental relationship between Kempe and her second scribe. Kempe and her scribe are not just working together, but they are engaging in a communal construction of meaning making: "also, while the aforesaid creature was occupied about the writing of this treatise, she had many holy tears and weeping…and also he that was her writer could not sometimes keep himself from weeping" (Butler-Bowden 298). Kimberley Benedict points to this scene as an example of the collaborative and intimate relationships found between composer and scribe within medieval mystical writing (Benedict xxi). This intimate relationship required "some degree of direct contact between writers. Some partners work separately and then meet to discuss their project, while others work alongside one another, but all partnerships involve face-to-face interaction, a criterion that calls attention to the most clear-cut and dynamic cases of collaboration" (Benedict xvi). However, this scene can be read another way. Rather than representing just an intimate and collaborative relationship, the scene shows how the scribe can take a supporting role in the construction of rhetorical meaning. In the narrative Margery and her scribe are metaphysically becoming one body as the priest/scribe takes on her grace of weeping, a grace given to Margery by God in order to speak this text into being. He now acts as Kempe's hands. He becomes an instrument to produce her manuscript. This type of relationship makes it possible to see how two individuals can directly work together to both gain an audience's acceptance of the main

speaker's rhetorical agenda and authority, while making evident the intentions of the other participant.

The narrative description of the scribe metaphysically becoming Kempe's hands stems from the real historical experience that would have occurred between Kempe and her scribe. As Benedict describes,

> Acknowledging religious women as contributors to texts' content, the scholars nevertheless credited scribes with having handled matters such as grammar, style, and allusions to scriptural and patristic writings…more often, the attributions were based on literal readings of medieval accounts of holy women's partnerships, which characterized the women as unlearned while ascribing literary and theological training to their assistants (Benedict 89).

This sort of description of the manuscript process discounts the scribe by claiming he has no ability to contribute to the text and the composer by arguing she must have equal technical skill in producing the artifact in order to have authority. Because of her inability to write, Kempe required a scribe with the skills to engage in the manuscript production process to act as her hands. Because the manuscript was not a fixed entity but a fluid space, the composer's (the speaker's) capacity to speak was facilitated less by their own literate abilities than through their access to a network of individuals, the rhetorical chorus, who had the skills to engage in the space of the manuscript and the authority to facilitate the work of the composer.

In particular, Kempe's homophonic relationship with her scribe moves beyond the interactions described in her narrative because Kempe, the historical figure, would have relied heavily on a scribe to help her compose her work.

>The priest who writes this book, to prove this creature's feelings many and divers times asked her questions, and information of things that were to come, unknown and uncertain at that time to any creature as to what would be the outcome, praying her, though she was loath and unwilling to do such things, to pray to God therefore, and ascertain, when Our Lord would visit her with devotion, what would be the outcome, and truly, without any feigning, tell him how she felt, or else he would not gladly write the book (Butler-Bowden 88).

At the same time, the narrative provides evidence and stories about her scribe and how he participated in the composition process. Since there is evidence that Kempe is a historical person, she would have made use of a scribe, so at some level the narrative story can provide some evidence regarding how Kempe and her scribe perceived their own relationship. All of the rhetorical moves made by Kempe and her second scribe serve to underscore specific moments of Kempe's text which amplify aspects of her rhetorical agenda. His voice, operating through homophonic relationships to Kempe, reinforces Kempe's role as lead voice. He elevates certain claims and rhetorical moves to indicate that he is ultimately responding to her message and contributing his own. The methodology of rhetorical chorus accounts for these group dynamics between an original speaker and the members of the rhetorical chorus who engage with that initial speaker's message. The chorus has an impact on the rhetorical space of the manuscript. The members of the chorus occupy the space but their actions do not subsume the voice of the woman rhetor. Instead their responses run along her message, engage with her message, and at points, run counter to her message.

Act III: Polyphonic Relationships

To identify how the rhetorical chorus interacts with the initial speaker through polyphonic relationships, I examine the folios 14v and 15r from the manuscript shelf marked, *Additional 61823*, the manuscript containing *The Book of Margery Kempe*. In these two pages alone, a large number of people participated in producing and using the artifact and, through their technical skills with manuscript writing practices, they have the potential to become members of the rhetorical chorus. Each used their access to the artifact to contribute their own rhetorical movements and agendas. The rhetorical chorus functions as a bridge between the rhetorical message and the audience by acting as mediators of the imaginative space that exists between the artifact and the audience. For example, in a medieval manuscript we can see these movements at fixed points (rubrics, illuminations, text) because the entrances of the different individuals occurred in the past and are located on the page for us in the present.

Figure 1 *The Book of Margery Kempe*, London, British Library, MS Additional 61823, 14v-15r. ©The British Library Board, MS Additional 61823

These two folios, 14v and 15r, provide a microcosmic example of how several individuals left copious traces of themselves throughout the entire artifact. The two pages can be seen at the same time when the book is opened. Together they contain the end of Chapter 13 and the beginning of Chapter 14 of the narrative text. In Chapter 13, Margery goes to Canterbury to speak to the archbishop. While she is there, Margery describes the hostile crowd outside the

archbishop's residence who want to kill her for being a heretic and her response to them, the telling of a parable. In this instance, Margery violates a church protocol by telling a story to illustrate her spiritual point and compounds her transgression by being a woman speaking. The crowd threatens to burn her and Margery becomes frightened, but is rescued by two men who take her away safely. At the end of Chapter 13, Margery has a vision of Christ where he tells her that her that he loves her because she is a "chosen soul" and "a pillar of Holy Church."

Throughout the manuscript, the voices of Salthouse, Little Brown Hand, Ruby Paraph Hand, Big Red N Hand, Big Black Hand, Big Brown Hand, and the Red Ink Annotator manifest as comments, edits and line drawings done by various members of the rhetorical chorus to engage with the artifact and Kempe's initial rhetorical message. The entrance and movements of these different voices create a polyphonic choral effect. In order to differentiate the various polyphonic relationships, this analysis moves away from focusing only on Kempe's narrative. Examining the manuscript as a rhetorical space opens up the analysis to include the movements into and out of the space by the scribe who actually wrote the manuscript we have and later active readers who interjected their own rhetorical agendas into the space and contributed their voices to Margery Kempe's. The voices within the manuscript space primarily form polyphonic relationships, where the voices occur in separate parts but possess equal status within the manuscript space. Polyphony is defined as "full development of the separate parts – the investing of several parts with the character of a main voice and the raising of accompanying voices to the status of counter-voices" (Frobenius 2011)[19]. Despite the equal status of the voices, there is still a

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[19] Mikhail Bakhtin introduced the idea of polyphony in *Problems in Dostoyevsky's Poetics* (1984). According to Bakhtin, polyphony functions as a literary device in which the author produces multiple voices within a text that do not necessarily reflect the views of the author. These voices are independent from one another and the author, so polyphony occurs as these voices dialogue with one another. However, Bahktin's definition focuses on a single author and the voices of the text are creations of that author and not real people (Zappen 53). In my use of the term, actual people enter into the space and contribute their own viewpoints. These voices intersect but do not necessarily

main speaker and accompanying voices. These speakers do not participate in immediate collaborative relationships because their relationships with Kempe are asynchronous, since they enter into the space over time. The vocal mechanics of polyphony further indicate that sometimes a rhetorical event contains not just a single rhetor speaking or the collective work of several speakers, but a situation where there might be one *and* many voices operating within a space. One voice acts as the lead voice with other voices having separate, but similar rhetorical agendas. These other voices act as counterpoints balancing between consonance and dissonance. Contrary to our usual use of counterpoint, this relationship does not mean disagreement, but, true to its musical roots, means a balancing between accord and discord; I both agree with you and yet do not in turns[20].

Figure 2 *The Book of Margery Kempe*, London, British Library, MS Additional 61823, 15r.
©The British Library Board, MS Additional 61823

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interact, since Kempe and the first scribes of the manuscript do not respond to the later voices in the space. The effect with polyphony in choral rhetoric is a layering of multiple voices within a rhetorical space over time.

[20] According to music terminology, counterpoint is a complex concept, which "arises when the natural procedure of two or more voices singing exactly the same melody an octave or some other interval apart is modified, so that the voices are no longer heard in rhythmic unison. For counterpoint to be aesthetically and technically acceptable, however, the differences between the contrapuntal voices must not undermine the perceived coherence of the musical result" (Whittall). While the different parts move separately from one another, they also indicate "coherence and unity" to the original melody by adhering to the "rules of voice-leading predicated on the distinction between consonance and dissonance and the need for the latter to resolve on to the former" (Whittall). It signifies "a balance between independence and interdependence" (Whittall). Unlike the Aristotelian method, counterpoint is neither aggressive nor combative opposition to another speaker's point of view nor should counterpoint be described as passive. Counterpoint operates a lot like harmony, but occurs when two or more voices sing the same melody or interval with entirely different rhythms.

Some of the interventions by polyphonic relationships are minor. In the image above, Big Black Hand adds "Suffer Death" to the sentence "I thank thee daughter that thou wouldest 'suffer death' for my love." This alteration makes the sentence clearer, but through a rhetorical chorus lens it also draws attention to the importance of suffering death discussed in the text. Another hand in red draws a line from the words "suffer death" to the caret within the sentence. Here one person in the chorus makes the move to alter the space, to rearrange and add to the materials present in order to change meaning, while a second person comes and adds to the space to sanction, lend agreement, or attest to the earlier change. The rhetorical chorus of the manuscript gives voice to separate rhetorical agendas, which are similar to Margery Kempe's. In the next section, I discuss other examples of voices from the rhetorical chorus who entered into the space most prolifically—Salthouse, Little Brown Hand, and Red Ink Annotator.

Salthouse/Little Brown Hand

The first member of the rhetorical chorus to mediate between Kempe and the audience is the scribe who produced the one manuscript we have of Kempe's work. This scribe, who medieval scholars call Salthouse, enters into the manuscript space twice. The first time he enters into the space he designs the manuscript space and then writes out Kempe's narrative in single neat column in ink on paper. Later, he enters into the space a second time to edit and correct his scribal errors and address other issues he sees with the original narrative in order to give voice to his own responses to the narrative (Little Brown Hand).

The scribe's name appears to be Salthows (Salthouse), because he wrote "Ihesu mercy quod Salthows" in the colophon (Meech 1940, xxxiii). Though the copying of one manuscript to another may appear to be just a mechanical action by the scribe and we cannot know what motivated Salthouse to write out Margery Kempe's story with any real certainty, it is possible to

make some educated speculations about how he added his own voice to hers and what his rhetorical agenda was based in part on his invocation of Christ. As a common technique in medieval scribal practice, the invocation indicates that the scribe is calling on God to bless him as he is producing this work for God.

Salthouse acts as a preacher-scribe by reproducing Kempe's work for the edification of later readers. In his role, Salthouse has a spiritual responsibility to maintain the rhetorical agenda of the work—the rhetorical message—and does so by maintaining Kempe's voice and that of the scribes of her narrative. As a preacher-scribe, he is responsible for testifying that "the words and incidents recorded in the text are divinely inspired, and must be transmitted unchanged" (Voaden 1999, 2). To do so, he calls upon God to bless him and quite possibly views his role of scribe as that of a preacher using Kempe's work to show how a life can follow Christ's example. According to Johannes Trithemius in *De Laude Scriptorum*, the preacher-scribe's job is "to copy sacred texts and therefore are not called to preach have the duty not to teach but to forbear silently; they have to proclaim the will of God, pen in hand, to all generations to come" (Trithemius 59). Salthouse or his patron (the person who commissioned him to write out the text) would have wanted to preserve and disseminate Kempe's voice for future generations. Salthouse demonstrates his sense of responsibility by maintaining the voices in the narrative through his careful scribal practices; "the language and spelling in the manuscript are consistent throughout…indicating that either the second amanuensis harmonized the text or Salthows did or a scribe who did a manuscript between these two versions" (Meech viii-ix). These careful scribal practices indicate a desire by Salthouse and others to maintain Kempe's memories, but at the same time, he has his own agenda for the copying and preservation of her work.

After copying the text neatly, Salthouse re-enters the space in a different rhetorical chorus role, the scribe-audience, through the notations, corrections, and marginal comments that scholars believe he added. Though scholars are mostly certain that the glossing hand belongs to Salthouse, they have labeled it Little Brown Hand. This hand can be found throughout the manuscript making the corrections and adding his rhetorical agenda to the movements of the overall text. Little Brown Hand appears to both agree with Kempe's agenda for her narrative and disagree at points where he presents his own view of her story. As Lynn Staley notes in her edition of the *Book of Margery Kempe*, the notations of Little Brown Hand identify a "record of devotion" (Staley "Book of Margery Kempe," 4). Most of his marks draw attention to places where Kempe's narrative takes a turn toward enacting a "kind of hagiographical superstructure" (Fredell 9). Specifically, in his article "Design and Authorship in the *Book of Margery Kempe*," Joel Fredell notes that Little Brown Hand marked trefoils (notations on the page with three points and a tail) to trace "an overarching vita- structure for Margery from the initiation into her earthly martyrdom of crying fits to the confrontation with archbishops" (9). Little Brown Hand writes "nota de clamore"—after Margery begins to loudly weep and cry in Chapter 28; "nota de vesture"—when she seeks to wear white in Chapter 30; and "nota de confessione"—after she makes a confession to St. John in Chapter 32 (Staley "The Book of Margery Kempe," 4). These notations, while small additions, bring Salthouse's voice and rhetorical agenda into the manuscript space. This action causes his voice to run alongside Kempe's voice and at other times, his voice demonstrates a desire to reinforce the hagiographical structure of her message over her earthly experiences and her more heretical actions.

Little Brown Hand appears to acknowledge Kempe's voice as the lead voice by following her original rhetorical agenda with his notations, but he also makes contrapuntal moves that

diverge from Kempe's agenda within parts of the narrative. His rhetorical moves include striking through sections of the text. For example, Kempe states "then the creature thought, when our Lady was come home and was laid down on a bed, that she ~~made for our Lady a good caudle, and brought it her to comfort her, and then Our Lady said unto her, 'Take it away, daughter. Give me no food, but mine own Child.' The creature~~ answered, 'Ah! Blessed Lady, ye must needs comfort yourself and cease of your sorrowing'" (Butler-Bowden 281-2). In this part of the text, Little Brown Hand marks out the line where Margery acts as an earthly servant by making the Virgin Mary a hot beverage and helping her into bed. With these marks, annotations and edits, Little Brown Hand's voice infiltrates the manuscript space and his voice runs counter to hers. The strike-through indicates that in response to her memory, Salthouse has written out the text and then later came back and crossed out the section that represents Kempe's more earthly servile and coded feminine behaviors. He clearly disagrees with her descriptions of more earthly and bodily memories or with her coded feminine behaviors intervening in her heavenly visions. Though his annotations effectively create a different rhetorical melody (a structured saint's life rather than the life of a woman working towards Christian living), he still remains compatible with Kempe's desire to be remembered for her saintly life.

Red Ink Annotator

While Salthouse/Little Brown Hand is the first member of the rhetorical chorus to leave physical traces in the unique manuscript copy, the last prolific contributor to the rhetorical space of the manuscript is the Red Ink Annotator. The textual evidence indicates that the Red Ink Annotator entered into the manuscript space sometime in the sixteenth-century, long after the other members of the rhetorical chorus left behind evidence of their passing through the

artifact[21]. This example of the Red Ink Annotator shows that members of the rhetorical chorus do not always participate in direct collaborative relationships with the main speaker. Rather they engage with the rhetorical artifact long after the initial speaker is gone and in doing so, occupy the artifact with rhetorical agendas that represent their own relationship to the initial rhetorical message, which is affected by their historical era and perceptions. The Red Ink Annotator's distinctive red ink traces over and highlights other people's marks to signify agreement with the choices they made about what part of the rhetorical melody to emphasize, especially marks madeby Little Brown Hand.

Based on his writing and the previous location of the manuscript, it has been determined that the Red Ink Annotator was most likely a Carthusian monk from the Mount Grace Priory. Since it is probable that he was a Carthusian, it is possible to make educated guesses about his rhetorical purposes. The Carthusians were an enclosed order who spent most of their time alone, including meals, so one of their founders dictated that the men should spend their time in prayer, but at other times, Prior Guigo said, "since we cannot do so by the mouth, we may preach the word of God with our hands" (Thompson 24). He called them to preach in the only way an enclosed order could by making religious manuscripts for the purpose of educating themselves and others. The different Carthusian monasteries would also circulate manuscripts amongst themselves (Parsons 145). Thus the Red Ink Annotator adds his voice to rhetorical space for the edification of himself and possibly his pastoral audience,[22] and he constructs his authority by

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[21] According to Sanford Brown Meech in his introduction to *The Book of Margery Kempe*, dialectal spellings, references "in red ink to Richard Methley, a Carthusian of Mount Grace Priory, and the two to John Norton, Prior of that house" place the Red Ink Annotator in the Mount Grace Priory. His handwriting is in the style of "the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century" (xxxvi).

[22] Kelly Parsons in "The Red Ink Annotator of *The Book of Margery Kempe* and His Lay Audience" (2001) suggests the pastoral audience may actually be a woman living near the monastery.

demonstrating his education, in marked contrast to Kempe's illiteracy, by making use of both

Latin and vernacular notes.

The Annotator makes a number of different types of contributions to the manuscript and

to the two pages discussed here. First, he adds two types of mnemonic devices in order to shape

the text and his remembrance of it for easier referencing in his or his audience's memories. In the

example below, the Annotator has added in the inner margin the word "Loue" or love, which

repeats the word "lofe" or love found at the beginning of the text on the next page[23]. This

repetition of the word creates a reiteration of the meaning.
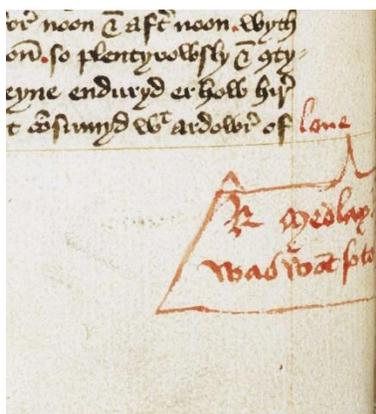
Figure 3 *The Book of Margery Kempe*, London, British Library, MS Additional 61823, 14v.
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The word "loue" is further used by the Red Ink Annotator to create another

complementary move with the narrative. In this moment of the text, the narrative describes

Margery's meditations and conversations with God that led her to weep in devotion in such a

manner that it was surprising her heart did not fail from being filled with love. The Annotator

moves away from the text by adding his digression that "R. Medley the Vicar was wont so to

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[23] Since this word has been written at the end of a page, it is possible that it is a marker left by scribes to indicate the end of a quire to help with the putting together of the book. If this is the case, it would function less as a separate rhetorical agenda and more as a sign of the members of the chorus who act as designers who dictate the navigation of the artifact. An examination of manuscript artifact would be necessary to make this determination. In addition, this word is written in red and seems to be generally accepted as the work of the Red Ink Annotator. Further paleographic and codiocological examinations are necessary.

say". Here, he reemphasizes not just the story but Kempe's message by reminding the reader that her vision is not strange. Instead, he articulates a situation that has occurred for someone else who is devout and therefore, he amplifies a point of Kempe's rhetoric that would have meaning for himself and a religious community. He also adds drawings like tears, clothing, and a burning heart as additional mnemonic devices to symbolize many other significant moments within the narrative. He does this to shape the text and his remembrance of it for easier referencing in his or his audience's memories.
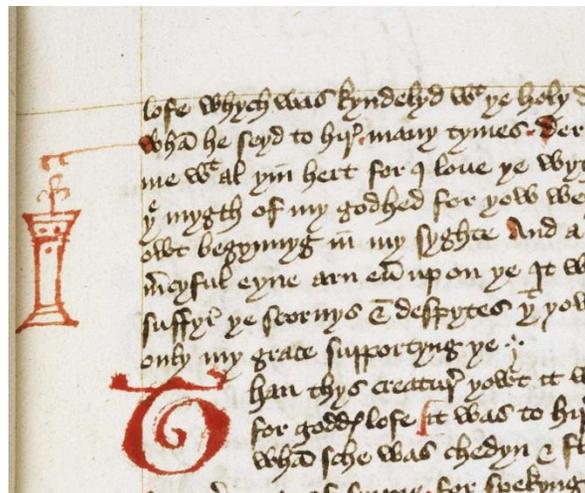
Figure 4 *The Book of Margery Kempe*, London, British Library, MS Additional 61823, 15r.
©The British Library Board, MS Additional 61823

On folio15r, the Red Ink Annotator has drawn a picture of a pillar with lines coming from it that might symbolize fire to represent an image in the text: Margery is a pillar of the church. Above this pillar he has written a nota drawing attention to the assertion in the text that Margery is loved by God, because she is chosen and a pillar of the church. Together the image of the pillar and the nota above it reemphasize and rearticulate the authority of Kempe's visions. With his second type of contribution to the manuscript, the Red Ink Annotator interjects his own emotional responses to the other voices in the rhetorical space. He writes, "Amen, Amen, Amen" after the story of Margery healing a sick priest through prayer. Third, he authenticates Kempe's

experiences by noting other examples of men who demonstrated their spirituality in the same way she did, such as the Reverend Medley in the example above. Fourth, like Little Brown Hand, Red Ink Annotator also makes corrections to the manuscript text, especially where he appears to dislike how Kempe describes her bodily relationship with God. He strikes out phrases like "as she in contemplation and in meditation had been his mother's maiden and helped to keep Him in his childhood and so forth in the time of His death" (Butler-Bowden 361). As befits a polyphonic relationship, the Red Ink Annotator both agrees with Kempe's rhetoric and disagrees. His voice has a separate but equal purpose to that of Kempe as he makes these interjections in order to affect how the narrative is remembered. In this way he shows how all audience members can become speakers in a work, because they combine the original message with additional memories from their own minds, and layer in their own associations within a rhetorical artifact.

Part II: Gay Girl in Damascus

On June 7, 2011, the audience of the blog *A Gay Girl in Damascus* launched a sincere campaign through petitions, news articles, and Twitter to rescue the author, Amina Abdallah Arraf al Omaril, a self-described lesbian Syrian-American activist, from Syrian security forces. As a result, *The Washington Post*, *NPR*, and Palestinian news site *Electronic Intifada* investigated Amina and came to the startling conclusion that no one had actually seen Amina in person (including her Canadian girlfriend). By June 9, it was revealed that Amina was a straight American man, Tom MacMaster, who created the persona in order to shed light on the Syrian situation, present his arguments, and practice his creative writing ability ("Apology to Readers").

This case study examines another moment where gender and gender performances reveal the machinations of the rhetorical chorus, but it does so by demonstrating how the chorus participates in constructing and deconstructing a speaker's ethos, authority and credibility. As the

events surrounding *A Gay Girl in Damascus* reveal, MacMaster was successful in creating his false persona, because he did not create his ethos alone. Early on in the process, MacMaster relied on other people to help validate Amina's existence and message. MacMaster created an entirely fictional persona, Amina, over a number of years as a means to express his beliefs regarding the Middle East and to practice his literary abilities. One reason for the anger after the fiction was unmasked was that these participants were not only conned into emotionally investing in a false persona, but the participants, members of the rhetorical chorus, also helped to create and distribute MacMaster's creation of Amina's ethos (her authority, credibility and authenticity) and his rhetorical messages masked by Amina's identity. Later, in response to MacMaster's admission, audiences of the blog and the blog's message moved to either denounce MacMaster or scramble to protect the rhetorical message even as the ethos of the speaker was shattered. The movements of this audience both before and after the revelation offer a disparate perspective on how some members of an audience come to co-construct a speaker's ethos, promote and appropriate the message being developed, and distribute the message across multiple locations within online spaces.

This section examines the relationships between MacMaster and some of his audience members in order to illuminate how rhetorical ethos comes to be constructed not by one individual, but through the direct interventions of multiple people. When Tom MacMaster created a false authorial persona, his rhetorical ethos was constructed not just by the single individual author, but by the participation and moves made by the rhetorical chorus. Principally, in this example, these individuals are other bloggers, but many are also journalists and social activists. To discuss the contributions of the various groups to constructing ethos, I apply to this case study the language of musical texture and chorus used previously with the Margery Kempe

case study. In a complex situation such as this one, where the rhetorical chorus has many members and occupies a much larger space than a medieval manuscript, the language of musical texture facilitates an analysis. The language of musical texture helps to articulate how individual voices can intermingle (harmony or counterpoint) during an event, but also how to distinguish the movements of individual voices from others during different points within a space. Their roles in the creation of rhetoric problematize the long-held belief that the construction of both ethos and a rhetorical message comes from either a single speaker or a collective group working for a common goal. Instead of maintaining this false binary, the rhetorical chorus provides a method for observing how a situation can contain one *and* many speakers. In my example, the rhetorical chorus consists of four groups: (1) those who promoted Amina's message—the audience of the blog, newspaper reporters, and other bloggers; (2) those who contested Amina or doubted the ethos of the speaker—newspaper reporters, bloggers; (3) those who denounced MacMaster for his false persona; and (4) those who fought to protect the arguments from losing their credibility as MacMaster was losing his—newspaper reporters, Middle Eastern activists, and members of the LGBT community.

Act 1: A Gay Girl in Damascus

In February 2011, a blogger Amina Abdallah Arraf al Omaril, claiming to be a lesbian Syrian-American activist, began a blog entitled "A Gay Girl in Damascus: An out Syrian lesbian's thoughts on life, the universe and so on." This blog caught the attention of many because of the speaker's combination of on-the-spot descriptions of the Syrian uprisings, her Sapphic poetry, and her thoughts as "an out Syrian lesbian." As with Kempe, Amina's actions position her as the lead voice who articulates a particular message according to cultural conventions and constraints. Amina further reinforced her feminine identity by designing her

blog with pink lettering and pastel floral backgrounds[24]. Amina built on the audience's preconceived expectations regarding the use of a blog to present autobiographical narratives and the use of external sources and relationships with others to give witness to Amina's existence and her authority as a speaker.

Amina created her false persona by first enacting the traditional role of the individual speaker and establishing her ethos based on personal experiences. On February 19, 2011, she described herself as "a dual-national and I grew up between Damascus, Syria and the American South, neither of which was exactly the easiest place to be struggling with what I considered inappropriate desires" ("Halfway out of the Dark"). Throughout her blog, she delivered autobiographical anecdotes, which were effective in first building an audience and later promoting ideologies. The blog served as an ideal place for the constructing of a speaker's identity because it functioned as a site of self- disclosure and self-expression, which served to enhance "self-awareness" and confirm "already-held beliefs" (C. Miller and Shepard 2012). Amina articulated her messages by organizing them according to culturally sanctioned forms of self-disclosure and personal narrative to convey her ethos and build ties to her audience. As an example, Amina shared a story of finding an active lesbian community while going out in Syria: "I went into a hair salon one day and, not long after I arrived, I picked up on something between the women working there; I spoke around in circles and so did they … and finally learned that the women there were all gay" ("'Halfway out of the Dark'"). With similar stories, such self-disclosure in her blog functioned as a "rhetorical convention" designed to "gain readers in the blog community" (Rak 172). Statements of disclosure in the blog created credibility because of their apparent authenticity. In addition, these personal anecdotes created the possibility of shared

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[24] In "Online Ethos: Source Credibility in an 'Authorless' Environment," Barbara Warnick argues that website design is one of the main ways that audiences determine credibility regarding a site (260-2).

experiences as women, as lesbians, as Muslims. Therefore, the audience could accept Amina as a credible speaker because they were familiar with the authority and authenticity of blogging as a medium to convey personal experiences in order to express ideologies.

As a lead voice, Amina promoted several major arguments through her authority of personal experience living in Syria, which were taken up by others who would become her rhetorical chorus. First, she posits a positive and optimistic view of the lesbian situation in a Middle Eastern community, such as Amina's pleasant encounter with the women in the hair salon ("'Halfway out of the Dark'"). Second, her stories about her family depicted familial relationships within a Muslim family as less patriarchal and homophobic than Western media depicts, and she claimed that she was able to easily balance lesbianism and her Muslim faith ("My Hijab, My Choice"). For example, in the blog post, "Waiting and Worse," Amina describes drinking alcohol with her Muslim father, where he claims, "Silly girl, he grins, we, your mother and me, were fairly certain you were gay" (May 3, 2011). Third, Amina often set up scenarios and descriptions of her own sexuality in Syria as evidence that Western media only has a superficial understanding of the Middle East and its policies towards the gay community. She made this argument explicit in her blog entry, "PinkWashing Assad?." She argued that Western culture, especially the media, was pinkwashing the Middle East, using false constructs of how gender and sexuality are treated in the Middle East as justification for invading or compelling Middle Eastern countries to adopt Western ideals (May 28, 2011). As the persona developed, Amina positioned herself as a lead voice by using rhetorical techniques familiar to an audience in order to build credibility and organizing the message according to culturally sanctioned conventions which often invoked an emotional response from the audience.

However, Amina's role as the individual speaker was further predicated not only on those traditional rhetorical strategies, but on how other people responded to her. These other people were not just her audience, but a specific group of people who took up Amina's message and distributed it elsewhere for their own purposes. Besides being the speaker of the initial message, Amina cannily made use of digital spaces and connections with other people outside of her blog in order to develop relationships with other speakers and activists who held similar ideologies to her own. Amina had an online presence through the use of a Facebook account, a LinkedIn account, and she developed and maintained contact with activists in Syria and the Middle East through email. This web presence helped to clarify and build Amina's ethos, because these sites provided audience members other aspects of Amina's character to reveal her constructed 'authenticity'. Amina's Facebook page claimed her birthday was, October 12, 1975. On this Facebook page, Amina described herself as "just your typical Syrian/American Lesbian dilettante, dreaming of being the most successful Muslim female author of SF/Fantasy/AltHistory in the English Language" ("Amina Arraf"). Amina also had made an earlier attempt to develop her ethos online through another blog, which was started in September 2007 and indicated an interest in writing fiction and her autobiography.[25] In other words, Amina was MacMaster's online persona for as many as six years prior to the revelation of the hoax, and her 'life' online can be heavily documented in other locations besides her blog. This online life meant that Amina had relationships with others who could vouch for and reinforce the authenticity of both Amina's message and her existence as a speaker.

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[25] For more information, see Andy Carver quoted in Memmott and Peralta "'Gay Girl in Damascus': Missing or Mythical?"; Mackey. 2011 "Shifting Syrian Fact From Syrian Fiction." and Joseph W. "'Amina Arraf,' Britta Froelicher & the University of St. Andrews."

In early February as Amina began posting to her blog, she initiated relationships with early members of her rhetorical chorus, members of the news blog *Lez Get Real*, who would later help to promote her ideas and defend her ethos. *Lez Get Real* "is a blog with 'A Gay Girl's View on the World'" which was developed by Paula Brooks[26] and continued to function as a site for a lesbian community to report the news until 2014. The reporters demonstrated their belief in her ethos as a speaker by deferring to Amina's expertise and knowledge about issues in Syria and the Middle East. For example, the February 7, 2011 post "Syria Protests story Apology," Linda Carbondell quotes Amina's response to an earlier news posting*: "I just stumbled on your blog and, as a Syrian lesbian now living in Damascus, I had to read it … and comment. A fair number of the facts are actually wrong; the economy here's actually doing pretty good (compared to most of the world and certainly compared to Egypt) which, probably more than anything, has undermined any protest movement here."* Later, Brooks asked Amina to write news articles (as was announced on June 1, 2011 in the "Happy Pride Month" posting by Bridgette P. La Victoire). In writing for *Lez Get Real*, Amina had the opportunity to extend her socio-political arguments regarding the Middle East and LGBT rights to a different community and enlist their help in advancing her arguments. The community of *Lez Get Real* perceived Amina to be an expert on Syria because of her experiences living there and they believed she was working with them in good faith. Because of their trust in her authenticity, they were willing to extend to her the authority of a speaker on their site. This relationship built up Amina's ethos by lending her credibility as a speaker on Syrian affairs through their privileging of her voice on their site. They could testify to Amina's identity, because of their continued interactions with her. Through her presence in multiple locations online, Amina was able to act as a site for the intersections of

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[26] Shortly after Amina was unmasked as Tom MacMaster, Paula Brooks was discovered to be a straight man, Bill Graber. See Flock and Bell. "'Paula Brooks,' editor of 'Lez Get Real,' also a man ."

several communities. These relationships and networked connections allowed Amina to be positioned her as lead voice, since they opened her arguments to the appropriation, production, and distribution of her ideas by a rhetorical chorus.

Act II: Going Viral

On April 26, 2011, Amina's blog posting inspired an emotional response from its audience and the message of the post was taken up immediately by new members of the rhetorical chorus, other bloggers and news organizations. The blog post entitled "*My Father, the Hero*" describes a nighttime visit to Amina's house by guards from the Syrian military police, who arrived to arrest her for blogging against the Syrian government and for being open about her sexuality. In response, Amina's father lashed out at the men and cowed them using harsh words into leaving the house without Amina. She writes,

> So you come here to take Amina. Let me tell you something though. She is not the one you should fear; you should be heaping praises on her and on people like her. They are the ones saying alawi, sunni, arabi, kurdi, duruzi, christian, everyone is the same and will be equal in the new Syria; they are the ones who, if the revolution comes, will be saving Your mother and your sisters. They are the ones fighting the wahhabi most seriously. You idiots are, though, serving them by saying 'every sunni is salafi, every protester is salafi, every one of them is an enemy' because when you do that you make it so.
> "Your Bashar and your Maher, they will not live forever, they will not rule forever, and you both know that. So, if you want good things for yourselves in the future, you will leave and you will not take Amina with you. You will go back and you will tell the rest of yours that the people like her are the best friends the

Alawi could ever have and you will not come for her again.

"And right now, you two will both apologize for waking her and putting her

through all this. Do you understand me?"

And time froze when he stopped speaking. Now, they would either smack him

down and beat him, rape me, and take us both away ... or ...

the first one nodded, then the second one.

"Go back to sleep," he said, "we are sorry for troubling you."

And they left!

As soon as the gate shut ,,, I heard clapping; everyone in the house was awake

now and had been watching from balconies and doorways and windows all

around the courtyard ... and everyone was cheering ...

MY DAD had just defeated them! Not with weapons but with words ... and they

had left ...

I hugged him and kissed him; I literally owe him my life now.

And everyone came down and hugged and kissed, every member of the family,

and the servants and everyone ... we had won ... this time...

She ends the story by stating that her father will remain in Syria to fight for democracy and so

while the rest of the family has left for the safety of Beirut, she will remain to be with her father.

Because Amina's story exemplifies courageous behavior—both her own actions and those of her

father—the posting went viral immediately, and began circulating around the web. At least three

different communities took up the message of the blog and distributed it into other locations: the

LGBT community, academics and activists interested in Middle Eastern politics (specifically

Syria), and a couple of different Western media outlets.

The people who distributed Amina's message online followed a homophonic relationship with Amina positioned in the role of lead voice. According to musical terminology, the homophonic relationship "balances the melodic conduct of the individual parts with the harmonies that result from their interactions, but one part—often but not always the highest— usually dominates the entire texture" (Hyer 2014). Some members of the chorus pick up on specific inflections that they determine to be the main thrust of the rhetor's speech. Homophonic relationships act as support for the original message by repeating the message, which amplifies different aspects of Amina's message. This support, in our blog example, takes the form of directly mediating the message to other locations to increase readership, emphasizing particular messages from the text, and further magnifying the speaker's ethos.

On April 29, 2011, Heather Clisby updated *HerBlog*'s *Spotlight Blogger* with an article "A Gay Girl in Damascus: My Brave Father" in which she says of Amina's blog that "this riveting post will bring the recent events in Syria in glaring reality" and "the bravery of Amina and her amazing father is admirable and her writing, unforgettable." Another blog, *WhenSallymetSally*, added a post describing Amina as a "rising internet star" on May 10, 2011. The posting goes on to state "Amina candidly and humourously describes her experiences as a lesbian in Syria, a country that bans homosexuality" and "how she sees no conflict in being both gay and Muslim. She prays five times a day, fasts at Ramadan and 'covered' for a decade (i.e. wore clothes concealing her face and body)" ("Rising Internet Star"). These blog descriptions demonstrate homophony by shifting Amina's message virtually unchanged to other locations online and then calling for audiences of *HerBlog* and *WhenSallymetSally* to go to Amina's blog and become audiences there as well. These members of the chorus encouraged readers to view Amina's work as heroic and a strong voice for what they see as an otherwise voiceless group,

Middle Eastern lesbians. These posts acting in a homophonic role were quick to repeat and amplify the speaker's ethos as a lesbian woman who is able to balance her sexuality with her religious beliefs even in a location where one's openness about sexuality violates religious codes and could lead to death.

In addition, academics and activists who wanted to promote a different view of the Middle East than what is usually supported by Western media outlets acted as homophonic voices by further distributing Amina's similar message. Joshua Landis, Director for the Center for Middle East Studies and Associate Professor at the University of Oklahoma, posted "News Round Up (28 April 2011)" and wrote "a new blogger in Damascus who writes like a dream and gives us a wonderful new voice and perspective on life in Syria. Read Amina about her confrontation with two young Alawite intelligence agents- wonderful account of the successful deployment of 'the Damascus gambit' on Syria's complicated chessboard of religion, class, gender, patriarchy, and national one-upmanship" In addition, *Mondoweiss*, "a news website devoted to covering American foreign policy in the Middle East, chiefly from a progressive Jewish perspective," also promoted Amina: "so you come to take Amina- a loving Syrian father saves his gay blogger daughter from the security services April 29, 2011" ([Gay Girl in Damascus]). *Mondoweiss* distributed Amina's message by directly cutting and pasting part of her blog entry "My Father, My Hero" to their own site. Because of the actions of the *Mondoweiss* editors and academics such as Joshua Landis, Amina's rhetorical agenda was brought to the attention of entirely new audiences. These organizations authenticated Amina's ethos for their audiences, while emphasizing specific issues, which are important to the chorus and described in Amina's blog post.

Amina in the News

In April and May of 2011, reporters from three news agencies, *The Washington Post, The Guardian* and *CNN* took on homophonic roles by demonstrating their support of the overall message while at the same time promoting Amina's message as a crucial component of their own agendas. According to the news reporters, Amina contacted them by email and other Syrian activists who they were in contact with authenticated her. When members of the mainstream media finally became involved in disseminating Amina's rhetoric, a *Washington Post* article, "Syrian blogger says she faced arrest but remains defiant," described the dissemination of Amina's rhetorical agenda online: "Wednesday, her voice got out there in a more profound way after a blog post she wrote went viral. In the post, she tells of a visit two security service men, wearing black leather jackets and carrying pistols, made to her house in the middle of the night. They had come to arrest her for her blog, 'A Damascus Gay Girl'" (Flock "Syrian Blogger"). As this case of homophony demonstrates, the voices do not blend together in such a way that one voice disappears. Rather, the voices balance between agreeing and disagreeing with the lead speaker. Through their instrumental role, these news reporters lent further credibility to Amina, since they used her as an authoritative source in their articles and therefore, used Amina's message to promote her and their own causes.

On Friday, May 6, 2011, the *Guardian* printed an article entitled "A Gay Girl in Damascus becomes heroine of the Syrian revolt: Blog by half-American 'ultimate outsider'" describes dangers of political and sexual dissent." This article by Katherine Marsh, a *Guardian* reporter who lives in Syria, states that Amina is an "unlikely hero of revolt in a conservative country" because her blog "is brutally honest, poking at subjects long considered taboo in Arab culture." The article appears to put Amina forward as an example of who is protesting in Syria, a person that Marsh's Western audience can sympathize with. Marsh says that in the blog as "the

blend of humour and frankness, frivolity and political nous comes from upbringing that straddles Syria and the US." In addition, Marsh highlights the other major theme of Amina's blog and personal experience, her homosexuality, as evidence of her heroism; "despite facing prejudice—in both the US and Syria—Abdullah sees no conflict in being both gay and Muslim." Amina is raised in this article to heroine status especially because she has used her dual citizenship and her influential family in Damascus to empower her to speak. Through this article, Amina's personal experience is appropriated by Marsh and redistributed to a new location online. This personal experience is altered to meet Marsh's rhetorical agenda, but at the same time, promotes Amina's views on the social and political situation in Syria and her sexuality. Mostly the article reinforces Amina's ethos as a speaker, since it claims her credibility as both a writer and as someone who heroically faces prejudice.

In the May 27, 2011 article, "Will Gays be 'Sacrificial Lambs' in Arab Spring?," Catriona Davies discusses the prospect that the uprisings in the Arab world, while bringing the possibility of freedom may also give rise to further persecution of homosexuals, since "homosexuality is illegal in 76 countries worldwide and punishable by death in five, including Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Iran." The article provides quotes from Sami Hamwi, a journalist from Damascus and the Syrian editor of *Gay Middle East*, and Haider Ala Hamoudi, "an expert on Middle Eastern Islamic law at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law," who both express concerns that political change for gay rights is progressive, but hampered because traditional Islamic law bans homosexuality. Hamwi has fears about his own safety and that of other reformers. He also conveys "doubts that any political change could significantly improve gay rights." Hamoudi states that "Sheikhs still emphasize that death penalty is the Islamic punishment for gay men." The article then contrasts both men's positions on gay rights with "a

more positive view of the situation" provided by Amina Abdallah and her blog. As quoted in the article, Amina claims that "a whole lot of long time changes are coming suddenly bubbling to the surface and views towards women, gay people, and minorities are rapidly changing." She also claims that the responses to her blog have been "almost entirely positive." The article closes by stating that most people interviewed by CNN (with the exception of Amina) state that gay rights are unlikely to occur anytime soon and in the meantime, recent social movements in the Middle East have actually made the situation more dangerous for the gay population.[27]

With the exception of the *CNN* article, these members of the rhetorical chorus appropriated and distributed Amina's messages to new locations online by articulating the message in virtually the same manner as Amina for their own purposes. Through these homophonic movements, the members of the chorus often preserved her original messages, but their intentions in growing her audience and promoting certain parts of her message were their own. The Western LGBT communities not only distributed Amina's ideas, but endorsed them as evidence of a lesbian woman and her father standing up against a repressive government for her human rights. While the LGBT communities were describing Amina and her father as examples of heroic defenders of her sexuality, other organizations emphasize her father's ability and desire to save Amina from the security services. Social activists working on advocating for different issues within the Middle East used Amina's message as evidence of the authenticity of their own views, because she spoke from the privileged position of personal experience. Lastly, the news reporters first reported on Amina's rise as a blogger worth noting and then reinforced Amina's authority to speak by using her to further their own arguments. In making their own contributions

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[27] In response to the article's position, Amina wrote a blog response entitled "Pinkwashing Assad?" on May 28, 2011 where she accused Davies of pinkwashing the Arab Spring, encouraging a Western audience to want to intervene in the Middle East in order to 'rescue' the gay community.

and promoting Amina to their own audiences, the rhetorical chorus helped show their readers that Amina was a credible speaker they should trust by repeating and amplifying her rhetoric.

Act 3: A Gay? Girl? In Damascus?

On June 5, 2011, the events on the blog *A Gay Girl in Damascus* reached a climax, when MacMaster in attempting to extricate himself from his blogging persona created a new pseudonym—Amina's cousin Rania O. Ismail. Ismail posted that Amina had been kidnapped by armed members of Syrian security forces. Immediately, followers of the blog and members of the rhetorical chorus who had been promoting and distributing Amina's message went into action to save the blogger. They flocked to Facebook, Twitter and online petition sites hoping to raise enough awareness of the captured blogger to help rescue her. Sandra Bagaria, Amina's partner in Canada who she dated through email, started campaigns on Facebook and Twitter, to get the word out to Amnesty International and the US State Department. Facebook alone had at least three separate campaigns designed to advertise Amina's abduction: FreeAminaArraf, Free-Amina-Abdallah, and Amina-Abdallah-Arraf-al-Omari. As the fervor over Amina's kidnapping demonstrated, Amina's rhetoric invoked trust and an emotional response from her audience, because the message adhered to "infrastructures of trust" that the audience recognized (S. Miller 2). They wanted to support an out lesbian Muslim woman who chose to speak even though she lived in a repressive country. The fervor also shows the depth of the emotional connections made between Amina and her audience. Since Amina was no longer able to speak, her rhetorical chorus set out to authenticate her ethos and promote her rhetorical agenda to a range of locations online.

As blog followers and other contacts across the internet began to mobilize to rescue Amina, new organizations took up the story in an effort to bring awareness to Amina's plight.

As these new organizations did more research they began to find holes in Amina's story and online history: the earliest to do so were Liz Henry of *HerBlog*, Andy Carver of *NPR*, Ali Abunimah and Benjamin Doherty of *Electronic Intifada* and Melissa Bell and Elizabeth Flock of the *Washington Post*[28]. These new members of the chorus acted through polyphonic relationships in which other voices enter into the space later than the original speaker and the homophonic relationships. These polyphonic voices operate separately from the original message and sometimes act as a counterpoint by moving against the original message. With counterpoint, the voices of the rhetorical chorus balance between agreement and disagreement with the original voice. The contrapuntal voices do not bolster or follow the original message like homophonic voices. These cross movements create a situation where the contributions of the new voices, new rhetorical messages, move abrasively against the original message. In this case the contradictions wore away at the original message to reveal the fraudulent ethos of the speaker.

Initially, the questions about Amina's existence caused confusion: Did she exist? Was she actually a lesbian? Was she really in Syria? Abunimah and Doherty discovered that Amina's articles for the website *Lez Get Real* were posted from IP addresses associated with the University of Edinburgh. Since Amina claimed to be writing in Syria, a police state, it was entirely possible that she existed and had to hide her identity to protect herself and her family. However, as the reporters and bloggers listed above researched Amina, they discovered that her online persona's identity was not tied to the material body and experiences of a woman, but to MacMaster. On June 8, 2011, Liz Sly of *The Washington Post* reported that while Amina had a Canadian girlfriend who was vouching for her existence, the girlfriend, Sandra Bagaria, had never met or even Skyped with Amina and the United States State Department could find no

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[28] For more details, see: Henry, Memmott and Peralta, Ali Abunimah and Benjamin Doherty, and all articles by Bell and Flock.

evidence to confirm Amina's existence. Each contradiction wore against Amina's constructed identity and in doing so, the constructedness of the identity became more apparent. The portion of the rhetorical chorus who demonstrated that Amina didn't exist did so by tracing the various ways ethos had been established. They found that all the physical evidence indicated that Amina was only an online persona.

Act IV: *A Straight? Man? In Edinburgh?*

On June 9, 2011, Tom MacMaster outed himself as the real author of *A Gay Girl in Damascus* to news organizations. In his "Apology to Readers" post, MacMaster claims, "While the narrative voice may have been fictional, the facts on this blog are true and not misleading as to the situation on the ground. I do not believe I have harmed anyone" (June 12, 2011). With these claims, MacMaster sought to absolve himself of responsibility for committing any sort of fraud. Though he misrepresented his identity online, he believed himself to be acting in good faith and good will by speaking for those who are otherwise silenced. His most salient point is that he did not harm anyone. Unlike other potential examples of writing fraud, he also did not acquire any financial gain from his behavior, and any plagiarism committed would have been incidental to the creation of his fabricated character.

MacMaster's response to being found out raises some pressing concerns regarding contested authorship. While some people sought to place responsibility and blame for their anger at his door, MacMaster claims he was operating within acceptable social constraints since he did not harm others and he created his false persona online in order to have a safe place and identity from which to speak. Since he operates through good will, claims expertise over the subject of Syria, and appears to follow appropriate rhetorical conventions, he appears to still fit with the traditional definition of ethos, which was proposed earlier. However, in response to the

circumstances and MacMaster's own apology, the rhetorical chorus intervened through further polyphonic moves in order to articulate their own complicated responses to the situation. Like a dramatic chorus, the rhetorical chorus gathered in groups on the world's stage to argue against or defend different aspects of MacMaster's rhetoric and ethos.

Act V: Dénouement

At this point, some parts of the rhetorical chorus had helped to build Amina's ethos, while others helped to erode the layers of credibility to show the hoax beneath. In this last stage, new groups came forward. One part of the rhetorical chorus sought to reject both MacMaster and the message as the credibility of the speaker evaporated. Another portion of the rhetorical chorus struggled to protect the ethos of the message from the infamy of the lead voice. A third group in this final stage of the cours wanted to reclaim some part of MacMaster's credibility, by claiming his efforts to be acts of goodwill and necessary for the preservation of certain ideals.

Rejecting the Speaker/Message

The first part of the chorus to articulate their views on the hoax had the not at all surprising reaction of anger and rejection. These chorus members as bloggers had the ability to censor the speaker by displaying "outrage over plagiarism and identity concealment in the real world," a situation which, "brings up an interesting paradox related to [online] authorship, and that is the simultaneous emphasis on a commitment to authorial authenticity seems untroubled by an equally prevalent dependence on intertextual links, citations, and embedded media" (Singh 32). Through their polyphonic roles, these choral members moved against the original message and speaker, while at the same time, using the initial message to argue that they had been injured by MacMaster's actions.

Of all the communities Amina tried to advocate for, the LGBT community was the one who spoke out strongly when they realized that the experiences Amina and her rhetorical chorus built her ethos on were actually false. A blogger for *Gay in Middle East*, Daniel Nassar, angrily wrote a post entitled, "From Damascus with Love: blogging in a Totalitarian State."

> Because of you , Mr. MacMaster, a lot of the real activists in the LGBT community became under the spotlight of the authorities in Syria...this attention you brought forced me back to the closet on all the social media websites I use; cause my family to go into a frenzy trying to force me back into the closet and my friends to ask me for phone numbers of loved ones and family members so they can call in case I disappeared myself… you feed the foreign media an undeniable dish of sex, religion and politics and you now are now leaving us with this holier-than-thou- semi-apologize with lame and shallow excuses of how you wanted to bring attention to the right people on the ground.

For Nassar and other LGBT community members and activists, MacMaster's hoax did not shed light on their situation, since he had no real experience with what their lives were like. To make things worse, MacMaster's actions brought unneeded attention to the community by Syrian security forces and potentially placed them in serious danger.

Nassar wrote multiple responses to MacMaster's deception in an effort to point out that MacMaster's ventriloquism of a lesbian woman was problematic rather than helpful. In his article for *The Guardian*, "The Real World of gay girls in Damascus," Nassar comments on what life is actually like for gay women in Damascus, a direct assault on both Amina's trustworthiness and her argument's credibility. Specifically, Nassar asserts that a lesbian woman is not likely to be accepted by her family as so many members of the rhetorical chorus wanted to believe, and

the police who came to arrest her would not have been driven off by her strangely supportive

father. In response to the argument from some members of the rhetorical chorus that Amina's

message could still help lesbian women in Syria, Nassar repeatedly warns that it also draws

dangerous attention to them. "They don't need more attention from authorities who might target

them to make sure a real Amina does not exist" ("The Real World"). For Nassar, Amina's

credibility came from her self-disclosure and personal experience, but she didn't exist and the

experiences she described would not have occurred. In addition, the argument Amina makes

about the positive possibilities for the LGBT community in the Middle East loses its credibility,

because of the events surrounding MacMaster's hoax. Instead, MacMaster placed the LGBT

community at greater risk and did the exact opposite of what he set out to do. While he claimed

he was fighting against pinkwashing, the use of LGBT persecution as a reason for the West to

intervene in the Middle East, MacMaster acted as a Westerner who felt he could speak better for

the LGBT community than they could.

Besides the Middle Eastern LGBT community, Western LGBT activists and bloggers

found themselves having to shift their own constructions of ethos. Instead of relying on self-

disclosure and self-validation online to speak, some LGBT bloggers felt they had to demonstrate

to their readers that their sexual identities and gender remained the same offline as well as on. In

a June 13, 2011 blog posting, "LezGetReal and Gay Girl in Damascus: Straight Men in Drag," a

lesbian woman who identifies herself as The Lesbian Conservative wrote "And as for *The*

Lesbian Conservative, well, I've actually presented myself in-person to a couple of the good

folks who read my blog." This statement illuminates the problem faced by the LGBT

community: the authenticity of their own voices is now called into question. *The Lesbian*

Conservative and others have to now demonstrate they are who they claim to be, that people can

vouch for their existence not just online and they must find ways to establish that their ethos as speaker as well as the message should still be considered credible. This backlash potentially means that LGBT writers no longer had anonymity online to protect themselves from homophobic and dangerous responses to their work, because they must 'out' themselves both online and offline to show credibility. The LGBT chorus viewed MacMaster's actions as damaging not only to their personal safety but also to their own ethos online. Because of him, LGBT in Syria and other parts of the Middle East were in danger of being scrutinized, outed, tortured, and possibly killed, because of the international media attention being paid to their community. In their view, MacMaster's work online created a problematic example of authorship and one from which any perception of authenticity and authority should be removed. He lied and therefore, everything he did and said was a lie regardless of how and why he felt he could speak.

Protecting the Rhetoric

Conversely, some members of the rhetorical chorus sought to rescue the credibility of Amina's arguments from the taint of MacMaster's hoax. On June 10, 2011, Linda S. Carbonell of *Lez Get Real* added a post entitled "An Apology to our Readers about Amina Abdallah." In this article, Carbonell explains that the persona Amina contacted her claiming to be a lesbian woman from Syria. This persona fulfilled a need that the blog had: "I wanted someone in the region who could do a much better job of explaining the Arab Spring to Americans than I could from 5,000 miles away." Carbonell admits that she bought into Amina's ethos, because Amina's arguments matched those that Carbonell firmly believes in as well ("An Apology"). Carbonell felt Amina was trustworthy because Amina shared her experiences as a Syrian and as a lesbian. Further, Carbonell could rely on Amina's authenticity because they developed a working

relationship with common rhetorical agendas and Amina appeared to be acting in good faith for the benefit of the *Lez Get Real* community.

Surprisingly, despite all the evidence that MacMaster had fictionalized Amina and lied, Carbonell and *Lez Get Real* still wanted to believe Amina was a woman and a lesbian. As the news came out that Amina was not a lesbian in Syria, *Lez Get Real* in its letter of apology bought into the fiction of gender and sexuality even when it became obvious that the person writing the work was not in Syria: "Beyond the truth about "Amina," who apparently is a 35 year-old lesbian living in Edinburgh, Scotland." The important aspect of the argument for *Lez Get Real*, and Carbonell was that the story was being told. Carbonell writes, "I want something understood, though, "Amina" didn't say anything that wasn't the truth. The situation in Syria is no less horrific just because she wasn't actually there. People are dying, people are being mowed down in the streets, people are disappearing into the jails and secret police dungeons. IT DOESN'T BLOODY MATTER WHO TELLS US THIS AS LONG AS WE LISTEN TO THE CRIES OF PEOPLE WHO WANT TO BE FREE." For Carbonell, *Lez Get Real* and a number of other activists online, the important and trustworthy part of the rhetorical situation was less about Amina and more about the message being presented. So in response to the destruction of Amina's ethos, the rhetorical chorus moved to make counter arguments and find merit in the message Amina once argued. At this point, the rhetorical chorus was willing to leave aside the ethos of the speaker and focus on the authority and authenticity of the message that the rhetorical chorus alone could build, maintain, or destroy depending on their own rhetorical agendas.

Speaker of Goodwill?

The last group, while acknowledging that MacMaster had fooled people, argued that this situation was not an example of problematic authorship, but rather an example of appropriate

authorship online. In her post, "Gay Girl in Damascus blogger hoax: Chasing Amina," Liz Henry acts as part of the rhetorical chorus who wants to protect part of MacMaster's rhetorical agency and preserve some of his rhetorical ethos. She puts inflection on one aspect of MacMaster's rhetorical stance regarding the importance of anonymity online. She argues that,

> Many people have good reason to conceal their identity and to develop relationships online under a screen name. They might like to express an aspect of their personality that would not mix well with their professional life. They might have gender identity issues they are working through. They might be in a family situation that makes it unsafe for them to come out as gay. They might write fiction using characters whose stories are under copyright. None of those, however, are excuses for deception and manipulative behavior.

While MacMaster did not present any direct argument about anonymity through his persona Amina, he used this mythos of internet authorship as his vehicle for presenting his arguments. In an interview with the *Guardian*, MacMaster specifically articulates this premise by stating that "I started writing posts on Syria and Islam," but he found that no news organization in the U.S would provide "a fair hearing to the Palestinian Israeli issue." He often got responses such as "Why do you hate America?" To combat what MacMaster calls "that stupid argument", he argues "if I sign myself with an Arab girl's name first there will be some deference from obnoxious men, just because people will be more polite to a girl than to a guy and second people won't get hung up on why do you hate?" (Addley). People who would argue against him online as a white man in Georgia would allow an Arab woman to make her case, because she would be speaking from her own position and experiences within the world. In other words, MacMaster's

authorship models the utopian online world that Henry and others[29] want to protect; specifically, they sought to protect the idea that online "aspects of identity which currently form the basis for discrimination and hierarchical relationships will cease to matter" (Kendall 129-30). Despite the precedent that MacMaster sets of misusing anonymity, some people still see anonymity as a way for others to speak. They seek to reclaim this aspect of his argument and his construction of identity by dividing the activity from his failing ethos. In this move, they are agreeing with him, defending him, and yet, separating their argument from him.

Even as allegations against Amina's authenticity became louder and more clear, many spaces online still sought to keep, if not her actual voice, then the ideas that she gave voice to alive and well. One such move occurred in the *Guardian*, for which Nesrine Malik wrote an article entitled "The 'fallen' heroines of the Arab Spring': Women who abide by cultural traditions while rebelling politically have become icons. But there is another vanguard of outsiders." In this article, Malik juxtaposes Amina and her blog to Tawakkol Karmon and Saida Saasouni, Arab women who have instigated revolutions in Yemen and Tunisia while still maintaining traditional and conservative Muslim values. While Malik notes that "there are allegations that [Amina] is an agent, a hoax, her very existence doubted," Malik describes Amina as an example of other women, outsiders to traditional conservative values who are seeking reforms as well. Malik praises Amina for demonstrating the values of rebelling against the mainstream: "More importantly however, whether real or fake, or real with a dash of poetic licence, she demonstrates the benefits of opting out of mainstream values." Malik's argument focuses on the idea that Amina and others demonstrate that one does not have to follow "an

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[29] Bell and Flock, "Gay Girl in Damascus hoax shouldn't spoil online anonymity."

unspoken rule of survival: separate one's thoughts and convictions from one's public behavior—if the two do not naturally align." Even as evidence showed that Amina may not be a real person, Malik seeks to maintain the ideal that people who want to rebel against a system in the Middle East do not have to do so by keeping to traditional values. This position reflects a very Western view of the situation in the Middle East by advocating that social reform can only really occur through disruptions or rebellions in the system rather than by navigating traditional roles. Malik's argument then makes the Western view of social reform the more heroic means of making changes and it encourages the idea that the West needs to encourage or help the Middle East to do social reforms 'correctly.'

MacMaster's arguments regarding Syria were also used to maintain current Middle Eastern views of the West. Because of the hoax, the Syrian government was able to argue that dissension and confusion within the country was caused by Western outsiders. A commentator to Liz Henry's blog post, "Painful Doubts about Amina," Andy Warpole writes, "it should be noted that the Syrian state media has picked up on this story and are using it as evidence that opposition voices are fabricated in the West." A writer for *Foreign Policy*, David Kenner, contributed "Straight Guy in Scotland: What the 'Gay Girl in Damascus' hoax tells us about ourselves and the media in the era of the Arab Spring" In this article, Kenner states that "The story played perfectly into Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's efforts to portray the domestic revolt as one guided by shadowy outsiders—indeed, Syria's official government mouthpiece prominently featured a profile of MacMaster, claiming that the hoax 'aimed at enhancing continuous fabrications ad lies again Syria in term of (sic) kidnapping bloggers and activists.'" These accusations regarding how the West perceives the Middle East and how the Middle East perceives the West are contingent on interpretations and arguments offered by multiple people

online. The issue becomes a function of audience reception. Each side comes to accuse the other

of not understanding the 'truth' about social issues or how to address those social concerns

'properly.' The situation then devolves into an argument in the vein of he said/she said.

In the west, the misunderstanding between the Middle East and the West is blamed on

Western media outlets. Arguably these media outlets provide misinformation or incomplete

information for their own rhetorical agenda. On his blog *Syria Comment* in the post "What

happened at Jisr al-Shagour?," Joshua Landis writes "The real story is not the fake Gay Girl in

Damascus—a juicy distraction that has dominated the airwaves for the last two days—but the

way so many journalists cannot check their stories before deadlines because they are not

permitted into Syria and don't understand Arabic. The Syrian government doesn't even try to

add English subtitles to its version of events and Youtube recordings, making them useless to the

thousands of foreign reporters who cannot understand Arabic. The result is bad reporting that

often relies on one side of the story." Landis' attack on Western media belies his earlier praise of

the blog in his own writings and raises some interesting polyphonic relationship questions.

Landis not only praised the blog, disseminated its message to other points online, but he also

most likely knows MacMaster's wife, Britta Froelicher, since she studies Syrian politics and has

been an active participant in academic and social events related to studying Syria and the Middle

East[30]. So even as MacMaster's credibility has been tainted for creating a false persona, his

arguments regarding Western views of the Middle East continue to be taken up and used by

various participants online. Through polyphonic moves, the pieces of his argument are inflected

and carried on by others who have their own rhetorical agendas.

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[30] See, Joseph W. and Bell "Britta Froelicher, wife of 'A Gay Girl in Damascus,' caught in her husband's
'hurricane.'"

The last part of MacMaster's argument to be reclaimed and protected by members of the rhetorical chorus was the idea that the internet has now made us a smaller networked community than we were before. In her blog, Amina wrote a poem which says, "Borders mean nothing if you have wings."   This sentiment is echoed in his "Apology to Readers," when MacMaster's posits that while he puppeted Amina and her life was fictional, the arguments he made were still true. He states that despite the fact that he was from Georgia and lived in Edinburgh, he could provide his audience with real information regarding the situation in Syria better than other sources. "The events there are being shaped by the people living them on a daily basis. I have only tried to illuminate them for a western audience." This notion that the world is small enough that anyone can relate events going on in another part of the world is taken up in the article "The Geography Lesson of Gay Girl in Damascus" by Aditya Chakrabortty in *The Guardian* on June 13, 2011. Chakrabortty points out that the acceptance of MacMaster's lies online stem in part from an internet myth that the world is getting smaller because of the internet age. MacMasters states that he can discuss Syria because he has visited there and knows people there even though he is not actually participating in any of the local events occurring in Syria. This last argument was not so much taken up and rescued by other voices, but the concept that the internet makes the world a small community is an ongoing and pervasive belief that continues to affect perceptions of how information is distributed within the space.

The situation demonstrates how other people bought into these myths and perpetuated their ideals even as the hoax was revealed. While angry participants made new arguments based on MacMaster's movements, other members of the rhetorical chorus sought to maintain and keep aspects of his arguments. These members of the chorus were concerned that the anger of others would undermine the parts of the argument that should still have value despite being articulated

by a fraudulent persona. This chorus moved through the digital space of the internet, participating in appropriating and distributing MacMaster's rhetoric for the purpose of reclaiming the initial rhetorical message even as the Amina's ethos crumbled. When Tom MacMaster created Amina, he believed he was legitimately using the persona he created to help the LGBT community in the Middle East to voice their concerns for a Western audience. In his online "Apology to Readers" he states, "I only hope that people pay as much attention to the people of the Middle East and their struggles in thıs year of revolutions. The events there are beıng shaped by the people living them on a daily basis. I have only tried to illuminate them for a western audience" (June 2011). He maintained that it did not matter who actually made the arguments as long as the message was presented. While many communities were angry for being duped, members of Gay and Lesbian communities used the opportunity to denounce MacMaster, his construction and ventriloquism of a lesbian woman, and his rhetorical agendas.

Building on the Chorus Model

Musical texture adds a new dimension to the chorus model, so that a collaborative relationship can be parsed into parts, contributors and their actions, and interpreted based on the pacing of those actions much like the performances in the *Glee* episode discussed earlier. Applying the model to the two case studies of this chapter helps to distinguish between the actions of a main speaker and the later performances of the individuals within the group. Though the rhetorical contexts for the two case studies are incredibly different, certain group activities can be attributed to the actions of the lead voice and the responses of other individuals to that original speaker. Margery Kempe is a lead voice, because some church officials sanctioned her life narrative, two learned scribes agreed to help her write down that story, and other audience members actively engaged with the manuscript artifact. Kempe needed these other people to

even get her story written down let alone distributed to others. In contrast, digital technology

made it possible for Tom MacMaster to publish his own ideas on his blog without relying on

other people to participate in the act of producing his work. In this age of self-publishing in

digital spaces, a lead voice like MacMaster is capable to utilizing already existing platforms for

designing and producing his work. However, his authority as a speaker is contingent on other

people choosing to respond to his message and distributing his message into other online spaces.

Therefore, a key difference between the two examples of lead voice has to do with when the

chorus participates. In manuscript culture, the chorus was more heavily relied on to act as

producers and designers of the manuscript space, whereas in digital spaces, the chorus acts more

as agents, who chose what aspects of the message to be taken up and circulated.

Besides the reliance on others to produce or distribute the message, the lead voice is

distinguishable in both case studies by the rhetorical techniques used to organize the message.

While Kempe and MacMaster did not use the exact same rhetorical techniques, they did engage

in affective rhetorical practices or practices based on emotion and designed to create an

emotional response in the audience. Specifically, this affective rhetoric involves the use of the

speaker's personal experiences to validate the speaker's authority. Kempe's authority is built

entirely around the premise that she lived a holy life and had spiritual experiences that were

worth recording. MacMaster purposefully created a female persona in order to speak from her

experiences as a lesbian woman in Syria. It is possible based on these case studies that the role of

personal experience and affective rhetorical practices may be present because of the speaker's

gender (or ventriloquized gender). Yet, this quality of affective rhetorical practice is not a

common trait of patriarchal rhetorical practices and may very well signify an important

distinction between certain collaborative practices. Instead of all collaborative groups engaging

in homogenous rhetorical practices, perhaps some groups have a much stronger reliance on alternative forms of rhetorical techniques.

In a rhetorical chorus model, the homophonic relationship describes the responses made by choral members who are producers and designers. These early contributors act as instruments and facilitate the building of the rhetorical artifact. Kempe's second scribe like many medieval scribes was not a machine involved in the manuscript production process. Instead, his *techne* gave him the capacity to affect how the original speaker's words were mediated and to contribute to the artifacts for his own purposes. He is both an individual speaker and an instrument of communication for Kempe. In contrast, MacMaster's homophonic relationships did not involve people who actively and directly contributed to the production of the message. Rather, the homophonic responses occurred when people online took excerpts from MacMaster's blog and distributed his exact words to other spaces, changing the rhetorical context in which the message was embedded. Through these actions, the chorus was able to choose what parts of the message were taken up and how different audiences would receive the message. This uptake had the potential to drastically change the audience's reception of the message. For both cases, the homophonic relationship provides a new dimension to collaborative group activities, since it acknowledges the participants who help the main speaker, but these participants do not have to share in the lead speaker's agenda. A chorus member is able to contribute without losing his or her identity or separate rhetorical agenda in the process.

Polyphony explains musical lines that move with and against the original melody and helps to articulate how different melodies can enter in at various times. The choral model uses polyphony to explain how the rhetorical chorus does not engage only in reciprocal, synchronous or proximal collaborative relationships with the main speaker. This analysis of the artifact as a

rhetorical space further demonstrates the interplay between the multiple voices present, whose rhetorical agendas are separate from that of Kempe's or MacMaster's, and at the same time, these voices often work both for and against the speaker's message. The polyphonic choral members appear to have the ability to construct and constrain how the audience receives the speaker's originary message. Specifically, the polyphonic chorus consists of mostly agents capable of adding their own rhetorical messages to the rhetorical artifact. They take the parts of the message they want to keep and attribute to the speaker authority over that message. Conversely, they also strip away the speaker's authority if they no longer trust in the speaker's credibility. In each case, the chorus moderates how the audience will receive both message and speaker.

Studying the polyphonic relationships of the two case studies of this chapter indicates that the chorus model works best to unpack collaborative situations which are examples of contested authorship or speaker authority. For example, polyphonic relationships in Kempe's case help to explain how her message was taken up and distributed. The unmasking of MacMaster as the author The *Gay Girl in Damascus* blog offers an alternative example regarding the development and attribution of authority for a lead speaker. Typically, a rhetorical event such as this one appears to consist of a single speaker who builds his rhetorical authority and addresses his rhetorical message to a specific audience. However, this example of contested authorship demonstrates that authority is not lodged only in the speaker and the speaker's choices regarding the message. The relationships between lead speaker and chorus further problematize our understanding of authority in particular since Amina's authority diminishes greatly as her inauthenticity emerges. Rather, rhetorical authority then is lodged in the rhetorical chorus' own use of the rhetorical message rather than in the character of the speaker or the

message. They were the ones to lend MacMaster's credibility, to vouch for his existence as Amina, and they were the ones who placed inflection on the aspects of his argument that mattered to them. The chorus also fought to maintain parts of his rhetorical message even as they eroded the ethos of his persona.

Applying the chorus model to the two case studies of this chapter reveals the social practices created and used by the rhetorical chorus in order to mediate another person's rhetorical message to an audience. An examination of these social practices and the role of the rhetorical chorus reveal that issues of speaker authority and identity actually mask a system of production where gender and authority are co-constructed and preserved by multiple people. While we can often see the newscaster on the television, we do not see the person behind the camera, the director in the studio, the agencies paying for ad time, or the person who actually researched and wrote the news. We can attribute a name and authorship to someone, but there are no absolute guarantees that the person we have named is also the writer (ghostwriting as an example). And any historical text may come to us with a name attached, but how can we be sure that Aristotle actually wrote the texts attributed to him? (McAdon 2004, 2006 and Walzer and Inabinet 2011). We overcome these concerns by instituting social practices which allow us to place our trust in the message being received. These social practices are created and used by the rhetorical chorus in order to mediate another person's rhetorical message to an audience. In these systems, rhetorics are "derived from ritual, imaginative, and affiliative discursive practices that we trust for their well-supported and reasoned statements, but also because they participate in infrastructures of trustworthiness we are schooled to recognize, sometimes by lessons and habits we cannot name" (S. Miller 2007, 2). We overcome concerns about trust and authority by instituting social practices which allow us to place our trust in the message being received. The

chorus model facilitates a new perspective on rhetoric in which group interactions develop not only the message, but also affect the social systems and practices we place our trust in when we communicate.

Chapter IV: Pizan, Huffington, Chorus

On November 15, 2010, Peter Daou and James Boyce, two liberal political consultants, filed a lawsuit against Arianna Huffington; her business partner, Ken Lerer; and their business, the online news blog, the *Huffington Post*. Through this lawsuit, the two men wanted to be acknowledged for their role in originating the idea of the *Huffington Post* as a liberal solution to the *Drudge Report*, a conservative blog designed to mediate news reports (W. Cohen 2011). In a November 16, 2010 blog post on his own site, Daou claimed that the impetus for this lawsuit came when he read an article from the journal *Wired* entitled "How Andrew Breitbart Hacks the Media." In the interview, Andrew Breitbart, a conservative media personality, states bluntly that he created the *Huffington Post*: "'I created the Huffington Post,' he says simply. 'I drafted the plan. They followed the plan'" (Shachtman 2010). While Arianna Huffington did not deny Breitbart's contributions to the origins of the *Huffington Post* in the article, she did state that it was not entirely his idea, since Breitbart was not at the December 2004 meeting where she claims the idea for the website was first considered. Because of her response, both Daou and Boyce felt it was time to be included in the origin story of the *Huffington Post*.

In response to the lawsuit, Arianna Huffington and Ken Lerer composed a press release and submitted it to the political blog, *Politico*, and into court evidence. This response begins emphatically with "we have now officially entered into Bizzaro World" and goes on to state "James Boyce and Peter Daou, two political operatives who we rejected going into business with or hiring 6 years ago, and who had absolutely nothing to do with creating, running, financing, or building the Huffington Post, now concoct some scheme saying they own part of the company" ("Statement from Ken Lerer and Arianna Huffington"). At stake for both parties in this lawsuit is an establishment of who had a role in the origin story, the story of invention, for the website.

Having a role in the invention story would mean having authority over the artifact being produced, an impact on the environment in which the artifact exists and a significant financial payout for the people involved in creating the site. This lawsuit offers an ideal rhetorical situation for critiquing how a collaborative group impacts the production, design, and circulation of rhetoric on the *Huffington Post*. Because of the complexity and multiplicity of interactions found within rhetorical artifacts such as the *Huffington Post*, the chorus model can provide a tool of analysis for distinguishing the multiple voices, agendas, and rhetoric(s) found within an artifact and distinguishing how those variables affect message as it's distributed within different rhetorical contexts.

This chapter examines what repeated outcomes emerge when the chorus model is applied to a rhetorical situation marked by complex group interactions. These outcomes provide further avenues of inquiry regarding the communal and social invention of rhetoric. To discuss the implications of a chorus model for studying group rhetorics, the chorus model is applied to two case studies—Christine de Pizan and Arianna Huffington and their respective choruses. In my first case study, I apply the chorus model to Christine de Pizan, a medieval woman writer, and her work. Christine has been historically both accepted and rejected as an authoritative speaker based on evidence of her own actions and the interventions of others who helped preserve her rhetoric. For example, Christine's initial chorus—her scriptorium, her illuminators, and some members of her audience— offered their own voices to the production of her work in order to contribute to her ability to speak as a woman author in manuscripts like Harley MS 4431, a presentation copy manuscript designed for the Queen of France. In contrast some later publishers removed many indicators of her authorship in the translations and print copies they produced. Yet, she remained to be 'recovered' by modern medieval, feminist, and rhetorical scholars. For

my second case study, I analyze the multi-vocal production and rhetorical moves of Arianna Huffington and her consortium of friends, business partners, and fellow bloggers who have come together to create the *Huffington Post*, a news blog where news information is gathered by humans (rather than algorithms). This space has been constructed around Arianna as the main speaker and brings together particular news items in order to convey a particularly liberal perspective. An application of the choral model to the origin story of the *Huffington Post* and the origin story of Christine de Pizan's manuscript, Harley MS 4431, raises tantalizing questions regarding the nature of collaborative responses to an original speaker, the circulation of rhetorical meaning and the role of collaborative group in mediating a message to an audience.

The two speakers in this chapter are in many ways the female counterparts to Geoffrey Chaucer and Jimmy Wales from Chapter 2. Like Chaucer, Christine de Pizan is an acknowledged medieval author with authority over her work, but unlike Chaucer this acceptance of her authority has not been constant or consistent. Like Wales, Arianna is the director and named authority over a site which flourishes based on her mission statement for the site. However, Arianna must deal with (male) detractors who argue that they are initiators of the *Huffington Post* and Arianna Huffington is only the namesake. Unlike their male counterparts, both women have had their choruses both promote and systematically detract from their authority as speakers. Despite this balancing between acceptance and rejection as speakers, both women remain examples of lead voices whose work has long-reaching influence. While these two women are juxtaposed in this chapter based on similarities between them regarding authority and interactions with others, each case study demonstrates separately how the choral model can be applied in order to analyze the impact of group interactions on specific rhetorical situations.

Case Study 1: Christine de Pizan

   Christine de Pizan was famous for being both a writer and a woman. Christine, a younger contemporary of Geoffrey Chaucer, lived between 1365 and approximately 1431 in Paris, France. While she was originally from Italy, her father, a scholar and astronomer, was asked to join the court of King Charles V of France. According to her autobiographical descriptions in the *Cité des Dames*, her father "took great pleasure in seeing your [Christine's] inclination toward learning" (2.36.4). Her father's court connections may have provided her with access to King Charles' library and court literature, which would have provided her with an exceptional education (Willard 28). After marrying a court clerk, Christine had three children and by her own account appears to have had a loving relationship with him (*L'Vision* 3.3.4). When both her husband and father died within a few short years of each other, Christine had to care for her children and mother; she did so with her writing. This turn of events gave rise to her early literary efforts, when she composed poems to mourn her losses. Later, Christine branched out into other scholarly and literary endeavors. Over her literary career, Christine composed in a variety of literary styles and covered a wide range of unusual topics for a medieval woman writer, including politics and anti-misogynist arguments.

   Christine de Pizan is a prime example of the continued ambiguity surrounding a woman speaker, which occurs even as women are recovered into the rhetorical canon. Christine's reception into the canon was not a smooth transition from rejected woman speaker to 'recovered' proto-feminist speaker. Rather, her entrance into the rhetorical and literary canons has been marked by complex shifts between acceptance, rejection, and equivocation. In her autobiographical work, *L'Vision*, Christine describes her reception: her patrons "willingly saw

and joyfully received them, and more, I think, for the novelty of a woman who would write (since that had not occurred for quite some time) than for any worth there might be therein" (3.3.11). Her contemporaries viewed her novelty as a woman writer to be the source of her authority, a characteristic reinforced and remediated in both text and image within her manuscripts. At the same time, "she also tells us that some individuals accuse her of having 'monks and students forge her works,' so incredulous were they that a woman could be a successful writer" (Hindman 460). Works by Laurie Finke (2007), Nancy Bradley Warren (2005), and A.E. B Coldiron (2006) represent the struggle to understand just how early print publishers viewed Christine's work. Early print publishers in England and France both effaced evidence of her authorship and authority and reified select symbols of her authorship and authority in order to promote their own ideologies.

Contemporary medieval, feminist, and rhetorical scholars have since 'recovered' her, and Christine's work draws modern scholars because her oeuvre offers a tantalizing prospect for studying medieval authorship, authenticity, politics, gender, and the book trade. We not only have evidence that she had control over the production of her work/manuscripts to an astonishing degree (for the medieval era), but she also wrote about protofeminist or at the very least, anti-misogynistic topics (the degree to which she should be considered proto-feminist is a subject of endless speculation[31]).

This recovery continues the 'fetishizing' of the individual speaker described by Barbara Biesecker and introduced in chapter 1. The implication of this 'recovery' is that Christine is only recoverable because we can privilege her role as an individual speaker separate from the people she worked with. However, Christine like so many other writers before and after her did not

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[31] For arguments about the extent to which Christine de Pizan should be considered a 'mother' of feminism, see: Blumenfeld-Kosinksi, Delany, Laennec, and Quilligan.

create her work by herself. This ambiguous 'recovery' process highlights a central problem for Christine and other women speakers: How does credible authority get attributed to a speaker who speaks within a complex multivocal rhetorical situation without relying on the audience's ability to identify when the speaker is able to influence the production and distribution of her messages? A chorus model allows us to map and measure the scope of a speaker's authority while at the same time accounting for the scope of others' impact on the attribution of authority and on the invention of rhetoric.

The Stage

An analysis of the interactions between main speaker and the ensemble which helps her produce and distribute her work begins with the rhetorical artifact. This artifact operates as a metaphoric stage into which the chorus and other audience members enter. Though the chorus actually operates in the in-between space between the artifact and the audience, or the "manuscript matrix," as Martha Rust called it, the artifact's physicality affords us the ability to identify who has been there by the marks or evidence they have left behind. For this case study, the stage is Christine de Pizan's autograph manuscript British Library, Harley MS 4431. This manuscript was compiled by Christine and her scriptorium sometime around 1413 and was given to Queen Isabeau of Bavaria, the manuscript's patron ("Research Context"). Though Christine created a number of collections of her works, Harley MS 4431 is one of the latest and most ornately designed manuscripts to be made in her workshop and ostensibly under her supervision, which means it is usually regarded as the pinnacle of her work ("Research Context"). The manuscript contains thirty of her texts written in neat columns and beautifully and carefully designed with elaborate borders, decorated initials, and rubrics. The majority of the illuminations appear to have been done by an illuminator known as the *Cité des Dames* Master, so named by

scholar Millard Meiss after Christine's most famous text, *The City of Ladies*. The ornateness and care of the manuscript serve as a testament to Christine's skills as an author and as a publisher.

The space or stage of the artifact is not limited to the tangible materiality of the artifact, but encompasses the space between the artifact and the audience, the manuscript matrix (Rust 2007). In this in-between space, where meaning comes into being, the chorus performs their roles as producers, designers, and agents who engage as mediators between the original speaker and the audience. Besides its uniqueness as an ornate compilation of Christine's work, MS Harley MS 4431 also provides an example of how rhetoric gets invented within the in-between space between the artifact and the audience by the chorus. This in-between space includes the ways the manuscript materials get transmitted and mediated to an audience. After Christine produced her manuscript, she gave it to Queen Isabeau of France. The manuscript eventually was taken from France by the English when the Duke of Bedford's army "looted the royal library in the Louvre during his occupation of France (Finke 23). The transmission of Harley MS 4431 and the changes in chorus and location from France to England altered the audience of the manuscript and shifted rhetorical agendas for promoting the work. As each of its members entered into the system, the chorus became a group who helped Christine de Pizan to promote and distribute her message.

Performing Players

For the manuscript Harley MS 4431, Christine de Pizan is the lead speaker whose ideas and work are being responded to by others. Since the establishment of lead speaker status was addressed in more detail elsewhere, I will provide here just two examples of how Christine is able to establish her role as lead speaker based on her combined acts as composer and publisher. First, MS Harley MS 4431 contains a number of works in which Christine describes how she

composed both her authority as speaker, and her message including several of her shorter poems and a few of her major works: *Proverbes Moraulx*, *L'Epistre Othéa*, and *Le Livre de La Cité des Dames*. Throughout all these works, she makes careful choices which help to bolster her role as lead speaker. Second, manuscript evidence indicates that her role was extensive not only in the composing of the texts but in the production of her manuscripts.

Like Margery Kempe, Christine establishes her role as lead speaker by shaping her text based on rhetorical and literary conventions which are familiar to her audience and designed to create an emotional response in that audience. For example, Christine's major works often include a common medieval technique known as the modesty topos. This topos begins a poem or text with the author's statement of their authority to write the work couched in language designed to downplay the author's abilities. Frequently the modesty topos is seen at the beginning of hagiographical texts, such as when the medieval writer Felix, writing the life of St. Guthac, states "In this confidence I have publicly presented it to you, praying that if, as will happen, my faulty language shall here and there have offended the ears of a learned reader in any respect, he may note at the beginning of the volume these words in which I ask his pardon" (Colgave 61). In a similar manner, Christine frequently began her works stating that she is but a poor woman, so the audience needs to bear with her because she has something of importance to say however weakly stated. At the beginning of *L'Epistre Othéa*, Christine writes: "moved by humble desire, I, poor creature/ Ignorant woman, of little importance/ Daughter of the philosopher and doctor of yore" (30-1: 1-3). While Christine repeats that she is a 'poor creature' and 'ignorant woman,' she is also providing evidence of her ability and authority to speak on the subjects of her work by indicating her position in court, her pedigree of scholarship, and her personal experiences with the topic. The modesty topos serves to help the reader identify why the

speaker is worth listening to, which serves to amplify the speaker's authority by overly dramatizing their inadequacies.

To further demonstrate her authority as speaker, Chrisitne reshapes the modesty topos into statements of her identity and her authority. She often writes, "'Je, Christine.'" As Maureen Quilligan states in *The Allegory of Female Authority: Christine de Pizan's Cité Des Dames*, states the repetition of these two words throughout Pizan's works "makes its idiosyncratic frequency a signal mark of Christine's authority, a 'signature' in more ways than one" (Quilligan 1991, 12). Including her name repeats for the audience who she is, her role in writing the work, her authority to speak, and her name creates a link between all of her works. This move is particularly significant because to be named as author placed a medieval composer amongst the pantheon of great classical writers. This careful alteration subtly changes the modesty topos and amplifies her authority against her own pronouncements of inadequacy.

Through her composing, Christine repeatedly puts rhetorical inflection on key arguments which emerge frequently throughout her works. Her major works cover a range of topics including politics, military strategy, social behavior, anti-misogyny, and teaching (mirror writing). Of particular significance for feminist rhetorical scholars who seek to recover Christine as a speaker are her anti-misogynst writers, in which Christine engaged in public debates with male scholars and directly attacked common medieval social standards that served to constrain women. "She attacks the institution of chivalry in the "Letter to the God of Love" and misogyny in her letters on "The Romance of the Rose" and defends the contribution of women to history in *The Book of the City of Ladies*" (Dufresne 30). Many of Christine's works are concerned with proper behavior, especially the behavior of royalty and women. In her now famous work *City of Ladies* Christine combines St. Augustine's *City of God* and Boccaccio's *Famous Women* in order

to create a fictional place for women. *City of Ladies* is an allegorical tale, in which Christine as a

character is called by the three virtues—Rectitude, Justice, and Reason—to build a city for

women as a stronghold against misogyny and a place to honor famous women.

> Now take your tools and come with me, go ahead, mix the mortar in your ink
>
> bottle so that you can fortify the City with your tempered pen, for I will supply
>
> you with plenty of mortar, and thanks to divine virtue, we will soon finish
>
> building the lofty palaces and noble mansions for the excellent ladies of great
>
> glory and fame who will be lodged in this City and who will remain here
>
> perpetually, forever more (Pizan *City of Ladies*, 99).

To accomplish her work, Christine often reframed, remade, re-visioned the work of others. For

example, Kevin Brownlee, in his article "The Image of History in Christine de Pizan's *Livre de

la Mutacion de Fortune*," describes how Pizan makes use of works ranging from "the *Aeneid* and

the *Roman de la Rose*" to "the *Prose Lancelot* and the *Divine* Comedy" in order to "structure the

vast historical subject matter of the *Mutacion*" (46). Using these seminal works, Christine

demonstrates her education and experience as well as appropriating these works to then serve her

own agenda.

Besides composing the work, Christine exercises her authority as lead speaker by acting

as a publisher of her own works. Unlike many medieval writers (Geoffrey Chaucer and Margery

Kempe, for example), manuscript evidence indicates that we have approximately 50-55

autograph manuscripts from Christine Pizan, a huge number considering the era and her gender:

"the fifty manuscripts so far identified as autographs are linked by three features—contents,

decoration, and scribal hands" (Laidlaw "Manuscript Tradition," 231). Autograph manuscripts

are significant finds for modern scholars of medieval literature, because they were all produced

in Paris during Christine's life time and show evidence that she may very well have been involved in their production. For scholars who want clear evidence that the author had control over their work in order to comfortably attribute that author authority as a speaker, these autograph manuscripts make it very easy to regard Christine as a lead voice.

After examining twenty presentations copies, Gilbert Ouy and Christine Reno argue that three scribes—P, R, and X—wrote Christine's autograph manuscripts. "The X hand is encountered most often and R and P are found less frequently" (Laidlaw "Manuscript Tradition," 241). Since scribal hand X is encountered most frequently and makes corrections to the other two, Ouy and Reno proposed that this is Christine's own scribal hand (241). Even though the evidence is not conclusive, the argument for scribe X to be Christine is compelling since scribal hand X instructs the other two hands and these manuscripts were produced in Paris during Christine's lifetime. "Her frequent intervention in the production of manuscripts written by these scribes indicates, in fact, that the three individuals worked in one location, passing quires back and forth" (Hindman "With Ink and Mortar," 459-60).This level of intervention means that Christine de Pizan composed her work and also directed the production and design of her manuscripts. For modern scholars this evidence is great fodder for demonstrating that at least one woman was able to rise above a patriarchal and misogynistic environment to become a composer, writer, and publisher. But recovering one woman who happens to create rhetoric like a man, a description Christine uses to describe her situation in *Mutacion*, focuses on the novelty of Christine rather than on the practicalities of how she was able to build her authority through her interactions with her patrons, scribes, illuminators, and audiences (Blumenfeld-Kosinski 106).

Homophonic Relationships

Evidence from Christine de Pizan's autograph manuscripts, including Harley MS 4431, indicates the presence of two specific scribes who worked under her supervision, scribal hands R and P. "It seems that Christine regularly worked with two scribes, whose work she oversaw, adding catchwords, signatures, rubrics, headings, or sometimes a special dedication" (Hindman "Ink and Morter," 460). Like Kempe's second scribe, Christine's two scribes take on an instrumental and supportive role for Christine by bolstering her message through their contributions. However much Christine may have dictated how the work should be read and designed, the two scribes were humans capable of working on the manuscripts for their own purposes.

Besides her scribes, Christine's illuminators worked closely with her. There are three in particular who illuminated most of her autograph manuscripts: *Cité des Dames* Master, the *Epistre* Master, and the Egerton Master. "The Epitre Master and the Saffron Master who painted the miniatures in the Paris book seem to have worked only for Christine, with one exception" (Hindman "*Epistre Othea*," 63).The later *Cité des Dames* Master helped the *Epistre* Master complete some of the manuscripts and continued working with Christine after the *Epistre* Master stopped. The focus of this study, the manuscript, Harley MS 4431, was "illustrated by the artist known as the *Cité des Dames* Master, who with his associates formed one of the largest and most prolific groups of illustrators in Paris" (Willard 138). This particular illuminator and his workshop have no recorded names, but instead are labeled by their role in the production of Christine's manuscripts: "The Master of the *Cité des dames*, as Meiss calls him, continued to work for Christine until at least 1411. With his workshop, he was responsible for the miniatures in three separate manuscripts of the *Cité des dames*" (Laidlaw "Manuscript Tradition," 238).

Christine had a staff of scribes and made use of specific illuminators to decorate her texts. Her relationship with her scribes and illuminators would be homophonic in nature, since the members of the booktrade worked with Christine to create her works. These participants thus take on a supplemental and instrumental role as they worked with her to design, arrange, and produce the work. Not only is the number of autograph manuscripts unusual, but the common features they share provide evidence that Christine worked closely with her scribes and illuminators to produce the manuscripts.

Polyphonic Relationships

Besides the members of the booktrade such as the scribes and illuminators, Christine's patron Queen Isabeau enters into the choral system for Harley MS 4431. While Queen Isabeau ostensibly had more authority than Christine, her role as patron promoted Christine as the lead voice for the work. The Queen took on a polyphonic role by at once bolstering Christine's agenda and, at the same time, promoting Christine's work in the service of her own agenda. Queen Isabeau's role as a patron for the manuscript can be divided into two roles. First, in her book Christine de Pizan's *Epistre Othea*, Sandra Hindman provides evidence that Queen Isabeau may very well have asked Christine to pull together a collection of her works. This evidence centers on a codicological examination of the manuscript. Specifically, the *Epistre* section of the manuscript has been expanded with strips of good quality vellum of a similar color to the rest of the manuscript in order to make the smaller pages fit within the larger manuscript as a whole. This fixing of the pages was done with great care. The strips adhere using a thin amount of paste, are cut to fit smoothly, and then are painted over to camouflage the repair. Hindman speculates that this repair was done at the request of the Queen, because the Queen could very well have afforded to have the entire section redone in all its elegance rather than having the

section altered as it was. Therefore, Hindman believes the Queen already owned that copy of the *Epistre* and wanted it added to the book as it was (Hindman "*Epistre* Othea," 17).

Second, Deborah McGrady, in her article "What is a Patron?" speculates that beyond the dedication iconography and text, Queen Isabeau is not really positioned as the authorizing force behind the work. Christine's illuminations throughout the manuscript show that Harley MS 4431 was not done with the Queen as the sole patron. "Apart from the portrait of Isabeau as patron in the frontispiece, five out of seventeen opening miniatures in Harley MS 4431 depict another individual accepting the book or discussing some aspect of the literary enterprise with the writer"(McGrady 203). Besides the multiple depictions of other patrons receiving different texts throughout the manuscript, the dedication prose describes the collection as a storehouse of Christine's works rather than functioning as an epideictic poem to the Queen.

> This book, which I intend to present to you, in which there is not a single thing, neither in stories nor in learned writings, that I have not, with my pure thought, adopted or fashioned…And included in this volume are many books in which I undertook to speak in many different styles because one can learn more in hearing varied material, some profound, others light (Pizan "Dedication" Lines 16-31)[32]

Rather than praise the Queen, the dedication sets Christine as the authority over the work. The Queen is also figured here as a student rather than as the master of the work. These statements appear to contradict a traditional patronage relationship where the author gives up her authority and agency to the patron in exchange for monetary and social rewards for their work (McGrady).

Other polyphonic relationships emerge as the manuscript Harley MS 4431 was transmitted across the channel to England in the fifteenth century where it passed through a number of hands:

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[32] Translation of dedication provided by Deborah McGrady in her article "What is a Patron?", 201.

Harley 4431, a presentation copy of the works of Christine dedicated to Isabeau of
Baviére, Queen of France, was taken to England by John, Duke of Bedford, in
about 1425, part of the gains of his regency. He gave it to his second wife,
Jaquette de Luxenbourg. She, when Bedford died, married Sir Richard Woodville;
their son Anthony became the owner of the book and the translator of the
Prouerbes moraulx. After Anthony Woodville's death in 1483, Louis de Bruges
obtained the book (Coldiron 129).

Christine's work was then mediated and transmitted by both William Caxton (1478) and Richard
Pynson (1526), who each printed different versions of Woodville's translation of her *Prouerbes
moraulx* (Coldiron 128). Through their appropriation of Christine's work, Woodville, Caxton
and Pynson all participated in mediating her ideas to new audiences and ultimately, in creating a
physical representation of their polyphonic interactions with her work, the new artifacts they
printed.

Building the City

The system of production for Harley MS 4431 occurred within an environment of
complex production and social interaction, Paris circa 1413. Within their two volume project,
Manuscripts and their Makers: Commercial Book Producers in Medieval Paris 1200-1500,
Richard and Mary Rouse describe the manuscript production of Paris between 1200 and 1500
(2000). During these years, manuscript production in Paris became more commercialized as the
government of France, the University of Paris, and the Catholic Church increased their demands
for skilled writing. Because of the nature of the booktrade at the time, Christine's scriptorium
and illuminators were all from the same community of book traders and her patrons were
primarily members of the royal family.

Christine's early chorus, both her patrons and the booktraders, assisted her in distributing

her message. They are connected as a chorus through their ties to her and their lives in Paris. The

book trade in Paris was a complex process involving a large number of people who had the

ability and potential to influence what manuscript was created and how it was designed. In

addition the book traders themselves functioned as a community that went beyond shared

business practices. To accommodate this rapidly growing city with its multiple writing needs,

book traders organized the production of manuscripts from the highly illuminated and ornate to

simple school texts by living together in close proximity. "These were concentrated around the

Rue de le Parcheminerie near the Rue St. Jacques, just behind the Church of St. Severin"

(Willard 30). In fact, the Rouses are able to demonstrate the "crucial role of neighbourhood and

family in the cooperative production of manuscript books" (Rouse and Rouse 15). Through

property and tax records, the Rouses deduced that book traders owned and occupied homes along

the rue Neuvre Notre-Dame and the streets adjoining the church of St-Séverin (heart of lay

commercial book production) as well as the Rue des Ecrivains (Rouse and Rouse 14). The fact

that the book traders were able to live and work in close proximity to each other indicates that

they had relationships, working or otherwise, with each other. The book traders often owned

adjoining properties and intermarried. In addition, the book trade during the Middle Ages was a

family business and most members of the household contributed to the work in some manner

(Bell and Rouse and Rouse). For example, a woman finding herself widowed would likely keep

her husband's business either for her children or turn around and marry another member of the

book trade thus keeping the family business intact.

The Rouses demonstrate that the manuscript trade in late medieval France was

commercial in two ways. First, the Rouses offer physical evidence in the form of "accounts of

payment jotted down on manuscript flyleaves…and written or sketched instructions of illumination noted in the margins; both of these indicate a division of labour indicative of craftsmen working for a contractor (Rouse and Rouse 30). According to the evidence, late medieval manuscripts were produced much more rapidly and professionally than previously, because the *libraire* would split the labor amongst many people following a model of labor practice similar to early piecemeal factory production. In addition they discuss "evidence of serial production, that is, in iconography or motifs, suggesting a commercial product; and in a single manuscript one may see the distribution of work, quire by quire, among multiple artists" (Rouse and Rouse 31). In order to facilitate the quick and efficient production of manuscripts, artisans of the manuscript trade would use iconography found in copy books which were reproducible by several artists at once. This labor structure changed the way manuscripts production, making them easier, less expensive and faster to produce. The commercial structure allowed more people access to read the material and more people to contribute to the production process.

Second, the Rouses use the physical evidence found in manuscripts to develop an idea of the process manuscripts underwent as they were composed to further illustrate the relationship between book traders. To begin with, a patron approached or sent an agent to a *libraire*, "a combination book-seller and book-contractor," who was "the organizer of commercial book-production, and as the wealthiest element in the trade" (Rouse and Rouse 14). The *libraire* coordinated the production of the manuscript by bringing together the parchmenters to acquire the parchment, the scribes to rule and write, and the illuminators to paint the images (Rouse and Rouse 14). "The growing importance of the University of Paris, which flourished under the king's special patronage, had brought into being a whole world of copyists, illuminators, binders,

booksellers" (Willard 30). In this type of environment it means further evidence that Pizan knew the people she was working with and interacted with them regularly. These people most likely influenced her ideas and work as much as she did theirs.

The book trade members who helped Pizan design and distribute her manuscripts function as a constituency of the larger book trade community. Their purpose is to facilitate the production, use, and circulation of Pizan's rhetoric to an audience familiar with manuscript use, so the manuscript is the major tangible outcome of the chorus system. Christine had to navigate this system in order to be successful, but she also needed the support of members of the system to flourish as well. Some bibliophiles, notably the royal princes, could afford to have books copied for them by direct order, making individual arrangements with copyists and artists; some had books copied for them by regular members of their households such as secretaries, if they did not copy them themselves; but booksellers also existed who bought the necessary materials and commissioned scribes and artists to create books for some specific clientele or for a general market that a given bookseller expected to be able to find (Willard 45).

It would be fair to speculate that the booktraders came together to work with this unique woman in order to promote her work, because they viewed her as a novelty, as a member of their community, and for financial gains as Christine grew more influential. In this speculative scenario, they may have chosen to represent a woman who had tentative ties to their community prior to her fame as an author. Because of her father and husband, Christine was possibly educated as a scribe herself (Willard). The book traders of Paris who worked directly with Christine may have done so in part because of her familiarity with their roles as artisans. In an often quoted section of Christine's *Cite des Dames*, Christine mentions her connections to the book trade community by praising a particular illuminator, Anastasia who worked in Paris (Pizan

City of Ladies, 85). Lastly, the book traders must have wanted to work with Christine for financial gain, since they are working with her through professional relationships. They must have felt they would be appropriately compensated for working with her since they continued to do so throughout her career.

Besides the booktraders, Christine's patrons entered into the chorus system to support her as well. In her semi-autobiographical work, *L'vision*, Christine states quite plainly that she believes her patrons have come together to support her solely because of the novelty of a woman writer. "I presented them as novelties, small and feeble though they were, from my books on various subjects, which by their grace, as kind and gentle princes, they willingly saw and joyfully received them and more, I think, for the novelty of a woman who could write (since that had not occurred for quite some time) than for any worth there might be therein" (Pizan *Vision,* 106). As Christine describes it, she prepared her texts and manuscripts for an audience of nobility and royalty as "novelties" and in turn, they supported her efforts because of the "novelty of a woman who could write." Despite her novelty, as Sandra Hindman describes in her book Christine de Pizan's "*Epistre Othea'*, "this steady patronage by persons in the royal circle indicates that she was taken seriously as a writer" (Hindman 1986, 12). In other words, the nobles who acted as her patrons shared common ties with each other as French royals with interest in supporting the arts, and their desire to support such a novel woman writer. While they found her interesting because of her unusual activities, they also took her seriously as a writer by continuously supporting her throughout her long career.

In the environment of manuscript production for Harley MS 4431, Queen Isabeau serves as the impetus for the construction of the manuscript and its production by apparently requesting a collection of Pizan's already existing works. Since these works already existed and parts of the

manuscript may have been already bound as manuscripts which had to be rebound into the new manuscript structure, the agency and authority behind the work comes from a homophonic relationship between the Queen and Christine. "For although Isabeau may figure as judge of the anthology, she cannot claim to be the inspiration, the subject, or the original recipient of the works found in the collection" (McGrady 196).The Queen lends Christine more authority by recognizing her as an author and speaker worth paying, and preserving her work. But Christine demonstrates her own authority as a speaker, through continual reminders that her work has been held up by other noteworthy patrons as a source of authority. In this type of situation, Queen Isabeau has a civic agenda in so far that she wants to build her own social authority by acting as a beloved patron of the arts. She chooses to be part of the rhetorical chorus for this reason. Yet, this demonstrates that the reasons for engaging in these choral relationships is not straightforward since the tenuous connection between herself and Christine is based on economic motivations as well as social power.

Thus, choral identity occurs as an outcome of the choral system. Choral identity occurs in classical Greek drama when the chorus appears on stage. From the beginning the classic Greek chorus has shared qualities that unite them and provide them with the authority to speak. In the case of rhetorical choral model, however, the chorus does not come together through shared ties in the same way. The rhetorical chorus is only viewed as an ensemble after they have come together not before. In reality Christine's patron, Queen Isabeau, was not likely to directly encounter the booktraders who worked with Christine. Her patron and the booktraders are only connected because of their roles in the production and use of Christine's manuscript, a connection contemporary scholars can see from their positionality within history. These ties emerge not only through Christine, but also through the economic system of booktrading

occurring in Paris. These shared environmental, social, political, and economic factors only really connect Queen Isabeau to Christine's scribes and illuminators because of the manuscript and their actions as members of the chorus. Thus, after the chorus has come together to produce, they begin to share not only in the message, but in a common choral identity. The chorus share in commonalities shaped by shared social authority, technical skills, social community, and cultural concerns based on the other social system they belong to. Contemporary scholars are then able to attribute authority to the chorus based on commonalities after the booktraders and patrons have come together to create and use the manuscript, promoting Christine's message and revealing her social significance by the sheer number of people willing to bear witness to her efforts. For example, while Queen Isabeau has her own authority as queen, she enhances this social power by acting as a patron of the arts and in sponsoring a unique writer like Christine. Christine's connections to the royal family then reinforce her authority to speak and all of these connections are made possible by Christine's scribes and illuminators who actually facilitate the production of the manuscript. Whereas each contributor would have less authority on some level separately, they gain in their authority and agency to speak because of their actions together.

Rituals, Chorus and Authority

Besides the emergence of a choral identity, the chorus is able to impact the environment in which it occurs by using ritualized gestures to convey meaning. The illuminators and their illuminations for Harley MS 4431 provide a good example of how the rhetorical chorus acts as mediators of rhetoric through the use of these ritualized gestures. These illuminators intercede by engaging in ritualized performances through their artistry and its accompanying iconography. Iconography serves as "the branch of art history concerned with the themes in the visual arts and their deeper meanings or content" (Straten 3). In other words, images carry with them symbolic

and repeated meanings, which are known to audiences and emerge across media and artifact boundaries. "Historians know that images, as much as sentences and paragraphs, are texts to be read" and "an image can never be a 'simple record' of the artist's world" (Taylor and Smith 16). So the images found within Harley MS 4431 are meant to be read, to be interpreted, and to contribute to the making of meaning both within the artifact and beyond.

The manuscript Harley MS 4431 was illuminated first and foremost by the most prolific contributing illuminator to Pizan's collective works, the *Cite des Dames* Master who "undertook the majority of the illustrations, including the frontispiece and most of the pictures in the *Epistre Othea*, the *Chemin*, the *Duc des vrays amans*, and the *Cite des Dames"* (Hindman "Composition," 96*).* The second, the Bedford Trend Master "intervened to paint several lesser frontispieces, such as those in the *Complainte amoreuse*, the *Livre de la pastoure*, and the Proverbs moraulx" (Hindman "Composition," 96). Between these two illuminators and their workshops, Harley MS 4431 is beautifully and ornately illuminated throughout. Their work reveals the development of an iconography particular to Christine's manuscripts.

A study of ritualized gesture and authority requires an examination of the illuminators' process and their authority over how these icons get created. Within the process of manuscript production, the illuminator entered into the space last. Often the manuscript had already been given its design, so the illuminator filled their paintings into the empty spaces designated for illuminations. Illuminators could be told what to paint through written directions added to the margins of the manuscript to be cut off when the manuscript was bound, written programmes describing what they should do, or visual instructions in the form of rough drawings done to indicate what and where they should paint (Alexander 53). In the case of Christine's illuminators, it is likely given her repeated relationships with them, that she directed what should

be painted and where. However, neither the relationship between Pizan and her scribes nor the process of illuminating a manuscript justify disregarding the illuminators' own authority in making choices about the iconography they created.

First, "images, too, are constructions, whether conscious or not, of the artists who made them; and in turn they may be construct*ors* of the worlds they profess to record" (Taylor and Smith 16). The *Cite des Dames* Master had a particular style of painting which differentiated him from other painters: "his style is characterized by well-proportioned figures rendered in bright primary colours with many realistic details and set within beautifully composed landscape or architectural environments" (Hindman "Composition," 96). Likewise, the Bedford Trend Master has a distinctive style as well; "this artist employed somewhat more mannered figures with elongated proportions and diminutive features" (Hindman "Composition," 96). Both illuminators are distinguishable from one another. They have an ability and artistry which is separate from the directions being given to them by someone who does not know how to paint. While they may have to appease Pizan's requirements, they are still artists who construct their iconography based on their abilities and experiences with images.

Second, illuminators who were prolific like Pizan's *Cite des Dames* illuminator, had pattern books that they created in order to show a potential client what they were capable of doing as well as being able to consistently render paintings in multiple copies of a particular text (Alexander 1992). "As a way of speeding up the design and painting process, artists often imitated and adapted earlier visual examples, or made use of stock images that could be slightly changed to suit their new context" (Croenen 11). These pattern books would explain why the *Cité des Dames* painter consistently produced very similar paintings within the *Cité des Dames* manuscripts he illuminated. He may not have needed Pizan to tell him what to paint for each

manuscript, since he would have had a pattern of what to depict, which he followed fairly

consistently throughout the manuscripts. In order to discuss how the iconography was developed

and what symbolic messages were conveyed through the ritualized depictions, I turn to two

different types of iconography created: the dedication image and the images of Christine de

Pizan.

First, the opening dedication image of Harley MS 4431 occupies half a page, a larger

miniature than most in the manuscript. This image shows a relatively familiar iconographic scene

found especially in later medieval manuscripts of the author presenting her work to her patron. In

this case, Queen Isabeau is depicted receiving a bound book from Christine de Pizan.

Figure 5 Dedication to the Queen, miniature from London, British Library, Harley MS 4431.

In this miniature, the figure of Christine, the author, kneels before the Queen and her assembled

ladies-in-waiting as she presents the manuscript. This large miniature is decorated with an ornate

foliated and colorful border which surrounds both image and text. The scene is the Queen's

bedroom, a common location for a royal family member to receive guests. This room contains a

fancy red and gold bed and beautiful blue and gold *fleur de lis* wall coverings, a symbol of

French royalty, decorate the walls. The Queen sits to the left of the painting and is dressed in

flowing garnet and gold robes with ermine sleeves and a fancy headdress. Surrounding the Queen are six of her ladies-in-waiting. Before the ladies who act as witnesses to the ritual, Christine is shown wearing iconic clothes that viewers of her many manuscripts would recognize as her signature wear. She wears a white headdress and a blue gown with square cut sleeves. Lastly, the image contains two white dogs, which are believed to have been the Queen's favorite pets.

This illumination appears at first to follow the iconography of author dedication images found in a number of medieval manuscripts. This iconography serves as ritualized imagery designed to depict the ceremony of gift giving which would occur when an author presented his completed manuscript to a patron for payment and praise. This repeated imagery often showed the author, usually male, kneeling before his patron. The male author was generally generic in depiction with little or no clues as to his identity expect for his role in the ritualized image (Buettner 78). The patron is also drawn fairly generically but is usually painted larger and placed higher than the author in the image, a clear visual indication of the patron's authority over the writer. The patron also has some sort of symbol which denotes his sovereignty, such as a crown or scepter. This image performs as a visual and repeated ritual identifying and honoring the patron. One famous example is the depiction of Hoccleve presenting his manuscript to Prince Henry in Arundel MS 38.[33]

Through the opening dedication of Harley MS 4431, the manuscript's illuminators engage in the ritualized visual performance of honoring the patronage and identifying the author. However, the illuminators do more than just reify the already existing ritual. They make two crucial changes which add new symbolic meanings to the image and what it represents for Pizan's authority as speaker: "the dedication and several incipit miniatures in the Harley

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[33] See Appendix E

compilation disclose how the author and her bookmakers manipulate conventional patronage topoi and iconography to enhance the author's identity" (McGrady 196). First, the dedication image depicts a woman author, giving the manuscript to a woman patron surrounded by women. This symbolism of a woman writing for a woman about women is virtually unheard of in medieval manuscripts, where it is difficult to even find images of women writing (Smith and Taylor 1997). Second, the dedication is remarkably historically accurate. While the typical author dedication images have little to no setting indicators, the image in Harley MS 4431 reflects a more natural and historical setting for the figures. The Queen while seated above Christine is not demonstrably larger. Her advanced social status is rendered by her clothes and room rather than size. The Queen is surrounded by her ladies in waiting all dressed in styles appropriate to her household. "Christine de Pisan offers her work to Isabel of Bavaria, Queen of France, observed by ladies-in waiting dressed in the Burgundian manner with very wide and flowing sleeves for their costumes" (Gathercole 13). The Queen is painted surrounded by furnishings described in the Queen's household reports, two dogs in the scene are her favorite animals, and the women with her are dressed just like the historical descriptions of her attendants (Hindman "Iconograph," 103). This depiction of the queen sets up an important relationship between the dedication text and the rest of the manuscript. Thus, the chorus subtly alters pre-existing ritualized conventions in order to create new rituals designed to help the chorus mediate the rhetorical message to the lead speaker's audience.

Besides the dedication image, Harley MS 4431 has symbolic imagery throughout, which helps to mediate specific message to the audience. As Leslie Smith in *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence* discusses, the depiction of the author becomes more common throughout the later middle ages; however, this prevalence tends to be more limited when it

comes to women authors. However, the illuminators of Christine's manuscript broke with tradition by depicting her with identifiable markers; "the blue dress and the cotehardie (a simple headdress and wimple worn by the upper class) donned by this woman duplicate the costume of the easily identifiable author-figure in the only two miniatures preceding it, the frontispiece and the miniature introducing the Cent ballades" (McGrady 207).

Not only is the depiction of a woman writer a deviation from traditional author iconography, the image of Christine also carries meaning through repetition. Typically a ritual comprises of repeated actions which hold symbolic meaning for the actor and the audience; "regardless of the occasion, ritual always provides continuity through repetition and the prescribed rhythm of the ritual process, which follows its own immutable timetable" (Henrichs 69). Christine appears repeatedly in other dedication images throughout Harley MS 4431, in which Christine presents different sections of her manuscript to various patrons. In addition, Christine appears multiple times across the manuscript starting first with the dedication image and continuing through the *City of Ladies* section. The manuscript itself contains at least twenty images of Christine presenting her work or acting in an authoritative role as someone who can educate and guide the reader and the noble personages depicted in both the texts and images.
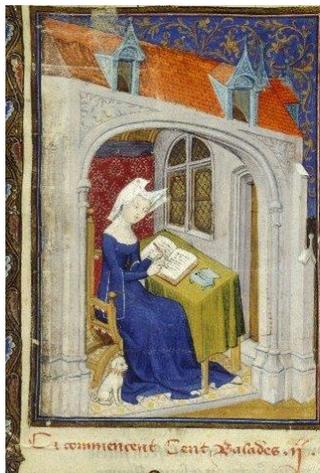
Figure 6 Christine in her Study miniature from London, British Library, Harley MS
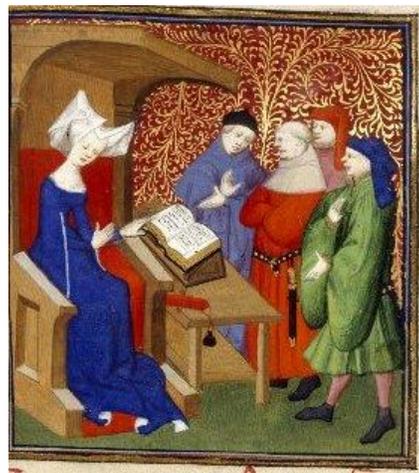
Figure 7 Christine teaching men miniature from London, British Library, Harley MS

These repeated iconographical images of Christine repeat and reinforce Christine's role as writer, her authority as speaker, and her position as teacher repeated throughout Harley MS 4431. "Christine in the familiar milieu of her study, surrounded by her books" and "it is easy to understand her as author, and, indeed, the left scene in the miniature is a variation on the standard author portrait, the conventions it borrows" (Hindman "With Ink and Morter," 465). By repeating the image of Christine with such accuracy and consistency, the illuminators take part in revealing Christine's authority through these depictions and while she may have told them to do this, they are able to mediate her message on to her audience through their skill. "Christine's authority is depicted repeatedly in the sumptuous miniatures placed throughout the book" (Coldiron 131). These repeated depictions of Christine create a consistency throughout the manuscript. The image also creates connections between the different depictions of Christine which reinforce her role as author and her authority over the work.

Figure 8 Christine presenting her book to Louis of Orleans. L'Epistre Othea , Paris BN MS fr. 848, f1r.
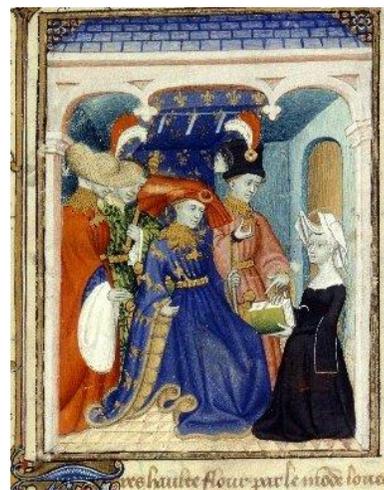
Figure 9 Christine de Pizan presenting her book to Louis of Orleans. L'Epître d'Othéa from London, British Library, Harley MS 4431. © British Library Board. All rights reserved, f95r. (1413-4).

This repetition of symbolic meaning occurs not only in Harley MS 4431, but also in a number of other autograph manuscripts. For example, the images above both depict the same imagery of Pizan presenting her *Epistre* text to the Duke of Berry though both illuminations come from different manuscripts. The ritualized performance here is the use of iconography to repeat and reinforce messages about women and authorship. The image of Pizan is replicated throughout her manuscripts showing her studying, writing, offering her book to patrons, educating men, educating her son, building the city of ladies; all of these repeated images add new symbolism to her image denoting her as mother, author, learner, and educator for her audience.

In later printed versions of Pizan's works, the repeated images of her, which originally serve to reinforce her authority are also used to diminish it. For example in the manuscript, MS Royal 15 E VI, a version of Christine de Pizan's *Faits d'armes* has an unusual miniature choice that alters the meaning of the text and constrains Pizan's authority. According to Nancy Warren's "The Sword and the Cloister: Joan of Arc, Margaret of Anjou, and Christine de Pizan in England, 1445-1540", the *Faits* opens with a miniature of "Chrisitne conferring with Minerva" (64). This scene metaphorically positions Pizan next to Minerva and thus symbolizes Pizan's authority to speak on military matters. In MS Royal 15 E VI, the miniature of Christine and Minerva is replaced by "a depiction of Talbot [John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury] receiving the sword of marshal of France. The male marshal displaces the martial women" (Warren 64). The change in imagery serves to position the Talbot as the authority over the work rather than Pizan. In his 1521 *The Boke of the Cyte of Ladyes* Henry Pepwell depicts Christine in a woodcarving in which "she is dressed in traditional widow's garb" (Warren 82). According to

Warren, this imagery of Christine in widow's garb resembles how other religious women were depicted in Pepwell's prints (82). In her article "The Reconstruction of an Author in Print," Cynthia J. Brown points to another example of Christine repeated ritualized iconography being disrupted by the French publisher Antoine Vérard in his 1488 edition of Pizan's *Livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie*. The printed manuscript Vienna, ÖNB, Inc.3.D.19 contains a miniature which is divided into two frames (220-2). Christine appears "in the upper register, not, however, as an author, seated at her desk or dedicating her work to a patron" instead she is "dressed in a nun's habit" and "lies in bed conversing with the Three Virtues at her side" (Brown 222). "In the lower register, however, the publisher's dedication is visually rendered: a kneeling Vérard has assumed an authorial pose as he presents his edition of the *Trésor* to the enthroned French queen" (Brown 222). Rather than reinforcing Pizan's role as narrator and character in the text, the image now alters her status to that of protagonist but a protagonist who is confined into a nunnery. While many medieval women writers were in fact nuns, the act of imposing a nun habit on a woman writer who is not serves to confine the woman and limit her experiential authority.

So the illuminators as members of the rhetorical chorus respond to the main events through ritual and performance in order to speak from a position outside the main events. In this case, they demonstrate Pizan's authority to speak artistically as well as textually. "A choral performance is an action, a response to a significant event and in some way integral to that event" (H. Bacon 18). The ritualized performances enacted in the images indicate that the illuminators perform a role as mediators between Pizan and her audience and their role is captured in the manuscript. With skill and repeated experience, Christine's illuminators worked with Christine over successive manuscripts and in doing so, created an iconography which an audience would be familiar with from other medieval examples. They also created a consistent

iconography across the Christine's corpus which reinforced her authority as speaker and bolstered the rhetorical messages of her text. Through these activities, the illuminators appear to be witnessing her role as speaker, responding to her, and judging her significance through their participation.

The authority and agency of the illuminators could be dismissed because they followed Christine's directions and because they used the medieval practice of repeating images. However, this belief adheres to a more modern view point of artistry and originality (Hindman 1986). The illuminators needed a great deal of skill and experience to render even the repeated images or to follow what Christine asked. Throughout most of her semi-autobiographical works, Pizan makes no mention of having any experience or skill in painting. Hindman and others have made compelling arguments that Christine dictated the way the images would look and how they would interact with her text, but what if she didn't? Is it really significant? Through rhetorical chorus, the answer is no. With or without her instructions, the illuminator establishes Christine as the main speaker, the lead voice, even over that of her patron through how she is depicted. In this way, his agenda is clearly to reveal to an audience that Christine's voice has been judged important. He bears witness to her arguments. The illuminator is a witness her authority as a speaker through these illuminations that he creates.

Witnessing the Speaker and her Message

A chorus speaks, dances, and sings from their position on the stage. This position most often is on the margins of the main action, but at the same time, the chorus remains always present. From its position on the margins of the action, the chorus can observe the actions which occur, respond to them, and comment on them. A choral model for rhetoric positions the ensemble between the audience and the artifact. They speak from this in-between, coming-into-

being space between the artifact and reader. From this position, the chorus is able to act as witnesses for Pizan's authority, her message, and mediate both to her audience. To bear witness is to not just observe something which has occurred but to testify about it: "a 'spectacle,' by which I mean simply a public gathering of people who have come to witness some event and are self-consciously present to each other as well as to whatever it is that has brought them together" (Halloran 5). In his article, "Text and Experience in a Historical Pageant," Michael Halleron states, "in gathering to witness a spectacle, I become part of it" (6). The chorus bears witness to the events not only by viewing them, but by remembering them, sharing them, and judging them. They engage in discursive practices in order to arbitrate, create, and maintain power structures. All this actions constitute a story, a narrative, of how people perceive their roles and how they perform those roles. The chorus observes what they see as the origin event, the why and how of Christine's work. In the case of Harley MS 4431, the origin story begins with a woman choosing to use her ability to read and write to begin conveying her emotional state through poetry. "To declare the author dead just when research was beginning to attribute to women seems to many yet another means of obscuring women's participation in culture" (Finke 17). Through her efforts she acquired an audience of wealthy royal patrons. As she gained fame as an author, she branched out into political and social prose texts. All along her development as a writer, skilled members of the book trade contributed to the production of her manuscripts, patrons paid for the privilege of owning her works, and audiences acknowledged her roles as speaker even as book publishers removed her name, image, and authority.

While Christine was readily accepted by many of her contemporaries and is now accepted by scholars, her authority as a speaker was diminished after her death by translators of her work. In England during the sixteeth century, Pizan's work was misattributed to other writers

such as Chaucer. When her work was correctly acknowledged, her depiction as a speaker was frequently altered. She was described as a nun, a confined woman, in order to limit her authority over her words. Besides confining her body, these descriptions also position her as a patron of the work rather than the composer or they accuse her of plundering the works of others (men) to get her ideas.

Caxton's, Pynson's, and Christine de Pizan's versions of her *Prouerbes Moraulx* have been compared and contrasted by A.E.B Coldiron in her article "Taking Advice from a Frenchwoman." The complexity of transmitting Pizan's works into English has also been taken up by Dhira B. Mahoney's "Middle English Regenderings of Christine de Pizan" (1996), Laurie Finke's "The Politics of the Canon: Christine de Pizan and the Fifteenth-Century Chaucerians" (2007), Cythina Brown's "The Reconstruction of an Author in Print: Christine de Pizan in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries" (1998) and Nancy Bradley Warren's *Women of God and Arms* (2005). These comparative studies reveal that the differences between the versions can tell us quite a bit about the publishers' agendas as they produced new print versions of the text for different audiences than those anticipated by Pizan. As Coldiron notes, Caxton, while preserving some aspects of Christine's original text, removes an important miniature associated with the poem (Harley MS 4431, 259v), which served to reinforce her authority as speaker for the text (Coldiron 134). In this miniature, Christine sits at a table on which sits an open book, while four men stand before her. This type of repeated imagery of Christine acting as learned scholar who offers knowledge to others or of Christine acting as author offering her workings to her patrons occurs throughout Harley MS 4431. By removing the miniature in his printed version, Caxton effaces a small part of Christine's established authority. However, Caxton does completely remove her authority. Besides keeping her name in the title, Caxton provides a description of

Christine as author in his colophon: "Of these sayynges Cristyne was aucteuresse" (Coldiron 136). Essentially, Caxton's main purpose appears to not be necessarily promoting Christine as author though he clearly acknowledges her as such, but to promote her message and ideas as being worthy of being "englished." Coldiron expands on this point by explaining that "one of the verbs most commonly used in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to describe the act of translation [is] 'to english'" (139). Through his actions Caxton engages in a polyphonic relationship with Pizan. He has entered into the production and circulation of her work in a time and space away from her. He appears to be both agreeing with her and disagreeing her as he navigates his own rhetorical choices in how he wants to present the material to his own audience. This change in agenda manifests in a physical representation of his choices, his own printed version of the work, which appears in a different medium than Christine's manuscript and has patently different rhetorical gestures.

In 1526 Richard Pynson named his version of the poem "Morall Prouerbes of Christyne," but included the work in his anthology of Chaucer's work called *The Boke of Fame*. Ostensibly Pynson collected a number of texts some of which are Chaucer's and others like Christine's poem were not, but he united the works based on the theme of fame and claimed Chaucer as the author of them all. Rather than view this polyphonic relationship as evidence that Pynson was seeking to completely undermine Christine, Coldiron (2006) and Finke (2007) both argue that Pynson was equating Christine with Chaucer's work and thus claimed her worthy of being in the Chaucerian tradition. Coldiron demonstrates that in Pynson's epilogue to the House of Fame Pynson describes what he views as "Chaucerian," a description she boils down to "pithy, wise, subtle, and densely packed with value, it means the best of *English* poetry in particular" (146-7). Pynson does however remove Caxton's colophon identifying and praising the author, Christine

(Coldiron 2006, 152). And Pynson is the not the first to incorporate Pizan as a Chaucerian. Thomas Hoccleve wrote "Letter to Cupid" in 1402 which was a "free adaptation of Christine's *Epistre au dieu d'Amours*" (Finke 24). According to Coldiron, Finke, and Warren this duality of acceptance and effacement may very well indicate the agenda of the fifteenth-century translators and publishers of Christine's work for producing the work. "With the exception of Hoccleve's 'Letter of Cupid,' all fifteenth-century translations of Christine's writings were done by men whose interests appears to have been primarily in her military, political, and didactic works" (Finke 27). These different versions illustrate a type of polyphonic relationship more similar to the Gay Girl in Damascus scenario. Caxton and Pynson are promoting a message of political and civic behaviors in order to encourage an English notion of nationality and rule. They are not seeking to promote a woman in a place of power or authority unnecessarily since that adds to the anxiety about a woman's role in the terms of power and governance, a crucial issue during this era since both France and England were concerned with questions about a woman's place to rule or to act as regent or to factor in determining in lines of succession (Warren).

In response to these early representations of her as a speaker, modern scholars frequently emphasize her authority over her words and manuscripts as well as her authority over their transmission. In her case, the chorus model offers an opportunity to see who her early chorus was and how they came together and interacted as a chorus. The model also reveals how her chorus contributed to the invention of rhetoric and how their early acceptance of her authority makes it possible to 'recover' her today. The preface to *The City of Scholars: New Approaches to Christine de Pizan* states "over the past two decades, no medieval author has enjoyed such a marked 'revival of interest in her work' as Christine de Pizan" (Zimmerman and De Rentiis v). A testament to this interest are the hundreds of articles printed about her works and role as a

medieval author as well as multiple edited collections such as *Christine de Pizan: A Case Book* (2003)*, Christine de Pizan and the Categories of Difference* (1998), *Healing the body politic: the political thought of Christine de Pizan* (2005) and *Christine de Pizan 2000* (2000). Prominent feminist medieval scholars have written about her work such as *Christine de Pizan and the Moral Defence of Women* (Rosalind Brown-Grant 2003), and the *Allegory of Female Authority* (Maureen Quilligan 1991). Most of her famous texts have been translated and edited for the use of scholars (Earl Jeffrey Richards, Martha Breckenridge, Glenda McLeod). This prolific revival and interest in Pizan's work has been attributed to "renewed interest in the Late Middle Ages" and an increase in feminist scholarship (Zimmerman and De Rentiis v). This extensive work means that Christine de Pizan has been recovered by literary and rhetorical scholars alike. Unlike many of her contemporaries (other medieval women writers), Christine de Pizan has been acknowledged by modern scholars to have significant authority and agency over her work. James Laidlaw, Charity Willard, and Sandra Hindman frequently refer to her as a professional writer— one who lives on the income produced by her writing—and as a publisher—one who oversees the construction of her work. She has been accepted as an authority over her work. Her general acceptance is likely due to the fact that she adheres to the mythos of the individual speaker, who can be attributed sole authority over her work. Through her relationships with her scribes and illuminators as well as their actions in distributing her ideas, Pizan can be clearly designated as the speaker, the person whose message is being responded to by her chorus (members of the Paris book trade and her patron). Because of the evidence that Christine had a uniquely hands-on role over the production and transmission of her manuscripts and work, Christine's relationship with her chorus appears to be more traditionally collaborative than the relationships seen in Geoffrey Chaucer's manuscripts.

An application of the choral model reveals that many of the participants who operate in the manuscript matrix, the coming-into-being space between the artifact and the audience take on the roles of witnesses. This witnessing is a specific attribute of a chorus, who frequently observes and responds from its position on the margins of the main events. "They are partially responsible for what I call the 'romance of Chaucer,' the belief that readers can have unmediated access to the poet's words and by extension to the poet himself, unspoiled by the 'contamination' of later scribes, anthologizers, popularizers, and editors" (Finke 20). The chorus witness Christine de Pizan's role as speaker, they witness the building of her authority and reputation as a speaker, and they witness how Pizan's message gets taken up by the audience. The act of witnessing is important for analyzing Pizan because it provides the means to measure the extent of Pizan's authority.

So the illuminators as members of the rhetorical chorus respond to the main events through ritual and performance in order to speak from a position outside the main events. In this case, they demonstrate Pizan's authority to speak artistically as well as textually. "A choral performance is an action, a response to a significant event and in some way integral to that event" (F. Bacon 18). The ritualized performances enacted in the images indicate that the illuminators perform a role as mediators between Pizan and her audience and their role is captured in the manuscript. With skill and repeated experience, Christine's illuminators worked with Christine over successive manuscripts and in doing so, created an iconography which an audience would be familiar with from other medieval examples. They also created a consistent iconography across the Christine's corpus which reinforced her authority as speaker and bolstered the rhetorical messages of her text. Through these activities, the illuminators appear to

be witnessing her role as speaker, responding to her, and judging her significance through their participation.

Application of the chorus model results in specific repeatable outcomes. At the same time, the model does not cause us to lose sight of the woman, her authority and agency when she interacts with other social agents. Nor does the model cause us to ignore the impact of others, which means we can continue to acknowledge the socialness of rhetorical invention. This position on 'recovery' limits the number of women speakers who might be recoverable if sovereignty over her work is not required to identify, especially this condition of sovereignty does not accurately represent most rhetorical situations. The position also makes the arguments for Pizan's inclusion into the rhetorical canon reductive. The chorus model offers a new framework for identifying the participants, analyzing their interactions, and exploring the impact of the chorus on the rhetorical context. Rather than continue the focus on Pizan as the sole authority over the text, an application of the choral model illuminates how her authority as a speaker was attributed and promoted even in the face of ambiguous reception, misogyny and effacement. The choral model also provides the means to consider how rhetoric comes to be invented through social interactions across time rather than limited to the social interactions surrounding the main speaker.

Case Study 2: Arianna Huffington and the Huffington Post

Like Jimmy Wales, Arianna Huffington has authority over her website and like Christine de Pizan, Arianna works in close proximity to the many people involved in the creation and use of the site. These relationships can be described as collaborative in nature; however, among all the people who visit and use the site, there exist a group of people who mediate between

Arianna's rhetorical agenda for the website and a more general audience. This chorus maintains

Arianna's position as the lead speaker; "Dr. Rost was within his rights to criticize *The Huffington*

Post on *The Huffington Post*, but **it's still Arianna's space**"—my emphasis (Aspan 2013)[34].

However, the Dauo and Boyce lawsuit requesting financial compensation for their role in the

invention of the site raises a couple of significant questions: to what extent do members of the

chorus mediate the speaker's message throughout the Web 2.0 environment? An application of

the chorus model on the first *Huffington Post* online edition facilitates the mapping of responses

by participants and offers the means for potentially identifying how collaborative actions

distribute messages across environments.

The Stage

   The Huffington Post and its messages are distributed widely by other users online within

the environment of Web 2.0. Application of the choral model takes this environment into

account, since the transmission of ideas across this environment maximizes the chorus' ability to

intervene. Web 2.0 is a platform which allows for complex interactivity between the websites

and the audiences using those sites. This platform created an environment rich with unique

genres of writing such as blogging and wikis, so audiences must learn these new forms of

communication in order to both navigate and create them (Wolff 219). The platform is also

marked by complex uses of symbolism;

> Each Web 2.0 application (domain, ecology) challenges users in a similar way by
>
> asking them to learn new terms, comprehend new symbols, engage with new
>
> writing spaces, recognizing relationships among multiple applications, and
>
> transfer knowledge from one application to the next—all of which contribute to

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[34] quote from Jeff Jarvis who runs the blog BuzzMachine.com on Dr. Peter Rost, a former Pfizer executive who wrote on the *Post*, but who outed a *Huffington Post* writer for making sarcastic comments to his Rost's postings.

the interactive complexities of what it means to write in this new environment

(Wolff 219).

Communication in the Web 2.0 environment is made possible through a user's ability to navigate the space. Like the medieval manuscript, the *Huffington Post* and its transmission across the web constitute in-between spaces in which the chorus operates. "Web 2.0 interactivity and information sharing; however, requires users to conceive constantly of what is not there, in front of them, on their screen, at that time" (Wolff 222). The user must have knowledge of the design on the space, how to move from one item to the next, how to interpret the symbols being used, and how to arrange the space for the individual's own purposes. Because of this ability to shape the space through navigation, an audience member can more easily become a chorus member who produces, designs, and uses a speaker's message for his or her own purpose.

This distribution is further privileged through the *Huffington Post'*s use of Google protocols. Sites like Wikipedia and the *Huffington Post* are able to be distributed more widely and readily because they cater to the algorithms Google uses to determine which sites get precedence on their search engines. Although, later members of the chorus made the *HuffPo* more accessible to an audience by making *Huffington Post* stories appear on Google, since "Ms. Huffington's editors are especially adept at optimizing the site for search engine results, so that in a Google search, a Huffington Post summary of a Washington Post or a CNN.com report may appear ahead of the original article. Ms. Huffington defends the practices as falling under the fair use doctrine" (Stelter 2009). Being privileged by Google means a wider audience, since any search for news or information will result in either the *Huffington Post* or Wikipedia as the first result of any search.

This complicated environment makes it difficult to study how rhetoric gets invented by multiple people who are not necessarily working together. The choral model has the potential to make it possible to map the interactions. Because the *HuffPo* occurs within a digital space, the site is very fluid and dynamic, so I focus my analysis on the first day of publication, May 9, 2005, in order to create boundaries on who the rhetorical chorus is and why they come together to affect the creation of rhetoric (See Appendix D).

The Players in Action

Arianna Huffington has become one of the most influential women in American media in the last few years, because of her establishment of the news blog, *The Huffington Post*. Because of her role in creating the *Huffington Post*, Arianna Huffington was listed as the 12th most influential woman in media on Forbes 2009 list and has been listed as number 52 on Forbes 2014 list of the World's Most Powerful Women. In 2005, the *Huffington Post* began as a blog designed to allow celebrity bloggers to participate in ongoing conversation about politics, entertainment, and other news. "And The Huff Post, as it's known, has come to symbolize a certain combination of entrepreneur and online commentator, creating a brand and a business around Ms. Huffington" (Selter 2008). Prior to her emergence as a media titan, Arianna was influential and active in politics first as a conservative, who worked on getting her husband, Michael Huffington into the Senate. Sometime after their 1997 divorce, Arianna switched from the conservative party to the liberal. Eventually, Arianna decided to run as a candidate for California governor against Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2003. Though she lost, Arianna remained active in the Democratic party and was one of many concerned by the losses during the 2004 presidential election cycle. In response, Arianna joined with her business partner, Kenneth Lerer, to work with various Democratic consultants and new media specialists to come up with a plan

to create a space dedicated to promoting news from a liberal perspective. The *Huffington Post* started as a blog where members contributed as news aggregators bringing together news items the members found interesting. Over time, the blog was transformed and moved away from a specifically aggregate form so that it would include original news items and interviews as well as continue with the blog and commentator community structure. When AOL bought *The Huffington Post* in February 2011, Huffington "took control of all of AOL's editorial content as president and editor in chief of a newly created Huffington Post Media Group. The arrangement gave her oversight not only of AOL's national, local and financial news operations, but also of the company's other media enterprises like MapQuest and Moviefone" (Peters 2011).

When Arianna Huffington worked to create the *Huffington Post*, she entered into a system of digital communication in order to convey her rhetorical message online. This system is identifiable through the means by which her chorus came together. After the Democratic losses during the 2004 Presidential election, Huffington and her future business partner, Ken Lerer began discussing the fact that the liberal policies were not making use of contemporary media in the best possible manner. To compensate for the problem, Huffington gathered a large group of individuals, political and celebrities, at her Brentwood Mansion on December 3, 2004. At this important meeting, it was decided that Lerer would help Huffington fund a new project: a digital media site to provide a liberal perspective on the news.

In April 7, 2004 article "A Mash Note to the Blogosphere," Arianna Huffington writes "I've got a confession to make. I have a big-time crush." Arianna exudes enthusiasm for what she sees as the wave of the future when it comes to news reporting. She writes "Although I've one recently stuck my toe in the fast-moving blogstream, I've been a fan—and an advocate— ever since bloggers took the Trent Lott/Strom Thurmond story, ran with it, and helped turn the

smug Senate majority leader into the penitent former Senate majority leader" (Huffington 2004).

Arianna expresses her excitement in the continuing changes bloggers are able to perpetrate

because they are not confined by the same rules and restrictions as traditional print journalism[35].

This article sets the stage for Huffington's agenda in regards to the construction of what would

eventually become the *Huffington Post*. She proposes that bloggers are now the sources of news,

because they chose what is important and thus, news becomes shaped by people who care about

the situation or as she phrases it "when bloggers decide that something matters, they chomp

down hard and refuse to let go" (Huffington "A Mash Note"). The bloggers agitate for some

news story or other to be taken up and eventually other news organizations pick up the

information. This argument describes the basic agenda behind the early functions of the

Huffington Post as a news aggregator.

Arianna wanted her blog to be the liberal answer to *Drudge Report*, though initially the

plan was proposed with the understanding that the space would be bipartisan where people from

both sides could engage in debate. "In a solicitation letter to hundreds of people in her eclectic

Rolodex [do people even remember what that is?], Ms. Huffington said the site 'won't be left

wing or right wing; indeed, it will punch holes in that very stale way of looking at the world"

(Seelye 2013). This ideal was mostly put to the side before the blog was launched in 2005. As

the site was developed, Arianna and her team pulled the site in a very specific liberal agenda.

The May 9, 2005 launch of the *Huffington Post* was the result of a culmination of work done by

Arianna Huffington and her rhetorical chorus. The rhetorical chorus found on the site that first

day came together primarily for Arianna as the lead voice.

Homophonic Relationships

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[35] For a full comparison on the differences between blogging journalism or j-blogging and traditional print journalism, see the following: Kaye; Vraga, Stephanie Edgerly and et. al; T. Haas; Kim.

While Arianna and Lerer were the impeti behind the creation of the *Huffington Post*, neither of them was skilled in the technology and use of new media. To compensate for this, Arianna and Lerer paired with Jonah Peretti, a MIT graduate who would go on to create Buzzfeed, and Andrew Breitbart, a conservative who had worked on the *Drudge Report* and would later go on to create his own news blogs. Unlike Pizan's scriptorium who did not leave any record of where their choices in production ended and Pizan's began, the interventions of Peretti and Breitbart can be followed up with meta-conversations about their participation in the creation of the *Huffington Post*, which they have indulged in through articles. In these conversations both discuss why they sought to work with Arianna on the site and also reasons they were dissatisfied with the experience and chose to walk away. They have left behind a record of their agendas and the ways they intervened in the processes of production, use, and distribution. To this day, Jonah Peretti is listed as a co-founder on the *Huffington* Post under his blogger biography page on the site. He was hired early on by Arianna to use his expertise in social media to help construct the blog site. The second major contributor to the production of the *Huffington Post* was Andrew Breitbart. The presence of Breitbart serves to complicate notions of collaboration, since his reasons for participating in the creation of the site actually worked in direct contradiction to Arianna's design.

In an article for the *Atlantic Wire*, Peretti describes his motivations for joining in with Arianna's endeavor. While Peretti early on had a homophonic relationship with Arianna and used his technical skills to bolster her message, he wanted to help create a bipartisan site. "When we started the Huffington Post I wasn't interested in business. I wanted to see a Democrat get elected president. After the Bush years, and seeing the Netroots movements, they seemed so hopelessly naïve. If we all just blog a lot, we'll save the world. They didn't understand how

power works and that's why I got excited about the Huffington Post" (Hudson 2012). Eventually, Peretti became disillusioned and moved on: "I started to get fatigued by partisan journalism and partisan reporting and columnists who have to be controversial. This is wrong, this is right. Being in the belly of the beast at HuffPo drained me" (Hudson 2012). As an individual he did not fully agree with Arianna's plan for the site or its purpose, though Peretti offered his technical skills to help build the *Huffington Post*. As a member of the chorus, he promoted the site and its ability to distribute the message. In other words, Peretti's identity changed as he went from being an individual contributor to being part of the ensemble. Eventually, he had to separate himself again in order to pursue his own interests beyond those of Arianna and the *Huffington Post.*

Andrew Breitbart claims in his book that Arianna called him up asking for suggestions on a new website design. While he gave her a less direct answer, he explains his motivations in helping with the following:

> "What," I said, "if we can get the collective left that we have dinner with, cocktail parties with, the left that talks crazy in private but only expresses itself at the Daily Kos under pseudonyms—what if we can get them all to put their names next to their crazy ideas? What if we can make it a one-stop shop for exposing liberals for who they are, and forcing them to stand by their positions?" (Breitbart 100).

Breitbart claims that through his efforts it is now possible to see "the richest noblesse oblige liberals in our land" and their ideas are now on display and open to responses by other people (Breitbart 2011, 100-1). Breitbart sought to make liberal arguments more transparent, but he also had a larger plan. Breitbart built his career around the idea of demonstrating the fallibilities of mainstream media and their false constructions of "political correctness" and "bi-partisan"

political and social commentaries (Breitbart 223). "Huffington disagrees, saying that while he helped with strategy, the idea for the site was cooked up at a meeting in her living room" (Shachtman 2010). He viewed the *Huffington Post* as a large step towards unveiling the problems of falseness of main stream media. So while other conservatives were skeptical or upset that he would indulge in helping the *Huffington Post* get off the group, Breitbart believed he was helping to create a better space for national discourse.

Breitbart quickly became disillusioned by the enterprise, because the site was no longer bi-partisan in nature, but rapidly becoming liberal. He was bought out before the site launched (Shachtman 2010). Yet, he maintained until his death that the *Huffington Post* was really his idea and that he set it up in order to work against the mainstream media's liberal agenda. In other words, Breitbart had a polyphonic relationship with Arianna early on. He knew her and chose to work with her, but he also served as a counterpoint to her. He both worked with her rhetorical agenda and against her agenda in turns.

All of these contributors came together to influence how media represents partisan agendas and to either bolster a liberal agenda or to unmask liberal speakers. Despite the very separate agendas, the members of the rhetorical chorus came together to build the *Huffington Post*. They supported the concept of an online news site with a liberal perspective. Through their participation in the building of the site, Breitbart, Peretti, and other bloggers sought to enact civic change on their environment as they helped position Arianna as the lead speaker and added their own rhetorical moves to the space. Arianna and her chorus of Breitbart and Peretti set out to create the *Huffington Post* as a specific type of rhetorical space. Arianna entered into the process of creation mostly through concepts and ideas she offered as lead voice, but she had to rely on Breitbart and Peretti who had the technical skills to make the ideas into reality. Both Breitbart

and Peretti also contributed their own rhetorical moves in the shaping of the space, especially Breitbart who had a contrapuntal relationship to Arianna.

Polyphonic Relationships

When the *Huffington Post* launched in May 2005, early news reports about the enterprise often derided the site for its celebrity writers and Arianna's status as a celebutante among liberal circles: "the initial publicity focused on how Huffington's showbiz pals---Warren Beatty, Diane Keaton, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, David Geffen—would give the group blog a veneer of glitter" (Kurtz 2013). These celebrity writers served as the initial draw for audiences to the website and allowed several known liberal writers a platform for commenting on current news and events as they unfolded. They were Arianna's friends, acquaintances, and employees (though most were not paid). They shared in a common ideology, a liberal social perspective, which is evidenced by the type of concerns they focus on such as blogs titled "Democrats what do they stand for?" by Walter Cronkite, "What would Jesus do…with Tom Delay?" by Arianna Huffington, and "Marriage Trouble," a humorous piece on gay marriage by Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Brad Hall.

In an environment such as this one, the chorus is able to quickly engage in promoting ideas and responding directly the audience in their role as mediators between Arianna and the audience. Arianna does not need to directly speak from her site often, nor does she have to interact directly with all of her audience on the site in order for the site to maintain her role as lead speaker. The platform provided by Web 2.0 allows her chorus to stand between her and the audience often, so that she only has to respond when she chooses to.

Entering Bizzaro World

Breitbart early on judged the *Huffington Post* as successful in his plan to make liberal arguments transparent and liberal speakers identifiable[36]. While he was bought out of the company before it launched, Breitbart was allowed to have his own blog on the site despite his contentious conservative agenda. In fact, he remained active on the site for a number of years until his comments finally sparked an argument with Arianna. Despite the request that he leave the site, his blogs and his bio remain on the site. Peretti also remains an active blogger on the site and he continues to lend his voice to the site as a member of the later ongoing chorus, the bloggers, editors, and commentators, who now shape how the *HuffPo* conveys meaning.

Peretti and Breitbart were part of shaping and originating the blog and they are still from the margins of the operation in terms of the choral events. They are able from their role to witness the events, comment and respond to the unfolding of the events. They also share in the responsibility of what has occurred by remaining on the site, commenting on their own interventions, and trying to institute practices that asked contributors of the site to take responsibility for their contributions as well. Most importantly, they are able to act as witnesses to the origin narrative which surrounds the *Huffington Post*. They were present in the early moments of its inception, and used their authority and *techne* to help shape the space for their own purposes. However, they also act as commentators to the early rhetorical decisions made in creating the space and they were not present in the original business meetings instituted by Arianna.

In contrast, Dauo and Boyce did not participate in the performance of rhetoric that occurred on the site as it was being produced. They did emerge as part of the rhetorical chorus

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[36] See Breitbart.

later as bloggers who contributed to the site during the first few years. "In the years before and after Arianna supposedly 'rejected' working with us, she was very happy to take our posts, links, contributions, suggestions, and guidance, and to praise us profusely privately and publicly. We have numerous such emails and communications" (Dauo). Despite the fact that they did not contribute their *techne*, their experience with social media, to the site, they contend that they should be considered part of the origin narrative. In fact, they want to reframe the narrative. According to their lawsuit, Dauo and Boyce offer evidence that they were part of the initial conversations and even that they were early on involved in the generation of ideas. In some ways, they are vying with Arianna to be acknowledged as lead voices, the points of origin for the story. However, they were not participants in creating the site like Breitbart and Peretti were, so they did not participate in shaping the rhetorical conventions which created the site.

In a 15 page memo, Dauo and Boyce proposed a website called 1460 after the number of days between presidential elections. According to legal documents for Peter Dauo vs. Arianna Huffington lawsuit, Dauo and Boyce met while working on Kerry's campaign. After the 2004 election, the two began to have conversations about developing a joint business venture which would be a "new kind of Democratic news-reporting website and blogging 'ring' or 'collective'" (651997/10). Both parties claim that they were present at the key December 3, 2004 meeting at Arianna Huffington's home and made a presentation of their memo and ideas (651997/10, 3). In response, Boyce and Dauo claim that "on or about December 17, 2004, defendants asked plaintiffs for a refined blueprint and strategic plan for the proposed website in order to begin its construction" (651997/10, 4). Rather than continue working with Boyce and Dauo after numerous conversations, "in January 2005, defendants formally replaced plaintiffs with conservative activist Andrew Breitbart, and caused the development of the website to go

forward, based entirely upon plaintiff's ideas, business plan and strategic insight, only without their participation" (651997/10, 4). Through their lawsuit, they are seeking to act as new witnesses, individuals who operated from the margins of the production and use of the website. They observed its development and responded to it through their own blogging. And while they judge the site to be accomplishing what they set out to do, they appear to be asking to be acknowledged for their role in the inception of the *Huffington Post*, their role in the chorus. Their position is tricky because they are asking to be acknowledged for coming up with the idea to begin with. It seems that in witnessing an event, the rhetorical chorus helps to build the argument by bearing witness to the initial rhetorical events, events that they shape themselves as well by acting as witnesses. They take responsibility for what is being recalled and how it affects a civic purpose.

Mediation, Ritual, Chorus

Besides acting as interlocutors between god and man or in the case of the rhetorical chorus, lead speaker and audience, ritual also serves a civic purpose. Likewise, the rituals of the *Huffington Post* serve a civic function. Because of the nature of Web 2.0, new writing practices began to emerge online including webblogging, which are "rhetorical constructs that structure and shape a user's experience with a particular site—for better or worse depending on a user's prior knowledge and web experience (Wolff 218-9). While early blogging typically consisted of online personal diaries, the blog had become a source of news and political writing by the time the *Huffington Post* emerged. Webblogs, or blogs as they are now known, have distinctive characteristics. A person wanting to blog goes online and finds an already existing blogging site such as Blogger or Wordpress. These sites provide templates of blogs for the writer. "Blogs are asynchronous, online venues that provide users with a range of online interactions; users read

information and opinion, send in their own analysis and links to additional information, and

interact with bloggers and other blog readers. Blog users may be as actively engaged as they

wish" (Kaye 75). Typically, the blog consists of a banner across the top, daily or weekly posts

below, and a sidebar which provides a history of posts made and other blogs or websites

supported by the blogger. The site also features a page which provides the identity and mission

of the writer. One of the main features which separate a blog from other forms of writing is the

ability of the audience to participate in the information being conveyed. "Blogs do not report

unbiased and original news, and they differ from established newspapers and electronic news

outlets because they do not undergo formal editorial review, but if a blogger makes a mistake,

readers and other bloggers will quickly point it out" (Kaye 76). The audience is able to enter the

blog asynchronously, read the blog at their leisure, and then respond to the blog content below

the writer's post. "Weblogs seem to foster a sense of community among readers" (Kaye 76). This

ability to respond creates a situation of reciprocity and dialogue between blogger and audience.

In this environment, the *Huffington Post* functions as a social and communal site, where

audience members are able to start their own blogs and comment on the blogs already present.

The news on the site gets critiqued by this audience, so that the information is not passively

distributed to a listening audience, but received and commented on.

Conclusion

The case studies involving Christine de Pizan and Arianna Huffington raise questions

about how the rhetorical chorus affects the environments in which they occur. Despite the

numerous differences between the medieval manuscripts and digital spaces discussed here, the

chorus model offers three similar outcomes for both cases. First, the choral identity of the chorus

marks their coming together as a group and indicates how they are able to gain authority not only

as individuals but through their role as chorus, as an ensemble. Second, ritualized performances begin with rituals, symbolic gestures, which are familiar to the audience and are repeated, but they can also be altered for the purposes of the chorus to create new rituals. Lastly, witnessing means the chorus takes on responsibility for what is being produced and act as judges over what gets distributed, even though they are not the center of the action, they are not the lead speaker.

The rhetorical chorus comes together and interacts with the lead voice to produce, design, and co-act with that lead speaker. The rhetorical chorus gains its authority through its function as a constituency of the audience, through the desire to come together for shared civic purposes, and through its position from the margins of the action. Besides the unifying feature of civic purpose, the chorus may share one or more commonality which serves to unite the group in the minds of those observing the phenomenon. As the chorus interacts, they begin to affect changes on one another. Rhetoric gets invented in part through these changes, since the changes are often what enable the chorus to speak. The rhetorical chorus is not homogenous nor do they necessarily have the same shared purposes for engaging in the system as each other. Chorus requires not only technical skills, but particularly literacies beyond a text-based one. They must be able to make decisions according to social norms. Rhetoric gets invented as the chorus comes together with their disparate agendas and enters into the rhetorical situation at different times. Though they interact for different reasons, through their actions they become an ensemble. They share in the distribution of the message and through this behavior they share in a choral identity. In short, the individual members become a chorus *after* they have contributed to the system and not before.

In a rhetorical chorus system, rituals, or repeated symbolic actions/performances, act as the vehicles for communication used by the chorus to communicate. The chorus responds to a

rhetorical event, through their use of ritualized gesture. These gestures are vehicles for symbolic meaning. Rhetoric gets invented as the chorus uses rituals already familiar to an audience. Then the chorus alters them to begin to create new meanings particular to the disseminating the message of the lead voice. The rituals are a method of communicating an original message to audiences using patterns of language or movement familiar to the audience. The rituals are partly how the chorus arranges the space, but also how the message is being articulated since the ritual carries with it symbolic meaning. The audience and the chorus have been schooled to recognize and understand these rituals and their meanings; however, the chorus has to have the *techne* to not only make use of these gestures, but to also create new ones.

Through language and rhetoric, the chorus is able to affect the main speaker and the original rhetorical events, even from their position on the periphery of events. The rituals facilitate the chorus' role as interlocutors or mediators between the lead speaker and the audience while they leave behind physical evidence of these rituals. Through ritual, the chorus is able to make something otherwise invisible, visible and tangible. With rituals, they choose to facilitate transmit, and respond to the speaker's messages. For example, the iconography of Pizan are not just images of her, but also represent intangible aspects of her authority to speaker, her roles as composer, educator, writer, builder and not just an image of one. In manuscript technology, the transmission is not limited to the boundaries of the manuscript page, but can move beyond those boundaries into the environments in which the manuscript technology gets produced, used, and distributed. The illuminators are able to make these parts of her character visible to the audience just like a chorus would make gifts and worship to the gods visible through their ritualized performances. The rituals of Web 2.0 mean that the line between audience and chorus is thin. In digital environment, the work can be self-published; so the role of the chorus is affected by the

environment more than by boundaries of materiality. The contemporary chorus is much more visible as well and can directly interact with the audience on behalf of the lead speaker, even while the lead speaker is also capable of directly interacting with the audience. The agendas and choices of the digital chorus can also be more visible since they more often document what they are doing.

The rhetorical chorus' actions give the initial rhetorical event its coherence by preserving the message (or parts of the message), and organizing the event into a narrative which can be distributed to an audience. For example, through the ritual uses by Pizan's chorus, readers now have 'new' visual examples of a woman writing which did not exist before and in the case of the *Huffington Post*, the rituals help the chorus to create a site that is like a newspaper, but is also dictated and shared by the power of the people. While the rhetorical chorus may not be choosing between two people like a flyting ritual, they are choosing to recall and witness a rhetorical speaker and his or her argument, by doing so they make judgments on the value of preserving and distributing the event. The rhetorical chorus exercises certain rituals in order to preserve the rhetorical event and demonstrate its importance to the public. These rituals are usually tied to the technology which the chorus is using to preserve the work. The chorus uses its familiarity with blogs—production, design, tropes, genre-writing, rhetorical conventions—in order to not only distribute the message, but to create new rituals that help facilitate communication (the diary becomes the blog- the blog takes on other medium and genres to communicate).

The chorus also fought to preserve those aspects of Christine's and Arianna's arguments that they judged to be important, such as the significance of a woman writer (Christine) or the power of political blogging communities (Arianna). The chorus's role is to bear witness of the events from the margins of the action. To bear witness is to observe a situation and then respond

to it. In doing so, they take social responsibility over what message is being preserved and disseminated as well as how the audience receives the message. They seek to inspire the audience to take some sort of change. The chorus through ritual and choral identity has taken the role of mediators and thus connects the system of rhetoric production to its environments. This type of witnessing and judgment could be seen when the chorus sought to preserve some parts of For example, early print members of the rhetorical chorus bolstered Christine's arguments by acting as her witnesses and redistributing her ideas to other audiences. Andrew Breitbart is a great example of witnessing, since his purpose for participating in the production of *Huffington Post* is one of opposition. He wanted to provide a platform for liberal agendas in order to make those agendas public. Through his technical and rhetorical skills, Breitbart acted as a producer, designer, and agent. From their position on the outside, the chorus can bear witness to the events by enacting specific rituals which allow them to shape the space (use of both rhetorical and technological *techne*). The witness is positioned on the margins of events, and so is able to observe the events, report them, and respond to them. These choral members facilitate the story and allow the user to choose how they engage with the material. They mediate between the designers of the program—their agenda in creating this narrative framework—and the users—who engage with the story for their own purposes.

These three environmental outcomes are not likely to be the only possible results of the interventions of the collaborative group, the chorus. This group uses their technical and rhetorical skills to produce and distribute a rhetorical artifact. Their interventions can affect the speaker's authority, the message, and the uptake of message by the audience. Because of these mediations, further research would be needed to assess other ways the chorus impacts the environment.

Chapter V: Speak Truth: Authority, Invention, and Chorus

Isabella's slavery ended in 1827 when the state of New York emancipated its slaves. While she worked as a domestic servant for a number of years afterwards, Isabella left when she felt called to preach and teach. As she ventured out in her new role as an inspired speaker, she took on the name Sojourner Truth to signify her new journeyman status. Eventually, Truth gained fame through her extensive work traveling and giving speeches for women's suffrage and abolitionist causes, and her self-promotion through the selling of her photographs and her biography, *Narrative* (Painter 1994). Because Truth was unable to write down her narrative and speeches, her work comes to us through the efforts of a large number of other people, some of whom developed idealized versions of who Truth was. For example, Truth's fame increased after Harriet Beecher Stowe composed an article for *Atlantic Monthly* describing Truth as "The Libyan Sibyl" in which Stowe described a meeting between her and Truth, which had happened years ago, but Stowe's version of events contain a number of inauthentic details (Painter "Sojourner Truth," 8). Today, the efforts of many people to preserve Truth's life and works has resulted in Truth becoming one of the most famous examples of African American eloquence during the women's suffrage and abolitionist movements. Her work, constructed or not, continues to resonate as school children read her speeches, scholars debate her authenticity, and speakers continue to appropriate her words to articulate the experiences of African Americans, especially African American women in the United States (Zacknodnick 2004).

Through her self-promotion as a speaker and the continued efforts of others like Frances Gage and Marius Robinson, evidence exists of Truth's abilities as a speaker and this evidence makes it possible to 'rescue' Truth by including her into the rhetorical canon. For modern scholars like Karyln Kohrs Campbell (2003), Roseann M. Mandziuk and Suzanne Pullon Fitch (2009), and Kyra Pearson (1999), Sojourner Truth is a woman speaker worth recovering, because

she represents an individual woman speaking who is able to make use of rhetorical eloquence despite her lack of education. At the same time, the rhetorical situations surrounding Truth's speech acts raise questions about who Truth was, how accurate our perceptions of her are, who wrote her works, and how much influence did Truth have in creating these works. Truth could only write her letters, narrative, and speeches using an amanuensis (Truth 109). Her speeches are often recorded second or third hand by newspaper reporters, which raises questions about the authenticity of their reports. The most famous "Aren't I a Woman?" speech also raises issues of racism on the part of the recorders, since the most famous rendition depicts Truth, a northerner from the area New York settled by the Dutch, speaking in an uneducated colloquial southern black dialect (Campbell 2003). In other words, Truth's role as an orator and activist comes to modern scholars fraught with racial and gendered tensions as well as concerns about authority, authenticity, and agency.

As this project has demonstrated, the chorus model can be applied to a collaborative situation such as Truth's in order to illuminate the interventions of others in the recording and preservation of a single speaker's message and, at the same time, to identify how the original message is distributed and mediated to an audience. Using Truth as an example, this chapter considers the implications of working with a choral model. Ultimately, the purpose of using this model is to expand on already existing notions of group work, collaboration, and rhetorical invention in order to encompass other examples, which occur within the history of rhetoric. While this model remains a developing theory for elaborating on scholarly uses of collaboration, the applications of the model can provide further understandings of group work within rhetorical history, literary and media studies, genre studies, and even the composition classroom. Lastly, as

with any model, the rhetorical chorus model has limitations and raises questions that cannot be fully addressed here, but should be considered in future scholarship.

Rhetorical Implications for Invention and Collaboration

Just like the other case studies in this project, Truth's contributions to rhetoric are not limited to what she produced on her own, but include how her work was recorded, preserved, and transmitted by others. In her article " Reading 'The Narrative of Sojourner Truth' as a Collaborative Text," Jean Humez notes that "important and complex issues of unequal power over representation of women's experience arise in studying and teaching those nineteenth-century African American women's life-history texts that were produced in collaboration with white political allies" (Humez 29). Humez is describing the complexity of collaborative relationships between unequal collaborative partners. Yet, at the same time, these collaborative partners make it possible for the speaker to communicate and to be remembered. In Truth's case, her work was created and preserved through multiple types of collaboration. She partnered with Olive Gilbert and Frances Titus to write her narrative, she spoke with Stowe, who later wrote the article which created a caricature of Truth for Stowe's audience, and she spoke in situations where others recorded her words. To include all of these multiple forms of collaboration into rhetorical analysis can be quite complex, because it opens up avenues of multiple inventions, agendas, and constraints, and some of these avenues would be nearly impossible to follow because evidence is lacking (we cannot read someone's mind).

The chorus model outlined throughout this project presents an opportunity to acknowledge the social contexts through which a message flows, because rhetoric can sometimes be the product of one and many speakers rather than one speaker. Since Kenneth Bruffee's "Conversation of Mankind" (1984) and Karen Burke LeFevre's *Invention as a Social Act* (1987),

speech and writing practices have been viewed more often as social processes. Because communication is a social activity, communicative acts are often identified, explored, and defined in relation to explanations of collaboration. Yet in "Writing as Collaboration," James A. Reither and Douglas Vipond point out that "saying that writing is a social process does not specify what writers need to know in order to write" (Reither 1989, 856). In other words, claiming the socialness of communication does not explain how it works. Who invents meaning? Who has authority? How are messages created, shaped, or developed? As a result of these questions, multiple definitions of collaboration have been proposed.

Despite the many definitions, communicative acts remain divided into a false dichotomy between the single speaker and the collaborative group. Part of the fixation on the status of an individual speaker in rhetoric arises from early definitions of rhetorical invention. Prior to LeFevre's work, invention had been historically viewed as the work of an individual speaker. In *Invention in Rhetoric and Composition*, Janice M. Lauer traces the history of invention in rhetoric. She begins with the platonic view of invention in which the rhetor selects from *topoi*, or commonplace argument structures, in order to organize the ideas he or she wants to convey. This view of invention supposes that the speaker already has the question in mind and that the person came up with the question on his own. In contrast, Francis Bacon states that invention "doth assign and direct us to certain marks, or places, which may excite our mind to return and produce such knowledge as it hath formerly collected, to the end we may make use thereof" (F. Bacon 116). Bacon perceives invention as the picking and choosing of information that one already has in one's mind, rather than the creation of an original idea.

In *Invention as Social Act* Karen LeFevre argues that rhetorical invention does not occur in the mind of the individual alone, but rather the individual is socially constructed and

influence. She demonstrates that the focus on the individual speaker has created the artificial

binary between individual speaker and collaborative group: "framed in terms of unhelpful

oppositions, they imply that 'individual' and 'social' can be neatly separated, and that one can be

said to cause the other. What I am suggesting, however, is that they be regarded as dialectically

connected, always co-defining and interdependent" (37). In LeFevre's argument, invention

occurs not just through a dialectical relationship between a writer and his or her audience, but

also over time, as the writer and audience engage in social transactions. LeFevre's work raises

some interesting questions about collaboration and invention, especially when considering the

implications of the artificial divide between individual and collaborative group in efforts to

recover women in the history of rhetoric. While LeFevre mentions this dichotomy, she does not

offer the means to break the dichotomy.

The chorus model shifts the binary between individual speaker and group activity, so that

any given rhetorical situation can be examined to take into account both an individual speaker

and the group. In the case of Truth's Akron speech, the rhetorical events encompass Truth and

her chorus, which consists of Marius Robinson, a reporter for the *Anti-Slavery Bugle*, and

Frances Gage, an educated white woman who acted as chair for the event. The model facilitates

observations regarding the identification of the chorus and their participation in rhetorical

invention. The chorus model begins by observing the rhetorical event in order to identify the

presence of the initial speaker (Sojourner Truth) and her chorus (Marius Robinson and Frances

Gage). The rhetorical chorus is defined as the ensemble of individuals who come together after

the initial invention and composition of a speaker's message in order to record, preserve,

produce, distribute and use the speaker's message. The rhetorical artifact, the rhetorical situation,

the rhetorical speaker can all be taken into account. What evidence is left over the course of

history? What do the artifacts contain? Who is speaking? Who produced the artifact? Who invented the message for the audience? Answering these questions result in a significant shift in perception of how rhetorical events occur, since they take into account both a single individual's agency and authority while, at the same time, acknowledging that the individual speaker does not work in a social vacuum. Viewing group and social communication practices through the lens of chorus rather than collaboration or conversation provides some significant shifts in perspective regarding the invention of speech acts, the attribution of rhetorical authority, and the transmissions from participants.

For the chorus, invention occurs not just through their manipulation of *topoi*, but also through their technical skills to produce and alter the rhetorical artifact in which the message resides. Both Robinson and Gage had the education and the means to access forms of communication not available to Truth, namely publishing and writing. They were able to use these technical and rhetorical skills to mediate Truth's message for their own purposes. Marius Robinson recorded his impressions of the conference. In his June 21, 1851 publication, Robinson pays special attention to describing only one of the many speakers, Sojourner Truth, and her speech. He describes this speech from his perspective as an audience member, which seems to indicate that he was attempting to maintain the impression of directly recording the events as they occurred. In contrast, Frances Gage published her version of the speech on May 2, 1863. Gage's account mirrors an earlier publication by Harriet Beecher Stowe in which Stowe praises Truth's work but, at the same time, constructs Truth as a comical, highly racialized ex-slave. Gage's account appears to be in response to Stowe's and sets out to demonstrate Truth's ability to move her audience through rhetorical eloquence.

In *Invention as a Social Act*, LeFevre describes the act of invention that occurs when an individual works with others to create an artifact. The chorus extends this view of rhetorical invention. Rather than focusing on the type of invention which occurs when a single person works directly with others, rhetorical invention also occurs as the message is being produced in the form of a rhetorical artifact and distributed. In other words, rhetorical invention can happen in society after the original speaker has completed his or her composing process and has sent their message out into the world. This type of invention I am calling *bricolage invention* since members of the chorus are picking and choosing whose authority to support and what pieces of the original rhetorical message they want to promote over other parts of the message. The chorus also determines the different ways the message will be transmitted and mediated to the audience.

Examining Truth's Akron speech with the chorus model demonstrates how bricolage invention occurs. In response to Truth's speech and other stimuli Robinson and Gage each created separate artifacts representing Truth's rhetorical message and efforts. As they produce and use the artifact, the chorus interacts with one another and with the lead speaker, and these actions can be classified into specific types of relationships: lead voice, homophonic relationships, and polyphonic relationships. A comparison of these two artifacts reveals that Robinson and Gage had different reasons for recording and describing Truth's speech.

Based on an analysis of Truth's speeches in general, Truth's role as lead speaker is evident by her repeated uses of specific rhetorical moves: her frequent use of humor, her personal experiences as a slave and a woman, her physical body, her "arguing from example" and her quotations of the Bible in order to construct her claims (Lipscomb 235). For example, in the Robinson version of the speech[37] Truth states "I have as much muscle as any man, and can

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[37] The Marius Robinson news article on the Akron speech can be found in S. P. Fitch, and R. M. Mandziuk's *Sojourner Truth As Orator: Wit, Story, and Song* (1997).

do as much work as any man. I have plowed and reaped and husked and chopped and mowed."

In contrast, Gage renders this argument as a direct rebuke against the claim that ladies are

weaker and need to be helped into carriages or over ditches[38]. In this version, Truth states, "I

have plowed, and planted, and gathered into barns….I could work as much and eat as much as

man (when I could get it), and bear de lash as well." In another example, both versions also state

that Truth argued against the usual misogynist reading of Eve as the cause of all sin by arguing

that "if woman upset the world, do give her a chance to set it right side up again" (Robinson

version) or "if de fust woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down,

all 'lone, dese togedder…ought to be able to turn it back and get it right side up again, and now

dey is asking to do it" (Gage version). In both of these versions of the speech, Truth uses the

same metaphors and rhetorical techniques to convey her message, and so a comparison between

the two illustrates that Truth must very well have spoken about Eve as an example of women's

ability to disrupt and repair and she must have used her experience with farming and working to

demonstrate the physical abilities of women to be strong and work.

Despite the number of similarities between the two versions which give some indication

of what Truth actually said, the two versions are also differently rendered since Robinson and

Gage had a polyphonic relationship with Truth. Neither of them recorded her words with the

mechanical accuracy of a tape recorder. Instead they both modified what they heard or

remembered in order to mediate Truth's message to Gage's and Robinson's respective

audiences. Frances Gage published her version of the speech on May 2, 1863, over ten years

after the original speech. Because Gage artificially represented Truth speaking in a southern

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[38] Frances Gage's version of the Akron speech can be found in Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's anthology *Man Cannot Speak for Her* (1989).

African American dialect, this version of the speech has been called "fictive" by Karlyn Kohrs

Campbell:

> "we now know that the familiar text of her 1851 speech is a fiction created some
>
> twelve years after the event by a white woman, Frances Dana Gage, an
>
> abolitionist and woman's rights supporter who presided at the 1851 Akron
>
> woman's rights convention at which Truth spoke. The original publication of
>
> Gage's version of Truth's speech on 2 May 1863, may have been prompted by a
>
> desire to steal the thunder of Harriet Beecher Stowe, who a month earlier had
>
> published an essay on Truth as 'The Libyan Sibyl'" (Campbell "Agency," 9).

Gage's depiction is also fiction in the way all biographies, autobiographies, and memoirs are

fiction. The message that she claims Truth gave is very similar to the ones given in the Robinson

account, which means that while she most likely embellished for the purposes of communicating

with her audience, she was still maintaining Truth as lead speaker and bolstering her message to

new audiences.

Frances Gage was writing specifically in response to Harriet Beecher Stowe's

construction of Truth in the famous article, "Sojouner Truth, the Libyan Sibyl." In 1863, Harriet

Beecher Stowe wrote the *Atlantic Monthly* article designed to contribute to Stowe's fame as an

author and build Truth's identity. "Many years ago, the few readers of radical Abolitionist papers

must often have seen the singular name of Sojourner Truth, announced as a frequent speaker at

Anti-Slavery meetings, and as travelling on a sort of self-appointed agency through the country"

(Stowe 473). In the article, Stowe uses a colloquial southern dialect to describe Truth in a

stereotypical fashion familiar to her mid-1800s audience. "'Yes, honey, that's what I do. The

Lord has made me a sign unto this nation, an' I go round a-testifyin', an' showin' on 'em their

sins agin my people" (Stowe 473). Stowe's depiction of Truth demonstrates that she was

familiar with Truth (for example, she knew that Truth had had a legal battle to get back her son

after he had been illegally sold south). "Ye see, we was all brought over from Africa, father an'

mother an' I, an' a lot more of 'us; an' we was sold up an' down, an' hither an' yon" (Stowe

474). However, many other facts are false, such as her description of Truth as coming directly

from Africa, and her general demeanor mirrors the racist speech patterns and African American

personas that Stowe wrote about in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Gage's use of language may very well

be partly because she is mimicking Stowe's use of language in an effort to further demonstrate to

her audience that she too knew Truth and has the same authority to speak about Truth as Stowe.

While Robinson's and Gage's versions of the speech are markedly varied in many

respects and they were published at different times, they both appear to be encouraging the

audience to see Truth's authority as speaker. Not only is she named as the originater of the

speech, but she also clearly contributed several key rhetorical moves in order to establish her

authority as speaker. Their polyphonic relationship to Truth reveals the extent to which the

chorus model differs from definitions of collaboration. In collaboration, the relationship between

participants tends to be transactional, with both parties exchanging goods, services, or ideas. The

exchange requires reciprocity. In the chorus model, the relationship is transmittal. According to

the OED, transmission involves "conveyance from one person or place to another"

("Transmission"). The Akron speech serves as an example of how the transmissions from the

lead speaker to her homophonic and polyphonic collaborators impact the way rhetoric gets

constructed. First, the chorus does not generally work directly with the speaker in any capacity.

They often engage in the rhetorical invention process after the speaker has finished composing or

even has died, as in the case of Chaucer. Their actions then do not usually elicit a response from

the speaker. They do not participate in a traditional dialogical interaction. Rather the chorus operates by producing the artifact for the speaker (but not always at the speaker's direction or for complementary agendas). Identifying the chorus and the main speaker as well as the artifact or artifacts provides the evidence that the actions and transference between speaker, chorus, and artifact impact the rhetorical process.

In addition to expanding the possible uses of invention to describe the creation of knowledge, group activity or collaboration can take on a wide range of implications: "we have come to situate the issue of collaborative writing in a much broader historical, political, and ideological context and to contemplate the ways in which our society locates power, authority, and authenticity, and property in an autonomous, masculine self" (Lunsford and Ede "Rhetoric in a New Key," 234). The chorus model explores a type of collaborative group activity, which is not readily a partnership or a reciprocal dialogue between two or more people. This form of collaboration has the potential to alter how we categorize and describe group work in rhetorical history and elsewhere.

The chorus model reveals how the chorus ensemble affects the rhetorical environment, the rhetorical situation. This impact usually takes the form of choral identity, ritualized gestures, and witnessing. Choral identity consists of the shared characteristics which can be identified once the chorus has been observed. These characteristics are not the reasons the chorus came to intervene in any given rhetorical situation, but are instead the characteristics that emerge after the individuals participate. In other words, the chorus does not become a group first and then intervenes but can be acknowledged as a group after they have intervened. In the case of Truth's Akron speech, Robinson and Gage are connected with one another because of their possible interests in abolition (based on their respective activities, like Robinson being a reporter for the

Anti-Slavery Bugle), but mostly their connection is through their efforts to record and promote

Truth's voice. They do not work together to promote her voice, but develop distinctly separate

artifacts representing Truth's work. At the same time, they can be grouped as individuals who

have technical and rhetorical skill to intervene in the preservation and distribution of ideas.

The choral identity also indicates that the group work of the chorus involves a sense of

civic or social responsibility on the part of the participants, just as Robinson and Gage both

utilize Truth's words to promote their own messages of abolitionism and suffrage. The chorus's

civic or social responsibility extends to their choices in mediating a message to the audience.

This role raises some questions that could be avenues for additional study: what role does the

chorus take in censorship? Who has responsibility over the production and uptake of meaning:

the publisher, the editor, the writer, the speaker, the translator? What is the role of responsibility

in rhetoric? The chorus acts as gatekeepers. They chose what will be promoted, transmitted,

taken up. Their choices are informed by their own rhetorical agendas, their own separate

audiences, and their purposes for taking up the single speaker's message to begin with.

Their actions in mediating Truth's words to other audiences position both Robinson and

Gage as witnesses. They witnessed Truth's performance of her speech. They witnessed her role

as advocate for women's rights. They witnessed her use of rhetorical *topoi* designed to

demonstrate her experience and authority as speaker. As witnesses, Gage and Robinson act as

observers and judges of the events as they unfolded. They utilized ritualized gestures in order to

convey Truth's meaning as they understood it. In Robinson's case, he followed the ritualized

communication practices of a journalist by trying to maintain a tone designed to make the reader

feel as if they were present during Truth's speech. In Gage's case, she depicted Truth using a

dialect Truth would not have used. This dialect carries with it its own ritualized symbolic

meanings. The southern dialect found in both Stowe's and Gage's renditions of African Americans creates an image of a poor, uneducated, simple, and not terribly intelligent person. At the same time as Gage uses such an inappropriate and racist depiction of Truth, she is also describing Truth as a strong tall woman who is able to stir the crowd with her words. Through a chorus lens, calling Gage racist is reductive and does not encapsulate the complexities of her choices to both promote Truth and diminish her authority simultaneously. Rather, both Gage and Robinson made distinct rhetorical choices in order to mediate Truth's message. The better questions then are how did Gage mediate the message? What did she do differently? Why might she have made these differences? Who was her audience? In this case, the chorus model demonstrates that group work which shifts between an individual speaker and a group of participants does not require consensus. In both homophonic and polyphonic relationships, consensus is not required in order for the individuals to interact.

Applications for the Chorus Model

Rhetorical chorus can be applied as a method for unpacking or analyzing a specific type of collaborative relationship. It can be applied to a wide range of circumstances, in which a lead speaker and a group do not necessarily work directly with one another to promote a rhetorical message. In this section, I propose several different avenues for applying the chorus model, including women in rhetorical history, the composition classroom, ghostwriting, fanfiction and examples of contested authorship.

Women in Rhetorical History

The first direction this theory can take would be a study of women who have had limited access to the tools needed to preserve their own rhetoric, especially women who are illiterate. This study would explore how the women were able to navigate their circumstances in order to

communicate. Throughout history there have been a large number of women who have managed to leave behind traces of their work despite restraints to their voices, limitations to their education, and prevailing misogyny. In recovering these women, it might be as fruitful to examine how they were able to navigate their circumstances as much as it would be to reclaim them as individual speakers in the history of rhetoric. This study would also further consider how gender and gendered performances affect the construction of rhetoric and how social conventions and institutions both enable and restrain women's work.

Classroom Settings

In "Collaborative Learning and the Conversation of Mankind" Kenneth Bruffee argues that learning is inherently collaborative, since all human thought and learning are tied to social interactions. Because learning is collaborative, classrooms should model this practice so that students have the opportunity to ask questions and create knowledge together. This stance on learning based on Lev Vygotsky's work on human learning has been heavily promoted by the National Council of Teachers of English. In this classroom, collaborative practices often take the form of group projects, peer editing, and peer workshopping. Muriel Harris (1992) and Rebecca Moore Howard (2000) have written about the limitations of focusing on only a few types of collaboration and leaving out other opportunities to encourage group interactions.

The chorus model analysis can provide a way to complicate or expand on new ways of encouraging collaborative practices in the classroom, especially when dealing with contentious situations. For example, a fellow teacher at a research-one institution faced a dilemma when teaching her business writing course. The course was designed so that the students worked together in responding to advocacy campaigns and culminated in a group project in which students were asked to work together to create a new advocacy campaign for a non-profit

organization. While most of the groups worked fairly well together and produced the required materials, one group of four caused a great deal of trouble. One of the members chose to be antagonistic and would not do any work during class. Because of this one student's attitude, the other members of his group imitated his behavior, except one. The group relied on one girl in the group to complete all of the tasks. Despite the efforts of my fellow teacher to point out the inadequacy and irresponsibility of the group's choices to have the one student complete all the work, the trend persisted. In addition, the active working student claimed to not mind the behavior and acquiesced to the situation.

An application of the chorus model can provide additional ways to ask students to participate in group work. Teachers frequently find themselves dealing with a lack of consensus between group members or a lack of reciprocity in work and responsibility. Rules and group contracts can alleviate some of the problems, but perhaps a re-visioning of group activity may prove fruitful for reconsidering how students interact with one another to invent work. In the case of my fellow teacher's wayward group, the antagonistic student may have benefitted from being made the choral leader, who has specific responsibilities toward his fellow group members. As Mike Brewer and Liz Garnett noted in their article, "The making of a choir: individuality and consensus in choral singing," a strong chorus member can cause problems in the group, but if given the responsibility will often work to encourage weaker members of the group (2012).

Ghostwriting

Ghostwriting offers another situation where a study of a rhetorical chorus model has the potential to illuminate group activities, which otherwise get subsumed into issues of authenticity (Boreman 1961 and Bruss 2011) and authority (Brandt 2007). In ghostwriting, one speaker may

set forth what they would like to have said, but another person takes the role of writer and composer, making the first person's ideas communicable. In "'Who's the President?': Ghostwriting and Shifting Values in Literacy," Deborah Brandt characterizes ghostwriting as a process which highlights particular power dynamics: "The politician's status brings status to the writing; they are connected to it by name, and it is this connection that authorizes the writing and warrants the reading" (549). In this framework, Brandt argues that the actual writer is "a mere instrument in completing the connection" (550) and so Brandt views the process as a series of transactions of authority between the ghostwriter and the speaker. Ghostwriters through these transactions subsume their work into the voice of their employer, an important quality that distinguishes ghostwriting and raises significant issues of authenticity. A good example for future study would be the relationship between ghost writing and political autobiographies. It has become customary in the last few decades for politicians to produce their own autobiographies, which frequently coincide with campaigns for political positions. The most recent case is Hillary Clinton and her book, *Hard Choices*. These books provide a platform for the politician, but are frequently written by a ghostwriter. When Clinton wrote her first book, "It Takes a Village," she received criticism for not acknowledging her ghostwriter (Zengerle 2008). In her later books, Clinton made a point of mentioning her ghostwriters, but this use of a ghostwriter, while extremely common for books by politicians and celebrities, is also a license for diminishing Clinton's influence and authority. The common theme in articles is "and she can't even write her own books." In a CBS News article written during the 2008 election cycle, Jason Zengerle magnifies just how ghostwriting can play a role in a politician's campaign. "In other words, the prospect of Hillary beating Obama in a battle over the ownership of words is about as strong as her current prospects of beating him for the nomination" (Zengerle 2008). Clinton's inability to

write her own books has been used against her in efforts to distinguish her politics and ability to hold office from that of Barack Obama. Obama did write his own book, early on before he ran for his office in the Senate. In a perverse reversal, Clinton is simultaneously criticized for sanitizing her book to the point of being boring and political. So she while she did not write the book, thus demonstrating her inability to articulate her message or complete a written project, but she is still an authority over the text enough to be criticized for censoring what appears in the book (Zengerle 2008).

The act of ghostwriting can be critiqued as inauthentic and unethical because one person is pretending that another's work is their own, especially with political ghostwriting. In the blog *Outside the Beltway*, Doug Mataconis penned an entry called "Hard Choices and D.C's Dirty Ghostwriting Secret" in which he reflects on the frequency of ghostwriting in politics and Hillary Clinton's relationship with her ghostwriters, which tends to be described as questionable. Clinton frequently does not name or admit to the existence of her ghostwriters. Because of the lack of transparency when a political speaker uses a ghost writer, Mataconis questions whether the use of ghostwriters is even ethical (2004). Applying the concept of rhetorical chorus here would allow for a more objective look at how the two parties interact. The speaker could become the lead voice, whose voice gets bolstered by the ghostwriter, who operates out of his own agendas and authority as a writer, the technician capable of making a speech or book happen. Yet, articles like Jack Cashill's "Who wrote Dreams From my Father?" contend that Obama could not have written the book since he had no experience in writing. In his article Cashill appears to be equating Obama's possible use of an unnamed ghostwriter with intellectual fraud. Among his evidence, Cashill notes "Once elected president of the Harvard Law Review—more of a popularity than a literary contest—Obama contributed not one signed word to the HLR or any

other law journal" (2008). All of this evidence appears to be indicating that Obama could not

have written the book since he had never completed a written project like it before. Cashill goes

on to argue that Bill Ayers' 2001 memoir *Fugitive Days* reads "very much like 'Obama'" (2008).

This argument gave Republicans ammunition for arguing that Obama operates unethically by

lying about his own ability to write a book and is not capable of completing an intellectual

project like writing a book (or entering office). A future study of this situation would address

questions of authority and censorship as well as the development of public personas. This study

of ghostwriting using a chorus model could address the paradoxical need to both acknowledge

the ghostwriter as well as diminish the authority of their role in creating and promoting a

message.

Fanfiction

Fanfiction has the potential to be another good site for an analysis using the chorus model

since the original story came from one writer (also mediated) and is picked up and appropriated

by a fan who then invents a story for their own purposes. Fanfiction occurs when fans of a given

film, tv show, celebrity, book, cartoon, comic or other artist narrative write their own stories

based on a fictional world. A quick look at Google illustrates that fanfiction is an extremely

common way people respond as an audience. The word "fanfiction" alone garners 26, 300, 000

hits. Many of the sites offer platforms for distributing work based on Harry Potter

(HarryPotterFanfiction.com; MuggleNet Fanfiction), One Direction (One Direction FanFiction),

Lord of the Rings (Stories of Arda; Lord of the Rings FanFiction), Star Trek (Trekiverse; Ad

Astra) as well as generalist sites (FanFiction.Net). According to Karen Hellekson and Kristina

Busse in the book *Fanfiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet*, fanfiction as a

literary genre is complex, since the literature is shaped not only by the author, but also by the

interactions of members of the fan community as well as the authors and composers of the original works considered canonical. "The creator of meaning, the person we like to call the *author*, is not a single person but rather is a collective entity. Furthermore, that collective, what we might call *fandom*, is itself not cohesive" (6). Because of the collective and communal nature of writing fanfiction, an analysis of the interactions between participants using the chorus model has the potential to expand on current understandings and issues related to copyright and gatekeeping.

Copyright is frequently a concern for fanfiction writers because some original writers like J.K. Rowling ask fans not to commercially produce works based on her characters (Waters 2004). Sometimes the original writers and their publishing companies go so far as to accuse the fanfiction writers of copyright infringement. On her personal website, Anne Rice states adamantly "I do not allow fanfiction. The characters are copyrighted. It upsets me terribly to even think about fanfiction with my characters. I advise my readers to write your own original stories with your own characters. It is absolutely essential that you respect my wishes." These restrictions do not stop fans from making their own work and in this age of the internet, the fans are able to readily publish their work in public places as well. Applying the chorus model to these circumstances has the potential to reshape how authorship and copyright are perceived, since the chorus model provides the means to both acknowledge the previous writer and identify the transitions made by fans who take on homophonic and polyphonic responses to the original works.

Gatekeeping is another place of concern which the rhetorical chorus model can potentially redress. "Fanfic is a form of what Jenkins (1992), borrowing from DeCerteau (1984), calls 'textual poaching,' in which the meanings of fans are brought to bear on a given text despite

the preferences of producers, reflecting a struggle to neutralize or compensate for hegemonic aspects of the original" (Scodari and Felder 2009, 246). Fanfiction disrupts the gatekeeping protocols of the print publishing system (Mackey and McClay 138-9). Rather than having a work vetted by a publisher and editor in order to produce a work publically, a fanfiction writer can make use of any number of platforms to present her narrative. At the same time, the fanfiction community often has its own gatekeeping procedures based on communal rules.

> It is impossible, and perhaps even dangerous, to speak of a single fandom, because fandoms revolving around the TV program Due South have rules different from those of fandoms revolving around the Lord of the Rings books and movies, and fandoms that are centered around face-to-face meetings, exchange of round-robin-style letters, or generation of hard-copy fanfiction fanzines are each different from the kind of online fandom that is our primary focus here (Hellekson 6).

In addition to gatekeeping within the print industry, fanfiction carries with it distinctly gendered issues when it comes to gatekeeping. Articles such as Joanna Russ's "Pornography by Women, for Women, with Love;" Patricia Frazer Lamb and Diane Veith's "Romantic Myth, Transcendence, and Star Trek Zines," and Constance Penley's "Feminism, Psychoanalysis and the Study of Popular Culture" all describe how women make use of fanfiction, especially works known as slash (two male characters in a sexual relationship) in order to articulate concerns about identity, shifting concepts of gender performance and sex and equal relationships through their writings (Hellekson 17-23). These works demonstrate that women are able to some degree to use fanfiction as a means to speak when they might otherwise feel unable to do so. For example Shippers, or mostly female X-Files fanfiction writers and audience, "hypothesize and

campaign for the series to acknowledge a romance between its protagonists, FBI agents Dana

Scully (Gillian Anderson) and Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and hence, resist producers'

commercial imperatives, a separate spheres dichotomy, devaluation of the feminine/private

sphere, and masculine generic conventions" (Scodari and Felder 238). The Shippers wanted a

romance which flew in the face of FOX network's continued efforts to attract a young male

audience over the women who made up half the show's audience (Scodari 240).These women

writers are also garnering attention as authors, which carries its own problems, such as the

situation of *Fifty Shades of Grey*[39], a situation in which questions are raised as to why some

authors of fanfiction are being paid for their work by mainstream publishing sources while others

are being issued writs for their violations of copyright. Applying a chorus model to these

examples of fanfiction would demonstrate the power dynamics between the original author and

the shifting influences of different fanfiction authors. The chorus model would also reveal the

other participants in the fanfiction community who act as gatekeepers. such as the traditional

publishing community or the producers of fanfiction platforms online.

Contested Authorship

Rhetorical chorus may also be fruitful for examining situations of contested authorships.

Despite moves to acknowledge the multiplicity of authorship practices, the public often turns its

anger onto a single author in examples of contested authorships such as James Frey's *Million*

Little Pieces and Tom MacMaster's *A Gay Girl in Damascus*. For example, Oprah Winfrey

publicly rebuked Frey on her syndicated network talk show after his hoax was revealed, despite

that fact that he was not alone in editing, publishing, and publicizing his text (*Oprah Winfrey*

Show, January 26, 2006). Contested authorship can be explored by tracing the speakers who

helped construct and deconstruct the ethos of Amina, using the methodology of analysis

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[39] See Sales, Fay, and Ngak.

discussed in Chapter 3 of this project. The breakdown of ethos unmasks cultural assumptions regarding individual authorship, gender performances, and the often ignored interventions of others in producing and disseminating rhetorical messages. As the fervor over Amina's kidnapping demonstrated, Amina's rhetoric evoked an emotional response from her audience, because the message adhered to "infrastructures of trust" that the audience recognized (S. Miller 2). MacMaster was successful in creating his false persona, because he did not create her ethos alone. Instead, multiple voices contributed to building Amina's ethos and disseminating the message across multiple points online.

Limitations of the Chorus Model

To borrow from Kenneth Burke, the chorus model is my terministic screen. The model allows us to see some things anew and at the same time, limits our ability to see or focus on other aspects of a rhetorical situation. These limitations pose varying levels of concern for a scholar. The biggest limitation of the chorus model would be the over emphasis on the chorus as a metaphor. The musical and Greek chorus on which this model is based are not exactly and perfectly the same as the group being described. The similarities are present enough to help make some good observations but too close an application of the chorus as metaphor would diminish the point. For example, group work being described here does not occur once in a single performance as a musical or Greek chorus might do. The group also does not follow the close direction of a writer or composer who dictates how the chorus will be behaving. These differences aside, the chorus model offers a few potentialities of analysis since it allows us to map transmission of ideas, and actions of people.

Evidence constitutes another huge limitation for the application of the chorus model. It is possible to have an artifact and have little to no way of parsing out the different participants and

their contributions. Many modern print texts, for example, name the author, publisher and sometimes the editor of the work, but other than naming these people the text provides no clues as to what contributions were made or how the text came to be transmitted to an audience. This same sort of pitfall can occur even with medieval and digital texts because evidence may be lacking or masked. The contributors may not want their individual contributions to be identified separate from the overall artifact created. In digital texts the evidence might be too copious, resulting in an inability to track down all the various contributions, components, or uptakes of information. The result is that taking in the entire rhetorical situation and analyzing it is nearly impossible. A rhetorical situation in a digital environment is by necessity a past event, an artificially fixed point in time and space, so that the researcher can put parameters on what is being examined.

Another potential question or limitation of the chorus model pertains to the elements of autobiographical details which appear to be necessary for chorus model analysis. All of these examples contain elements of autobiographical details and information designed to demonstrate the existence of the historical person who composed. The problems of relying on historical autobiographical information to create an analysis using the chorus model can be explained in three ways. First, the scholar needs to know something about the named speaker who initiated the first rhetorical event within a historical context in order to determine the main speaker's invention and contributions and other participants' inventions and contributions. Yet, autobiographical details can be obscured or lost, especially if early chorus members did not find the information relevant enough to preserve and transmit. Second, the interpretation of historical events, including autobiographical details, can be complicated, since a scholar's analysis is heavily influenced by the scholar's own historical positionality. Third, the historical author and

his or her life story disappears into the construction of a historical persona who represents the original author. In his 1969 essay "What is an Author?," Michel Foucault points out that the named author is actually a historical and social construct developed to categorize literature rather than a completely authentic person (Finklestein and McCleery 2002). Viewing history as a constellation of similar events (Benjamin 1968) helps to offset the problems present in autobiographical and constructed authorship.

Lastly, the recognition of misogyny and racism as well as other constraints on a speaker's authority is another limitation of the chorus model. The model is not designed to acknowledge the full implications regarding the alterations a chorus member might make to a speaker's message. The model ends up rather naively ignoring the perceived impact of the gendered and racial limitations placed on the original speaker. For example, Sojourner Truth had to overcome hostile audiences, racism, her illiteracy, and her health in order to speak. The white men and women who helped her compose her work acted as homophonic instruments—her hands—and yet, their contributions were likely shaped by racism, both subtle and overt. The choral model demonstrates that despite the limitations imposed on Truth, her message has still been taken up, transmitted, and heralded by later chorus members, who constructed a version of Truth and her message for their own purposes. Additional work needs to be done to explore how the performances of race and gender impact the transmissions of a chorus and their participation in the invention of rhetoric.

Regardless of constraints and limitations, the chorus model affords us the opportunity to 'listen' anew to the voices of those who have come before us. These voices rise and fall and take up new themes, scores, and tones. The ensemble has an inherently rhetorical purpose (religious or civic) and functions as a mediating body between past and present, between distances,

between artifact and audience. This mediating body witnesses rhetorical events from the margins of those main rhetorical events and thus, responds and judges the merits of circulating the speaker's message. In their layering of voices both harmonious and contrapuntal, this ensemble is able to perform in its own space and to alter and navigate that space through their technical and rhetorical skills. The members of the chorus and their contributions can be observed and mapped. They share in identities and form a community. Their authority is based on their group status and they are able to convey meaning through repeated ritualized performances. The chorus' metaphoric and symbolic correlations to the human voice afford us, listeners, the ability to discern transmissions of the ensemble as a whole and as parts, the rhetorical moves of one *and* many speakers.

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Appendix A
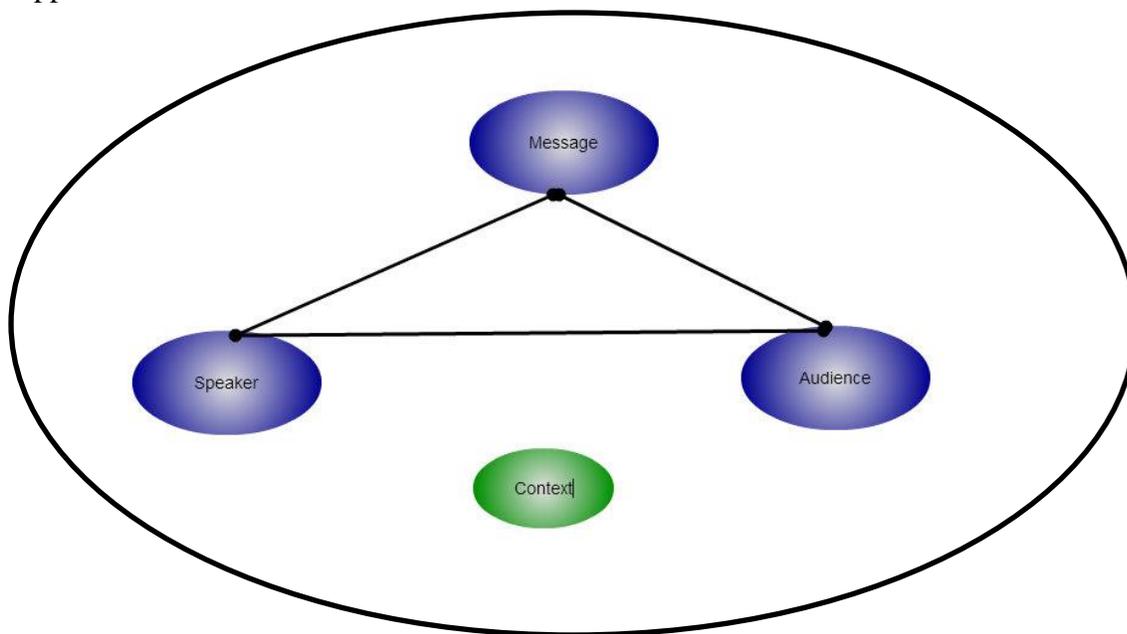
Appendix B
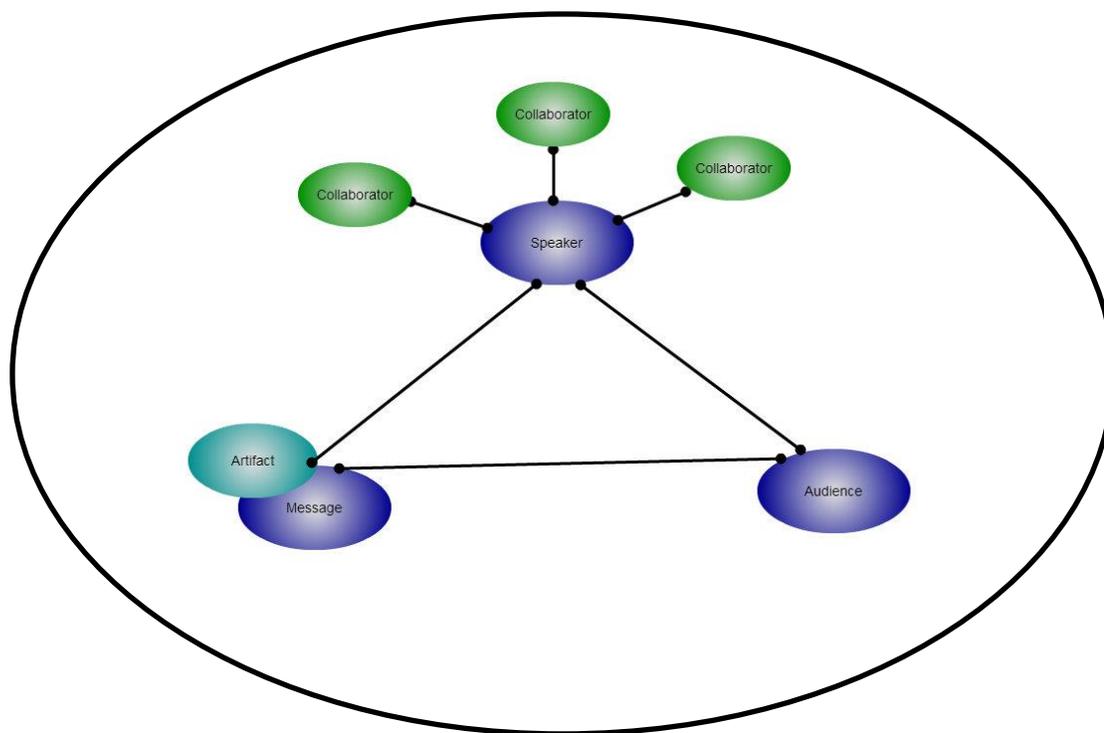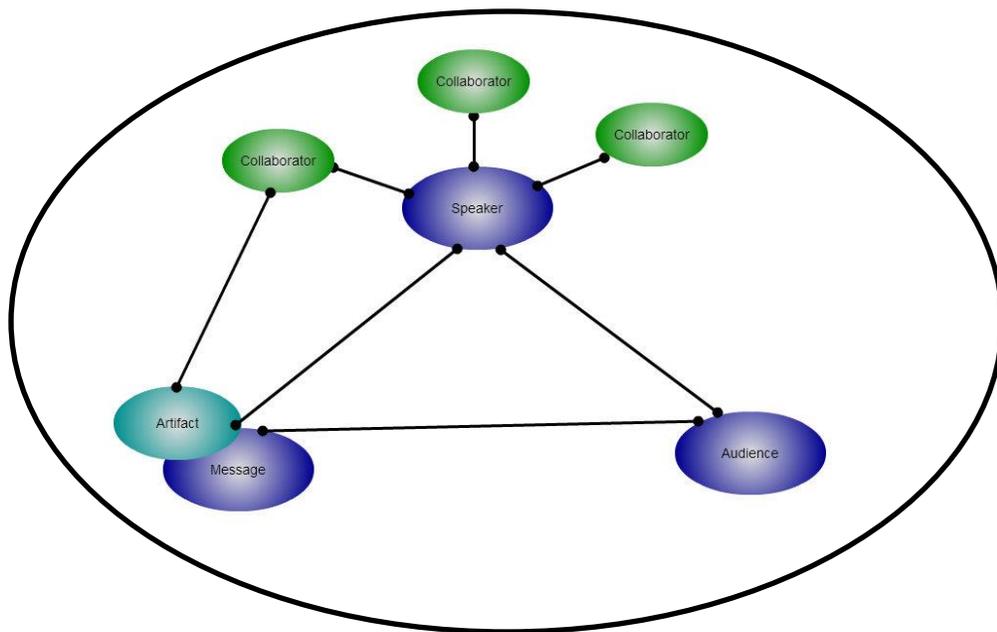
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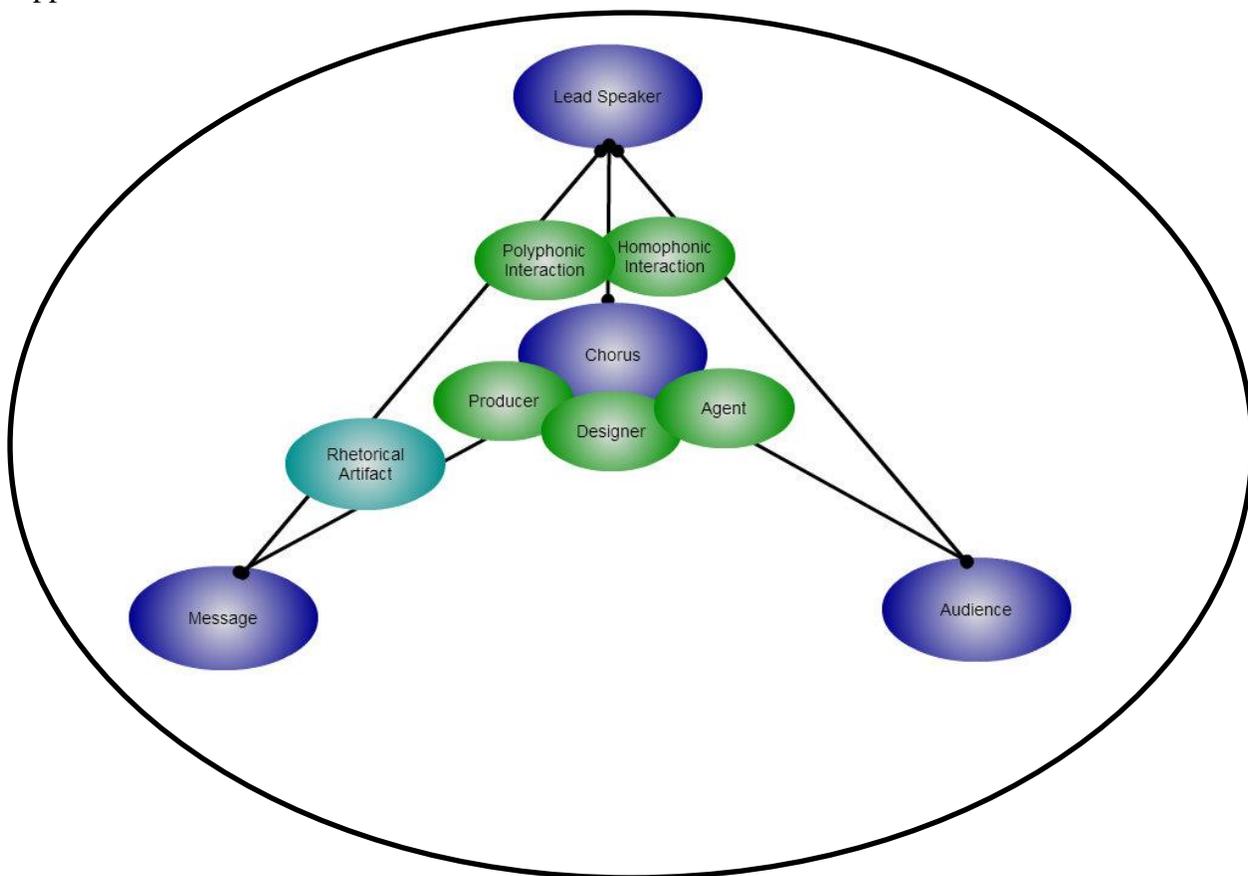
Appendix D

THE HUFFINGTON POST ©

DELIVERING NEWS AND OPINION SINCE MAY 9, 2005

May 09, 2005

Arianna

On The Blog Now

Welcome to the Huffington Post, which, as our motto says, has been delivering news and opinion since, well, a few hours ago. As you look around, you'll see that our front page features our favorite posts from our group bloggers -- including Senator Jon Corzine, Larry David, John Cusack and Walter Cronkite -- and the top news headlines of the moment. If you are hungry for more, you can always get your fill at The Blog and the News Wire where fresh posts and news stories are added 24/7. And don't forget to check out Eat the Press, Harry Shearer's spicy dish about the media. So come in and make yourself at home.

THE BLOG

FEATURED POSTS

Larry David   05.09.2005

Why I Support John Bolton

I know this may not sound politically correct, but as someone who has abused and tormented employees and underlings for years, I am dismayed by all of this yammering directed at John Bolton. Let's face it, the people who are screaming the loudest at Bolton have never been a

HUFFINGTON POST EXCLUSIVE: EMBARGOED BOOK CLAIMS SAUDI OIL INFRASTRUCTURE RIGGED FOR CATASTROPHIC SELF-DESTRUCTION

in brief | comments

Terrorism Expert Daniel Pipes Responds

in brief | comments

Military Strategist Brian Haig Responds

in brief | comments

Huff Post Updates:

THE NEWS WIRE
THE BLOG
RSS/XML

Rep. Ed Markey
05.09.2005

One Little, Two Little, Three Little Nukes...

Today, I will join Hans Blix at the United Nations for a discussion on the need to balance disarmament and non-proliferation. The real "nuclear option" that threatens our national security is not the one being debated in the Senate – this nuclear option will end in a devastating plume of smoke over our cities.
Read whole post.

Author Bio | permalink

Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Brad Hall
05.09.2005

Marriage Trouble

Look around and you'll see the gays getting gay-married all over the place, and, to quote, well, everyone: gay marriage destroys real marriage. Now, when I come home to my wife, I feel nothing. How could I? SHE COULD BE A MAN. Thanks a lot, gays.
Read whole post.

Author Bio | permalink

Mike Nichols
05.09.2005

So, Now, Why Have You Called Us Together?

I think that metaphor is in trouble. To take the bible literally, as fundamentalists do, is an attack on the greatest collection of metaphors we have. We need metaphor as we need stories. We need stories that mean more than just the events that transpire in them. Anyone who has read to children knows that the development of their entire personalities requires stories beyond the literal. They are the only way to understand and develop ideas. If we

Harry Shearer
05.08.2005

Welcome to Eat The Press

Welcome to "Eat the Press". My name is Harry, I'll be your server. Everything's fresh, except the stuff that's been on the site since beta testing, but that's good, too.

A little about the menu. The appetizers are what I like to call "Found Objects", pieces of audio and/or video that illustrate the news-making process at work. Media people have always delighted in presenting us with the incautiously recorded moments of politicians and celebrities; this section represents just a tasty bit of table-turning. These pieces are presented raw, and without unnecessary chopping, so enjoy.

For the entrees we have for you the freshest looks at the stories the media is covering, why and how they're covering them, and what they're not covering. We've taken off the menu both the "gee, we did the horserace story again too often during the campaign" dishes and the extra-salty "they're biased against the left/they're biased against the right" stews you may have been gorging on lately.

In the spirit of the venue, we're looking for your observations and contributions. If you're in the media business, and have a tasty story of the...

Read whole post.

Posted at 12:00 PM | permalink

Appendix E

Hoccleve presenting book to Prince Henry miniature. London, British Library, MS Arundel 38, f37