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I want to tell you what I did and why I did it.: A rhetorical criticism of the crisis rhetoric of President George Bush

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"I WANT TO TELL YOU WHAT I DID AND WHY I DID IT."
A RHETORICAL CRITICISM OF THE CRISIS RHETORIC OF
PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH

A Thesis
Presented to the
College of Arts and Sciences
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by
Barbara Jen Chandler

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

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"I WANT TO TELL YOU WHAT I DID AND WHY I DID IT."

A RHETORICAL CRITICISM OF THE CRISIS RHETORIC OF
PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH

Barbara Jen Chandler
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Supervisor: Dr. Deborah Smith-Howell

This study examines the rhetoric of President George Bush as he addressed four crisis situations during his term in office-- The Panama Invasion in December 1989, the Flag Desecration issue in June 1990, the Persian Gulf War in August 1990 and the Los Angeles riots in April 1992. The discourse was analyzed to discover characteristics of his crisis communication rhetorical style and strategy, and to determine whether his crisis communication supported the arguments for a crisis rhetoric genre.

Bush's style and strategy were examined in terms of the rhetorical elements of speaker, audience, topic and setting. The analysis revealed that Bush used personal values to establish himself as the legitimate leader of the nation. He used patriotic, religious, social and family values to establish common ground with his audiences and focus the topics of his remarks.
Bush’s crisis rhetoric provided evidence in support of a crisis rhetoric genre theory. His remarks followed a consistent, identifiable pattern and contained elements necessary in crisis discourse in order for audiences to understand and evaluate the crisis situations and the actions chosen by the president to resolve those situations. Such genre elements include evidence of consummatory and/or justificatory language, the speaker’s awareness of a global audience, explanations of how the actions are in accordance with U.S. policies and how they are strategically sound and morally upright, justification of action based on audience values, and evidence of enemy themes in the discourse.

The study provides insight into the rhetorical style of George Bush and offers a framework for similar studies of other presidential crisis rhetoric. It also presents specific criteria for the crisis rhetoric genre which can be applied to future study of this communication issue.
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CHAPTER ONE  INTRODUCTION

"We interrupt this program to bring you a special news bulletin." Those words immediately draw the attention of any adult within earshot of a television or radio. Questions race through people's minds as they prepare to receive the information. *What is so important? Is it good news or bad? Is it a crisis? If it is, who is in charge? Is the news local, national or international? When did it happen? Who will speak? From where? What action will need to be taken? What decisions will need to be made?*

As the speaker begins to relay the late-breaking news, listeners filter the information through their mental storehouses of past experiences concerning news bulletins. Through that filtering process, they answer the questions and assign a level of importance to the news bulletin.

Perhaps it is a story about a bank robbery on the other side of town. The questions are answered: it is local news; probably not a crisis; the spokesperson will probably be someone from the police department. The listeners are dependent on that person for information that will help them decide who is in charge, whether the news affects them personally and whether they need to take any action or make a decision.

Perhaps the news bulletin is a story about a hurricane in Florida. People who do not live in the southeast probably do not need to take any action. They anticipate regular updates from someone in the National Weather Service, and they expect local Florida
officials to alert them, through the media, if victims of the hurricane need money, food or clothing that people living in other parts of the country might be able to provide.

A news bulletin about student protests on several college campuses alerts the public to an issue that may have national implications. It may become a crisis. People tune in to the news for updated information. They expect comments from university officials. They wait to see if any government officials address the situation. If so, the listeners measure the seriousness of the situation by whether they are city, state or national government officials.

If the news is about an international incident, such as a highjacking or a military action that threatens peace, people have certain expectations about who will speak and what will be said. They anticipate a national government spokesperson, and the public perception based on past experience is that the more powerful the position of the spokesperson, the more important the news is likely to be. If there is a statement from the White House, people wait to see who will deliver it. If the spokesperson is a White House aide or the Press Secretary, a certain level of seriousness is attached to the situation. If the statement is delivered by a cabinet member, the public knows that the news is more serious. If the President of the United States comes to the podium to deliver news to the American people, they know that it is a high priority situation and their attention is trained on the voice of the nation's most powerful leader.
All of the hypothetical situations described above have one thing in common. They all fit prescribed scripts that people have become familiar with, through past experience, as the way they receive and filter news information about unexpected situations. People have certain expectations about how they will receive information during a crisis and what will be said. These situations clearly fit the conditions that Lloyd F. Bitzer uses to describe rhetorical situations (1). According to Bitzer, a rhetorical situation involves an exigence -- an imperfection marked by urgency that invites discourse (6). In addition, a rhetorical situation requires that the discourse be delivered to an audience capable of being influenced by that discourse and taking action accordingly (8), and the discourse must fit the situation (10). In other words, in a rhetorical situation something must be wrong that can be remedied if a speaker can persuade the listeners to support the leadership's chosen solution. However, such persuasive discourse must be crafted very carefully if it is to achieve its goal. The speaker must have a clear understanding of the interaction of all the elements involved in the situation, including the topic, the setting and the audience. The speaker must decide what effect the speech may have on the audience. Will it be calming or challenging? Will it be demanding or placating? Will the speaker inspire the listeners or warn them (Hart, Modern Rhetorical 69-70)?
The discourse must fit the situation (Bitzer 10). For example, if an announcement about the deployment of U.S. troops to a war zone was delivered from a fishing boat, it would not be a fitting response because the setting is not in line with public expectations for such an announcement. Similarly, when Ronald Reagan was scheduled to deliver the State of the Union address and the Challenger Space Shuttle exploded, he changed the topic of his speech that evening and gave a eulogy. It would not have been fitting to deliver any other type of speech under the circumstances. It is very important for presidents to consider their decisions very carefully when preparing fitting responses to exigencies because the one thing they can be sure of is that when the president speaks, the people listen.

The presidency, as an institution, commands the attention of the nation, and therefore, so does the person holding that office. Several scholars have discussed why presidential discourse receives such attention. They suggest that the public tries to resolve uncertainty and the need for information during a crisis by attending to the words of the legitimately elected leader of the nation. In other words, when people recognize that a crisis situation is at hand that requires a response, they look to the president for leadership and direction.

In Political Campaign Communication, Judith S. Trent and Robert V. Friedenberg's discussion about the characteristics of the presidency offers some
explanation as to why presidential statements are the focus of audience attention during crisis situations. One such characteristic is simply the legitimacy of the office of president. The person who holds the office is perceived as the natural and logical leader of the nation (Trent and Friedenberg 66). A crisis occurs suddenly from the perspective of average citizens who may be uncertain as to the appropriate reaction, so people depend on government officials to provide meaning to the event (Young 272). Public uncertainty, particularly in a crisis situation, makes people anxious to hear the president's version of what is happening. People need to know as much as possible about the situation in order to determine their own opinions and courses of action. The president has access to virtually every possible source of information so the public perception is that the most credible information they will be able to get will come from the president.

Another basis for public attention to the president is the characteristic of competency. The president has the power to take almost any action, and people want to believe that the person they elected president is capable of fulfilling that role (Trent and Friedenberg 66). The basic tendency of Americans is to believe in great personages who can and will cope with major crises (Cronin 34). Within American society, the presidency fulfills that need (Denton and Woodward 212).

Clearly, people are primed to listen to presidents in crisis situations, and modern history has offered many opportunities for presidents to speak. Domestic and
international crisis situations in recent history include the Vietnam War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the assassinations of President Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy, the nuclear explosion at Three Mile Island, Kent State, civil rights demonstrations that erupted into violence, numerous airplane highjacking and terrorist actions including the capture of American hostages in the Middle East, the explosion of the Challenger Space Shuttle, and the Persian Gulf War to name just a few. Every one of these situations demanded a response. People expected to receive updated information about the situation from the White House. In most of these situations, presidents used the power of the office to take action and used the power of rhetoric to persuade the American public to support that action or decision.

Asking the American public to support actions like the deployment of military troops or to support decisions to negotiate with terrorists requires highly effective rhetorical skills. Even then, other factors such as economic issues or the actions of other nations can interfere with efforts to persuade the public to trust presidential decisions. Roderick P. Hart suggests that the American people did not re-elect "a pleasant fellow like Jimmy Carter because he could not persuade them that he could persuade them" (Verbal Style and the Presidency 6). Somehow, Carter failed to convince the public that he was a legitimate and competent leader who could handle the nation's crisis situations, but other presidents have been very successful at winning the public trust in their crisis
decisions. What factors contributed to that public confidence? Were there rhetorical strategies employed by some presidents that affected public acceptance of their decisions and courses of action?

In this thesis, I explore the role that rhetorical strategy and style plays in presidential crisis communication. I examine not only the text of presidential speeches made during crisis situations, but also the context of the situation in which those speeches were delivered. Understanding the structure and content of crisis discourse as well as the situations in which it occurred contributes to the knowledge of the institution of the presidency and provides information about effective communication concerning events that threaten the stability of the nation.

Previous research in presidential crisis communication has focused almost entirely on international situations (Kiewe 95-96). I continue the study of international crises in this thesis because previous studies raise controversy over whether crisis communication is a genre. However, in addition to international crises, I examine presidential communication concerning domestic crises that have occurred in the United States to see if presidents handle crises in their own back yard differently than that which occurs in foreign neighborhoods.

The study of the crisis rhetoric of presidents also provides insight into the rhetorical style of the individuals holding the office at any given time. Crisis
communication has been part of the rhetorical role of American presidents ever since the
institution of the presidency was established and the personalities who held that office
have become historic legends. Men like Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin
Roosevelt and John Kennedy were praised for their rhetorical skills. In fact, a study of
the crisis rhetoric of any of America's presidents would yield valuable information about
the office and about the individual elected to the office.

For this thesis, I focus on the crisis rhetoric of President George Bush, who held
office from 1988 through 1992. George Bush was president at an extraordinary time in
history. The Cold War ended and people stopped seeing Communism as a major threat to
the western world. Ever since Truman, presidents have been using Communism to define
the enemy and using nuclear war to define the ultimate crisis. During his term of office,
George Bush had to redefine the enemy and the crisis.

In addition, George Bush's rhetoric is interesting to study because he rode into
office on the tide of popularity created by Ronald Reagan, who was called by many the
"Great Communicator" (Jamieson, Eloquence x). Yet Bush was unable to be elected to a
second term as president. Although this thesis does not attempt to measure the influence
the voting public attaches to presidential crisis rhetoric, nor does it confirm or disprove
that the responses to major news events will make or break a president, it does examine
the relationship between specific presidential crisis communication and relevant public opinion polls.

The presidential crisis communication of George Bush is locked into history along with the events that prompted it. What he said is on record in the Public Papers of the Presidents to be studied by anyone interested in presidential communication and the history of that time. The speeches in those volumes are like a gallery of paintings, completed and hung in place in a particular order. Just as the art critic carefully examines each detail of a painting to discover information about the artist's style as well as the message the artist was attempting to convey, as a rhetorical critic I examine the detail of George Bush's rhetoric to better understand his speaking style as well as the messages he attempted to convey.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Examination of the relevant literature concerning presidential crisis communication reveals a broad range of approaches. In addition to various definitions of "crisis," some scholars discuss the power of crisis rhetoric to define reality and others focus on how presidents use crisis rhetoric to persuade and even manipulate the public. There are also various studies on presidential rhetorical strategies during crises, and several scholars have taken a generic approach to the topic.

Definition of rhetoric

A discussion of crisis rhetoric must begin with a definition of the word "rhetoric." Rhetoric is the nonverbal and verbal symbols used in the communication process by speakers and writers, listeners and readers (Golden, Bergquist, Coleman 2). Rhetoric includes everything from speeches to architecture to dance to public demonstrations. Rhetoric does not include natural objects and events, such as rock formations or hurricanes because they are independent of human communication (Foss 4). Rhetoric is transactional human communication and can only take place when at least two people agree to engage in the communication process.
Rhetoric involves people interacting in an atmosphere of potential change (Hart, Modern Rhetorical Criticism 9), and using language to help people narrow their choices (4). Because rhetoric involves making choices, it is also the art of persuasion. It is the use of symbols to influence thought and action (Foss 4). Speakers use rhetoric to persuade audiences to agree with them, buy their products, support their plans of action, vote for them, in short, to take action that furthers the purposes of the speaker.

Aristotle wrote that the function of rhetoric is "not to [absolutely] persuade, but to discover the available means of persuasion in a given case" (Cooper 6). In other words, it is not enough for rhetors to just speak. Each case has its own unique nuances that make one rhetorical strategy more persuasive than any other and speakers must examine all the possible means of persuasion when crafting their rhetoric.

Clearly, political communication is rhetoric. It involves speakers and listeners, writers and readers. It involves leaders trying to persuade and people trying to make choices about what action to take. Those choices are most difficult and most urgent in crisis situations and presidents, particularly in this age of modern media, must be well-prepared to present their most persuasive rhetoric (Kiewe, xvi).
Definition of crisis

Political communication scholars who discuss crisis rhetoric must first define what constitutes a crisis. In Political Language, Murray Edelman describes a crisis as "a development that is unique and threatening" (44), and in Constructing the Political Spectacle he adds that a crisis "heralds instability" (31). Edelman's choice of words suggests that a crisis is any situation in which people feel unsafe and are unsure about a proper course of action. These are relatively ambiguous terms that could be applied equally well to personal or national crises.

Hart takes a national crisis approach. He discusses crises in terms of the word "strife" and defines such communication as "speeches describing domestic and international conflicts such as Vietnam, the Middle East and nuclear disarmament" (Verbal Style 22). These examples involve military action and it is likely that most people would agree that any situation involving the potential for loss of life is a crisis.

In his introduction to The Modern Presidency and Crisis Rhetoric, Amos Kiewe defines presidential crisis rhetoric as a transactional communication process between the president, the press, and the public (xvii). In that same book, in an article entitled "Richard Nixon and the Personalization of Crisis," Carole Blair and Davis W. Houck define presidential crisis rhetoric as "...an entreaty by a president to the nation to see itself..."
as seriously and immediately threatened..." (Blair and Houck 99). They go on to note that such threats may come from other nations, from individuals or from circumstances.

These definitions of rhetoric and crisis illustrate the broad scope of presidential crisis communication, and there is an equally broad range of approaches for studying crisis communication.

Crisis rhetoric as a way to define reality

Several examples of crisis communication research focus on rhetoric as a way to define a crisis and thereby, define reality for that situation (Bitzer 4, Foss 4). When presidents are presented with crisis situations, they must weigh all the information and determine how to present it to the public. The way that presidents choose to speak about events is influenced by their backgrounds, personal values and their own expectations of how events should proceed. The people who determine the policies and actions of nations do not respond to the objective facts of the situation, but to their image of the situation (Boulding 120). Presidents may judge events imperfectly or incorrectly or even deceptively, but what they say is an effort to make sense out of events and project courses of action (Wichelns 9). In other words, just like everyone else, presidents' past experiences affect their perceptions so when the public listens to presidential crisis communication, they are hearing about it from that individual's view of reality.
The president's rhetoric establishes the urgency of a situation. Some scholars argue that a crisis situation does not even exist as a crisis until leaders start talking about it that way. Hart states that even the most existential event, such as the bombing of Pearl Harbor is denied essential meaning in a president-dependent culture until the chief executive delivers a speech about the event so as to make it meaningful (Verbal Style 6).

Such a statement implies that any situation, regardless of how obviously serious and threatening it may be, can be presented as a crisis or a less serious situation depending on how the president wants the public to perceive it. Richard Cherwitz and Kenneth Zagacki agree with Hart, saying events become crises not because of unique sets of situational exigencies, but by virtue of the discourse used to describe them (307). In other words, the person describing the situation controls whether the language will create a sense of threat. Edelman concurs with this view, noting that usually a crisis is an episode in a long sequence of similar problems, and that a crisis is a creation of the language used to depict it (Constructing the Political Spectacle 31). Therefore, even when people are aware of events leading up to a potential crisis, they do not classify it as such until the president defines it as a crisis.
In some cases, scholars argue that crisis rhetoric is used to actually manipulate public perceptions of crisis situations. Jeffrey Tulis agrees that the public has trouble identifying crisis situations. However, he blames this on a rhetorical presidency which creates pseudo-crises (181). Tulis states that presidential speeches themselves have made crisis rhetoric so routine that the public has lost the ability to distinguish between genuine and spurious crises (179). In other words, because presidents use crisis rhetoric so often when there is no real crisis, people can no longer identify the real thing.

Marilyn Young and Michael Launer strike some middle ground in this discussion, concluding from their study of presidential rhetoric concerning the KAL 007 crisis, that in a crisis atmosphere, the public relies on accumulated knowledge to define the situation and determine appropriate action, which creates the rhetorical situation in which the rhetor is expected to respond. Once the rhetor does respond, the elements become interactive and the rhetor informs and establishes the context in which the event will be evaluated (288).

In other words, the public identifies an exigence that requires a response from the president. However, they do not assign crisis level to the incident until the president speaks, after which they place their previous knowledge into the context of the situation as established by the president.
Presidents can use discourse to define reality, but they can also alter the perception of reality by what they do not say. When addressing the nation about crisis situations, presidents can disclose whatever information they choose. They have the power to present their most persuasive arguments, and they can omit potentially valuable information such as facts about their previous failures in similar situations, or the views of their critics, or details about alternative plans (Hart, Sound of Leadership 81). Clearly, to include such information would not be in the best interests of speakers who are trying to persuade the public to support their policies, but such omissions may limit public understanding of the reality of the situation.

Offering another example of how failure to speak alters reality, Farrell points out that when the White House perceives that communication is out of control and causing a loss of credibility for the president, as it did in the Three Mile Island incident, it can shut down the information center. The Presidential Task Force that investigated the crisis simply offered the conclusion that because the communication incompetence was so widespread, any popular explanations being offered were not credible (Farrell 286-94). By using the excuse that the information was inaccurate, they were able to shut off all information and create a high level of public uncertainty. In this case, the White House defined the crisis situation by providing no information and creating a very unstable reality.
Crisis rhetoric as persuasive strategy

Some research literature explores the persuasive characteristics of presidential crisis communication and how it is used to direct public thought and action. Bitzer suggests that it is the very role of crisis rhetoric to persuade the audience (5). Hart remarks that "the most important decision a modern president makes is not that of deciding policy, but that of articulating policy in ways that will make the Congress and people want to adopt that policy" (Verbal Style 6). Although some might argue that this is a rather extreme statement, implying that any presidential action will be acceptable to the public if it is presented persuasively, most public speakers would agree that when public support is required for success, even the most perfect plan of action is doomed if it is not presented effectively, and with the right presentation, even the sloppiest plan can be made to appear brilliant.

Edelman suggests that in crisis situations presidents can persuade the public to support White House policies by using rhetoric to focus attention where they want it. Leaders are able to divert and orchestrate public concern because people who are fearful respond with enthusiasm to those who offer clear definitions of enemies and unambiguous promises of solutions (Edelman, Constructing Political Spectacle 59). When people are faced with threats and uncertainty, they welcome the direction of a leader in control of the situation.
Hart provides additional insight into how public uncertainty can be a factor in the power of persuasive crisis rhetoric. In *Verbal Style and the Presidency*, he discusses how presidents can manipulate the level of public anxiety through the use of certain words. For example, adding embellishment to stressful remarks heightens the gravity of the situation (Verbal Style 54), a formal speaking style emphasizes the symbolic role of the president as the nation's leader (53), and speeches exhibiting a high level of certainty result in higher public opinion polls following the speech (155). The public responds positively to presidents who display high levels of strong leadership and competency characteristics.

**Styles of crisis rhetoric**

Another approach to studying crisis communication is to explore the various rhetorical styles employed by presidents. The styles and strategies examined in current crisis rhetoric literature fall into two general categories. One is the use of myths and metaphors to create enemy themes, and the other is crisis rhetoric based on personal and social values. 

*Rhetorical strategies that create enemy themes*  As was discussed previously, the anxiety level of the audience is considered a factor in using crisis rhetoric to persuade.
Myths and metaphors can be used to create enemy themes as a rhetorical strategy for presidents to employ to raise the public's anxiety level.

In *Politics as Symbolic Action*, Edelman offers an extensive discussion of "enemy themes" that evoke mass arousal and anxiety by describing the enemy as alien, a stranger or even subhuman (115). Classic myths that revolve around hostile plotters and benevolent leaders promote the belief that victory can be achieved over the enemy if the group will work, sacrifice and obey its leaders (78). For people who are looking for decisive leadership and clear solutions in a crisis situation, such myths identify an enemy and a course of action, which can be a welcome relief from the anxiety and uncertainty about what action to take.

Presidents have used these types of enemy themes to describe the Communist threat ever since Truman was president (Rasmussen 111). Communists have been portrayed as people outside of our society and therefore, strangers (Edelman, *Politics as Symbolic Action* 115). However, enemy themes have not been limited to the Communist threat. They have been used to describe Americans as well. Edelman discusses a speech delivered by Richard Nixon in 1969 in South Dakota on law and order in which he referred to dissenters and demonstrators as "those intoxicated with the romance of violent revolution" (Edelman, *Politics* 71). Clearly, although Nixon did not characterize the protestors as aliens, he did place them outside the boundaries of acceptable society.
Enemy theme discourse lends itself to rhetoric delivered to justify military actions. Robert L. Ivie notes that rhetoric from the War of 1812 used images of savage enemies bent on rituals of victimage (Metaphor of Force in Prowar Discourse 240-253). He explains that victimage rhetoric portrays images of "evils forced upon a reluctant nation by the aggressive acts of an enemy" (Images of Savagery 279). Ivie pursued the study of enemy themes as a rhetorical style used by American presidents in their justification of war. By analyzing the vocabulary of selected American presidents, he was able to identify the metaphors they use that characterize victimage rhetoric (Presidential Motives for War 337).

All of these enemy themes contribute to public perceptions of persecution and conspiracy. Presidents use this strategy to provide a common enemy and the promise of strong action to return the nation to stability.

Rhetorical strategy based on values Another strategy for persuading the public to support presidential decisions in crisis situations is to focus on the accepted social values of the society. Various scholars have identified and analyzed the use of language that promotes such values as patriotism, trust, democracy, freedom, and even religious values in crisis rhetoric. For example, when Reagan discussed military power, it was in terms of an essential instrument of national purpose (Goodnight 391). In other words, military
action was necessary to preserve the nation's basic values such as freedom and democracy.

Robert C. Rowland and Thea Rademacher call Reagan's use of values a passive style of rhetorical crisis management. This style is employed by speakers who choose to avoid taking firm positions on controversial subjects while expressing strong value commitments to end the crises (Rowland and Rademacher 328). For example, during the Superfund controversy Reagan spoke of his personal commitment to the environment but never answered the charges of critics (Rowland and Rademacher 332).

In addition to avoiding controversial subjects by emphasizing social values, Reagan focused on values in order to avoid providing detailed or technical information. Janice Hocker Rushing notes that in his Star Wars addresses, Reagan avoided discussing technical information. Instead, he chose to make social reasoning more powerful than technical reasoning by telling his audience that they need not tax themselves to understand the technical matters if they understand the greater purpose -- preventing nuclear obliteration (416). When the public seeks leadership during ambiguous or complex situations, such as crises, this rhetorical strategy reduces the ambiguity by eliminating the confusing information.

Previous to Reagan's presidency, Johnson used a similar values-based rhetorical strategy to divert public attention from the immediate civil rights crisis by subordinating
it to the need for regional and national unity and the desire for economic growth
(Zarefsky, Subordinating the Civil Rights Issue 117). Johnson chose to appeal to accepted
social values of unity and national prosperity in order to focus public attention on the end,
not the means, of his political policies.

Edelman offers some discussion that seems related to the issues of passive style
and the rhetorical use of social values to control the focus of public attention in a crisis
situation. In Political Language, Words That Succeed and Policies That Fail, he asserts
that crisis rhetoric typically rationalizes policies that are especially harmful to those who
are already disadvantaged. He suggests that a crisis hurts the poor more than those with
the resources to adapt and states that the government avoids rhetoric that calls attention to
unequal distribution of goods and services. On the other hand, there is an increase in
rhetoric concerning threats that legitimize and expand authority. The former are
"problems" and the latter are "crises" (49). These statements not only relate to the
research on passive rhetoric as a strategy for diverting attention, but when presidents use
crisis rhetoric to define "problems" and "crises," they are using the discourse to define
reality.

Rowland and Rademacher refer to Reagan's passive rhetorical strategy as a
"rhetorical Teflon coating" (327), but that expression seems equally applicable to
Johnson's civil rights rhetoric and Edelman's statements about government's crisis
rhetoric in general. In all cases, the rhetorical strategy allows the president to gloss over the sticky issues such as controversy, demonstrations or complex technical information. Rowland and Rademacher express concern that this style of crisis rhetoric "seriously diminishes the capacity of the public to make informed and rational decisions" (328).

However, Zarefsky argues that values-based discourse is the proper rhetorical course, noting that "in a time of crisis, perhaps one of the president's chief duties is to speak for the ordering of values to which he subscribes" (Civil Rights and Civil Conflict 65). Zarefsky goes on in his study of Johnson's civil rights rhetoric to suggest that an individual president's personal values might very well direct the discourse for good reason. His states that crisis events demand a quick response and presidents cannot review systematically all possible response suggestions presented to them, so their communication during a crisis is likely to reflect their intuitive value preferences (Civil Rights and Civil Conflict 59). This view suggests that in crisis situations, presidents take action based on instinct rather than studied deliberation with advisors.

Religious values have also been used to persuade the public during crisis situations. G. Thomas Goodnight discusses how Ronald Reagan incorporated religious values into his "Evil Empire" speech concerning potential nuclear crisis. Goodnight suggests that using biblical quotations and speaking as a prophet demanding righteousness, Reagan turned the nuclear arms debate into a spiritual conflict (400). This
use of religious values in crisis rhetoric dates back to colonial times. It is based on the jeremiad, a Puritan sermonic style in which listeners were made to feel they had brought the evil upon themselves with their sins, but by following God's plan and working hard together, they would be rewarded (Bormann 130, Hart, Modern Rhetorical 192). This type of speech creates a sense of fear and uncertainty that makes people receptive to images of enemies committing evil acts against the nation so that they respond to calls for national unity. As Goodnight's study of Reagan's speech indicates, the jeremiad form of rhetoric continues to be employed in modern times as a method to increase public anxiety and persuade the audience that the only salvation is unified support of the solutions presented by their leader.6

Crisis rhetoric as a genre

Researchers who select the generic approach to study presidential crisis communication search for common language patterns in the discourse. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson define genre as a classification based on the fusion and interrelation of elements in such a way that a unique kind of rhetorical act is created (25). They add that the rhetoric in a given genre will consist of language forms that may appear in isolation in other discourse, but within the genre, they appear together in a certain combination every time (20). In other words, the images generated by the
paragraphs, sentences and even individual words interact in unique, but consistently identifiable patterns that provide clear indicators about the type of situation that prompted the discourse. There is some argument among scholars as to whether or not crisis rhetoric is a genre.

One type of crisis rhetoric discussed previously in this thesis, the jeremiad, is identified by Hart as a genre (Modern Rhetorical 192). He defines a genre as a class of messages, similar in structure and content, that create special expectations for the listeners (183). This definition relates directly back to the scripts discussed in my introduction to this thesis. Audiences have prescribed expectations of the form and content of presidential rhetoric based on contextual clues. For example, when the television announcer interrupts a program for a special news bulletin, people anticipate that some crisis will be the topic of the message and that the message will be delivered following the format of previously delivered crisis rhetoric. This societal understanding of the rules that dictate the traditional form and structure of certain types of messages is the basis of rhetorical genre.

Richard A. Cherwitz and Kenneth S. Zagacki support the theory that presidential crisis communication during international crisis situations meets the criteria of a genre, explaining that "presidential messages contain discernable and recurring features that shape public expectations regarding crisis management." They add that "these rhetorical
patterns are so etched in public consciousness as to create immediate recognition when present in presidential discourse" (308). Clearly, this description of presidential crisis communication includes recurring features that have similarities and familiar patterns that create public expectations, thus meeting the criteria of a genre.

Cherwitz and Zagacki offer more detail about the generic characteristics of crisis rhetoric by identifying two subcategories: consummatory and justificatory. Consummatory rhetoric is used when presidential discourse is the only official reply made by the American government to a crisis situation. The speech is directed to a global audience and seeks a global resolution. In such a speech, the president identifies who or what is responsible for the emergency and outlines any economic or diplomatic actions that the government may have taken (Cherwitz and Zagacki 308-316). It is discourse used when no military action has been taken and the president is trying to solve the crisis through economic or diplomatic means.

Justificatory rhetoric, on the other hand, is presidential discourse that announces overt military retaliation taken by the U.S. government. The primary audiences are the American public and the instigators of the crisis (Cherwitz and Zagacki 308-316). In this case, there is no hint of compromise or debate. It is meant to be decisive and irrevocable.

Justificatory rhetoric was the focus of research by Karen Rasmussen in which she identified several characteristics and arguments of justificatory rhetoric that strongly
suggest it is a genre. She states that there are certain identifiable characteristics in a perceived international crisis: 1) there is a demand for immediate action, 2) the crisis is far removed from the people being asked to accept the justification, 3) the decision to accept or reject the justification is based on little information, and 4) the themes of justification are a variation on Truman's "The U.S. mission is to assume free world leadership," which was based on America's chief enemy being Communism (111). In other words, an international crisis will always require quick action and the public will have little information on which to base its support of that action other than the traditional anti-Communist, nuclear threat theme.

She goes on to identify the arguments that presidents use in justificatory rhetoric. They are 1) U.S. action is necessary to further foreign policy goals, 2) the action meets Communist duplicity and threats in a morally upright and strategically advantageous manner, and 3) this action fares well when compared with enemy moves and other alternatives (113). These arguments asking for public support are based on rhetorical styles discussed previously, such as trust in the president as the legitimate and competent leader of the nation and on appeals to patriotic and social values.

Rasmussen concludes that justificatory rhetoric succeeds because 1) the speaker transfers the action taken to widely accepted values of the audience, 2) U.S. citizens have a predisposition toward action, 3) since the rhetoric is justificatory, the request is only for
acceptance or rejection, not to take any responsibility, and 4) the crisis context does not allow in-depth public exposure to information necessary for evaluating alternative courses of action (116). In other words, in light of the public's propensity that something be done, and the inherent nature of crises which requires immediate decisions rather than allowing time for discussion, a rhetorical appeal to American values is likely to gain support for presidential policies in crisis situations. It appears that Rasmussen's clearly defined outline of justificatory rhetoric characteristics could be applied to any discourse as a set of structural and contextual similarities that create expectations among the listeners, thus meeting the qualifications of a genre.

Bonnie J. Dow looks at two other rhetorical strategies that bear some resemblance to the consummatory and justificatory categories. They are epideictic and deliberative rhetoric. Epideictic rhetoric is used to explain an issue in an effort to achieve communal understanding. This is similar to the description of consummatory rhetoric. Deliberative rhetoric, like justificatory rhetoric, is used to gain informal public and formal Congressional approval for presidential action (297-303). Although Dow's categories seem to parallel those of Cherwitz and Rasmussen, she vehemently disagrees with any scholarly attempt to define crisis rhetoric as a genre. She does not see enough similarities in the speeches that have been studied, and she suggests that a definition of crisis genre would require an exhaustive study of all crisis rhetoric (307). Amos Kiewe agrees with
Dow that not enough case studies exist to establish the existence of a genre of crisis rhetoric (Kiewe xxiii).⁷

Taking the discussion a step further, Farrell argues that generic discourse is not even possible in a crisis situation. In his study of the rhetoric associated with the nuclear power event at Three Mile Island in March of 1979, Farrell found that traditional communication patterns broke down in that crisis situation. He suggests that in a crisis, the options of discourse are almost never clear during the moments of its unfolding. In this instance, the highly technical nature of the event made discourse even more difficult as technicians, scientists and politicians all tried to use familiar language patterns to present the problem to the public (272-274).

The result Farrell describes was ambiguous, perhaps even chaotic communication: Rhetors search awkwardly for language capable of defining, explaining and assimilating urgent events. Audiences struggle to understand information, set criteria for policy evaluation, and locate viable options for action. The crisis does not so much 'invite' discourse as defy it (273).

In other words, in crisis situations, there can be no clear patterns or consistent characteristics. In fact, Farrell suggests that in a crisis situation, it is nearly impossible to communicate at all.
Pratt suggests, however, that there may be a way to identify generic characteristics of crisis rhetoric. In his analysis of speeches made by Eisenhower during the Suez crisis in 1956, Kennedy during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 and Johnson during the Gulf of Tonkin crisis in 1964, Pratt concluded that the speaking characteristics of the president and the specific nature of the crisis combine to determine the type of speech (202). He seems to suggest that a crisis rhetoric genre can be defined by creating categories for speaking styles and natures of crises. Then researchers would use those categories to identify similarities in discourse and generic characteristics. However, this method seems much too broad and generalistic to meet the requirements for a rhetorical genre as defined by Campbell and Jamieson.

Clearly, the issue of whether crisis rhetoric qualifies as a genre is a topic of controversy among rhetorical scholars. The categories of justificatory and consummatory rhetoric seem to provide a basis in favor of the genre argument, but the unique nature of crisis situations forces consideration of arguments that since each crisis is unique, the rhetorical responses must be unique. In an article entitled "Eisenhower, Little Rock and the Rhetoric of Crisis" published in *The Modern Presidency and Crisis Rhetoric*, Martin J. Medhurst suggests that "...it seems highly unlikely that the rhetoric presidents use to deal with crisis situations should be any more alike than the presidents themselves..." (Medhurst 42).
Summary

The literature concerning presidential crisis communication illustrates the variety of approaches available to researchers. Research discussed in this thesis fell into four categories: rhetoric used to define reality in crisis situations, rhetoric used to persuade audiences to accept chosen courses of action, various rhetorical styles used by presidents and a generic approach to crisis rhetoric. While each method of analysis produces a valuable perspective of the discourse, it also raises questions that invite other types of analysis. For example, a study of crisis rhetoric as persuasion can lead to a discussion of how the rhetor can use it to define reality. A study of the generic form of the jeremiad is directly related to the rhetorical use of myths and metaphors. It is because of this overlap and interaction of strategies that presidential crisis communication lends itself to the methodology of rhetorical criticism.
CHAPTER TWO  METHODOLOGY

Rhetorical criticism

Rhetorical criticism is the investigation and evaluation of rhetorical acts and artifacts. Hart says it is the business of identifying the complications of rhetoric and explaining them in a comprehensive and efficient manner (Modern Rhetorical Criticism 32). It is a way of exploring the interaction of communication symbols and the situations in which they exist.

Rhetorical criticism involves the study of all aspects of communication situations. Both the text and the context must be considered (Hart, Modern Rhetorical 60). A message is not created in a vacuum. Critics must understand the psychological, sociological and historical context of the message by examining the discourse for clues -- Hart calls them "genetic markers" (58) -- that add meaning to the reasons why speakers say what they say, where, when and to whom. When both the text and the context of presidential crisis rhetoric is studied, it leads communication researchers to a more comprehensive understanding of crisis communication.

Foss suggests that there are two reasons to engage in rhetorical criticism. One is to understand particular symbols and how they operate (5). Presidential crisis communication lends itself to this purpose for rhetorical criticism. Many variables
interact in a piece of crisis rhetoric, and rhetorical criticism allows for the examination of all those variables and their relationships to each other. For example, the impact of the speaker-audience relationship is evident when presidents whose elections were supported by labor speak at union conventions. Because of that relationship the presidents' messages are likely to be well-received. The relationship between the topic and the speaker's personal background may also affect the message if, for example, the speaker is a president who never served in the military and the topic is an international crisis that requires military action.

In additional to examining the relationships between speakers, audiences and topics, rhetorical criticism examines the specific language of the text to discover images and language patterns that might dominate a message or be common to every message. This study of the words and relationships of discourse is the process and the purpose of rhetorical criticism.

The second purpose of rhetorical criticism is to contribute to rhetorical theory (Foss 6). Critics may study rhetorical acts and artifacts in order to lend support to existing theories or they may break new ground in the field, discovering new principles of effective rhetoric. For example, when political discourse began to be widely televised in the 1960's, it changed the emphasis in political speechmaking from memorable discourse to memorable sound bytes. Rhetorical criticism of events like the Nixon - Kennedy
debates provided new information for rhetorical theory so that political leaders could adapt their speaking style to the new age of electronic media. The contributions of rhetorical criticism to theoretical perspectives are extremely valuable as speakers strive to become more effective communicators.

**Rhetorical criticism methods**

There are a number of methods for doing rhetorical criticism, all of them qualitative. Rhetorical criticism is not built around statistical data, but rather, it is discursive, offering arguments about the rhetorical acts or artifacts being studied, and presenting descriptive information to support those arguments.

Speeches are the primary source of information about what rhetors perceive and about how they try to shape the perceptions of their audience. The critic does not study speeches only to learn the speaker's positions on issues. Of essential interest to the rhetorical critic is the way in which the speaker attempts to make issues salient and ideas persuasive (Wichelns 9). The goal of effective rhetoric is to persuade the audience to support the views of the speaker in both thought and action.

The rhetorical critic asks three general research questions:

"What is the relationship between the rhetorical artifact and its context?"
"How does the message construct a particular reality for the audience and the rhetor?"

"What does the rhetorical artifact suggest about the rhetor?" (Foss xi)

In this thesis, I go beyond these general questions through a series of more specific questions, based on Hart's model of the rhetorical situation, to closely examine presidential crisis communication.

**The rhetorical situation**

The methodology for this thesis is based on Hart's rhetorical situation model which provides a framework for developing the critical probes necessary to study both the text and the context of discourse (Modern Rhetorical 71).

There are six elements in Hart's model: speaker, setting, audience, topic, persuasive field and medium. All of these elements are constrained by rhetorical conventions and are contained within the cultural boundary. (See Appendix A.)

The element of **SPEAKER** addresses the "who" factor -- whether presidents speak to the public directly or have surrogates speak for them. Issues to consider are what experiences might be in the president's background that could influence the rhetorical strategy, and how the symbols of the presidency establish legitimacy and competency.
**SETTING** involves timing and location. In a crisis situation, the president might speak directly to the public concerning a late breaking news incident, but in fact, that rarely occurs. Most often, the presidents address issues some time after the public has learned of them through other spokespersons who may or may not represent the president. So the question arises as to how much time people have had to filter information about the news event before they hear from the president, and whether that time lag has any influence on how the public reacts to the president's position. Timing may also be a factor if the statement is being made early in the president's term of office or nearing election time.

The location at which the president delivers his message can also be a factor that influences public perception of the message. Was the speech delivered from the Oval Office, a strong symbol of the presidency, or from a fishing boat? Was the speech part of a news conference scheduled to address a specific topic or at a scheduled appearance where the president is a guest speaker?

A study of the element of **AUDIENCE** may include research into public opinion polls prior to and following presidential statements in order to determine whether the public was predisposed to accept or reject the statement. Was the statement delivered to a generally hostile or friendly audience? How much information would the audience be likely to have had prior to the president's statement?
TOPIC goes beyond the facts of the news story. Issues to consider are whether the topic has been in the news previously, how complex it is and whether it is controversial.

The PERSUASIVE FIELD consists of all those other messages impinging upon an audience in a given speech situation. It may include rumors, related news stories and statements made in the past on this topic by anyone, including the president.

The element of MEDIUM concerns the channels through which the president delivers the message -- print, broadcast, and in person.

All of these elements are filtered through RHETORICAL CONVENTIONS which address the rules that have been established in the past concerning talk about this topic, and the result is the MESSAGE.

All of these elements of the rhetorical situation occur within a CULTURAL BOUNDARY that encompasses all the values, attitudes and beliefs of the national culture. Hart notes that rhetoric is rooted in the age of its creation (Modern Rhetorical 10). Any analysis of crisis rhetoric must include acknowledgement of the influence that culture has on audience perceptions and reactions. In addition, rhetoric loses its relevancy when it is examined outside the culture which gave rise to it.

These rhetorical situation elements interact, sometimes in very complex ways, within any piece of presidential discourse. As the research progresses, there is overlap in
the data collected, which is natural since the elements themselves interact in order to create the discourse being studied. Through the use of critical probes which operate as a road map, specific presidential crisis rhetoric can be explored and symbol interaction within these six elements can be discovered.

Proposed study

Research of any kind, by its very nature, offers many possibilities for exploration, and no matter which paths scholars may follow, they are inevitably faced with a multitude of choices as to which direction to follow next. Rhetorical criticism is no different. In fact, if anything, rhetorical criticism seems to have infinite possibilities and every question leads to dozens more. Therefore, perhaps the most difficult task of a piece of rhetorical criticism is to define its limits.

A critical study of presidential crisis communication presents a challenge in establishing limits. It not only raises questions about the president's actual speech during crisis situations, but also questions of agenda setting by the media, public opinion patterns, and the cultural climate at the time of the speech. It raises issues of character and the relationship of the president's language to his espoused personal values or background. It points out the fluctuations in public perception when similar words spoken by two different presidents elicit totally different public reactions.
Each of these questions could stand alone as a critical study, but any research into one will inevitably lead to the others, and more. Therefore, it is necessary to define the focus for this thesis and save the other questions for future research. As I discussed in the introduction to this thesis, the crisis rhetoric of any president would be valuable to study. However, this thesis focuses on the crisis rhetoric of George Bush during his term in office from 1988 through 1992.

Narrowing the focus of study to one president, George Bush, still left a multitude of examples of crisis rhetoric available for study. During his four years as president there were many incidents that he spoke about, so before Bush's crisis rhetoric could be studied, crisis situations to which he might have responded had to be identified and selected for study.

Not every event that Bush spoke about was a crisis, so one way to sift through the pool of potential pieces of discourse for study was to define what types of crisis situations would be included. Based on a synthesis of the various definitions of "crisis" presented previously (see page 11), a "crisis" for purposes of this study was defined as a time specific situation that creates a sense of uncertainty and is potentially threatening to national security. In addition, it must be a situation that can be acted upon by the president and it must be a situation that has the attention of the American public. This definition precludes ongoing situations such as a recession which cannot be isolated to a
particular time period in Bush's presidency. It also eliminates natural disasters, the course of which cannot be altered by actions from the White House.

During George Bush's presidency, there were a number of situations that created a sense of uncertainty and potential threat to the nation's security. In each case the course of action in response to the situation could have been, or was, affected by White House action. These situations include the Persian Gulf War, the Panama Invasion, the Rodney King verdict, the taking of American hostages in several Arab countries, the Waco, Texas incident, the opening of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union, Supreme Court decisions on abortion and on flag burning, the downing of an Iranian passenger plane by a U.S. Navy ship, tourist murders in Florida, civil wars in Bosnia, Somalia and Liberia, the Oliver North trial, nuclear arms reduction agreements, Washington Mayor Marion Barry's drug trial, Columbian drug wars, racial violence in New York City and in Virginia Beach, the Savings and Loan scandal, the stock market crash and the lifting of the trade embargo on South Africa (Times Mirror 43-50).

This list of situations was quickly narrowed by adding the criterion of public attention. Based on the Times Mirror Database of Public Attendance to Major News Stories, more than fifty percent of the American public followed four of these major news stories very closely. Two of the stories were international situations that involved the U.S. military and two dealt with domestic crisis situations.
The two international crises involved the deployment of U.S. armed forces to Panama and to the Persian Gulf. The invasion of Panama occurred on December 29, 1989. The Persian Gulf War was a crisis that extended over several months, but the moment at which the crisis was at its peak was on August 8, 1990, when Iraq invaded Kuwait and U.S. forces were deployed to Saudi Arabia.

The two domestic crises involved issues of civil unrest. The Los Angeles riots following the Rodney King verdict began on April 29, 1992. The Supreme Court decision on flag burning, which was handed down on June 21, 1989, had the potential to trigger civil unrest.

These four situations meet the criteria established by the definition of a crisis for the purpose of this thesis. In addition, inclusion of two domestic crises serves the purpose of going beyond previous studies of crisis rhetoric which focused on international crises. As a result, these four events provide opportunities to examine similarities in crisis rhetoric as well as differences between international and domestic crisis communication.

In this thesis, I explore both the text and the context of George Bush's discourse concerning the selected crisis situations in order to gain a better understanding of his responses to those events. Additionally, I present information to investigate the argument as to whether crisis rhetoric is a genre.
The rhetoric examined for this thesis was limited to oral presidential discourse concerning these four crisis situations that was printed in the *Public Papers of the Presidents* during the time period from two weeks prior to two weeks following the date on which the incident occurred. The printed text of all communication during those four-week periods was coded to establish a data base of specifics about the discourse. Coding categories were based on Hart's coding procedures used in *Sound of Leadership* (217-220).

For each crisis situation, I recorded the following information (See Table XVI):

1. Total number of communications from the White House during the four-week period surrounding the situation.

2. How many of those mentioned the situation.

3. How many of those mentioning the event were delivered verbally by the president rather than by White House spokespersons.

For each presidential speech, I recorded the following information (See Tables XVII-XX):

1. Date of remarks

2. Time of day

3. Location
4. Main topic of the speech
5. Audience type: national, press or special interest

In addition to the recorded data concerning the president's remarks, I analyzed the discourse using the following critical probes based on Hart's Modern Rhetorical Criticism and the generic research of Cherwitz and Zagacki and Rasmussen:

1. Did the rhetoric reflect an awareness by the speaker of the audience attitude (Hart 76)?
2. Was there a consistent structure to the message (Hart 168)?
3. Did the discourse have consummatory or justificatory characteristics (Cherwitz and Zagacki 316)?
4. Did the speaker use enemy themes in the discourse? (Rasmussen 155)?

The recorded data and analysis through critical probes provides information about the text of the crisis rhetoric, but to fully understand the discourse, the research must include information about the persuasive field -- the issues surrounding the crisis that are being discussed by the general public. In order to establish an understanding of the persuasive field surrounding the crisis situations selected for this thesis, I examined the media coverage and the public opinion polls during the four weeks surrounding each crisis event.
Information on media coverage was obtained by examining the 32 issues of *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines that were published during the two weeks before each crisis event and the two weeks following the event. These two major national newsweeklies were selected because of their national influence. According to Michael Baruch Grossman and Martha Joynt Kumar, they are the only print publications that approximate television news' connection to the American public (62). They have a combined circulation of more than seven million copies weekly and are read by a segment of the American population that is identified as well-off and well-educated (Grossman and Kumar 62).

From those magazines, I recorded the following information:

1. What were the cover stories?
2. Did the cover stories relate to the crisis situation?
3. Were there any other stories related to the crisis situation?

I used *The Gallup Poll Monthly* to track public opinion polls during the four-week time periods surrounding the crisis events plus the month immediately prior to and immediately following each crisis event. From those polls, I recorded the following information:
1. What questions related to the crisis situation did the pollsters ask the public?

2. What was the public response to those questions related to the crisis situation?

3. What was the presidential performance rating during that time period?

All of the data collected was analyzed to provide the most comprehensive examination of the George Bush's presidential crisis rhetoric that is possible within the limits of this thesis. The critical process I have chosen to use meets the criteria discussed previously for doing rhetorical criticism (see page 30). It provides information about how the elements of communication operate and interact in order to promote more effective communication. It adds to the body of rhetorical theory by contributing data on crisis rhetoric as a genre. As this study of George Bush's domestic and international crisis communication unfolds, it also expands the current research on the differences and similarities of international and domestic crisis rhetoric.

To begin the analysis of George Bush's crisis rhetoric, a background of the issues surrounding the crises studied is necessary. Such background information is what makes up the persuasive field for each crisis situation and thus identifies the topics of discussion,
public opinions and general attitudes that may have constrained Bush's rhetoric as he dealt with these crises.

**Persuasive Field**

The persuasive field is one of the elements of Hart's Rhetorical Situation Model (see appendix A). It is any discussion -- by the media, by government officials, even by one's neighborhood association that might constrain the discourse on a particular topic and that might affect how audiences perceive the speakers' remarks.

Before moving to specific analysis of Bush's crisis communication, we need to understand the persuasive field and how it relates to the research for this thesis. It is very tempting to relate the persuasive field to the president's discourse and draw conclusions. For example, analysis of the persuasive field during the Flag Desecration crisis revealed a Gallup Poll report stating that 61 percent of the public had a favorable opinion of the Supreme Court (Gallup, May 1989, 9). With a generally favorable public view of the Supreme Court, Bush would have to choose his words carefully in announcing his support of a Constitutional amendment that contradicted their recent decision on flag desecration. Of course, before analyzing Bush's remarks to see how he walked this rhetorical fine line, we would have to do more research into the persuasive field, including studying the trend of public opinion concerning the Supreme Court over several
months. However, such analysis would take the researcher into areas of agenda setting and speculation about what was on Bush's mind as he prepared each speech. As I explained in Chapter 1, for this thesis I have chosen not to be drawn into those areas. My purpose in examining the persuasive field is to acknowledge it as part of Hart's Rhetorical Situation Model and to provide a background for discussion of Bush's crisis rhetoric. In Chapter 3, which is a discussion of Bush's style and strategy, and in Chapter 4 which is a discussion of crisis rhetoric as a genre, I illustrate, through specific examples, some patterns and some inconsistencies in Bush's rhetoric. Where appropriate, I have provided support for my analysis from the information I collected on the persuasive field.

To ascertain the persuasive field for this study, data was gathered from news magazines and public opinion polls for the weeks surrounding the crisis events studied. Each issue of *Time* and *Newsweek* magazine during the four-week window surrounding each crisis was examined for articles that related in any way to the crisis. Also, issues of *The Gallup Report Monthly* were examined for information about public opinion during the month in which each crisis occurred as well as during the month prior to and following each crisis event. The following discussion provides a brief background of each crisis situation and a review of the relevant media material which contributed to the persuasive field at the time of the crisis.
Flag Desecration

In 1984, Gregory I. Johnson was found guilty in Dallas, Texas under a law against defiling the flag for burning the American flag in a demonstration of protest outside the Republican National Convention. On June 21, 1989, the United States Supreme Court overturned that decision, stating that to prohibit flag burning violated one's Constitutional right, under the first amendment, to freedom of speech. Following the Supreme Court decision, on June 30, 1989, President Bush and members of Congress called for a constitutional amendment making desecration of the flag illegal (Newsweek, July 3, 1989, 18-20). Fortunately, this situation did not develop into a crisis that threatened lives or property, but at the time of Bush's announcement, it certainly had the potential to develop into something very serious. The symbolic nature of the American flag stirred emotional responses among American citizens on both sides of the desecration issue -- those who saw the flag as a symbol of patriotism and those who saw it as a symbol of freedom.

Newsweek and Time magazines only had three articles concerning the Flag Desecration crisis during the time period examined for this thesis. Newsweek's only story about flag desecration appeared in the July 3 issue, four days after Bush's announcement calling for a constitutional amendment. The story in the July 3 issue was not the cover story, but it was a three-page story called "A Fight for Old Glory" which
reported on the Supreme Court decision and included photographs of protesters (18-20). That same week, Time had two articles about the flag. They also were not cover stories. One was a two-page story about the Supreme Court decision with a photograph of a flag-burner being arrested. The other was a one-page story under the category of "The Presidency" called "Giving Honor to Old Glory." This article included a small photograph of Bush pledging allegiance to the flag (14-16). It is worth noting that neither magazine chose to run any stories on the Flag Desecration crisis in the two issues immediately following Bush's announcement.

Table I: Newsmagazine coverage of Flag Desecration crisis

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<th>Cover stories about crisis</th>
<th>Other crisis stories</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newsweek</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Time</td>
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While these were the only stories specifically concerning the Flag Desecration crisis, there were other articles that the public may have related to the flag-burning issue. For example, in the June 12 issue of Time there was an article about the rise in violent
crime by young Americans (52-58), and one in the June 26 issue of *Time* about recent Supreme Court decisions and how the court is becoming more conservative (16-18). Since the Flag Desecration crisis involved flag burning -- a violent act, and a Supreme Court decision, these articles were part of the persuasive field, part of the "talk" about the issue.

In *The Gallup Report Monthly* for May, June and July of 1989, there were no polls taken specifically concerning burning the flag, the Supreme Court decision, or the proposed constitutional amendment. However, there was some information that suggests constraints on Bush's discourse. In the May, 1989 issue, Gallup reported a slight drop, from 58 percent to 56 percent, in Bush's approval rating between April and May. (8,10). In addition Gallup reported that 61 percent of the public had a favorable opinion of the Supreme Court and 21 percent had an unfavorable opinion (9). However, in the June, 1989 issue there was a report on public opinion concerning crime and the judicial system which stated that 73 percent of the public have "little or no confidence in the courts' ability to convict and properly sentence criminals" (23).

Examination of the persuasive field during the time period surrounding the Flag Desecration crisis revealed very little direct coverage of the issue by *Time, Newsweek* or *The Gallup Poll Monthly*. This seems surprising since the topic was hotly debated in
Congress. However, these media sources did include discussions of related issues including crime, violence, the Supreme Court and Bush's approval rating.

**Panama Invasion**

When George Bush became President, he declared the war on drugs to be a priority and in particular, he targeted General Manuel Noriega, dictator of Panama and an illegal drug trafficker. On December 20, 1989, Bush announced a U.S. military invasion of Panama. Guillermo Endara, who had won election as Panama's leader in May of 1989 and then was driven out by Noriega's forces, took control of the government on December 21 while Noriega sought refuge in the Papal Nuncio (Newsweek, January 1, 1990, 14-22). Throughout the crisis, there was on-going military action as well as diplomatic and economic action taken by the U.S. government. On January 3, 1990, Noriega turned himself in to U.S. authorities in Panama.

The Panama Invasion was a secret military action ordered by Bush within his powers as President. Prior to the invasion, there was no official Congressional debate and little public discussion on such military action. Media coverage of the invasion began with the January 1, 1990 news magazine issues. The Panama invasion was the cover story in the January 1 issue of *Newsweek* (12-22). Related stories in that issue were about Bush's presidency and the difficulties that may develop in Panama following the invasion.
(23-29). *Time* did not use the invasion for its cover story on January 1, but there were some related articles in that issue concerning how the invasion illustrated Bush's increasing "boldness in foreign affairs" (20-3), and a perspective on the political leadership situation in Panama (24-31).

**Table II: Newsmagazine coverage of Panama Invasion crisis**

*December 11, 1989 to January 1, 1990*

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<th>Cover stories about crisis</th>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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In addition to newsmagazine stories concerning the specific crisis being studied, we must also take note of other stories during the time period studied that were also part of the persuasive field for that crisis. On December 11, *Newsweek* carried a brief article about how U.S. military intervention saved Aquino's presidency from an attempted coup in the Philippines. Although a military action in the Philippines might seem to have little relationship to the Panama situation, the title of the article suggested otherwise: "Washington Fights the Noriega Factor," a reference to a coup attempt against Noriega in
Panama the previous October which did not receive strong White House support, and according to the Newsweek authors, created the image of indecisiveness in the White House concerning military intervention (58). The December 18 issue of Newsweek also included a story about the coup attempt in the Philippines (38-39). The December 25 issue of Newsweek included an article about an American church worker who was home for the holidays from El Salvador and had reported on the rebel violence there (52), and the December 25 issue of Time included a two-page full photo spread showing violence in Panama City as part of its section on photos from the past year (50-51). These two articles, part of the persuasive field, supported the views of those concerned about a general sense of political instability in Central America.

The November and December, 1989 and January, 1990 issues of The Gallup Report were examined for polls and articles related to the Panama Invasion. In the November, 1989 issue, polls revealed that Central America was Bush's weak point in terms of public opinion of his job performance. The report stated that 70 percent of the population approved of Bush's performance, higher than any president in his first term in office since John Kennedy. In that report, Bush received 81 percent approval for his handling of U.S.-Soviet relations and 65 percent for his handling of foreign policy in general (4). However, the article noted that "Central America remains one area of foreign policy that is not a clear positive for Bush...40 percent approve; 39 percent disapprove"
In the December, 1989 issue, Bush received a 71 percent approval rating for his performance. Those polls were taken prior to the invasion and there were no mentions of Panama or Central America in that issue. In the January, 1990 issue, Bush's job approval rating was 80 percent, "his all-time high and the second highest approval rating ever recorded in The Gallup Poll Monthly." However, the most interesting result reported in that issue was an increase in Bush's approval rating for his handling of the Central America situation, an increase to 66 percent. Based on these polls, it would seem that the public approved of Bush's Panama Invasion action, and in terms of public support in general, Bush had few constraints on his discourse.

**The Persian Gulf Crisis**

For months prior to the deployment of U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf, Iraq's dictator, Saddam Hussein had been threatening military action against the nation of Kuwait. There was a great deal of global diplomatic activity that took place during those months and Bush spoke often on the topic. On August 2, 1990 Iraq invaded Kuwait and Bush began to seek support from other countries for United Nations economic sanctions against Iraq. Those sanctions were passed by the U.N. Security Council on August 6. During this time, Bush also held discussions with NATO countries concerning participation in military action against Iraq if necessary. On August 8, Bush deployed
U.S. troops to the Persian Gulf to enforce the U.N. sanctions and to defend Kuwait and other Middle East countries threatened by Iraq. Many other nations also sent troops (Newsweek, August 13, 1990, 18-21).

A unique aspect of this military action was the television coverage of the war as it was happening. For the first time in history, the American public sat in front of their televisions and watched live coverage of missiles being fired, saw tanks and troops under attack and heard, unedited, the emotion in the voices of soldiers and reporters in battle zones. The Pentagon did censor some of the media satellite transmissions, but there was more than enough television time to give the public a front-row seat, first-hand view of the effects of Bush's chosen action. This gave Bush many opportunities to reach the public and build support, but it also put his decisions under a powerful magnifying glass - - it would be difficult to downplay any unsuccessful actions.

During the time period studied for this thesis, Time and Newsweek were again analyzed for news magazine coverage of the Persian Gulf crisis 18. In their August 6 issue, Newsweek carried a brief story in the Business Section suggesting that Hussein's sending troops to the Kuwait border was a move to control OPEC's oil production and prices 19. The article referred to Hussein as "...the key OPEC player of the '90's" (50). The article also mentioned that Congress had imposed additional sanctions against Iraq.
Table III: Newsmagazine coverage of the Persian Gulf crisis
July 30, 1990 to August 20, 1990

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<th>Cover stories about crisis</th>
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In the August 13 issues, the Persian Gulf crisis was the cover story for both *Time* and *Newsweek*. The lead article in *Newsweek* was about Hussein as an aggressor (16-20). Related articles were about Hussein as leader of the Arab world, Kuwait as an oil kingdom, U.S. military readiness and oil prices (23-30). In their August 13 issue, *Time* lead with a story called "Iraq's Power Grab" (16-20). Related articles were about the issues of oil and Hussein's power in the Middle East (21-24). All of these stories focused on Hussein as the enemy, unleashing vast amounts of information justifying action against him. As I will discuss in Chapter 4, Bush constantly made use of this enemy theme in his speeches during the Persian Gulf crisis.

The August 20 issue of *Newsweek* also led with the Gulf War. Articles focused on U.S. military readiness, hostages in Tehran, a history of how Hussein came to power, how Bush's early education may have contributed to his decision making processes in this
crisis, the impact of the Gulf crisis on oil prices and the economy, and an editorial piece on the role of the U.S. in the Gulf (18-41). The cover story for the August 20 issue of *Time* was about the power struggle between Bush and Hussein (18-22). Related articles were about global efforts to stop Hussein, the issue of Arab leaders on opposite sides of the conflict, Israel's position in the conflict, and oil issues (26-43). In this August 20 group of articles, there were two of particular interest because they related to Bush's use of values in his crisis rhetoric, a key to Bush's rhetorical style and strategy that will be discussed in Chapter 3. The article in *Newsweek* on his prep school education provided insight into the formation of his moral and ethical values, which were the foundation of Bush's crisis rhetoric. The cover story in *Time* about the power struggle between Bush and Hussein created a powerful backdrop for Bush's enemy theme discourse.

With all of the above articles concerning the specific crisis being studied, it is still important to examine any other articles that addressed related issues in the persuasive field during that time period. For example, a story in the science section of the August 13 issue of *Newsweek* was about recent studies of children born to survivors of the atomic bombs dropped on Japan in World War II (65-66). This article was significant because Hussein was threatening to use missiles with biological warheads and there was a great deal of fear and speculation about the effects of such weapons. Another *Newsweek* article, which appeared in the August 20 issue, was a historical piece on the Battle of
Britain, triggering memories of the cooperative efforts of Allied forces in World War II, similar to the present cooperative military efforts of NATO members in the Persian Gulf (50). Finally, in the August 13 issue of *Time* there was a story about Muslim nationalists in Trinidad and the issue of worldwide terrorism (26). Since Hussein was being portrayed as a Muslim terrorist, this story was simply adding support to that enemy theme.

Unlike the Panama Invasion, the Persian Gulf crisis was covered in *The Gallup Poll Monthly* 20. In July, there was no mention of the Persian Gulf situation specifically, but in the area of foreign policy, Bush's approval rating was 62 percent (3). His overall approval rating was 63 percent (2). In that issue, a report on a survey of Bush's personal characteristics indicated that 75 percent of the population found him to be sincere, 72 percent found him reliable, 66 percent found him intelligent, 76 percent found him confident, 84 percent found him friendly, 63 percent found him weak, 67 percent saw him as a leader and 70 percent saw him as an active president (5). These views of George Bush's personal and professional characteristics may have impinged on the persuasive field as he delivered his remarks during the Persian Gulf crisis.

The August 1990 issue of *The Gallup Poll Monthly* featured the Gulf Crisis as its cover story. Reports of weekly public opinion polls on the Persian Gulf Crisis for the entire month of August were published. Information from surveys conducted August 3
and 4 revealed that a majority of Americans supported direct U.S. military intervention if Iraq invaded Saudi Arabia, or if Americans were taken prisoner, and that Americans strongly favored economic sanctions against Iraq. During this time period, 52 percent approved Bush's handling of the crisis, 16 percent disapproved and 32 percent were not sure (3). However, public support for Bush increased quickly once he announced U.S. military action in the Persian Gulf.

Results of surveys on the crisis taken August 9-12 immediately following Bush's announcement of the deployment of U.S. troops, showed that 78 percent of the population approved of sending U.S. troops to defend Saudi Arabia (7). In addition, Bush's overall approval rating improved to 74 percent and his approval rating for handling the Gulf Crisis was 80 percent (7).

In surveys taken August 16-19 Bush's support remained steady. Seventy-six percent of the population approved of Bush's decision to send troops to the Persian Gulf and his overall approval rating was at 75 percent (14). Public attention to the crisis had also increased. Seventy-four percent of Americans said they had a clear idea of why the U.S. was involved in the Gulf War (14,17). When asked for those reasons, 49 percent said to defend oil interests, 17 percent said to defend other countries, 11 percent said to stop Iraqi aggression, 6 percent said to defend Saudi Arabia, 4 percent said to protect U.S. citizens, 1 percent said to get Iraq out of Kuwait, and the other 12 percent had other
answers or no opinion (16). These responses are interesting in light of Bush's stated goals for the military operation and will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

The Persian Gulf crisis continued to be covered in the September issue of *The Gallup Poll Monthly*. There were two reports directly related to the Persian Gulf. In view of the intense media coverage of the crisis, a survey concerning media treatment of Bush during the Gulf crisis was of particular interest. In that survey, 71 percent of the population felt that the media was "about right." Thirteen percent felt the media was too critical and 10 percent felt they were not critical enough (22). Also reported in the September issue, 65 percent of Americans thought that there was a better chance for peace in the Middle East because of U.S.-Soviet cooperation (27).

In addition to Gallup polls concerning the Persian Gulf crisis and Bush's performance, the August issue provided a report on a survey that tracked public confidence in ten major institutions. The results were that the military ranked highest, a valuable indicator for Bush as he committed troops to a major international military action (30-31).

*Los Angeles Riots*

Like the Persian Gulf crisis, the Los Angeles situation was preceded by extensive media coverage of the events leading up to the crisis point identified for this thesis -- the
Los Angeles Riots on April 29, 1992. The racial tension that gave rise to the rioting was triggered by the police beating of Rodney King, an African-American man, which was captured on videotape. The police were charged with using excessive force and, after a change of venue to Simi Valley, a predominantly white, middle-class community, a trial was held before a jury, made up of ten Caucasians, one Hispanic and one Filipino. They found the policemen not guilty, a verdict that ignited rioting in African-American and nearby Korean-American neighborhoods in Los Angeles. Bush, who was at that time campaigning for the 1992 Presidential election, sent in military troops to help restore order and ordered an investigation into a federal prosecution of the policemen (Time, May 11, 1992, 20-25). After calm was restored, Bush went to Los Angeles to meet with victims of the riots and with city officials.

The Los Angeles riots took place in the midst of the 1992 Presidential campaign so Bush's actions were under more than the usual amount of media scrutiny. This fact was a key constraint on Bush's rhetoric concerning this crisis. For example, the May 11, 1992 issue of *Time* gave a running, and critical, commentary of Bush's initial actions concerning the crisis. Suggesting that Bush missed an opportunity to garner support from people on both sides of the issue, the author stated, "Bush is also often a half-beat behind the mood of the moment, and so he was this time" (25). The author of the article continued to chronicle Bush's missteps noting that on Wednesday evening "he gave
reporters an utterly inadequate statement," and Thursday's remarks were "stern in condemning the rioting but confusing about what, if anything, he intended to do about the verdict" (25). On Friday, "he [Bush] at last got the message about right" (25). This type of reporting is a good example of the constraints present in the persuasive field which added to the rhetorical pressure that Bush was under as President and as a presidential-candidate during the Los Angeles Riots crisis.

The Los Angeles Riots crisis was the cover story of the May 11 issue for both *Time* and *Newsweek* (Time, 18-25; Newsweek 26) 21. Related articles in *Time* were about racial tension in Los Angeles, an analysis of the trial that acquitted King's attackers, an interview with Los Angeles Chief of Police Willie Williams, the role of black politicians in Los Angeles and an editorial piece on what action Bush should take (26-41). Related articles in *Newsweek* that week were about the violence and destruction of the riots, crime as a political issue, and how racism and poverty contributed to the Los Angeles crisis (30-54). Crime and violence, which were domestic issues in the Presidential campaign, were clearly part of the persuasive field during this crisis.
Table IV: Newsmagazine coverage of the Los Angeles Riots crisis
April 20, 1992 to May 11, 1992

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<th>Other crisis stories</th>
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<td>Time</td>
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Other campaign related articles that were an important part of the persuasive field appeared in the April 27 and May 4 issues of *Time* and the April 27 issue of *Newsweek*. These articles included candidates' responses to questions about how they would handle the crisis so Bush not only had to consider the "talk" in the persuasive field from the media and the general public, but also from his rival candidates whose responses could seriously constrain his rhetorical options.

The March 1992 issue of *The Gallup Poll Monthly* did not contain anything directly related to the situation in Los Angeles. However, there was a report on Bush's approval rating which indicated that 41 percent of the population approved of how he was doing his job (23). His foreign policy approval rating was at 55 percent (43) and 21 percent of Americans were satisfied with "the way things are going in the United States" (47). The April issue also had nothing specific about Los Angeles, and Bush's overall
performance rating remained relatively steady at 42 percent with 48 percent disapproving and 10 percent with no opinion (21). These polls dramatically illustrate the pressure Bush was under compared with his performance polls during the Persian Gulf crisis when he had approval ratings over 70 percent.

The May 1992 issue did include questions about the Los Angeles riots. Bush's overall job performance continued to fall with a 41 percent approval rating and a 52 percent disapproval rating, now the majority view (29). On issues related directly to the Los Angeles riots, race became a key factor in the survey response results. Forty-three percent of white voters rated race relations as an important issue compared with 82 percent of black voters (10). Thirty-seven percent of whites and 17 percent of blacks thought Bush was doing enough to guarantee equal justice (10). Concerning the specific issue of the Rodney King verdict and the outbreak of violence in Los Angeles, 71 percent of blacks, 68 percent of non-whites and 48 percent of whites disapproved of Bush's handling of that situation (15). These statistics clearly illustrate the negative attitudes of the public that Bush had to face with each speech he delivered during this crisis.

This background information concerning the persuasive field suggests that Bush's rhetorical success was greater during the international crises studied than during the domestic crises. In particular, he faced two key constraints during the Los Angeles Riots crisis that presented additional challenges as he tried to build public support for his
actions. One was the fact that he was facing his lowest approval ratings in the midst of a presidential campaign, and the other was his negative image among non-White Americans. These, and other factors presented in this section, will be included in the discussion in Chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis.
CHAPTER THREE  BUSH'S RHETORICAL STYLE AND STRATEGY

Hart's Rhetorical Situation Model is a useful tool for understanding George Bush's rhetorical strategy. The speeches examined for this thesis offered a great deal of data for analysis and discussion of four of Hart's elements -- speaker, audience, topic and setting.

A discussion of each of those elements follows. There are two other elements in Hart's model -- persuasive field and medium. The data collected concerning the element of persuasive field was discussed in Chapter 2 and is incorporated into the discussion of all the other elements. Medium is not analyzed in this thesis because the data did not suggest any unique use of the media. As might be expected, television and radio were the media for national addresses, and all other remarks were delivered in person to various audiences.24

In order to define and discuss George Bush's strategy and style, I examined the language of his speeches and identified examples that reflected rhetorical strategies described in Chapter 1 of this thesis. After studying 44 speeches given by George Bush during crisis situations -- both domestic and international -- I found that the dominant rhetorical strategy employed by Bush was his use of widely accepted values to define the situation and to direct the public's focus. I found that Bush used values-based rhetoric very effectively to highlight his role as the nation's leader and to establish common ground with his audiences. However, I also found several occasions when Bush's halting
delivery and trite language weakened his message. In this chapter, I will provide examples and discussion of his crisis rhetoric that reflect both the strengths and weaknesses of his rhetorical strategy and style.

I have organized the discussion within the framework of Hart's model, focusing on the elements of speaker, audience, topic and setting, with special attention to Bush's use of values to persuade his audience toward his point of view. In the section on the element of speaker, I illustrate how Bush tried to establish himself as a legitimate leader based on personal values and his competency. The section on audience explores Bush's use of rhetoric to establish common ground with audiences primarily by focusing on social, religious and democratic values. In the topic section I discuss how Bush used values-based rhetoric to focus the attention of the audience on his chosen agenda. The section on setting centers on Bush's choices for the locations of his remarks and how those choices supported social values that contributed to his messages.

The Rhetorical Element of Speaker

When Hart’s Rhetorical Situation Model is used for rhetorical criticism, the researcher looks for indications of elements that dominate the discourse. In studying George Bush's crisis rhetoric, I found that the element of speaker was dominant. Through his discourse, Bush called attention to himself, constantly defining his role as the nation's
legitimate leader. This was an important rhetorical strategy because for Bush to successfully persuade the public to support his chosen actions in crisis situations, he needed to create a public perception that confirmed his position of national leadership. Always building his message around values-based rhetoric, Bush used two rhetorical strategies to establish his legitimacy as the nation's leader in crisis situations. First he defined his role in terms of personal values, and second, he built his image of competency by presenting detailed information about the crisis gathered from credible sources such as international leaders, members of his cabinet or other national, state and local government leaders. I found arguments based on personal values in every speech in which the crisis was the main topic. However, when Bush was speaking on a topic other than the crisis, he limited his crisis-related remarks to short briefings of factual information. Detailed information from credible sources was evident in Bush's speeches concerning the Panama Invasion, Persian Gulf and Los Angeles Riots crises, but not in the discourse concerning the Flag Desecration crisis. Unlike the Flag Desecration crisis, the other three situations involved military action and gave Bush the opportunity to talk about the activity of his team of government and military personnel. During the Flag Desecration crisis, he really had no team because there was no action involving the military so his rhetoric was entirely values-based.
Before discussing the element of speaker and George Bush's use of personal values, some background information may be useful. Although this thesis does not present a psychological analysis of George Bush's use of language, it is valuable to understand the boyhood source of Bush's strong sense of personal responsibility for the preservation of American social and political values. In an article in Newsweek magazine on August 20, 1990, the authors discussed how Bush's boarding school education was reflected in his decisions concerning military action. In June, 1940, Colonel Henry Stimson, Franklin Roosevelt's Secretary of War, addressed the students at Phillips Academy. Among them was 16-year old George Bush. Stimson told his audience that "they had the 'opportunity' to choose between 'right and wrong,' to stand up for good against evil" (33). According to the article, Henry Stimson was George Bush's hero because he stood for the values Bush's family had taught him -- to be self-reliant and to fight to defend America (33). Although that article was written as a background piece concerning Bush's actions in the Persian Gulf, the lessons Bush received from Henry Stimson are reflected in all of the crisis rhetoric examined for this thesis, most particularly in the self-definition of his legitimate role as the nation's leader.

**Establishing legitimacy through personal values** It is easy to find evidence of Bush's personal values in his crisis rhetoric. Using language that was direct and simple, he left
no doubt in the minds of audiences that with each crisis, George Bush was personally reviewing the situation and making decisions for the good of the nation. Bush's rhetoric reflected personal confidence that he was, in fact, the legitimate leader of the nation, and he defined his role of President as his personal and patriotic responsibility based on his personal code of ethics.

Bush's speeches during the Panama Invasion and the Los Angeles crises contained examples of his statements of personal responsibility stemming from his role as president. For example, when he ordered the invasion of Panama, Bush stated, "I have no higher obligation than to safeguard the lives of American citizens" (1989, 1723). Upon his arrival in Los Angeles, Bush confirmed his personal obligation as the nation's leader when he stated, "It was important, I feel, that as President, I come here to Los Angeles" (1992, 732). Again speaking about the riots, he stated, "I think of the oath I took as President, the Constitution's charge to ensure domestic tranquillity..." (1992, 705). Following the riots he said, "I will do my level-best to heal the wounds and bring people together ... A President should do no less" (1992, 676). In these statements, Bush shouldered the entire burden of each crisis situation simply because it was his prescribed duty as president.

During remarks concerning the constitutional amendment on the desecration of the flag, Bush also took a very personal and powerful role. He emphasized his respect for
the Justices of the Supreme Court, but disagreed with their decision. Undaunted by the
status of the Supreme Court of the United States, Bush, as the legitimate leader of the
nation, stated, "as President, I will uphold our precious right to dissent. But burning the
flag goes too far and I want to see that matter remedied" (1989, 805). His meaning was
very clear. As President, he would stand in opposition to the Supreme Court, and his
viewpoint held every bit as much, if not more power than that of the Supreme Court.
They could make their decisions, but on this one, they were wrong and he was going to
see to it that it was set right. This is a clear illustration of how Bush's actions were based
on his personal values which dictated his decisions as president.

*Establishing legitimacy by establishing competency* While Bush's rhetoric based on
personal values certainly contributed to his image as a legitimate leader, it may not have
been persuasive as his sole argument for public support because it was based on his
personal code of ethics, not on his expertise concerning the situation at hand. James C.
McCroskey notes that strength based on legitimacy stems from an assigned role, such as
president, and will not endure (81). A strong leadership position requires the audience's
perception that the speaker is competent to fill that leadership role (McCroskey, 80-81).
Factors that contribute to a speaker's competency include language that reflects evidence
of personal expertise and the incorporation of information from highly placed sources
Bush incorporated both of these factors extensively in his crisis rhetoric.

**Competency demonstrated by personal expertise**  Bush's rhetorical technique of reporting detailed facts of the situation gave him an aura of expertise about each crisis. Much like a journalist reporting the "who, what, when, where, why and how" of a news story, George Bush generally began his remarks with a brief, but detailed report of the current status of the crisis situation. He included a chronological report of events and actions, a list of who he had spoken with (not necessarily anything on what they had said), and a reiteration of the government's goals.

For example, in his announcement of the Panama Invasion: "Last Friday, Noriega declared a state of war...the next day (he) shot and killed an unarmed American serviceman...last night I ordered forces into Panama...this morning I want to tell you what I did and why" (1989, 1723) This chronological presentation gave the audience key information immediately and efficiently while it supported the perception that Bush, as the nation's leader, had command of minute by minute updates concerning the crisis. Bush used this speaking style in both international crises studied and to a lesser degree, during the Los Angeles crisis. It was not evident in his speeches concerning the Flag
Desecration Amendment, probably because Bush's strength was in reporting military or law enforcement activities and that crisis was mostly a war of words.

Bush used this brief style of reporting detailed information in nearly every speech, but when he was addressing the press, brief remarks were the substance of his remarks in keeping with the nature of the press as an audience. Out of 17 speeches to the press, only two went beyond a briefing of the situation to include values-based discourse common in his speeches to national and special interest audiences. One was a press conference the day after the Panama Invasion. The other was remarks to the press on his arrival in Los Angeles after the riots. It is likely that in these two instances, Bush was purposely speaking beyond his primary audience, the press, to reach his national audience through the media. This ability of Bush's to tailor his remarks to his audiences will be considered at length in the next section.

Sometimes Bush carried his demonstration of expertise too far and seemed to be bragging. For example, during the Persian Gulf crisis, as he described the military operations, he told reporters, "For those who are unfamiliar with the complexity of an operation of this nature, you ought to study it and learn from it because it was an amazingly well coordinated, superbly executed operation" (1989, 1739). This tone in which he seemed to set himself above his audience and point out their ignorance may have actually diminished his leadership position in some people's eyes.
**Competency demonstrated by highly placed associations**  Bush elevated his role as the nation's legitimate and competent leader by promoting his role as a leader among national experts and among leaders of other nations. When Bush listed the names of leaders who were conferring with him on the various crisis situations, he placed himself not only within that highly regarded circle, but at the center of all diplomatic and military activity. He even expanded his realm of personal responsibility, creating the image of a global leader who, as President of the United States, shouldered responsibility for the political and social values of freedom and democracy for the entire world.

This was most evident during the Persian Gulf crisis when Bush's rhetoric reflected a position of strength on a global level as he led international diplomatic discussions and directed courses of action toward mutual goals. His remarks often began with a laundry list of international leaders with whom he had recently spoken. For example, "[This morning, I] talked with Prime Minister Kaifu of Japan...," "President Mitterrand with whom I've spoken...," "Chancellor Kohl, Margaret Thatcher...the NATO alliance is thinking exactly the same way on this...," "...talked yesterday with Kuwait's Amir...," and "tomorrow [we] meet in Washington with the Secretary General of NATO..." (1990, 1100-1). In all of these remarks, Bush used the complete, formal title, name and nation of each leader with whom he had spoken. By using their most respectful
titles, Bush elevated their status, as well as his own, in the eyes of the American public. In contrast, his language about the conversations was casual and very familiar. For example, "I just hung up, up there in Camp David, talking with Prime Minister Mulroney" (1990, 1100). Such language conjures up a picture of George Bush lounging in his cabin at Camp David, having a friendly chat. On another occasion, he apologized for keeping the attendees at the Annual Conference of the Veterans of Foreign Wars waiting, but he had just gotten off the phone with President Ozal of Turkey (1990, 1147). Such casual phrasing emphasized his personal comfort level as he held conversations with highly placed individuals.

As the Gulf Crisis escalated, Bush continued to promote his global leadership activity. On August 8 in his address to the nation, Bush stated that he had "spoken with political leaders from the Middle East, Europe, Asia and the Americas..." (1990, 1108). This rhetoric put Bush at the center of a worldwide communication network, but Bush was organizing more than discussions, he was directing the decisions. For example, after listing all of the leaders he had spoken with, he announced to the American public, "...we're all in the same accord...to accept nothing less than total withdrawal from Kuwait...and no puppet regime" (1990,1100-1). The statement indicated universal agreement and Bush's presentation of the information placed him at the control center of all global diplomatic activity in that crisis situation. His discourse suggested virtually
uninhibited global power when he stated, "I will ask oil producing nations to increase production...to minimize any impact that oil flow reductions will have on the world economy" (1990, 1109). These statements describing access to national leaders on every continent and the confidence to personally ask oil-producing nations to do his bidding for the good of the world economy certainly painted a picture of powerful, legitimate, competent leadership for the audience listening to that address.

There are also examples from the Panama Invasion crisis of Bush's use of rhetoric to expand his leadership role to a global level, once again reflecting a competent leader who was managing more than just a country -- he was responsible for the future of the entire hemisphere. In his press conference following the Panama Invasion, Bush noted, with appreciation, the support of Latin American countries (1989, 1728), and in his remarks to the Republican National Committee on January 2, he called the success in Panama "one more step toward a hemisphere that hopefully will be one day totally free, totally democratic" (1990, 4). In other words, President Bush's actions in Panama were not only in the best interests of the United States, but part of a higher goal -- to lead all of Latin America to a free and democratic future.

Even during domestic crises, Bush broadened his realm of responsibility to include the entire globe. For example, in the Flag Desecration issue, Bush's choice of words emphasized his role as not only the nation's leader, but a world leader. On June
30, in his remarks announcing the constitutional amendment on desecration of the flag, Bush noted that the flag was a symbol guaranteeing "civil rights here and democracy abroad" (1989, 832).

In 1992, as the nation's leader, he broadened the impact of the Los Angeles crisis to give it a national perspective, stating, "All communities in the United States need to pause right now in the wake from tragic events in Los Angeles...from New York...to San Antonio to San Jose, we must...build on our strengths" (1992, 692). Then, on May 8 in Los Angeles, Bush took that domestic crisis to an international level, stating, "...everyone around the world feels this trauma...everyone who looks to us as a model of freedom and justice..." (1992, 730). To the community leaders in Los Angeles he said, "Our ability to live and work together has really made America the inspiration to the entire world" (1992, 733). With these words, Bush's trip to Los Angeles became an act of the leader of the free world, not just the United States.

Bush certainly depended to a great extent on the rhetoric of legitimacy, but he also spoke from a position of expert knowledge concerning the crisis situations and he made numerous references to credible national and international sources. In this way, he established himself not only as the nation's legitimate leader, but as a global leader.

Having analyzed both aspects of Bush as the speaker -- his use of values and his establishment of legitimacy, I found that in some of his speeches, Bush's style seemed to
be dominated by his legitimate position as the nation's leader and in others, he emphasized values. For example, his announcements of military action during the two international crises studied were very different in style and it is interesting to compare the audience response to those different announcement styles. His announcement about the Panama Invasion was dominated by legitimacy. It was very direct, assertive and almost dictatorial in tone whereas his announcement about the Persian Gulf deployment was humble, values-based rhetoric that included an appeal for public support. Comparing the two opening paragraphs of those announcements illustrates the different tones:

Panama Invasion, address to the nation, December 20, 1989

    My fellow citizens, last night I ordered U.S. military forces to Panama. No President takes such action lightly. This morning I want to tell you what I did and why I did it (1989, 1722).

Persian Gulf crisis, address to the nation, August 8, 1990

    In the life of a nation, we're called upon to define who we are and what we believe. Sometimes those choices are not easy. But today as President, I ask for your support in a decision I've made to stand up for what's right and condemn what's wrong, all in the cause of peace (1990, 1107).
The Panama Invasion announcement was a statement of fact that did not invite public discussion. In contrast, the Persian Gulf statement was almost obsequious. In the Panama situation, Bush made a firm statement that left no room for debate or consideration of other options. The Persian Gulf announcement opened on a softer tone with an appeal for support. It was an attempt to bring the audience to a plane of agreement and understanding based on patriotic and moral values.

As explained previously, I have chosen not to use this paper as a study of public reaction to George Bush's crisis communication, but the different styles of these two announcements of military action invite examination of the persuasive field prior to and following their delivery. Tables V and VI illustrate the Gallup Poll tracking of public opinion in response to the question "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling his job as President?" prior to and following his speeches announcing the Panama Invasion on December 20, 1989 and the deployment of U.S. troops to the Persian Gulf on August 8, 1990. As the tables illustrate, Bush’s approval rating was lower when he announced the Persian Gulf action that it was when he made his Panama Invasion announcement. This lower approval rating and Bush’s likely anticipation that the Persian Gulf crisis would involve a difficult, protracted military involvement may explain his choice of rhetorical style for that announcement.
Table V: Bush's Approval Rating Before and After Panama Invasion Speech

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poll Taken:</th>
<th>Approve</th>
<th>Disapprove</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 7 - 10</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 4 - 7</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table VI: Bush's Approval Rating Before and After Deployment of Troops to Gulf

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poll Taken:</th>
<th>Approve</th>
<th>Disapprove</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 19 - 22</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 16 - 19</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bush's approval rate rose nine percentage points, from 71 percent to 80 percent in the poll taken following his Panama Invasion announcement, but his approval rate rose fifteen percentage points, from 60 percent to 75 percent following his announcement of the deployment of troops to the Persian Gulf. Although I cannot draw any firm conclusions from the greater increase following the Persian Gulf speech, it seems that the less aggressive approach with an appeal for public approval may have been more
effective with the audience. However, other factors in the persuasive field must be considered. For example, there was very little media or public attention paid to the Panama Invasion compared with the coverage of the deployment of U.S. military troops to the Persian Gulf (See Table VII). As a result, people were forming opinions about Bush's remarks with at least the perception of having more information about the situation in the Persian Gulf situation than in Panama and thus possibly felt more prepared to favorably support his decision to take military action.

Table VII: Weekly Newsmagazine Coverage of Panama Invasion and Gulf Crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 week after crisis</th>
<th>2 weeks after crisis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panama Invasion</strong></td>
<td>0 cover stories</td>
<td>1 cover story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 related articles</td>
<td>6 related articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persian Gulf Deployment</strong></td>
<td>2 cover stories</td>
<td>2 cover stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 related articles</td>
<td>16 related articles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While this analysis of the interrelationship between the persuasive field and Bush's style as a speaker may raise more questions than it answers, it does provide a more
complete picture of President George Bush as a speaker and how he balanced his position as the nation's legitimate leader with his understanding of audience values. The language that Bush used concerning the Panama Invasion was spoken from a position of legitimacy, confident of his decision to order military action and unconcerned about public reaction. On the other hand, during his announcement of the military action in the Persian Gulf, his language reflected a sense of vulnerability in terms of his leadership role. These differences in style illustrate that Bush had the rhetorical ability to play his role as the nation's leader from an autocratic or a populist position, but the analysis of the persuasive field suggests that his audiences were more receptive to the latter.

During crises, it is important for the American public to perceive the president as not only the legitimate leader, but a competent leader, able to make responsible decisions in critical situations. It seems evident that Bush was able to establish his competency through language that enhanced his role as a global leader with expert knowledge of the crisis situations, but, as the results of public opinion polls suggest, and as next section of this thesis illustrates, Bush had to use more than personal values and expertise to persuade his audiences to support his actions.
The Rhetorical Element of Audience

The study of the rhetorical element of audience is not an analysis of the audience, but rather an examination of how the speaker uses discourse to create a relationship with the audience. George Bush's challenge in this area was to establish common ground with his audiences. He needed to focus on shared values and express himself with sincerity and fluency. As the following discussion illustrates, I found that while George Bush used his values-based discourse to establish common ground with his various audiences, he occasionally seemed insincere or stumbled over his words, reducing the effectiveness of his message.

For this section of the thesis, I divided Bush's audiences into three categories: national, special interest and press, and then further categorized them by domestic and international crises. During the time periods studied, Bush gave at least one national address concerning each crisis, several lengthy addresses to special interest groups, and many brief remarks directed to the press.\(^{28}\) (See Table VIII). Bush tailored his remarks to each of these audience types in order to persuade them that he shared their values, that he understood their concerns and that he had expert knowledge of the situation. By doing so, he established his position as a competent leader, making decisions in the best interests of the nation in each crisis situation.
Table VIII: Speeches Delivered to Each Type of Audience for Each Crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Flag Burning</th>
<th>Panama Invasion</th>
<th>Persian Gulf</th>
<th>Los Angeles Riots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Audience</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since Bush's primary rhetorical strategy was values-based rhetoric, it is not surprising that nearly all of the arguments in his crisis speeches were built around widely accepted democratic, social, religious or family values. However, I found that during the two international crises and the domestic crisis concerning flag desecration, he focused almost exclusively on democratic values such as freedom, patriotism and national unity. During the other domestic crisis, the Los Angeles Riots, he drew on a much wider range of values and I found it most interesting to study his remarks to special interest audiences during that crisis because he addressed six different special interest audiences over a
period of two days. In preparing those speeches, he had his best opportunities to use targeted persuasion directed at specific issues in order to build support and to establish speaker/audience relationships. Bush exhibited real ability in this area as he tailored his remarks to each audience -- establishing common ground to persuade them that he had their best interests at heart. He knew that each group would have concerns about specific issues and he was very skilled in addressing those issues, always framing his remarks within his primary rhetorical strategy of using values-based rhetoric.

In the following sections, I have provided a selection of statements from each crisis situation that illustrate Bush's use of values to create common ground with his audiences and, at the end, I provide a detailed discussion of his rhetorical approach to his various Los Angeles audiences.

**Establishing common ground with audiences during international crises** While democratic values were common to all of Bush's crisis rhetoric, patriotism and freedom were the heavy focus of his remarks during the international crises studied. During the Panama Invasion, he stated "[we're] starting the year with a free Panama -- one more step toward a hemisphere that hopefully will be one day totally free, totally democratic" (1990, 4). With these remarks, he reinforced a basic American value that the best
societies are democratic societies. Thanks to his actions, Panama could now join the ranks of democracy.

However, Bush's remarks during the Panama Invasion Crisis were not designed to bring people together, promoting national unity, something he did extensively in his domestic crisis remarks. In fact, his remarks during the Panama Crisis seemed almost to exclude the American public. The only appeal Bush made for any sort of public support was during remarks to Republicans at a barbecue in Beeville, Texas when he said, "We will do everything we can to lift them [Panama] up...to give them a shot at democracy that some of us take for granted every single day...And so, let's all pitch in and try to make it work" (1989, 1744). Even when he praised the soldiers who fought in the Panama Invasion, he set himself and the soldiers apart from the audience when he said, "You get the feel of their patriotism and their courage" (1989, 1750). With these words he implied that the audience could have a vicarious experience, but could not share those feelings of patriotism with himself and the soldiers. While these comments call for a type of teamwork, they hardly equal the call for national unity that was evident in his remarks in the other three crisis situations studied. This may have been due to the fact that the invasion was kept secret and concluded fairly quickly, so Bush was not required to persuade the public to support his actions. There was no need for national unity since there was nothing for the nation to unite behind.
On the other hand, from his first remarks to the nation announcing the deployment of troops to Saudi Arabia, the audience was a part of the action. He announced, "We succeeded in the struggle for freedom in Europe because we and our allies remained stalwart." (1990, 1109). He added, "Standing up for our principle is an American tradition...it may take time and tremendous effort, but most of all it will take unity of purpose" (1990, 1109). These remarks drew on the values of national pride and unity that the nation shared during World Wars I and II. As Bush made this rhetorical link from one generation of patriotic Americans to another, his credibility and his competence as a leader were enhanced. By including the entire national audience in this struggle for freedom, led by George Bush, World War II veteran and the nation's Commander-in-Chief, he established common ground and his expertise -- a brilliant combination that certainly resulted in public support for his decisions in this crisis situation.

However, sometimes Bush's crisis rhetoric was dulled by his inability to sound sincere. For example, Bush attempted to establish himself as a compassionate leader during the Panama Invasion, but his style was stiff and he sometimes sounded insensitive in his efforts at empathy. On December 27, 1989, one week after the invasion, he made the following remarks, "And I should say here and now: Of course we grieve at the loss of young American life. And frankly, I grieve at the loss of innocent Panamanian life, caught up in this battle. But at times, you have to make a decision: What is in the national
interest/ What is right? What is the right signal to send to the world? (1989, 1744)

Words like "I should say" and "frankly, I grieve" lack sincerity, and Bush's sympathy for those who died was diluted by his overriding concern for the nation's image.²⁹

Establishing common ground with audiences during domestic crises In his domestic crisis rhetoric, Bush used two different approaches in terms of values as he worked to establish common ground with his audiences. His speeches in Los Angeles drew on a wide range of values: democratic, social, religious and family values. However, democratic values such as unity, national pride, equality and patriotism were the sole focus of Bush's remarks during the Flag Desecration crisis. In his remarks, he listed all of the democratic values symbolized by the flag, stating, "Our flag represents freedom and the unity of our nation ... We can't forget the importance of the flag to the ideals of liberty, honor and freedom" (1989, 832). His comments stressing national unity were quite poetic, "the flag represents and reflects the fabric of our nation...our very fiber as a people" (1989, 832). All of these references to freedom and unity reinforced values basic to American democratic society. By using them to support his actions concerning the issue of flag desecration, Bush enhanced his image as a competent leader, representing what he clearly believed were the best interests of the American people, but it did not
provide much opportunity for him to target audiences and develop a relationship with them on this issue that would bring the support he needed for his chosen position.

On the other hand, the Los Angeles riots provided a unique arena in which to examine Bush's efforts to establish common ground with several special interest audiences. (See Table IX). Because the six speeches involved a single crisis situation and were delivered over a two-day period, they provide a unique, composite picture of Bush's strengths and weaknesses in terms of the rhetorical element of audience. Bush began his series of Los Angeles addresses in the African-American community, speaking to congregants at Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church. Afterward he spoke with African-American community leaders and then with leaders of the Korean community. The second day he began with remarks to firefighters and law enforcement personnel, followed by a speech to military and law enforcement personnel and finally, remarks to Los Angeles community leaders.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Audience</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Focus of Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church</td>
<td>Social values, family values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church</td>
<td>Government action in rebuilding community; civil rights investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean-American</td>
<td>Radio Korea Broadcast Studio</td>
<td>Government action in rebuilding community; American dream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefighters and Law Enforcement</td>
<td>Firestation No. 26</td>
<td>Praise for public safety personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military and Law Enforcement</td>
<td>Los Angeles Coliseum</td>
<td>Praise for law enforcement and military personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leaders</td>
<td>Challenger Boys and Girls Club</td>
<td>Failure of existing social programs, Bush's economic agenda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Audience #1: Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church  The audiences on the first day were all members of communities that had been the sites of the rioting. Many were victimized by the rioting in terms of physical harm, emotional trauma and loss of property. The main focus of Bush's remarks to these groups was the importance of social, religious and family values. He urged restraint and patience as the various government agencies went about their work restoring order and rebuilding the communities.

However, Bush was able to fine-tune his remarks to be even more specific with each of these victimized audiences. For example, when he spoke to the Mt. Zion Baptist Church congregation, his remarks were filled with references to religious and family values. He stressed the need for compassion, sending "a message of forgiving and healing" (1992, 715). These would be familiar words spoken in a church and because Bush used this very fitting language with this audience, it made him appear more competent as a leader. When Bush reminded them that "We are one Nation under God" (1992, 715), and that "...faith is still very important to our leaders" (1992, 716), he aligned himself and all government leaders with the members of the congregation, establishing solid common ground. Appealing to the familial nature of religious congregations, he added, "We need our own family. We need our church family. And we must find ways to strengthen America as a family" (1992, 715). These words underlined
the religious and family values of the congregational audience and clearly put Bush in a positive position to ask for their support of his leadership.

Bush used his own family to further illustrate the importance to him of family values. He described his family's reaction to the Rodney King verdict, "Everyone was stunned -- me, Barbara, my kids" (1992, 685-686). This personal revelation was a direct link between himself and every head-of-household in that congregation who felt personally offended by the verdict. Then he shared with the congregants his family's method for promoting family values, explaining, "when Barbara reads to kids...she is emphasizing...the importance of the role of grandparents...the importance of love (1992, 715). These warm and personal remarks about religion and family were an important strategy in trying to establish common ground with the African-American community and win their support for his actions concerning the crisis.

**Audience #2: Leaders of the African-American Community**

Later that morning, when Bush spoke to the African-American community leaders, he changed the focus of his remarks from religion and family in order to address issues most salient to that group, specifically what government was doing to rebuild the community and the progress of a federal civil rights investigation into the Rodney King verdict. In so doing, Bush highlighted his expertise concerning the situation in an effort to enhance his competency
with this group. As he spoke, Bush presented them with a list of government agencies and directors who were working with local and state government agencies to begin the rebuilding. Using the rhetorical strategy to promote his legitimacy discussed earlier in this chapter, the list read like a team lineup, "...under David Kearns they've put together a good task force...FEMA...Jack Kemp's HUD, Lou Sullivan's HHS...leading the fray was Pat Saiki, out here very early for the SBA..." (1992, 717). With these remarks, Bush demonstrated his awareness that as leaders of the African-American community, his audience would be most interested in what action was being taken to address the problems in their neighborhoods. By providing specific, detailed information, Bush chose an effective strategy with this group, establishing his expert knowledge and handling of the situation. He attempted to establish common ground with the group by appealing to such social values as teamwork and unity, asking that they do their part to calm the African-American community while he did his part as the leader of the national government's action squad.

Bush seemed to use a very effective combination of values and expertise to establish common ground with his African-American audiences and he added some compassion to the mix that in some cases could even be described as passionate. For example, during his address to the nation on May 1, he expressed deep feelings concerning the Rodney King beating, stating, "What I saw on the video was revolting. I
felt anger. I felt pain. I thought: How can I explain this to my grandchildren?" (1992, 685). These remarks were a validation of the feelings of angry people nationwide and may have created a bond with African-Americans. However, when he spoke directly to the African-American community in Los Angeles, he stumbled over his words and seemed uncomfortable, as if he were groping for a coherent statement, "...we will follow through with any responsibilities under the law...to see if civil rights of anybody have been violated, King or anybody, Rodney King or anyone else, that there be fair play and equity there" (1992, 717). The disjointed structure of this statement and the repetition of the words "King" and "anybody" may have affected how the message was received by his audience. He may have sounded desperate, trying too hard to convince his audience, or he may have been interpreted as having strongly passionate feelings about this issue. If the audience perceived Bush as a supporter of civil rights, then deeply held passion would be their likely view of his awkward remarks. However, if Bush was perceived as not being highly supportive of civil rights, his stumbling over the words could be interpreted as language he was having trouble spitting out. Examination of public opinion polls taken from May 7 to May 10 sheds some light on the persuasive field during the time that the African-American audience was receiving Bush's message in Los Angeles on May 7 (See Table X).
Table X: Issues Polled Among Non-White Population from May 7 to 10, 1992

(Gallup Poll Monthly, May 1992)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>82% saw race relations as an important issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17% thought Bush was doing enough to guarantee equal justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71% disapproved of Bush's handling of events following King verdict</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Gallup Poll Monthly* for May 1992 reported that in public opinion polls taken from May 7 to 10 following the Los Angeles riots, 82 percent of black voters rated race relations as an important issue, only 17 percent of blacks thought Bush was doing enough to guarantee equal justice, and 71 percent of blacks disapproved of the way Bush handled the events following the King verdict and the riots (12, 15). The results of the polls suggest that Bush was not extremely successful in convincing the non-white communities of his competence in this crisis.

**Audience #3: Leaders of the Korean Community** In his third speech of the day in Los Angeles, when Bush spoke to leaders of the Korean community, Bush changed his focus once again. The Korean community's greatest loss in the riots was damage to businesses and Bush centered his remarks on this issue, knowing that help in rebuilding their
businesses would be the key salient issue for this community. As with the African-American community leaders, he successfully covered the government's actions concerning issues that were of concern to the Korean community.

However, Bush missed the mark in establishing common ground with this audience. While he appealed to the African-American leaders to work with him as a team, he segregated the Korean community by highlighting their immigrant background. For example, he spoke about those who came to America from Korea and "grabbed a piece of the American dream." (1992, 719). Then Bush set an almost adversarial tone when he stated, "We have to convince these people that the American dream is for real" (1992, 720). This language did nothing to establish common ground with the Korean community or enhance that population's attitude that his actions were in their best interest.

Bush may have created some negative feelings in this audience when he stated, "I look at this in a very broad sense, not only in terms of families that were hurt but in terms of international. I think most people here will concede and rejoice in the fact that we have good relations with Korea...I will do everything I can to show our friends abroad as well as here that it's not the American way" (1992, 719). This language was very self-centered as Bush once again promoted his own role as a global leader. Furthermore, although this message may have resonated for members of the community who retain strong ties to
Korea, many of them came to the United States as long as 25 years ago. Such longtime residents may have resented being told what "the American way" is since they probably considered themselves Americans. In fact, some of the community leaders may have come as children and lived all of their adult lives in America. In overemphasizing the idea of "the American way," Bush may have enhanced his world leader image with this rhetoric, but in so doing, he may, in fact, have alienated a portion of his audience who thought of themselves as Americans with a Korean heritage.

On the other hand, Bush certainly enhanced his competence with the Korean leadership as he addressed specific complaints that had been raised in the Korean community about the rebuilding efforts. He used a very direct, action-based approach, listing the concerns and the specific actions being taken. Such statements included, "I understand that some in the community...were unhappy by the location of the disaster relief center. And by early next week...we are going to have a new, acceptable location. And I understand that not having forms in Korean is a problem...We also realize that translators are a problem...We have an 800 assistance number that will receive calls in six languages" (1992, 720). These statements strengthened Bush's position as a leader and indicated that he had a clear understanding of their needs. Organizing relief efforts for the community would certainly have been much more important to the Korean leadership than whether Bush shared their community values, so it seems likely that even though
Bush was not effective in establishing any common ground with his audience, there was no damage done to his competency level.

**Audiences #4 and #5: Police, Firefighters and Military Personnel** During his second day of speaking in the Los Angeles area, Bush's audiences changed. Instead of speaking to victims of the riots, he spoke to the city officials and professionals who were responsible for actions taken to stop the riots, including the firefighters, law enforcement personnel and military personnel. These audiences were more homogeneous than those of the previous day and his speeches to all three groups contained similar language. His opening remarks included lists of names of individuals who deserved thanks and lists of facts about the violence, such as the number of fires and the number of arrests. This type of rhetoric illustrated his expert knowledge of the crisis and enhanced his competency with these groups. Then he used social values such as patriotism and selflessness to establish common ground with the audiences. He offered words of high praise for the public safety and military professionals as he related in-depth anecdotal stories of acts of heroism during the riots. He even drew on religious values with these audiences by stating, "At a time like this you think of your faith..." and quoting the Biblical passage "Blessed are the peacemakers..." (1992, 727). With this effective balance of establishing his expertise and sharing their social, political and religious values, Bush certainly
enhanced his competency as a leader in the eyes of his public safety and military audiences in Los Angeles.

**Audience #6: Los Angeles Community Leaders**  During the speech to his last special interest audience in Los Angeles, a group of community leaders, Bush stated, "We must not let our diversity destroy us...it is central to our strength as a Nation" (1992, 733). He applauded those who "reached across the barrier of color to save lives" (1992, 735, 744). Bush continued to emphasize social values, but he began to choose language that broadened the focus of the crisis to include the failure of government social programs in general. He stressed democratic values, particularly equality, stating, "[we will] discuss our common commitment to justice, civil tranquility and the rule of the law" (1992, 680).

Because the triggering events of the Los Angeles riots involved racial issues, his focus on the democratic value of equality were those of a competent leader. His remarks assured his audiences that he understood their concerns and, having established that common ground, urged them to work together for the common good of the nation. Few people could argue with those statements of national unity, and they were certainly in concert with Bush's actions regarding the crisis -- meeting with community leaders in Los Angeles, providing government aid for riot victims, and then presenting his agenda for changes in social services. Such a blend of effective rhetoric and supporting action
helped create the perception of a thoughtful, action-based, leader -- a competent leader. Although Bush had stated his desire to keep the campaign out of the discussions with his Los Angeles audiences, this speech was clearly an effort to gain support for his economic agenda. It is perhaps to his credit however, that in the midst of a difficult presidential campaign, this was, in fact, the only one of the six speeches to special interest audiences that sounded like a campaign speech.

Overall, Bush used sound rhetorical strategy in his efforts to establish common ground with his audiences. He used values-based language that they could identify with and he spoke with confidence about his expertise in the crisis situations. However, Bush may have had some trouble establishing rapport with his audience in terms of compassion and empathy, so while his crisis rhetoric contributed to his image as a competent leader, that image was tarnished by his failure to express himself as a compassionate leader.

The Rhetorical Element of Topic

As I discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, crisis rhetoric provides presidents with opportunities to define crisis situations and to direct discourse about the crisis so that it supports the president's agenda. Bush's remarks to various audiences clearly indicated his strength in identifying and addressing topics of interest to his special interest audiences. Even on those occasions when he failed to express compassion, Bush was able to
establish a relationship with his audience that allowed him to control the topic of his remarks and to a great degree, direct the audience's focus of attention. During two of the crises studied, the Persian Gulf Crisis and the Los Angeles Riots, Bush was able to promote his political agenda within the boundaries of his remarks, continuing to use the strategy of values-based rhetoric. Speeches made during the Gulf Crisis provided him with opportunities to discuss the topic of military spending and promote his defense agenda, and the Los Angeles riots provided opportunities to promote his economic and social reforms agenda.

Table XI: Agenda Focus During Bush's Crisis Speeches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Speeches on Defense Agenda</th>
<th>Speeches on Social and Economic Reforms Agenda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Panama Invasion</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flag Desecration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian Gulf</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Riots</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Defense Agenda During the Gulf Crisis, Bush took the opportunity to acknowledge the need for restructuring the military and to stress the importance of maintaining a strong military force. On August 2, a week before the deployment of U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia, Bush was already using the crisis situation to argue for his defense agenda. Speaking at the Aspen Institute Symposium, he delivered a lengthy, detailed speech on how to restructure U.S. defense as the Cold War was coming to an end. His remarks included details about what would be necessary to be prepared to respond to international aggression. During the week immediately following the deployment of troops, Bush focused on informing the American public about the decisions being made and actions being taken, but he soon returned to his defense agenda. On August 15, when he spoke to the Department of Defense Employees, he again alluded to the changing role of the military, saying, "I am relying on you to shape the forces of the future, to preserve peace and freedom in the face of new threats and new dangers" (1990, 1139). In a speech at the Annual Conference of the Veterans of Foreign Wars on August 20, he said the military activity in the Persian Gulf had reaffirmed lessons about America's defense and he stated, "Although the size of America's Armed Forces in the years ahead will be smaller because the threat to our security is changing...we will remain purposeful, proud, and effective...Just look at the last 18 days. Desert Shield has been a classic case of America's military at its best...a reduction of numbers does not mean a reduction in American
strength...when it comes to national defense, finishing second means finishing last" (1990, 1149-50). With these remarks, Bush was taking full advantage of the military successes in the Persian Gulf in order to build public support for a strong military.

In addition to promoting his defense agenda, Bush used his speaking opportunities during all of the crises studied to raise the public awareness and enhance the image of the military. His statements of praise for the fighting soldiers were effusive. During the Panama Invasion crisis, he praised the "courageous and selfless" troops (1989, 1722) who did a "first class job." Sounding like a proud parent, he told supporters at a barbecue in Beeville, Texas, that it was the "darnedest coordination you've ever seen between helicopter gunships and little -- we call them Little Bird helicopters -- in the air all at the same time" (1989, 1744).

Bush cited the bravery and outstanding service of military personnel as justification for his defense agenda. During the Persian Gulf crisis, he praised "...men and women in the Armed Forces [who] have performed with extraordinary ability...and dedication to duty" (1990, 1157). He pledged, "I will never send young men and women in to battle with less than the very best this nation can provide them. I will never -- I will never, ever -- let Americans like this down" (1989, 1150). During the Gulf crisis, at a Republican Party fund raising luncheon on August 20, he could not seem to say enough about those serving in the military. Noting that America must meet its obligation to
preserve peace, he said, "...we have the finest young men and women that the service has ever had, an all-volunteer Army, all-volunteer force, if you will, and the finest young kids ever, suited up and serving. So, it is this obligation that brave men and women are shouldering today in Saudi Arabia -- the finest-- finest men and women" (1990, 1154).

This rhetorical strategy linked the present military situation in the Gulf with the Panama Invasion which Bush had directed successfully and it established the premise that this caliber of personnel deserved the best that defense spending could buy.

Bush also used domestic crises to further his defense agenda whenever possible. In Los Angeles, he told military and law enforcement personnel, "I will remain the President who strongly supports the law enforcement community in this country and who strongly supports our military" (1992, 729). However, he was able to use the element of topic most effectively in Los Angeles to promote his domestic agenda

**Economic and Social Reform Agenda** Just as the Gulf War provided fertile ground for Bush to nurture the seeds of his defense agenda, the Los Angeles riots, occurring as the presidential campaign was in full swing, gave Bush the platform to promote his domestic agenda for the reform of economic and social programs. He did not waste any time in linking the crisis to his rhetorical campaign on this topic. In his early remarks concerning the riots he said that there are people "caught up in a tragic cycle of poverty and despair."
But the answer...is peaceful and thoughtful change" (1992, 676). Bush quickly established the government's role with his first speech at Mt. Zion Baptist Church when he told the congregation what their role was in his proposed social change, the church's parental role in teaching right from wrong and strengthening families, noting that "Family values means the church must continue to teach the kids right from wrong...Government can't do that" (1992, 715). This is a good example of how Bush used his rhetorical strategy to direct attention away from any possible government responsibility for the crisis and back to the local neighborhoods. In several addresses during the following days he spoke about the need for change, "We must bring hope and opportunity to our inner cities...The Federal government has a...fundamental role in ending poverty and despair" (1992, 713). In Los Angeles, he used a roundtable discussion with African-American leaders to bring them into the reform process, "...what I really would like to get is the heartbeat of the community...I want to hear from you...as to what you think we can do, and please speak frankly about it" (1992, 717). Then, in his last appearance in Los Angeles on May 8, he delivered a lengthy speech to community leaders outlining his plans for social reform. He discussed the failure of the majority of existing social programs, saying, "Today I want to talk about what went wrong in Los Angeles" (1992, 730) and noting that the city cannot return to the status quo (1992, 731). He announced a $19 million plan to "weed out criminals" and expand "educational, employment and
social services" in the inner cities (1992, 732). He spelled out the roles of the community leaders and the media in promoting change and even suggested that liability laws should be changed as part of the reform because they "...frighten people away from helping others. We ought to care for each other more and sue each other less" (1992, 734). In his radio address to the nation the next morning, he restated the elements of his domestic agenda, "preserve order...spark an economic revival...revolutionize American education...promote home ownership" (1992, 735), and stated, "My first order of business now that I am back in Washington is to build a bipartisan effort in support of immediate action on this agenda" (1992, 736). Then, on May 11, he expanded his agenda, adding arguments on health care reform and still using the crisis in Los Angeles as the backdrop for his remarks. At a fund raising dinner in Philadelphia he said, "...the time has come to set the old, worn-out ideas aside" (1992, 744). To the press on May 12, he made a brief reference to the agenda and said, "We talked about this up in Philadelphia yesterday and in Los Angeles last week, and I think there's strong support for this program" (1992, 749). At this point, Los Angeles had served its purpose as a segue into his topic of choice. The riots were no longer the primary link between the needs for economic and social reform and Bush's agenda and he moved on to promote his programs with little or no reference to Los Angeles.
It is a powerful rhetorical tool to be able to direct public attention to a particular topic and to use events of the day to promote a particular agenda. Bush did not waste those opportunities. The data collected for this thesis revealed that whenever Bush delivered remarks during the time periods studied, once he acknowledged the crisis at all, he made it part, if not all of the topic in every speech.

He used crisis situations very effectively to promote his defense and domestic agendas with one exception. That exception occurred on May 1, two days after the Los Angeles riots broke out. He had issued his first remarks concerning the crisis the evening before at a fund raising dinner. Then, on May 1, Bush delivered three speeches. The first one at 7:04 a.m. was a scheduled speech to participants of the Great American Workout. Although his remarks concerning the crisis represented only a very small part of the speech, he referred to the situation as one that "troubles the whole country" and announced scheduled meetings with the Attorney General and the head of the FBI as well as civil rights leaders. (1992, 680). The third speech that day was delivered at 9:03 p.m. It was an address to the nation on the civil disturbances in Los Angeles. That was, of course, a lengthy speech outlining what action had been taken, asking people to remain calm, and stressing the social values that would become the theme for his remarks on that crisis. However, the second speech Bush delivered that day was at 1:25 p.m. at the Points of Light Ceremony. In those remarks, he made no mention of the riots at all. This
peculiar omission cannot be explained by the type of audience. Both speeches were
delivered to special interest audiences. In fact, there were even appropriate places in the
remarks at the Points of Light ceremony to reiterate the social values that he stressed in
his early morning speech because during the Points of Light ceremony Bush praised Los
Angeles award winner Robert Zamora, who created the "Getting Busy Teen Club as an
alternative to gangs in east Los Angeles" and the members of the Eammanuelle Reformed
Church in Paramount, California, who "started tackling the crises that threatened their
neighborhood, like gangs and illiteracy and crime" (1992, 682). It is hard to imagine that
the crisis did not come to mind as he praised these Los Angeles programs designed to
improve the situation in neighborhoods that had just been victimized by rioting. In terms
of rhetorical strategy, one cannot help but wonder if the omission was intended, and if so,
to what end? If it was simply an oversight in the delivery of a speech written prior to the
outbreak of the crisis it still seems odd that Bush remembered to inject remarks on the
rioting in his early morning speech and neglected to mention it during this speech at a
most appropriate juncture -- presenting awards to Los Angeles citizens who were taking
action to create less hostile environments for those in the riot-torn areas.

Nonetheless, Bush certainly demonstrated that he had rhetorical skill in the use of
topic and built his verbal messages very effectively to direct audience attention to his
agenda. However, there are also nonverbal messages that contribute to effective rhetoric.
In the next section, I discuss how Bush used the element of setting to further develop his crisis rhetoric.

The Rhetorical Element of Setting

The way in which an audience receives any speech can be greatly impacted by the setting. Remarks delivered in an inappropriate location may seem weak and may even be misinterpreted. However, a location with the right nonverbal symbols in the background can add powerful force to a message. I found that Bush used the symbols of his office when delivering speeches to national audiences. However, when possible, he took advantage of other locations to add impact to his remarks.

Table XII: Settings of Remarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 at White House</th>
<th>2 at other locations$^{31}$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flag Burning</strong></td>
<td>3 at White House</td>
<td>5 at other locations$^{32}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panama Invasion</strong></td>
<td>6 at White House</td>
<td>8 at other locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persian Gulf</strong></td>
<td>6 at White House</td>
<td>13 at other locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Los Angeles Riots</strong></td>
<td>6 at White House</td>
<td>13 at other locations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of Bush's remarks were made in Washington D.C. in a White House setting, the architectural symbol of his authority as President. During both international crises
studied, settings such as the Oval Office, the White House Briefing Room and the Cabinet Room added credibility to the President's assurances that he was in touch with world leaders and in command of the situation. It would have been unthinkable for him to go to Panama or the Persian Gulf himself. Americans are accustomed to having their President in the White House during an international crisis. Although the public does not expect presidents to travel to sites of international crises, during domestic crises, presidents can enhance their images of competence, legitimacy and compassion by personally visiting national sites of crisis as soon as it is safe to do so.

George Bush chose the White House as the setting for about half of his remarks during crisis situations. His awareness of the symbolic value of the White House was evident the week before he deployed American troops to the Gulf when Bush had a scheduled speaking engagement in Aspen, Colorado. In order to impress upon the public that he was "on the job," he announced his schedule to reporters, "I will have consultations...there in Aspen with Prime Minister Thatcher and I will be returning home this evening, and I'll be here in Washington tomorrow" (1990, 1084). In other words, this was not a pleasure trip and, as the nation's leader, he would return to his legitimate and appropriate location -- Washington -- as quickly as business would allow.

During international crises, Bush did deliver several speeches away from the White House, his symbolic center of power, but many of the locations were associated
with the government, such as the Pentagon and military bases. One location, Bush's home in Kennebunkport, Maine, might have been technically considered a government-associated site, but because it was Bush's vacation home, it created a different nonverbal message than the White House. Of the four crises studied, Bush delivered remarks from Kennebunkport only during the Persian Gulf crisis, and I believe it was one of the few poor choices he made concerning the setting for his speeches. When Bush made announcements from the comfort of his vacation home about the deployment of U.S. troops to a war zone, he appeared detached from the situation and insensitive to those who were personally affected by the military action that he had ordered.

On the other hand, Bush made some very good choices about setting, especially during the domestic crises that allowed him the flexibility to travel to the site of the crisis and personally assess the situation. George Bush was able to deliver his remarks concerning the two domestic crises studied in locations that added power to his messages. For example, after the Los Angeles riots, he spoke to the African-American community in their neighborhood and the Korean community in their neighborhood. Having the President of the United States come to see the damage first hand was much more effective in building a relationships with those audiences than would have been possible had he spoken to them from Washington or even from some other location in Los Angeles.
Perhaps the most powerful and fitting backdrop for his remarks was during the flag burning crisis when Bush announced the proposed constitutional amendment on desecration of the flag. He delivered those remarks at the Iwo Jima Memorial. Few locations could have punctuated his remarks more effectively than the familiar statue of soldiers raising the flag at a memorial erected in memory of those who died defending it.

In general, George Bush made good use of his location options to add emphasis to his crisis communication. Logistical and safety reasons prevented Bush from delivering remarks related to international situations at the location of the crisis, but during those crises, he was consistent in his use of the White House and other presidential settings as the backdrop for his remarks. Additionally, during the two domestic crises Bush took advantage of opportunities to be "on the scene." In Los Angeles he stood amidst the devastation created by the crisis and talked about how the government would help the victims pick up the pieces of their lives, and in Washington he created a powerful visual image when he stood before one inspiring national symbol, the Iwo Jima Memorial, as he defended the significance of another, the American flag.

Summary

While it is useful to examine each of the rhetorical elements and how Bush used them in his crisis communication, it is the interaction of those elements that results in the
speaker's most persuasive messages. Bush clearly depended on his personal values to develop his stature as a legitimate and credible leader, but he used the settings of his remarks to extend those images. Bush developed his role as a legitimate and competent leader, and he was able to promote his agenda through the use of topic.

However, Bush did exhibit some vulnerability in terms of developing audience support, particularly during the Los Angeles riots crisis. When he delivered his remarks to the riot victims in their own destroyed environments, he made strong use of the element of setting, but he seemed to fall short as a competent leader operating from a position of strength. He was involved in a difficult political campaign at the time and was burdened by a poor domestic economic situation, but his speaking style did not lend itself to sympathetic, caring language and, in fact, he appeared awkward and uncomfortable when he tried to deliver such remarks. His inability to express sympathy and compassion made him appear stiff and insincere when placed in riot-torn neighborhoods or military hospitals. The most reasonable, responsible decisions may be rejected by an audience if there is a perception that action was taken with no empathy for those affected by the decision. Of course, because public opinion varies, people often disagree on whether leaders have made responsible, competent decisions in any given situation. However, if leaders take the opportunity to establish a relationship of common ground with their audiences and give them a sense that the leadership's decisions were
made with the audience's best interests at heart, the result is likely to be a positive attitude concerning a speaker's competence (McCroskey, 75). Presidents whose rhetorical strategic styles strengthen the audience perception of their competence are more likely to achieve audience acceptance of their chosen actions in crisis situations.

Bush's crisis rhetoric was most powerful when the elements of speaker, topic, audience and setting interacted within the framework of his value system. Much of George Bush's rhetorical power emanated from his setting and he was simply more effective speaking from the Oval Office than "in the trenches." Bush's rhetorical strategy worked best when the topic lent itself to discourse based on the moral principles that were integral to the speaker, George Bush; when the audience was a special interest group whose values Bush could readily identify with; and when Bush could deliver his remarks in a setting that enhanced his power as a world leader.
CHAPTER FOUR  CRISIS RHETORIC AS A GENRE

My initial interest in presidential crisis communication stemmed from the question of whether such discourse was a rhetorical genre. The review of literature discussed in Chapter 1 revealed some controversy about the question, and I approached my analysis of Bush's crisis communication with the various arguments in mind. While some scholars offered very specific criteria defining the crisis rhetoric genre, others denied its existence altogether. Communication scholars have identified other rhetorical genre such as eulogies and inaugural addresses. Speeches that address those situations follow certain patterns of structure and language that the audience can readily identify which helps them understand the situations. The value in including a crisis rhetoric among the various communication genre is based on the need for understanding between presidents and their audiences during crisis situations. Like other recurring human situations, crises call for rhetorical responses and the genre helps audiences and critics evaluate whether the responses are fitting for the situations.

My first step in seeking support for a crisis rhetoric genre was to study Bush's discourse in terms of the requirements of a rhetorical genre as defined by Campbell and Jamieson and Hart. Bush's crisis rhetoric clearly met those requirements, supporting the argument that presidential crisis communication is indeed a rhetorical genre. His speeches contained a consistent, identifiable pattern of style and strategy that allowed
audiences to identify the purpose of the speeches and to anticipate the kind of information
they would receive in order to make sense of the situation that prompted the president's
remarks.

When I examined Bush's rhetoric for evidence of the criteria specific to crisis
rhetoric genre as outlined by Cherwitz and Zagacki and Rasmussen, I found that their
approaches were too narrow to provide a useful definition of crisis rhetoric genre. In the
following discussion, I provide arguments to support a list of crisis rhetoric genre criteria
that includes some of the elements of Cherwitz and Zagacki and Rasmussen's research,
but which extends beyond their limiting boundaries to establish a broader genre definition
that will be more useful to audiences and to communication scholars. Based on my
research, crisis rhetoric is a genre defined by the following characteristics:

1. Consistent, identifiable pattern of language style and strategy
2. Evidence of consummatory and / or justificatory language
3. Speaker indicates awareness of global audience
4. Explanation of how action is in accordance with U.S. policy
5. Explanation of how action is strategically sound and morally upright
6. Justification of action is based on widely accepted values of audience
7. Evidence of enemy themes
Consistent, identifiable pattern of language style and strategy

Campbell and Jamieson's definition of genre argues that in such discourse, identifiable elements will interrelate, providing a clear indication of the type of situation that prompted the discourse (20, 25). Hart's discussion includes a definition of genre as a group of messages whose structure and content create certain expectations for the audience (183). Based on those definitions, Bush's crisis communication supports the genre argument. His speeches were dominated by the interrelationship of two identifiable elements: 1) his leadership role and 2) the values on which he based his arguments. His speeches followed an identifiable pattern and were consistent in their structure. He began with a list of facts about the situation followed by the "why" of the situation using values-based, descriptive arguments. His rhetoric created certain expectations for his various audiences -- brief, factual information for the press and more descriptive discourse for his special interest and national audiences that provided values-based explanations and justifications of the actions taken (See Table XIII). All of these characteristics of Bush's crisis rhetoric fit the requirements of a genre listed above.
Table XIII: Bush’s Dominant Argument Styles with Various Audiences

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factual</th>
<th>Descriptive</th>
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<tr>
<td>Press</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Evidence of consummatory and/or justificatory language

For this portion of my research, I began with the framework of criteria outlined by Cherwitz and Zagacki and Rasmussen to examine consummatory and justificatory characteristics in Bush’s crisis rhetoric. Cherwitz and Zagacki state that consummatory rhetoric is used when no military action has been taken and the president is trying to solve the crisis through economic or diplomatic means. They describe justificatory rhetoric as announcing military action. Rasmussen adds that justificatory arguments center around the perceptions that U.S. action is in accordance with foreign policy goals and that the action taken is morally upright, strategically sound and is likely to be successful in response to enemy action. She also states that part of the success of such rhetoric in gaining public support for government action is based on the ability of the speaker to transfer the action to the public’s accepted values. I have chosen to examine
Rasmussen's additional characteristics later in this chapter, and begin with the issue of justificatory versus consummatory rhetoric in terms of military versus domestic action.

In my research, I found that when Bush discussed military and diplomatic actions in his crisis rhetoric, he did include the consummatory and justificatory characteristics defined by Cherwitz and Zagacki and Rasmussen. However, their research suggests that crisis rhetoric can be clearly distinguished as either consummatory or justificatory, but I found that most of George Bush's speeches during the crises studied were a blend of both types of language. Table XIV illustrates the breakdown of his speeches into three categories: 1) consummatory with no justificatory references to military action; 2) justificatory with no consummatory references to diplomatic or economic action; 3) "blended," speeches containing consummatory and justificatory rhetoric.33

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Panama Invasion</th>
<th>Persian Gulf</th>
<th>Los Angeles Riots</th>
<th>Flag Desecration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consummatory</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justificatory</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blended</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>
Ten of the fourteen speeches Bush delivered concerning the Persian Gulf crisis were a blend of consummatory and justificatory language. My research of the four week time period surrounding the Persian Gulf crisis revealed that Bush never delivered a speech concerning military action without including some discourse about diplomatic and economic action. By the same token, during the time period studied, Bush never gave a totally consummatory speech concerning the Panama Invasion crisis. Five of his eight speeches during that crisis were blended. This blending of consummatory and justificatory rhetoric was also present in Bush's domestic crisis rhetoric. During the Los Angeles riots crisis, twelve of his nineteen speeches were blended. Overall, 28 of the 44 speeches studied were not exclusively consummatory or justificatory (See Table XIV). Those blended speeches all contained some comments on diplomatic and economic efforts being taken to avert, relieve or defuse the crisis and in all of them, Bush still mentioned the role of military force.

For example, in Bush's announcement of the Panama Invasion, which was justificatory rhetoric, his remarks included consummatory language offering the promise of a U.S.-Panama partnership (1989, 1723). Bush used this one speech to announce military action and to make a consummatory offer of diplomatic action. In another blend of consummatory and justificatory rhetoric, one week after the invasion, Bush announced
that he would be sending a military reconstruction task force to Panama (1989, 1739).

This was an announcement of a consummatory action -- reconstruction -- that he had ordered to be performed by military troops.

During the Persian Gulf crisis, there were many speeches during which Bush blended consummatory and justificatory rhetoric. For example, in his remarks on August 2 concerning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, one week before his deployment of U.S. troops, Bush listed diplomatic and economic actions being taken such as the call for an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council, an Executive order freezing Iraqi assets and a call for global condemnation. All of these announcements fit the definition of consummatory rhetoric. However, in the same speech Bush laid the groundwork for military action, stating, "We remain committed to take whatever steps are necessary to defend our long-standing, vital interests in the Gulf" (1990, 1083-4). Although this was not an announcement of military action, it was justificatory in nature, referring to the potential for military involvement.

Consummatory and justificatory rhetoric received equal exposure in a speech on August 5 when Bush told the press, "I just wanted to fill you in on all the diplomatic activity that is taking place" (1990, 1100-1). In the same speech he informed them that he was meeting at Camp David with top military people (1990, 1101). These remarks sent a clear message to his audience that he was making decisions about both diplomatic
and military actions concerning the crisis situation. By using both consummatory and justificatory rhetoric during this crisis, Bush was able to notify the public about all the options being considered for resolution of the crisis and meet their expectations for information about the situation.

After Bush took military action in the Persian Gulf, his consummatory and justificatory rhetoric became virtually indistinguishable as he described the use of military troops to perform consummatory actions. For example, in his address to the nation on August 8 he spoke about the role of the military in enforcing economic embargo and global sanctions (1990, 1109). In other words, the military action taken (justificatory) was, in fact, in support of economic actions being taken (consummatory).34

Two weeks after the deployment of troops to Saudi Arabia, Bush stated, "As the deployment of the forces of the many nations shows (justificatory) and as the votes in the United Nations show (consummatory)..." (1990, 1157-8). By including both justificatory and consummatory statements in one sentence, Bush seemed to offer something for everyone -- actions for those who wanted to support military involvement and actions for those who wanted to support diplomatic approaches to the crisis. These speeches allowed him to assure the public that he was doing everything possible to avoid escalation of military action, but at the same time, he was alerting the enemy and assuring the public that he was prepared to take military action to resolve the crisis. As a characteristic of
crisis rhetoric genre, this blend of consummatory and justificatory language is valuable in addressing the widespread views of a global audience and helping them understand the options available to the president in dealing with a crisis situation.

Bush’s blend of consummatory and justificatory rhetoric was not limited to international crises. In his address to the nation on May 1, 1992, concerning the Los Angeles riots, Bush devoted half of the speech to information on the military troops who had been dispatched to Los Angeles. In fact, his announcement of the use of military troops was quite similar to those announcements during international crises. He described the conditions that required military involvement, "4,000 fires, staggering property damage, hundreds of injuries, and the senseless deaths..." (1992, 685). He then explained what action had been taken, "I’ve ordered the Justice Department to dispatch 1,000 Federal riot-trained law enforcement officials to help restore order in Los Angeles" (1992, 685). The other half of the speech centered around diplomatic efforts to assure civil rights leaders that the Federal government was taking action "...to ensure that justice is served" (1992, 685). As in the two international crisis studied, Bush blended his consummatory and justificatory crisis rhetoric to assure his audiences that as their leader, he was taking both diplomatic and military actions concerning the situation.

Bush’s remarks concerning the Flag Desecration crisis were primarily consummatory, centering on legislative action to resolve the crisis. However, he did
include military references in his remarks during this crisis. For example, he used justificatory language when he related a story of a soldier who was killed in battle and stated, "If the debate here is about liberty, then we cannot turn our backs on those who fought to win it for us" (1989, 832). So even during this domestic crisis which involved no announcement of military action, military references were a part of George Bush's blended crisis rhetoric.

These examples provide evidence that Bush used a combination of both consummatory and justificatory language to persuade the public to support his chosen courses of action during crisis situations. Cherwitz and Zagacki and Rasmussen used the differences between consummatory and justificatory rhetoric to support their genre argument. I suggest that their criteria are too narrow to be useful in a genre definition. Bush's speeches support my argument that crisis rhetoric includes both consummatory and justificatory language, and in terms of defining the genre, the presence of either one, or both types of language meets the requirements of the genre.

**Speaker indicates awareness of global audience**

Types of audiences being addressed is another criterion proposed by Cherwitz and Zagacki and Rasmussen that is too narrow for a crisis rhetoric genre definition. They link their audience types to a distinction between consummatory and justificatory rhetoric by
stating that in justificatory rhetoric the primary audiences are the American public and the instigators of the crisis whereas in consummatory rhetoric the speaker is addressing a global audience. However this distinction is too limiting and does not contribute to a useful definition of crisis rhetoric. Because of modern communication technology, presidents must always be aware that they are addressing global audiences, and my analysis of Bush's crisis rhetoric supports the argument that he was aware of that audience.

During the Panama Invasion crisis, Bush did address United States population as his primary audience and clearly identified Noriega as the instigator of the crisis. However, his awareness of his global audience was evident as he went on to thank the Latin American countries and U.S. allies for their support of his actions (1989, 1728). In another statement that illustrated how Bush extended the boundaries of his audience, Bush stated, "At the beginning of the term\textsuperscript{35}, there were still three holdout dictatorships in Latin America. And thanks to the sacrifice and the courage of our American fighting men, today there are only two" (1990, 4). These remarks were directed at the Latin American population -- a global audience -- as much as to the United States population. They suggested a warning to the two remaining dictatorships and perhaps even a preview of future presidential action.
During the Persian Gulf crisis, Bush identified Saddam Hussein as the instigator and the American people were his primary audience, but once again, he took every opportunity to expand his remarks to include a global audience. In his news conference two weeks after the deployment of troops, Bush said, "...this is not a matter between Iraq and the United States of America; it is between Iraq and the entire world community" (1990, 1158). This was just one of many statements during the Persian Gulf crisis in which Bush directed his remarks to a global audience.

Like the international crises studied, Bush's speeches during domestic crises were directed primarily to the American public. His first remarks on the crisis in Los Angeles were, "I urge all Americans to approach this situation with calm" (1992, 669) and "Tonight I call on every American to show restraint and to respect people's rights and property." However, even in this domestic crisis situation, Bush took advantage of opportunities to raise the crisis to a global level and speak to a global audience. For example, when he spoke to leaders of the Korean community whose businesses were vandalized during the rioting he said, "I will do everything I can to show our friends abroad as well as here that it's not the American way" (1992, 719). This statement was for the benefit of his global audience, not the American audience immediately present. In another example of Bush's efforts to give the crisis a global perspective, he said in his remarks to Los Angeles community leaders on May 8, "everyone around the world feels
this trauma, everyone who looks to us as a model of freedom and justice" (1992, 730). As these remarks illustrate, although Bush's primary audience appeared to be the American people, his language revealed his awareness of his global audience. Even during the Flag Desecration crisis, Bush spoke to a global audience, promising to "protect civil rights here and democracy abroad" (1989, 832). While this may not have been a particularly powerful statement to his non-American audience, Bush's words illustrate that he was clearly aware of his global audience. With today's highly technological communication network, categorizing crisis rhetoric based on a domestic or global audience is outdated. Remarks concerning any issue may be directed primarily to the domestic public, but there will always be the potential for a global audience. George Bush's discourse supports the argument that crisis rhetoric as a genre must be prepared with a global audience in mind.

**Explanation of how action is in accordance with U.S. policy**

Crisis communication must include an explanation of how the actions taken by the president was in accordance with U.S. policy. In seeking public support of his actions during both international and domestic crises, Bush's rhetoric was characterized by lists of goals that were in concert with U.S. policy. For example, Bush's stated goals of the Panama Invasion were to safeguard American lives, defend democracy, combat drug
trafficking and protect the Panama Canal treaty (1989, 1723). On December 21, as the invasion was in its second day, Bush reported on progress achieved toward those goals. Matching his remarks to his originally stated goals, he announced that the military had neutralized the enemy, provided a stable environment for the new government, ensured the integrity of the canal and created a safe environment for American citizens in Panama (1989, 1729). Each action was in support of a stated policy goal of the U.S. Bush consistently used his crisis rhetoric to reiterate U.S. policy goals and explain what actions had been taken in accordance with those goals. This type of communication during a crisis helps audiences understand what decisions are being made by the president and why.

In Bush's address to the nation on the Persian Gulf crisis on August 8, 1990 he listed the goals of that military action, stating, "Four simple principles guide our policy. First we seek the immediate, unconditional, and complete withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Second, Kuwait's legitimate government must be restored to replace the puppet regime. And third, my administration...is committed to the security and stability of the Persian Gulf. And fourth, I am determined to protect the lives of American citizens abroad." (1990, 1108, 1138). As he did during the Panama Invasion crisis, Bush restated these goals often during the crisis and his remarks in subsequent speeches reflected the progress achieved in meeting those specific goals.
During the Los Angeles crisis, Bush also used his rhetoric to demonstrate that his actions were in accordance with U.S. policy. His justification for using military troops in Los Angeles was to restore law and order, which can be described as a domestic U.S. policy. He stated that policy in his address to the nation on May 1, 1992, when he said, "The Federal effort in this case...will not be driven by mob violence but by respect for...the rule of law" (1992, 686). In other words, he would take federal action in order to further the U.S. policy of law and order. When Bush arrived in Los Angeles after calm had been restored, he told military personnel and local law enforcement personnel and firefighters, "your very presence restored a sense of civility" and he praised them for "restoring the peace" (1992, 727-9). Bush's remarks were designed to emphasize the effectiveness of the military action in supporting the government policy of law and order by restoring domestic tranquillity in Los Angeles.

As these examples illustrate, during both international and domestic crisis situations, Bush clearly stated goals of U.S. policy and explained how they were supported by his chosen actions. This characteristic of crisis communication exhibited by Bush supports the argument that crisis rhetoric describes actions taken as in accordance with U.S. policy.
Explanation of how action is strategically sound and morally upright

Another characteristic of crisis rhetoric is that the action should be perceived by the audience as morally upright and strategically advantageous (Rasmussen 113). Bush spoke with ease about military strategy and used this ability to strengthen his arguments concerning the actions taken. In addition, considering Bush's strong focus on values, it is not surprising that his rhetoric contained language defending the morality of his actions.

Strategic advantage during the Panama Invasion was the focus of Bush's rhetoric. In his remarks to the press on December 31, 1989, he applauded the military invasion strategy, stating, "...in a military sense, everything I've heard is that the operation, though some were desperately hurt and some regrettably killed, was a superb operation" (1989, 1751) This statement offered assurances to the audience concerning the strategic correctness of the actions taken. However, Bush's reference to those who were injured and killed was somewhat cold-blooded and did not support his assertion that "The United States used its resources in a manner consistent with political, diplomatic and moral principles" (1990, 8). As was discussed in Chapter 3, Bush had some difficulty expressing sympathy in his crisis rhetoric and these two statements illustrate how that weakness may have sent a message of insincerity to his audience.

Military strategy was also central to Bush's remarks during the Persian Gulf crisis, but during that situation he was more effective in assuring his audience that the actions
taken were morally upright. Bush began to build support for the strategic and moral value of military action one week before he deployed U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia. During his remarks at the Aspen Institute on August 2, Bush stressed the moral responsibility of the U.S. and the strategic threat to U.S. interests, stating:

Even in a world where democracy and freedom have made great gains, threats remain. Terrorism, hostagetaking, renegade regimes and unpredictable rulers, new sources of instability -- all require a strong and an engaged America.

The brutal aggression launched last night against Kuwait illustrates my central thesis: Notwithstanding the alteration in the Soviet threat, the world remains a dangerous place with serious threats to important U.S. interests. (1990, 1092).

These remarks were a broadly based assessment of the various immoral forces and unidentified aggressors that the U.S. must be prepared to face. By making these statements, and using Iraq's invasion of Kuwait as simply one example, Bush was setting the tone for potential U.S. involvement, informing his audiences about the moral and strategic threats against which he was preparing to take action.
One week later, in his address to the nation announcing the deployment of troops to Saudi Arabia, Bush clearly defined the moral standings of the two adversaries -- Hussein vs. the rest of the world, when he said, "Iraqi Armed Forces, without provocation or warning, invaded a peaceful Kuwait...Facing negligible resistance from its much smaller neighbor, Iraq's tanks stormed in blitzkrieg fashion through Kuwait..." (1990, 1107). On the other side were the United Nations sanctions "...enshrined in international law..." (1990, 1108). These remarks clearly established the actions of the U.S. and its allies as taking the highest moral ground. "Enshrined" carries a connotation of holiness. In contrast, Bush equated Iraq with the most barbaric behavior in modern history -- the blitzkrieg methods of the Nazis.

Bush spoke of America's international moral responsibility when he addressed Republican supporters at a fundraising luncheon in Rhode Island, stating, "we must be guided by the imperatives of a strong moral compass" (1990, 1154). He justified his actions in the Gulf, emphasizing the moral struggle that was part of his decision made "...not with passionate haste [but] with a heavy heart...not out of some national hunger for conflict but out of moral responsibility" (1990, 1154). These remarks clearly met the requirements of the genre definition -- that the actions taken were morally upright.

During domestic crises, Bush also used his rhetoric to argue that his actions as president were morally upright and strategically advantageous. Evidently pleased with
the strategic results of government action in Los Angeles, Bush told an audience on May 13, "I think the Nation is focusing on how well all levels of government came to bear on helping in the recovery and the re-stimulation of the community there in Los Angeles" (1992, 758). Even though there was no invasion, Bush still found the language necessary to illustrate that restoring law and order and rebuilding Los Angeles was a well-planned, well-executed strategic government operation.

During both domestic and international crisis situations, Bush used language that helped him assure his audiences of the moral uprightness and strategic correctness of his actions, thus fulfilling a characteristic requirement of crisis rhetoric as a genre. In addition, creating this positive frame of mind could naturally lead his audiences to transfer the government's action to accepted social values, another important factor in establishing public support for the chosen action and another characteristic of the genre.

**Justification of action includes references to widely accepted values of audience**

In Chapter 3, I discussed at length Bush's use of values-based rhetoric to establish common ground with his audiences. It was the very essence of his crisis communication style to justify the action taken in terms of the values of his audiences. He used a wide variety of values with great skill. Whether he was basing his statements on patriotic values, social values, family values, humanitarian values or religious values, he seemed to
know just the right mix for his different audiences. In addition to the examples of Bush's rhetorical use of values offered in Chapter 3, I found the following statements provide further insight into Bush's values-based rhetoric and how it supports the genre argument.

The Flag Desecration crisis provided an interesting example of Bush's use of crisis rhetoric to transfer his action to the widely accepted values of the audience. In his call for a constitutional amendment, he incorporated several values, including patriotism, liberty, free speech, civil rights and democracy (1989, 832) into two symbolic references -- the Iwo Jima Memorial and the flag itself. When Bush delivered his speech in front of the Iwo Jima Memorial, "the most famous image of World War II," this was a direct transfer of his action to the patriotic values of World War II (1989, 832). Then, with a poetic flair, Bush stated, "To the touch, this flag is merely fabric. But to the heart, this flag represents and reflects the fabric of our nation" (1989, 832). Drawing attention to the values represented by these powerful symbols, George Bush clearly linked his call for protection of the flag with basic patriotic values held by many Americans.

Another interesting use of values-based remarks was during the Los Angeles riots crisis when Bush said, "We are embarrassed by interracial violence and prejudice. We are ashamed" (1992, 715). By touching the raw nerves of racial intolerance, Bush created a link between the social values of humanity, equality and civil rights and the actions taken to uphold those values. In addition, when Bush said "We are ashamed," he added a
tone of religious value to the rhetorical mix and joined his fellow Americans in taking responsibility for the damaged state of America's values system which allowed this crisis to occur. Once he had identified the values related to this crisis situation, he detailed the actions he was taking, such as meetings with community leaders, to restore that value system.

One of the best examples of Bush's transfer of his actions to the values of his audience was a speech to Los Angeles community leaders during which he wrapped all the values he had discussed in previous Los Angeles speeches into one package and then used his political agenda to link his actions to those values. Referring to such values as civil rights, freedom, democracy, and family and religious values, Bush denounced existing social service programs and promoted his own agenda of social reform. After a lengthy speech outlining his action plan, Bush summed up his arguments:

From now on in America, any definition of a successful life must include serving others ... we remain the freest and the fairest and the most just and the most decent country on the face of the entire Earth ... in good communities...young people are cared for, and they're instilled with character and values and good habits for life (1992, 733).
This series of remarks was a passionate appeal to widely accepted values of American society, including patriotism, civil rights, brotherhood and democracy. Bush's delivery of these remarks reminded me of the finale in a fireworks display when the presenters throw in everything they have and literally take the audience's breath away. There is nothing left to do but applaud.

Throughout this thesis, Bush's use of values to build audience support was evident and masterful. He knew how to defend his chosen actions in terms of social, patriotic and religious values and, whether the crisis was domestic or international, whether the actions were military or diplomatic, he knew which values would be most effective with which audiences. Certainly, Bush's speeches support the argument that a characteristic of crisis rhetoric as a genre is the justification of action through references to widely accepted values.

Evidence of enemy themes

Rasmussen included enemy themes as one characteristic of justificatory rhetoric, but she specified that such language referred to the Communist enemy. I found examples of enemy themes in 36 of Bush's 44 crisis speeches examined, but none were based on Communism as the enemy (See Table XV).
Table XV: Use of Enemy Themes in Bush's Crisis Rhetoric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total number of speeches</th>
<th>Speeches with enemy themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flag Desecration</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama Invasion</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian Gulf</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Riots</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once again, Rasmussen's criteria are too narrow for a useful definition of crisis rhetoric genre. During Bush's administration, the Communist Soviet Union collapsed, losing its global power and posing little threat to the United States. By limiting her criterion to a Communist enemy theme, Rasmussen's genre definition was only applicable for about 80 years. Certainly, presidents have needed to identify enemies in crisis rhetoric prior to the rise of Communism in the early 1900's and will continue to do so in the future. In fact, Communism may regain its strength somewhere in the world and once again pose a major threat. In such a case, Communism will likely be the enemy theme in some future president's crisis rhetoric, but for the genre definition to be useful to speakers
and audiences, it must include enemy themes as a broad characteristic that can be applied to any language referring to anyone or any ideology that threatens the United States.

During the crises studied, Bush identified specific individuals, certain behaviors and even social climates as enemies. Enemy themes during the international crises focused on Noriega and Hussein, specific individuals whom Bush targeted as the instigators of the crisis. During the domestic crises, Bush did not identify individuals as enemies. Instead he referred to faceless enemies such as "mobs" and "protesters."

During the Panama Invasion crisis, there was one enemy -- Manuel Noriega, and Bush identified him as "an indicted drug trafficker" (1989, 1723) and a "gang leader" who, as a national leader, ordered his forces to shoot, kill, beat and sexually abuse unarmed Americans (1989, 1723). Bush singled out Noriega as a common criminal making the violent acts carried out under his orders sound more like inner city violence than the acts of a nation at war with the U.S.. During the days after the invasion, Bush began to talk about bringing Noriega "to justice for poisoning the children of the United States of America and the people of the world" (1989, 1744). It was easy for Bush to identify the enemy in the Panama Invasion crisis and he took full advantage of that to build support for his actions against such a despicable enemy.

During the Persian Gulf crisis, Bush again was able to identify a specific enemy in Saddam Hussein. However, he did not do so in his early remarks -- he began by
condemning aggressive behavior as the enemy. For example, during the week prior to his deployment of U.S. troops, Bush referred only to "naked aggression" by Iraq (1990, 1083, 1085, 1089, 1098, 1101, 1106). Then, in his address to the nation on August 8, 1990 announcing the deployment of troops to Saudi Arabia, Bush not only named Hussein as the enemy, but likened him to the century's most heinous enemy, Adolf Hitler: "As was the case in the 1930's we see in Saddam Hussein an aggressive dictator threatening his neighbors" (1990, 1108). This use of enemy themes helped Bush build support for his actions by defining a single enemy and assigning that enemy a label that would be most abhorrent to the American people.

On August 15, in a speech to Department of Defense employees, Bush continued to talk about the enemy, Saddam Hussein, "...the man who has used poison gas against the men, women and children of his own country" (1990, 1138). Here, Bush was describing Hussein not only as an enemy against the United States, but as an enemy against his own people. In a rhetorical note of disdain, Bush referred to the enemy by his first name, "Saddam...lied to his neighbors," "Saddam...invaded an Arab state," "...Saddam would have us believe," "Saddam has claimed..." (1990, 1138). By not using his last name or title, but calling him simply "Saddam," Bush showed that Hussein was not deserving of any respect as the leader of a nation. In a statement that expressed the enormity of the evil this enemy could do, Bush stated, "Our jobs, our way of life, our own
freedom, and the freedom of friendly countries around the world would suffer if control of the world's great oil reserves fell into the hands of that one man, Saddam Hussein" (1990, 1139). Bush created the image of a single enemy who could seemingly bring down the world. In an interesting twist on the enemy theme in another speech, Bush stated that by taking foreign hostages, Iraq had violated an "age-old Arab tradition of showing kindness and hospitality to visitors" (1990, 1148). Thus, Hussein was the enemy of civilized society throughout time. As a threat to the United States, to his own Iraqi people, to world peace and to the traditions of Arab civility, Saddam Hussein provided Bush with a great deal of material for the enemy theme in his crisis rhetoric.

Unlike the crises in Panama or in the Persian Gulf, Bush did not have an individual he could identify as the enemy instigator of the crisis in Los Angeles. Nonetheless, he was able to use enemy themes in his domestic crisis rhetoric. In his initial remarks, the violent crimes themselves were the enemy. Bush stated, "random violence against innocent victims must be condemned" (1992, 669). This statement defined "violence" as the enemy without identifying the people who might be instigators of the crisis. Bush also condemned "mob brutality" several times (1992, 671). The word "mob" added human form to the enemy theme, but Bush remained ambiguous about the faceless perpetrators of the violence.
The next day in his address to the nation, Bush began to put a face on the enemy - the face of the American people. He said, "In a civilized society, there can be no excuse...for the murder, arson, theft, and vandalism that have terrorized the law-abiding citizens of Los Angeles...It's as if we were looking in a mirror that distorted our better selves and turned us ugly." (1992, 686). With these words, the face of every American became the face of the enemy. Bush had injected enemy themes into his crisis rhetoric without naming any individuals or ideologies.

When he visited Los Angeles after the riots, Bush's remarks concerning enemy themes varied depending on his audience. In some cases, perhaps to defuse the situation, he downplayed the enemy theme. For example, to the African-American community he said, "This is not a time for blame" (1992, 714), and to the Los Angeles community leaders he stated, "Casting blame gets us absolutely nowhere" (1992, 731). These remarks were an attempt to acknowledge that someone or something was the enemy but that Bush's agenda was to focus on rebuilding.

On the other hand, in his remarks to firefighters, law enforcement personnel and military personnel, Bush used his strongest enemy theme language with such phrases as "...people that would wantonly destroy, wantonly terrorize, wantonly kill their fellow citizens" (1992, 727), and "...we've seen the worst that human beings can do" (1992, 728). After Bush's visit to Los Angeles, he continued to name human, but faceless enemies
such as "gangs of looters" and "angry mobs" (1992, 735). Bush was careful to avoid any racial or socio-economic identifiers when describing the Los Angeles riots instigators, but he spoke against those faceless people who participated in the violence knowing that they were considered outside the boundaries of acceptable society.

During the Flag Desecration crisis, Bush did not name an enemy, but he came very close when he made reference to protesters, stating, "Flag-burning is wrong" (1989, 805). As was the case during the Los Angeles riots, the enemy here was faceless and nameless. In effect, the enemy was a behavior -- flag-burning. Nonetheless, it meets the definition of an enemy theme. In addition, although the idea of an enemy theme may be too strong in this case, Bush certainly established the existence of an adversarial relationship when he pitted himself against the Supreme Court on this issue.

Enemy themes were evident in Bush's crisis rhetoric and are a necessary element of any speech during which presidents must inform the public about a crisis situation and what actions are being taken. Enemy themes should be included as one of the characteristics of crisis rhetoric genre, defined as any reference to an individual, a group, a behavior, a social climate or an ideology that contributes to or creates a crisis situation.
Summary

My analysis of George Bush's crisis rhetoric does support the argument that presidential crisis communication is a rhetorical genre with the following elements as the genre criteria:

1. Consistent, identifiable pattern of language style and strategy. For George Bush, that pattern was the use of values based rhetoric to establish himself as the nation's legitimate leader and to establish common ground with his audiences.

2. Evidence of consummatory and/or justificatory language

3. Speaker indicates awareness of global audience

4. Explanation of how action is in accordance with U.S. policy

5. Explanation of how action is strategically sound and morally upright

6. Justification of action is based on widely accepted values of audience

7. Evidence of enemy themes

The first characteristic addresses the general definition of a genre. The fourth, fifth and sixth characteristics are basically unchanged from those presented in previous communication research. However, the second, third and seventh elements reflect several modifications of the Cherwitz and Zagacki and Rasmussen's definitions of the crisis rhetoric genre. First of all, the speeches cannot be separated into consummatory and justificatory categories. In fact, to separate these two language characteristics is
counterproductive to the genre theory and is misleading for the political leader who interprets the separation as a guideline for effective crisis communication. Rather, speeches should be examined for elements of both types of language. Bush consistently blended the characteristics of consummatory and justificatory language in his speeches, supporting the argument that the criterion of Cherwitz and Zagacki and Rasmussen is too limiting.

Another criterion that requires refining is the audience definition. With today's worldwide communication technology, the audience cannot be limited to the U.S. public and it would be naive of any president to think otherwise. With modern communication methods such as electronic media and satellite communication, decisions are communicated with lightning speed and there is little control over the audiences of those messages. Every crisis communication is accessible to and evaluated by a global audience during both international and domestic crisis situations. Therefore, every crisis speech must cover a wide range of audiences, assuring them that both consummatory and justificatory options are part of every decision.

Finally, concerning the definition of enemy themes, recent historical events require the removal of references to the Communist enemy, which would only have been applicable to crisis rhetoric delivered from the 1920's to the 1980's. Enemy themes in presidential crisis communication prior to the 20th century would have had no references
to Communism, but rather would have referred to the enemies of the time, and we have no way of anticipating the enemies of the future. Enemy themes are an important characteristic of presidential crisis communication, but the definition for the genre must be broad enough to include any threat to the tranquility of the United States. Enemy themes should include any potential national threats, which may be individuals, nations or ideologies. This may seem to be an issue of semantics, but it is important to clarify the criteria of enemy themes in order for political leaders to use the genre framework in presenting their crisis messages to the public.
CHAPTER FIVE  CONCLUSION

When George Bush announced the deployment of troops to the Persian Gulf there was very little protest from the American public. At the time, I found this somewhat amazing considering that the U.S. military action in Vietnam was still a hot topic of public debate. I felt sure that those who argued against the political actions that sent U.S. troops to Vietnam would openly defy Bush's decision should he choose to send troops to the Persian Gulf. However, much to my surprise, Bush accomplished that military action with very little protest from the American public and, in fact, the action seemed generally well received. I wondered how, in a national climate that seemed so strongly opposed to sending the U.S. military into foreign conflicts, Bush was able to persuade the American public to support his deployment of military troops in the Persian Gulf. Some answers to this question were revealed in my rhetorical analysis of George Bush's speeches delivered during the Persian Gulf crisis and the other three crisis situations examined for this thesis -- the Panama Invasion, the Los Angeles riots and the Flag Desecration crisis.

First of all, Bush employed a very effective style and strategy that was based on two rhetorical elements -- his personal presence as the nation's leader and his ability to tailor his remarks to his various audiences by building his arguments around widely accepted values of the American public. Second, he structured his remarks in a consistent pattern that met the criteria of crisis rhetoric genre, which helped his audiences anticipate
the focus of his remarks, helped them understand the crisis situations, and helped them relate the president's chosen actions to resolution of the crises.

This thesis offered an in-depth, detailed view of George Bush's crisis rhetoric which contributes to the body of communication research on presidential crisis communication. However, George Bush's remarks during crisis situations tended to be brief, direct and to the point, so it is fitting that an analysis of his crisis rhetoric can be summed up by examining just one brief sentence from a speech he delivered on the morning of December 20, 1989 following his ordered invasion of Panama. "I want to tell you what I did and why" (1989, 1722). These few words embodied the defining characteristics of George Bush's crisis rhetoric. Bush delivered factual information about crisis situations with confidence. He used the word "I" three times, calling attention to himself as the speaker and the nation's legitimate, competent leader. By using the word "I" instead of "we," he defined his role as president, emphasizing his personal responsibility for the actions taken during the crisis. Certainly he supported his remarks with references to credible sources -- political and military officials, and leaders of other nations -- but the final decision was his, and his alone, as the President of the United States.

While Bush, the speaker, dominated the positioning of his crisis rhetoric, values dominated the content of his remarks. In the statement above, the single word "why" told
George Bush's audience a great deal about what to expect from that speech. They knew that when he told them the "why" of his actions, the explanations would be in terms of their values. They also knew that he was going to explain how the actions were strategically sound in response to the actions of the enemy who instigated the crisis, and he was going to explain how the actions were morally upright and in concert with U.S. policies. Bush's crisis rhetoric was certainly more complex than this one brief statement reveals, but his personal view of his leadership role and his use of values were the common threads that dominated his crisis remarks.

However, Bush had a rhetorical weakness -- speaking face-to-face with the average citizen. This was most evident during his remarks concerning the Los Angeles riots. Compare his national address from the Oval Office with his remarks to victims when he visited the actual sites of the riots. When he addressed the nation, his delivery was smooth, coherent, strong and full of empathy for the victims. However, when he faced the riot victims in the destroyed neighborhoods, he stumbled over words and failed to express himself with compassion.

On the other hand, Bush's strongest rhetorical position was as a global leader. Whenever possible, he enhanced his role as the nation's leader by presenting himself as a global leader, and the wider his sphere of leadership, the more effective and confident was his rhetoric.
My study of Bush's style and strategy revealed a great deal of information about George Bush as a speaker, but it also provided examples of language that helped create a list of criteria for the crisis rhetoric genre. Rhetorical genre are important communication tools for presidents and their audiences. Scholars have provided presidents with guidelines for campaign speeches, keynote addresses, inaugural addresses and eulogies that help the speaker and audience communicate with each other. Certainly crisis rhetoric -- the most critical communication between presidents and their publics -- should be included in this list.

The very nature of crisis -- unpredictable and ambiguous -- makes guidelines for crisis communication difficult to develop, and it is likely that additional research will result in ongoing redefinitions of presidential crisis rhetoric criteria as scholars work toward consensus on the genre theory. Nonetheless, generally accepted guidelines for crisis communication are necessary to further its standing as a rhetorical genre, and further study of other presidents' crisis rhetoric is necessary in order to clearly define it as a rhetorical genre.

One of the questions addressed by this thesis was whether there were differences between domestic and international presidential crisis rhetoric. The results of the research were that both Bush's domestic crisis rhetoric and international crisis rhetoric were similar in style and strategy and supported the genre theory.
Similarities in Bush's domestic and international crisis rhetoric included his emphasis on his personal responsibility as the nation's leader, and the consistent structure of his remarks. In addition, his pattern of using widely accepted values to support his actions was present in both types of rhetoric.

One clear difference between Bush's domestic rhetoric and international crisis rhetoric had to do with identification of enemies. During the international crises, he had no problem naming specific individuals who were the instigators of the crisis. However, during domestic crises he chose not to name any specific enemies. He talked in general terms about types of negative behaviors that were in opposition to American values, but the domestic enemy was always faceless. In fact, for a president to attack specific American citizens as enemies would contradict the values of unity and brotherhood that contribute to national stability. It would be interesting to study Abraham Lincoln's speeches in terms of enemy themes to see if, even when the American people were bitterly fighting each other, he ever identified the enemy by name.

Another area of comparison between domestic and international crisis rhetoric had to do with the settings in which Bush delivered his remarks. Traditionally, presidents do not visit the sites of battlefields or rioting neighborhoods during crisis situations. It is understandable that such on-site visits would put the president in harm's way and interfere with his or her accessibility to the people and resources necessary to make crisis-related
decisions. However, after the threat to the president's safety has passed, the feasibility of an official visit is likely to be considered. During and immediately following the crises studied for this thesis, Bush did not leave the United States. He traveled to military hospitals in Texas to visit personnel who had been wounded in the Panama Invasion and he traveled to Los Angeles to meet with residents and community leaders.

It is interesting to speculate on his motivation for those two visits. The Panama Invasion was presented by Bush as a successful military endeavor and his visit to the military site nearest to the crisis location may have strengthened his image as the leader of the operation. George Bush's decision to visit Los Angeles following the riots was probably influenced by the fact that he was in the midst of a challenging presidential campaign. Although, as was discussed previously, his rhetorical performance there was occasionally weak, his presence enhanced his image as the nation's leader and the six meetings he held with victims, public safety personnel and government leaders gave him a platform for presenting his campaign agenda. Since Bush did leave Washington D.C. in response to both an international and a domestic crisis, the question of whether presidential travel decisions are influenced by the location of the crisis remains unanswered. Additional study would be useful to examine such questions as how much time elapses between the return of order and the president's visit to the crisis site, and whether a presidential visit to a crisis location enhances his or her leadership credibility.
Overall, while this thesis did provide some information concerning the similarities and differences between domestic and international crisis rhetoric, it was difficult to make solid comparisons in many areas because the Flag Desecration crisis never developed into a situation that threatened public safety. The potential for demonstrations and even violence was a real possibility and, in fact, the debate over a Constitutional amendment continues six years later. However, without the involvement of military action, it was difficult to compare and contrast President Bush's rhetoric during the Flag Desecration crisis with his remarks during the other three crises. For example, I found differences in terms of the values Bush emphasized in various speeches. During the international crises, he stressed patriotic, democratic and humanitarian values, but during the Los Angeles riots crisis, he built his arguments around family and religious values. This variation in emphasis does not reflect a difference between domestic and international crisis rhetoric because Bush did not draw on family or religious values during the Flag Desecration crisis, but additional study of other domestic crises involving violence would provide comparable discourse for a study of those values that dominate international crises and those that dominate domestic crises. While the four crises studied for this thesis met the criteria as established in Chapter 2, future research should focus on crisis situations that are comparable in terms of the threat to public safety and need for military action.
Future study

This thesis contributed to the body of communication literature by providing insight into the rhetorical style of President George Bush and at the same time, offering a framework for similar analysis of other presidents. Additionally, I have suggested specific criteria for a definition of the genre and broadened the scope of crisis communication research by including domestic crises in my analysis. However, like most communication research, my study raises many new questions. While I disagree with Dow (307) who suggests that presidential crisis communication cannot be identified as a genre until every presidential speech has been examined by rhetorical scholars, I do suggest that further study of other presidents' crisis rhetoric is necessary in order to clearly define the elements of this rhetorical genre. One particular area that warrants additional study is the genre characteristic of a consistent, identifiable pattern of language style and strategy. Further study is necessary to determine if Bush's own pattern -- the use of values based rhetoric to establish himself as the nation's legitimate leader and to establish common ground with his audiences -- is the pattern common to all presidential crisis rhetoric. If not, the genre definition must be a broad statement requiring a pattern that may be unique to each president but which is consistent and identifiable for that president. In addition, it might be interesting to examine presidential crisis
communication by eras to determine if presidents in the early decades of our nation did, in fact, speak exclusively in consummatory or justificatory style, depending on what action had been taken. If so, such research could help define when modern presidential crisis communication -- the blending of consummatory and justificatory rhetoric -- came about.

Additional studies in the area of presidential crisis communication style and strategy would benefit from a more narrow focus that addressed each of Hart's rhetorical situation elements for several different presidents. For example, future analysis of the element of speaker could include a comparison of those presidents who predominantly used the pronoun "I" versus those who chose the word "we" when justifying their decisions. Such research could help identify which is more commonly used by presidents to establish their legitimacy as the nation's leaders.

In terms of the element of audience, agenda setting studies could provide valuable information about the persuasiveness of various crisis rhetoric styles and strategies. In fact, it was very difficult to analyze George Bush's crisis rhetoric without drawing conclusions about its effectiveness in terms of public opinion. I believe it is a valuable and essential first step of rhetorical analysis to examine the rhetoric itself, and this thesis provides a useful framework for that study. However, in studying a president's crisis communication, its effectiveness can best be measured in terms of public response to the
rhetoric. Therefore, it follows that additional study in the area of presidential crisis communication must include such areas as public opinion patterns during a given crisis and agenda setting patterns by the media in order to identify what strategies, styles and characteristics of crisis rhetoric are most effective in persuading the public to support the president.

When George Bush said to the American public, “I want to tell you what I did and why,” he alerted his audience to the style and general content of his remarks. He followed the crisis communication script that audiences were familiar with, thus making it easier for them to understand and evaluate his chosen actions. He usually met the demands of Bitzer’s rhetorical situation, presenting discourse that was a fitting response for each situation, and he apparently chose an effective rhetorical style and strategy. As a result, President George Bush was generally able to persuade his audiences to support his actions during crisis situations. Future research into presidential discourse, which addresses the issues of rhetorical style and strategy, and the crisis communication genre theory, will provide communication scholars with additional insight into this important aspect of presidential rhetoric.
APPENDIX A

Elements of a rhetorical situation as illustrated by Roderick P. Hart in Modern Rhetorical Criticism (71).
APPENDIX B

Released on Thursday, December 9, 1993 by the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press.

TIMES MIRROR DATABASE
PUBLIC ATTENTIVENESS TO MAJOR NEWS STORIES
(1986 - 1993)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCENT FOLLOWED</th>
<th>EVENT DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger (July 86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Destruction caused by the San Francisco earthquake (Nov 69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Verdict in Rodney King case and following riots and disturbances (May 92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Little girl in Texas who was rescued after falling into a well (Oct 87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>War's end and the homecoming of U.S. forces from the Gulf (March 91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Hurricane Andrew (Sept 92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia (Aug 90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>The Floods in the Midwest (Aug 93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Oct 90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Sept 90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Nov 90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Oct 90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Invasion of Panama (Jan 90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Destruction caused by Hurricane Hugo (Oct 89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Jan 91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>U.S. air strikes against Libya (July 86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>The plight of the American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq (Sept 90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Recent increase in the price of gasoline (Aug 90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Sept 90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Crash of a United Airlines DC-10 in Sioux City, Iowa (Aug 89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Deployment of U.S. Forces to Somalia (Jan 93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Alaska Oil Spill (May 89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>The release of American hostages and other westerners from Iraq and Kuwait (Jan 91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Supreme Court decision of flag burning (July 89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Waco, Texas Incident (May 93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Opening of the Berlin Wall between East and West Germany (Nov 89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Flight of the space shuttle (Oct 88)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table XVI: Breakdown of White House communications for crises studied

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crisis</th>
<th>Window of study</th>
<th>Total White House Communications</th>
<th>Communications related to crisis</th>
<th>Bush's oral communications related to crisis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supreme Court Decision on Flag Burning: June 21, 1989</strong></td>
<td>June 7, 1989 - July 5, 1989</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panama Invasion: December 20, 1989</strong></td>
<td>December 6, 1989 - January 3, 1990</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table XVII: Data on Bush's rhetoric during flag burning crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of day</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Main focus of speech</th>
<th>Argument style</th>
<th>Community and government</th>
<th>Community working together</th>
<th>Press</th>
<th>Constitutional amendment</th>
<th>In-depth</th>
<th>Soldiers who died</th>
<th>Special Interest</th>
<th>Memorial</th>
<th>Memorial time and date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:23 a.m.</td>
<td>White House</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>New York Hilton</td>
<td>Gramercy Ballroom</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Community working together</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Constitutional amendment</td>
<td>In-depth</td>
<td>Soldiers who died</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>Memorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:41 a.m.</td>
<td>White House</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>New York Hilton</td>
<td>Gramercy Ballroom</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Community working together</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Constitutional amendment</td>
<td>In-depth</td>
<td>Soldiers who died</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>Memorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:35 p.m.</td>
<td>Gramercy Ballroom</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>New York Hilton</td>
<td>White House</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Community working together</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Constitutional amendment</td>
<td>In-depth</td>
<td>Soldiers who died</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>Memorial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yes | Both | In-depth | Soldiers who died | Special Interest | Memorial | Memorial time and date |

No | Commemoratory | Brief | Constitutional amendment | Press | Memorial time and date |

No | Commemoratory | Brief | Constitutional amendment | Press | Memorial time and date |

The themes were: Use of enemy, Commemoratory or Justification.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Argument Style</th>
<th>Main Focus of Speech</th>
<th>Use of Enemy Themes</th>
<th>Consumption of</th>
<th>Discussion of</th>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Argument Style</th>
<th>Main Focus of Speech</th>
<th>Use of Enemy Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:40 a.m.</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:50 p.m.</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:25 p.m.</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:20 a.m.</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Naval Air Station</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Naval Air Station</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Naval Air Station</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>Close up on invasion</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table XVIII**: Data on Bush's rhetoric during Panama Invasion crisis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table XIX: Data on Bush's rhetoric during Persian Gulf crisis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Descriptive</th>
<th>Details of troop deployment</th>
<th>Press</th>
<th>Main Kinship</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Republican candidates and party agenda</td>
<td>Special interest</td>
<td>Greenwich County Club</td>
<td>1:45 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Importance of a strong military</td>
<td>Special interest</td>
<td>Baltimore Avenue</td>
<td>10:39 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Global cooperation in Gulf</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Main Kinship</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XIX continued: Data on Bush's rhetoric during Persian Gulf crisis
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Consumption</th>
<th>Descriptive</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Time of day</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Bush's rhetoric during Los Angeles riots crisis</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Bush's rhetoric during Los Angeles riots crisis</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>9:40 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Progress in securing calm</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Recalling the effects of L.A. riot and beginning process of regaining Kline</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Review of events, military action, review of legal</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>2:17 p.m.</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>l.s. Mexico Relations</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
<td>9:03 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>7:40 a.m.</td>
<td>South Lawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Republican party agenda</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>8:10 p.m.</td>
<td>Lawrence Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Bush's rhetoric during Los Angeles riots crisis</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>3:12 p.m.</td>
<td>Hearing Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Bush's rhetoric during Los Angeles riots crisis</td>
<td>Press</td>
<td>12:05 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XX: Data on Bush's rhetoric during Los Angeles riots crisis
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Brief</th>
<th>Health care</th>
<th>Special Interest</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Government support of small business</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>Paul Laurence Rose Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Domestic agenda</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>White House Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>Grand Ballroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>White House Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>Challenge Boys Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>Los Angeles Coliseum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>Radio Korea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>Broadcast Studio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Republic agenda</td>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XX continued: Data on Bush's rhetoric during Los Angeles riots crisis
NOTES

1. Richard E. Vatz argues that an event is not an exigence unless the rhetor chooses to make it so for the audience. Taking the theory to the extreme, he suggests that there are an infinite number of events in nature and rhetors create exigencies from those events they choose to talk about.

2. Young 289, Farrell 272, and Edelman, Constructing the Political Spectacle 59 all presented this viewpoint.

3. In the Forward of The Modern Presidency and Crisis Rhetoric, Robert E. Denton discusses the American public notion of presidents as wise decision makers, "...a combination of Washington and Lincoln..." (xi).


5. Amos Kiew's introduction to The Modern Presidency and Crisis Rhetoric contains arguments very similar to those which I have presented in this thesis because we are both commenting on research from the same scholars of presidential crisis rhetoric. Although
many of my statements are remarkably similar to his, I drew my conclusions independently of his writings, based on my own review of the literature which I conducted prior to the publication of his book. However, in the interests of presenting the most complete review of literature possible, I have incorporated relevant references from Kiew's book into my thesis. References to public expectations of presidential rhetoric in crises and the power of crisis rhetoric to define reality in a crisis can be found on pages xvi, xvii, xxiv and xxv

6. Metaphors are part of the rhetorical strategy of jeremiads and are often presented in the form of fantasy types -- scenarios of conspiracy. Bormann's research, cited in this thesis, provides more detail about the blending of jeremiads and fantasy types.

7. Carole Blair and Davis W. Houck present arguments on the issue of genre that relate to the definition of "genre" itself. These arguments go beyond the scope I have outlined for this thesis, but are valuable to consider in a study that focuses solely on the issue of genre (Kiewe, 98-100).

8. For more information about the effects of television on political discourse, see for instance *Eloquence in an Electronic Age* by Kathleen Hall Jamieson.

10. Since 1986, Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press has maintained a database that measures public attentiveness to major news stories. See Appendix B.

11. There were actually eight different news stories identified by the Time Mirror that were followed very closely by more than fifty percent of the public. However, since all those stories are about one crisis, I have chosen the August 8, 1990 date as the "peak" event of the crisis because that is the date on which President Bush deployed U.S. troops, taking the crisis to its more uncertain and urgent level.

12. In Sound of Leadership, Hart uses seven different topic categories and a percentage breakdown based on 25% and 75%. I used that model as a basis for determining whether the crisis was the primary topic of the speech.

13. During 1989, the periodical's title was *The Gallup Report*. The 1990 and 1992 issues were titled *The Gallup Poll Monthly*. 
14. Time and Newsweek magazines for June 12, 19, 26 and July 3, 1989 were examined.

15. Time and Newsweek for the weeks of December 11, 18, 25, 1989 and January 1, 1990 were examined.

16. The highest rating was Kennedy's 83 percent during the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961. The Gallup Poll Monthly, January, 1990, 16.

17. Not included in this discussion of persuasive field because it appeared outside the four-week window defined for this study, it is nevertheless interesting to note that the July 1990 issue of The Gallup Poll Monthly discussed the impact of the Panama Invasion on Bush's approval rating and how it diminished over time (2, 6).

18. The issues of Time and Newsweek for July 30 and August 6, 13 and 20, 1990 were examined.

19. Iraq's aggressive posture was a crisis in the Persian Gulf for months before the crisis point identified in this thesis -- the deployment of U.S. troops. Therefore, unlike the Panama Invasion crisis, one would have expected the news magazines to cover the issues, which would ultimately lead to U.S. military involvement, during the weeks prior to the
deployment of U.S. troops. Therefore, it was surprising that during the window of time studied, there were no articles on the Persian Gulf crisis in the July 30 issues of Newsweek or Time. This raises an interesting agenda setting question for future research.

20. *The Gallup Poll Monthly* was examined for the months of July, August and September, 1990.

21. The issues of Time and Newsweek for April 20, 27, May 4 and 11, 1992 were examined.

22. *The Gallup Poll Monthly* for March, April and May of 1992 was examined.

23. This issue also included a great deal of information comparing the presidential candidates, and while that information may have contributed to the persuasive field, it was too extensive to consider in detail for this thesis.

24. Since this is not an agenda setting study, any discussion of either print or broadcast mass media is only included as appropriate to discussion of the elements of audience, topic and setting, or the arguments concerning genre in Chapter 4.
25. McCroskey noted that sincerity and fluency may affect the public perception of a message ((73).

26. This is a standard question found in every issue of *Gallup Poll Monthly* that was examined for this thesis.

27. Data for Tables V and VI were taken from *Gallup Poll Monthly*, September 1990, pages 24 - 25.

28. Since the function of the press is to relay the president's remarks to the public, it could be said that every press conference had a national audience, but for clarity in this thesis, the "audience" only refers to the primary audience who actually heard the president deliver his remarks.

29. These remarks were delivered to Bush supporters at a barbeque and so, perhaps, he felt he could speak more frankly to this clearly friendly audience than he might to reporters and the nation. However, presidents must never forget that every official statement they make can be picked up by the media and disseminated worldwide, thus reaching a much broader group of people than the primary audience.
30. Bush's speeches concerning the Los Angeles riots addressed both his defense agenda and his social and economic reforms agenda. These speeches were delivered during his re-election campaign and the circumstances of the crisis provided him with the opportunity to promote both of these political agendas.

31. The flag burning issue did not develop into an active crisis at a specific location. Bush delivered remarks on the crisis during a speech at the New York Hilton Hotel and at the Iwo Jima Memorial.

32. Of these five locations away from the White House, three sites -- The National Institute of Health in Bethesda, the Naval Air Station in Corpus Christi, and the Brook Army Medical Center in Fort Sam Houston -- are government owned properties and gave Bush an official Presidential backdrop off the grounds of the White House.

33. In some cases, the blended speeches were primarily consummatory with only brief references to military action, and in other cases the consummatory and justificatory references were more balanced, but within the confines of this thesis, I have chosen to focus on the issue of Bush's blend of consummatory or justificatory references and not on how predominantly consummatory or justificatory the speeches were.
34. One of Bush's few speeches which was entirely consummatory was delivered the afternoon of August 8, just over four hours after announcing the deployment of troops. In those remarks to the press Bush only spoke about the cooperation of NATO members in terms of economic actions taken (1990, 1124).

35. Presumably he was referring to the beginning of his term as president.

36. Surprisingly, in remarks to the press later that same day, Bush did not use any enemy themes in his remarks at all. His focus was limited to a discussion of NATO cooperation in the Persian Gulf crisis. In his next public remarks on the crisis, August 14, Bush again omitted any enemy theme statements. In fact, the only reference to the crisis in that speech on the federal budget was "Even while we address our critical international obligations we must address that persistent, real need [the federal deficit]" (1990, 1130).

37. The following charts illustrate the frequency of Bush's crisis related remarks concerning each crisis studied for this thesis. Each crisis is identified, followed by a date. That date is the point when the crisis was at its peak as defined in Chapter 2. The "Window of Study" refers to the time period from two weeks before the crisis to two weeks after the crisis. The "Total White House Communications" includes all communications published in the Public Papers of the President during the four week
time period examined for this thesis, including the President's oral remarks, his written communications, remarks made by White House spokespersons, and official appointments and nominations. "Communications related to crisis" is the number of oral and written communications including those made by the President and his spokespersons. "Bush's oral communications related to crisis" includes only those statements related to the crisis that were delivered orally by George Bush.
REFERENCES

**Books, Book Chapters, Scholarly Articles**


**Newspaper, Magazine Articles and Public Opinion Polls**


**Speeches**