The Storytelling of Public Spaces: Rhetoric, Community, and Social Change

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THE STORYTELLING OF PUBLIC SPACES: RHETORIC, COMMUNITY, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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Dedication

To the community of El Paso who welcomed me and my family with open arms.

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I don’t know whether it is possible to love the planet or not, but I do know that it is possible to love the places we can see, touch, smell and experience.

~ David Orr, Earth in Mind
THE STORYTELLING OF PUBLIC SPACES: RHETORIC, COMMUNITY, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

by

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DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This dissertation examines how public art, broadly defined, contributes to the dialogue of public places. It assumes that public places are filled with rhetoric--from commercial, governmental, private, and other sources. This rhetoric is mainly concerned with the public as audience, receivers of information who are then expected to act in certain ways – following the directions of street signs or entering shops when a window display attracts their attention, for example. Public art, particularly community-based art, can be used to make public places more democratic, providing platforms for people and communities to talk back and reassert their identities. The case study, a practicum, grew out of a class assignment called *Computers and Writing*, an elective that was part of the coursework for the degree in Rhetoric and Composition. The assignment required students to create a digital mural and install it on a photograph of a real location. As a consequence of this project a community arts project was born, one that is currently underway to bring murals by a local artist to Fort Bliss, Texas. It is this project that informs much of the focus of this dissertation and the implications for pedagogy in the Rhetoric and Writing Studies classroom--the importance of listening and empathy, the need for professional business writing and software skills, and the imperative to develop student-leaders who can actively engage in their communities. Because the case study involves a murals project and takes place on a military installation where memorials and museums dominate the public art landscape, special attention is given to these genres.
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Introduction

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Five years ago I took a class with Dr. John Scenters-Zapico called Computers and Writing. While computers and writing may go hand in hand for those of us who can’t spell or write legibly without the help of a computer and keyboard, what I took away from the course far exceeded what I could have envisioned from the course title - a new vision of how I could interact with my community and the world around me. It was through an assignment to design a digital mural and virtually install it in a real location that I began to see my environment differently. The assignment did three important things: 1. It asked me to think about what images and text I wanted to use to tell a visual story that would be meaningful to me, 2. It forced me to look critically at the existing environment - images, colors, texts, and spatial arrangements already in place and to think about how my mural would dialogue with that environment, and 3. It asked me to consider audience, the community that would be viewing the mural on a daily basis - their existing knowledge, how they might react to my mural, and what message I wanted to convey. Importantly, I began to experience the rhetoric of a public space, a place where I could enter into an existing dialogue.

The location I choose was the newly constructed Freedom Crossing at Fort Bliss, Texas, the largest shopping mall on any Army installation in the world. While I was living on Fort Bliss, it was a location I frequented regularly, and I knew it symbolized the change and growth that had occurred on post over the last several years as a result of funding from the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commission. The existing images were professional, commercially produced pictures reflecting the population of Fort Bliss – young people, soldiers, and families. Being a shopping location, the images were all of happy moments, and targeting
the military community, nearly all had red, white, and blue, even stars and stripes somewhere in the background. There were two things I felt were missing: 1. A sense of place coming from living in the El Paso-Juarez-Las Cruces region, and 2. Any sense of the real life tension that military personnel and families face. The environment was pleasant and appropriate for a shopping/dining location on a military facility, but did not speak to the reality that I knew, and therefore, I personally did not connect with it. I also suspected there were others who did not connect with it either.

As I sat in the middle of Freedom Crossing envisioning the virtual mural for my class project, I had a willful thought to create an image of my design that would be on the largest outdoor wall, visible from the farthest distance possible. Perhaps it was what someone who tags public structures feels. It was a desire to change the public environment in such a way that I felt I belonged there, that something I could connect with was represented. And not in small part because I was in a highly controlled military environment, the idea seemed audacious. Still, in quiet moments like on my daily run, I started turning over how a real murals project might actually work.

It began with mentioning the idea to bring murals by local artists, something “organic to El Paso” to some of the locations on Fort Bliss. An El Paso friend had invited me for lunch and a swim at a country club with our daughters who attended the same pre-school. We ran into one of her work colleagues, and it was while standing in the pool with these two women that the discussion began regarding who in El Paso I should get in touch with to move the idea forward. Ultimately this led to my speaking with Adair Margo, one of the most influential persons in the arts in the El Paso region. Adair Margo introduced me to Gaspar Enríquez, who not only is a world-class artist, but grew up in El Paso’s Segundo Barrio and who happens to have a personal
story that gives him an emotional connection to soldiers and Fort Bliss. It wasn’t long before the mural assignment for English 5399 became an actual project, a project that was to be my introduction into how rhetoric and co-operative public art could be engaged in telling stories with the purpose of bringing together communities and fostering cultural change. One example of how the project addresses cultural change within the community is the process of creating and having approved the central images and themes of the murals themselves.

What began as an impulse to tell my own personal story, something I quickly abandoned as soon as the artist was selected, became a process of negotiation as the leadership at Fort Bliss began making requests about including their division crest in one of the murals, the artist began interviewing and photographing customers of the facilities and active duty soldiers, and the resulting prototype images began being circulated. One of the three murals, one that featured the image of a female soldier holding the hand of a young child, even became contentious when the commanding general of the division communicated the request first through his wife then officially in email to include the image of a male soldier in the mural, because “male soldiers use the building [where the mural will be located] as well.” This stirred a very strong emotional response for me, because I had recognized the timeliness of the artist’s attention to female soldiers. At first I had attributed the inclusion of strong women as being characteristic of the artist’s body of work. Later, however, as news stories of allowing female soldiers to fulfill combat jobs in the military and reports of the level of sexual violence against female soldiers became front page news, I recognized that a mural featuring a female soldier, representing all soldiers, was an important message that supported the widespread national call for a cultural change within the military. The general’s instruction to include a male soldier was a direct assault upon that message, never mind that the building itself had already been dedicated to a
male soldier whose name is prominently displayed at the front of the building and who is memorialized with a picture and plaque within the building entrance.

Today, the murals project has the full backing of Fort Bliss and William Beaumont who own the three new state-of-the-art buildings on Fort Bliss identified to house a total of four mural designs drafted by Gaspar Enríquez. The project has fiscal sponsorship with Paso del Norte Foundation, a local non-profit and fundraising arm of Paso del Norte Health Foundation. Fundraising is currently underway, with $30,000 raised for the Freedom Crossing mural through a campaign spearheaded by former El Paso mayor, John Cook. The murals project has also become the basis for my dissertation thesis. I have long been interested in how rhetoric can help level the playing field for communities and individuals underrepresented in the public sphere. My experience trying to have a voice within my own community has given me insight into how the complicated and messy process of public art can do just that.

**NATURE OF THE PROBLEM**

We generally do not think of public spaces as democratic places of dialogue, even dialectic. Public spaces are designed by professionals such as city planners as well as commercial and public interest groups. They are often governed by rules such as keeping dogs on leashes, placing litter in designated receptacles, stopping cars for pedestrians in sidewalks, staying on the trail, staying off the grass, etc. Public spaces tell visitors how to behave in order to be safe, protect resources, and respect the rights of others. There is also the pervading presence of retail messaging aimed at a targeted customer base. This messaging may even contradict the planned character of the public space. For example, in the case of the commercial indoor-outdoor shopping area of Freedom Crossing on Fort Bliss, the garrison leadership responded in its planning to an overwhelming survey response that the area should have a “non-military” feel.
However, the companies filling the numerous retail spaces are targeting their potential customers, military personnel and their families. The result is that throughout Freedom Crossing patriotic images and red-white-and-blue colors are present, arguably bringing a military feel to the location if patriotism is conflated with the armed forces.

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines public as “Open to general observation, view, or knowledge; existing, performed, or carried out without concealment, so that all may see or hear.” Using this definition and the examples above, public spaces place individuals in the rhetorical position of audience. In fact, individual acts of agency, such as graffiti or speaking from a street corner soap box, may be criminalized or interpreted as ranting or spectacle. Yet public places are important spaces for all members of the community to have a voice. Through organizing with others, individuals can be more than just members of the public audience. It isn’t until the words collaborative or cooperative are used that public spaces can take on a more balanced rhetorical nature. Tom Finkelpearl in his book What We Made: Conversations on Art and Social Cooperation describes collaborative projects as implying “a shared initiation of the art, and start-to-finish coauthorship,” and cooperative projects as simply implying people working together (6). Collaborative/co-operative art, such as community murals, provide opportunities for underrepresented community-members to be heard. While one person’s message may not be seen as legitimate in the public sphere, an organized group of community members with a unified mission and purpose has a much higher chance of affecting change. A lack of unification of this type was one of the main criticisms of the Occupy Wall Street movement, a movement that sought to draw attention to the wealth gap between the majority “99%” population and the most wealthy “1%.” While a large number of people were involved, a loose community, the movement lacked organization and clarity. From a rhetorical standpoint,
the Occupy movement did a good job of connecting with the outrage and frustration of some members of the 99% audience, but ultimately seemed to fail in connecting with the powerful 1% members, some of whom were seen in one online video standing on a balcony sipping champagne and smiling above the Occupy protesters. The protesters also were ineffective in motivating action resulting in change because of a failure to define the issues and offer ways for people to get involved other than joining together to occupying public spaces. In addition, despite their large numbers that gained the attention of the media and public, they lacked legitimacy without clear leadership and direction. Community and collaboration, and I would add leadership, are all necessary in creating the cohesiveness and legitimacy that are necessary for successful community projects. Community art projects that bring the community together through consensus, shared values, and a sense of hope are one example of community projects that do just that.

Community art, such as murals, has been previously explored from the perspective of artists and art scholars. Yet there is great value in studying the rhetorical aspects of the process and end product. While collaborative art may start with an individual’s idea, to be successful it requires a wide-range of rhetorical acts including finding partners, gaining permission from a location, drafting and having designs approved, and engaging the larger community—the audience. What may start as an individual idea is shaped by this process so that the end product may not represent the original idea in any way. The process of collaborative art is a process of meaning-making and negotiation as a group of people attempt to present their vision in a way that will connect with their larger community.
PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to better understand how rhetoric intersects with traditional notions of rhetoric and how public art can be used rhetorically to do public work such as creating community agency, identity, and meaning. This study focuses on the case study of a murals project that is currently underway on Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas, with the purpose of drawing general principles for best practices and future areas of study.

My case study examines the use of rhetoric in the murals project, from its inception in the classroom through location selection, legal considerations, draft design process, team building, fundraising activities, and finally the involvement of the physical materials such as paint selection and wall preparation. I also examine the murals themselves to delve into whose stories are being told and what messages about community and identity are involved. Further, the environmental and historical context for the murals and their locations are examined as a dialogical context for the project and murals. The case study demonstrates how public art is rhetorical, both in its use of text and images, as well as its ability to produce physical objects and do work.

In addition to the case study, there are numerous books and electronic resources that address public art projects. These sources are used to examine commonalities and conclusions from a wider variety of public art projects.

ASSUMPTIONS

This work assumes that communities use symbols to tell their stories and define their values. These symbols can be examined rhetorically in order to better understand how the community defines itself, historically, in present day, and moving forward. It also assumes that there is a transformative interpretive process that happens during the process of community
projects in creating the symbols that will be represented. That process of transforming stories into visual rhetoric is one that can be examined critically to identify whose stories are being told, how community is defined, and what values are represented. As Anthony Cohen states in *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, “Symbols do not so much express meaning as give us the capacity to make meaning” (15). Collaborative projects are an opportunity that allows community members to publically reinforce the existing identity and purpose of their community or begin redefining them.

The environments of public spaces are filled with messages, each object by its placement, size, name, color, and relationship to other objects communicating to and being interpreted by the public audience. Civic art as rhetoric is assumed to include a wide range of artifacts, from digital murals to public statues to billboards. The rhetorical context of the public space includes street signs, buildings, landscaping, and the spatial arrangement of objects. It is a conversation that can be as noisy, literally and figuratively, as Time Square or as quiet as a public garden. It is the totality of all sights, sounds, smells, textures, and tastes that an individual inhabiting a public space encounters and interprets according to their past experiences.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This dissertation seeks answers to the following questions:

1. How does public art fit into the discipline of rhetoric?
2. What type of rhetorical work does public art do?
3. How can public art inform pedagogy in the RWS classroom?

The following chapters will begin with linking public art with traditional rhetoric then focus on the rhetoric’s public work. Related to this work, identifying the process of meaning creation for a
community and its members through public arts projects is an important step in better understanding how these projects can best be used to allow members of the community underrepresented in the public sphere to have a voice. It can help identify how public spaces can become more democratic, spaces for open discussion and dialogue, creating the opportunity for cultural change and power shifts. Importantly, pedagogy can be developed that promotes key skills and competencies that prepare students to become effective agents of change through socially engaged community projects.
Chapter 1: Public Art as Rhetoric: Expanding the Use of Traditional Terms

The artwork of public spaces invites the involvement of a broad range of disciplines. Some of the most relevant include Urban Planning, Marketing, Art History, Cultural Studies, Visual Studies, Photography, and, I would argue, Rhetoric. Public art, for the purpose here, is defined broadly, including any form of art displayed or performed outdoors or in a publically accessible venue. While the case study focuses on a murals project, examples from other genres will be included in the study: advertising, performance art, memorials, public museums, graffiti, and others. It is clear, regardless of the disciplinary stance, that art is multi-faceted; it has many purposes and can be viewed from multiple perspectives. Art as an end product does not stand in isolation, but must be examined within its historical and environmental context as well as process of creation and maintenance. This chapter examines what elements of public art are rhetorical, with a focus on those that most closely follow the classical elements of rhetoric. That said, because public art differs in many respects from oral rhetoric, the terms will be expanded beyond their traditional definitions. The following is an exploration of these devices drawing on a number of case studies and the writings of experts from a broad range of disciplines on the subject.

1.1 Kairos and Chronos

Kairos is commonly referred to within the discipline of rhetoric as “fitness for the occasion.” It is an awareness of rhetorical situation, which involves an understanding of both context and audience. A related term, “chronos,” is also a Greek word referring to time, but of a quantitative nature as in the passing of time. While chronos is not typically used in the discipline of rhetoric, both concepts play distinct roles in meaning-creation in the realm of public art.
Because of the durational dimension of public art, the initial kairotic moment for the conception, funding, and installation of the work is fleeting as both the social context and audience may change over time. For public art to remain relevant it requires an ability to inspire the kairotic moment repeatedly, reconnecting with each new audience or even long-term viewers in a meaningful way. This means that in viewing a public artwork, some kairotic moments may be stronger than others, because often the moment of viewing is chosen by when one needs to run an errand or move from one part of a building to another and happens to have their head turned the right way and be in the right state of mind for it to catch their attention. “The right time” for an individual to receive the message of the artwork becomes open to chance.

A particularly interesting example of kairos and chronos is given by James Loewen, who is referenced in the introduction to *Places of Public Memory* for his explanation of the three temporal moments represented by memorials. The first is the period of time the event or subject was experienced, the second is the window when the memorial/work of art was created and installed, and the third is the era of the viewer (30). These three moments play with both concepts. There is the passing of time (chronos) between the three distinct events, which will influence how the historical event is depicted, interpreted, and remembered. There is also involvement of kairos in the second and third events - during the second to prompt the action of conceiving, organizing, funding, and installing the memorial and during the third as the memorial effects a particular viewer at a particular moment in time. The juxtaposition of these periods of time in the understanding of the subject of the memorial as well as the memorial itself is complex. As Thomas Conley relates in *The Study of Visual Culture after the Cultural Turn*, memories are made up of both personal experience and the images that have been created of the past (130). In the world of public art, and in this case memorials, kairos and chronos are at work.
simultaneously in generating meaning. In fact, it is easier to find more examples of chronos at work than kairos.

Unlike a live speech delivered directly to an audience at a specific time, public art has a much longer duration. It is not instantaneous, but often takes years of planning and organizing and the final installation can last from just a few hours to more than a century. Because of this, the role of chronos is particularly important, and there are numerous ways in which chronos comes into play in public art. First, there is the issue of physical permanence. Depending on the materials used and the authority of the author/artist, public art can be extremely temporary, as in the case of a chalk drawing on the sidewalk, to relatively permanent, as in the case of a marble bust in a public building. The longevity of a specific work has significance for several reasons. The material used and its ability to endure over time, for example marble vs. a softer material such as plaster, can communicate the value that work has for the community; the more durable the material, the more important the message or memory (Armada 232). Location can also signal the impermanence, and often illegitimacy, of some public art. Such is the case with murals painted on construction project fencing. The fencing is meant to come down at the end of the project, so any mural painted on them is understood to be temporary. It is also unlikely that anyone invested in art for a temporary fence, so the artwork found there may be considered by some to be vandalism. The notion that art of value is something that is funded and maintained is noted by Michael DiBerardinis, a former Philadelphia Department of Recreation commissioner, who is quoted in Philadelphia Murals, “If you think [murals] are art, you’ve got an imperative. Real art is preserved” (93). What is considered legitimate, is often signaled by the quality, condition, and care that are taken in the selection of materials, location, and on-going maintenance of a public work.
The location of a mural and the ability of the installation to evoke emotion in the audience as it passes can also add to the longevity of an installation’s message. One community member relates in *Philadelphia Murals*, “This corner is important. Most people use it to either come into our neighborhood or to leave…You take [the uplifting message of the mural] home with you. You take it to work. It lasts” (Dixon 149). The message and emotion of the mural can last in the minds of the viewer much longer than the few seconds it takes to pass it on the road.

In some cases, attitudes toward history or an historical figure can be revised over time by the interaction of the audience with the installation. Such is the case with a self-funded memorial of the deceased Detroit leader James Scott. Scott was a “somewhat shady, eccentric, and highly controversial figure” who bequeathed money to fund a memorial “celebrating his memory.” At first hesitant, the city did erect a memorial that included a seated statue of Scott. Over time, through the climbing of “thousands of children,” his lap [is] now polished to “gleaming gold” and the figure of Scott has “come to appear like a kindly patriarch” (Nawrocki and Clements 112). The memory of the man is altered as the perception of his legacy is influenced by the performance of the younger members of the audience treating his statue as a play structure, his lap as that of a beloved grandfather. Chronos, the passing of time, can create a space for memories and perceptions to be altered through the interaction of the audience with the piece of art.

Longevity of the construction process can also impact the final work. Some art projects are designed to be added to over time, some even leaving blank space for future expansion of the work (Nawrocki and Clements 76). In an installation *Mnemonics* at Stuyvesant High School in New York, the artists “equally emphasize the future of this ever-growing historic institution by including empty blocks reserved for the next eighty-eight graduating classes” (Fleming 138).
Other installations are unexpectedly delayed and result in the design being altered over the length of the project, as in the Detroit project *Orpheus*, originally a single large statue that over the course of the eight-year delay in construction had additional figures added around the base of the structure (Nawrocki and Clements 203). These are examples of how chronos, or the passing of time, can be part of the evolution of the meaning-making process.

During the design and construction process, some public art projects take into account changes in lighting over the course of the day and the seasons, giving a sense of passing time and change (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 136). In one installation in Detroit, the artwork tracked the shifting position of the sun over the course of the day, “producing a time-based, evolving visual experience rather than that of a single, fixed image” (Nawrocki and Clements134). In that same installation located across the street from a significant symbol of Detroit’s decline, the abandoned Michigan Central Station, phases of the moon are replicated from the year 1988, the last year the station was still operating. This is a clear reference to a turning point signaling the beginning of Detroit’s decline.

In addition to the changes to an installation that occur over time, the length of time an audience has to view an installation can also vary, for example, whether someone is walking or riding in a car and the particular traffic speed, are factors that impact viewing duration. In fact, according to artist Cliff Eubanks Jr., “the first job of a painting is to keep people from going by” (150). How quickly they go by, how much time they have to stop, and how many times they stop is significant. Eubanks describes his strategy with regard to audience and time, “I wanted the mural to be satisfying if you roll by in a car, but if you can stop, you get the details in the various panels” (150). Some locations are more encouraging of making that stop. In one location, an artist commissioned to create a mural on a clinic waiting room wall explains, “There are always
lines for everything. So they sit there and they contemplate and of course that’s the idea…” (Acosta 70). In fact, the location for the painting advertised that wait time was not to exceed twenty minutes, so the painting was there for patrons to enjoy while they waited for twenty minutes or less.

People waiting at the location of an installation also have the opportunity to become active participants in the viewing experience, changing their role from a passive audience member to someone involved in the creation and communication of meaning. In the case of a park in Santa Fe, New Mexico, “Mexican day laborers waiting in the park here for work have served as unofficial guides, explaining the imagery to Anglo visitors” (Fleming 28). If given sufficient time, audience members can become interpreter/author as newer viewers arrive on the scene.

Some projects are meant to be experienced over a duration of time, not in one viewing, but in many. Meaning is generated through the accumulation of experience and knowledge as one moves through the installation space, noticing different details that are drawn out by the viewer’s state of mind that day, their history with the installation, and/or chance (Fleming 138). One example is the Mary Queen of Scots Memorial in Jedburgh, Scotland that according to Michael Bowman in his essay “Tracing Mary Queen of Scots,” is intended for the visitor to “visit and re-visit…as we continue to work through the real and vexing historical problems – as well as our fantasies, fears, and desires – concerning women, sex, power, religion, and history itself” (212). Another is the installation Mnemonics at Stuyvesant High School in New York, where glass blocks are used as time capsules of artifacts that represent the history of the school and global humanity. The individual vitrines are meant to be viewed over time, allowing the knowledge to “accumulate” during the audience’s extended time, often years, at the school
(Jones and Ginzel 138). While it is the same individual visiting the work many times, the context of viewing changes each time, thus compounding the notion of kairos as each kairotic moment builds on the moments before.

While the notion of kairos and chronos may seem straight-forward, it is clear from these examples that the relationship between the two when it comes to public art is intertwined. Chronos, more so than with the spoken word, plays a greater role in meaning creation in these semi-permanent works and can influence the effect of kairos for the audience. Public art encompasses a complex array of the use of time in generating meaning for the community that creates, participates in, and experiences it.

1.2 RHETORICAL APPEALS

The rhetorical appeals apply to public art as they would to visual rhetoric, with the caveat that the context of the art takes on greater importance than would for a visual image viewed in isolation. The following are an exploration of how the rhetorical appeals can be applied individually.

1.2.1 Pathos

Pathos refers to the use of emotional appeal in connecting the audience with a work of art. There are many ways this can be accomplished. One significant way is through the use of color. Blues and greens can have a calming effect, while the use of vibrant red and orange can invigorate. In another example, the expression on the face of a statue or its pose can create an empathetic connection with the viewer. At the Korean War monument in Washington D.C., the viewer finds him/herself walking next to a group of soldiers draped in large rain ponchos and wearing combat hats as they walk with heads, faces stony, turned toward the ground as if looking
for something. The monument conveys the feeling of what it was like to slog through wet terrain and try to maintain focus on staying in formation and avoiding hidden dangers.

Public art can also contain text that appeals to the audience’s emotions, such as the Vietnam memorial, which lists the names of 58,307 U.S. service men and women (as of Memorial Day 2015) who died in that war. In this case, it is also the sheer number of names that appears on the reflective ribbon of the polished black wall that inspires a sense of the enormity of the cost of war in human lives. Art is inherently expressive, intended to grasp the audience’s attention, even if for a fleeting moment.

In fact, visual rhetoric is particularly effective in soliciting an emotional response from the viewer. It is this ability that allows public art to combine aesthetics with utility, providing enjoyment and knowledge (Nawrocki and Clements xiii). Public art in this capacity also supports healthy communities, for “We can only be ethical in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in” (Leopold qtd. in Fleming 28). When it speaks to the values of a community, public art can, through emotional connection, sustain the character of that community.

1.2.2 Ethos

Simply speaking, ethos is the extent to which the audience values a piece of art. Value can be represented by how much the viewer perceives the work to be worth commercially or aesthetically, for example. It can mean how much they connect with and buy into the work’s message. The ethos of a work of art is derived from a multitude of factors, often simultaneously: the quality of the work, the reputation of the artist, the location (gallery vs. highway underpass), style (commercial vs. realist vs. tagging), medium (recycled materials vs. piece of marble), the extent to which it represents the values of the audience, and the theme of the design (summer
vacation vs. labor rights), to name a few. The ethos of public art can be interpreted and evaluated in a number of ways. There is the extent to which a community accepts a public work as something it is willing to fund, maintain, and recognize. Credibility can also be established through the recognition of the art by traditional art critics and institutions. One of the more controversial aspects of community art has been the recognition of “street art” as art.

Several El Paso muralists have addressed the role played by the quality of street art in elevating its status in the traditional art world. Carlos Callejo speaks of the validity of murals as an art form as well as the need to compensate artists accordingly:

The quality of murals as ‘art’ has been questioned more often than their authenticity of expression…At the same time, some of this critical silence represents social prejudice and ignorance of the aesthetics of murals…Murals, however, are not only protest or simply large paintings on walls; they are paintings binding [sic] into architecture; public art conceived in a given space; art rooted in a specific human context. Murals are art that speak about social concerns and issues. They are an art form in their own right, and serious criticism and major commissions are long overdue. (67)

This connection to the social and human is one of the arguments for valuing murals according to Vincent Valdez, another muralist, “…because we come from working class sensibilities of aesthetics…and the institutional kind of work from the upper classes has to do with art for its own sake. We're challenging that…” (78). Valdez’ mural in the El Paso Federal Building is given as an example of the rising bar for quality murals, changing the perception that murals are just street art, projects to keep kids out of trouble, or recreational in nature (Colin 74-75).

Gaspar Enríquez, an artist now living and working in San Elizario, agrees, “I think quality is an important issue in the creation of works. A well-executed mural makes a positive impression on
people no matter what the content is. If muralism is to be supported, it must be of quality” (61). The quality of the artwork and pedigree of the artist is one reason why tagging or graffiti may not be recognized as art, whereas a mural may be. Artists like John Valdez and Gaspar Enríquez are college educated, have taught art, and have held major exhibitions locally and on a larger stage. There would be less resistance to recognizing them and their work as of value not only to their communities, but also to the art scene at large.

While some artists because of their reputations and the quality of their work lend credibility to their art form and fellow artists, Ernesto Pendregón, an El Pasoan artist, speaks to the need for monetary compensation along with that critical recognition, “And like any artist, any human being, I think it is great to have your art appreciated, but it’s better to have somebody appreciate it by giving you money” (29). This can alter the role the artist needs to play in order for his/her work to be recognized financially as when the artist, for example, acts as a lobbyists trying to gain a share of a city’s fiscal budget. Not compensating community artists adequately also runs the risk of marginalizing them within the arts community by undervaluing the work they are doing (Fleming 113). Further to that point, it is not only art that is being produced by community art projects/programs; for example,

SPARC has provided services to care of the cultural needs of an underserved community, negotiate gang truces, and encourage desperate young people to put their lives together, while simply telling the history of the city for all to see. The whole population benefits from these public services, but many still hold the view that artists should produce a three-story mural for $500 and a few buckets of paint. (Fleming 107)
Because murals are not making money for anyone, they may be overlooked, as can many art forms. Sometimes because they are in public places and not a fine art gallery, they can be undervalued, but they can enrich a neighborhood, a community, in ways that are quite valuable.

According to Timothy Drescher, an authority on murals, there are three recognized branches of mural artists: those who see themselves as community activists, those who paint out of self-expression, and those who partner with commercial interests (37-38). Ironically, while some may argue that the community muralist may score higher points for authenticity, if their work is painted in a temporary or unsanctioned location or if it is painted by children or unknown artist, it may not be as highly regarded as art as a commercially commissioned piece of art whose subject matter or spirit is less in line with what makes murals a unique form of art.

Another issue is that murals painted on a private wall, unless a prior agreement is made, become the property of the building owner (Drescher 29). Community murals are often not owned or controlled by the community that produced them. Their fates are in the hands of building owners and therefore at risk if the building is sold, renovated, or the work compromised in some other way. One example is a mural of a whale painted on a tall commercial building that is occasionally obscured by advertisements that help pay for the maintenance of the building (Nawrocki and Clements 16). What does this say about what is valued, what is important? Being a commercial location, it is monetary revenue that trumps artistic value, at least for periods of time, perhaps one making the other possible. Other locations may see the murals as attracting revenue, as in South Philadelphia where one real estate agent’s experienced told her that murals “enhance[d] curb appeal and property values” (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 109). Murals in some locations have become trendy and seen as lending character to a location, as in the case of so called mural towns that use murals as a means of attracting visitors and distinguishing the
community in a positive way. The murals are often placed in high-profile locations, the murals themselves well-maintained, and the surrounding area well-tended. The overall effect is to lend an aesthetic quality to the community, one that residents and visitors alike believe will be supported over time by public policy. Not only do the quality and placement of the murals lend to their ethos, but also the role of city planning in making the murals a priority.

Collaborative murals have been singled out as a type of public art that, as part of the process, deepens trust and understanding between the audience and the artist, adding credibility to the work as representing the community’s interests. This process requires an investment of the artist’s as well as community’s time if the mural is to communicate what is of importance to the community rather than the artist or external critics (Kester 173). This mutual investment to promote shared understanding is as important as the financial side of public art.

While funding provided for a public art work signals a vote of confidence in a project, it can also provide the resources necessary to create a credible program, as explained in Colors on Dessert Walls regarding El Paso, “The creation of murals in El Paso took a more focused route in the 1990s with the establishing of a major funding source…These major commissions also helped to raise artistic and communal standards regarding murals, their placement, and their importance to the city” (Juárez 19). Without sources of funds to support quality work and access to prime locations, public art will play a less significant role within a city. Investment in public art is an important investment in the future for a community and their enduring image.

Some businesses and communities adopt the use of murals out of commercial interests, blurring the line between advertisement and art in the process. This can be problematic; and in fact, in one neighborhood in St. Petersburg, Florida, a ban on murals containing words and/or numbers has been codified into law (Fleming 100). The use of murals for political and
commercial purposes is understandable as they can lend a tone of authenticity and sincerity. And yet the commercialization of community art projects may mean they no longer represent the community but rather are being used as a tool of commerce. In the long run, this can erode the value of murals as a medium for genuine community expression, making them just another commercial art form.

Combating this commercial trend, Ronald Lee Fleming, author of *The Art of Placemaking*, introduces the concepts of public value and the ethic of care as he states, “The positive force of making these meanings in the environment more accessible should restore a vision of place as a declaration of public value. It is this mental linkage to a sense of value, to a connection with community, that becomes the foundation for an ethic of care” (28). Public art that reflects a community’s core values can lend it credibility and foster a sense of connection to it, the place where they live, as well as each other. When it comes to community art, such as murals, the ethos of the project goes far beyond its financial valuation. Ethos is more strongly tied to the ability of a work to connect with members of a community and in their response to maintain and care for it. Ethos becomes a measure of how well the public art contributes to a sense of community and actually builds community by drawing members together in a constructive and communicative way.

1.2.3 Logos

Logos applies in the context of public art through the providing of information, whether through imagery alone or in combination with text. Public art can provide information and education to a broad spectrum of people within the community. According to one artist featured in *Colors on Desert Walls,*
Murals can be a great way of reaching thousands upon thousands of people, since they are located in public places, accessible to everyone. They are a wonderful form to educate and inspire. Murals tend to fill a need for honest communication between all people on a non-verbal level. Muralists often communicate ideas which often get neglected by our politicians and media or newspapers, ideas which need to be explored in the public eye.

(Callejo 68)

Another mural artist, Lupe Casillas-Lowenberg, credits murals for teaching her about her culture and history (40). In turn, later in life, Lupe’s exposure to her culture informed her own artwork, bringing the cycle of education full circle as her work perpetuated Mexican culture and history for future generations.

In other cases, public art can be an imitation rather than an education, as can be the case with graffiti found in parts of Mexico influenced by culture from the United States (Flores 59). Public art (or graffiti in this case) can echo the mass media artifacts of a dominant culture rather than representing local culture and history. Usually seen as a grassroots medium of expression, the murals can still reflect the dominant socio-political power if it is seen as an aspiration.

Murals can also be misleading, displaying a type of mis-logos, as in the lighter example of one mural that drew tourists to its depiction of a produce stand, only to leave them confused when there was no actual produce for sale (Fleming 100). Whether politically transformative, simply informative, or perpetuating dominant ideologies, murals transmit information through a medium that can be cyclical, informative, and long-lasting.

1.3 RHETORICAL CANON

The five canons of rhetoric – invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery serve as a template for producing an effective rhetorical message. They were codified by Cicero in his
work *De Inventione* in 50 B.C. when spoken rhetoric was the norm. So it is not surprising that while all five canons are easily applied to oral rhetoric, there are some canons that are more applicable to the rhetoric of public art than others. For that reason, this section will focus on invention, style, and memory; however, to some extent or with a slight twist, all are applicable. Arrangement and Delivery will be discussed together as there is overlap in their applicability to public art.

1.3.1 Invention

Invention has to do with the generation of ideas, the creation of subject matter while taking into consideration the rhetorical situation and specific audience. According to scholar Janice Lauer, “The term invention has historically encompassed strategic acts that provide the discoursers with direction, multiple ideas, subject matter, arguments, insights or probable judgments, and understanding of the rhetorical situation” (qtd. in Grabill Writing Community 85). If invention is the art of finding the best means of persuasion, then public art is arguing for what is important to the community. Public art tells a story; it is what the public is intended to remember, to understand what the community values and how the community identifies itself. Invention can happen through the process of interviewing community members, soliciting feedback on proposed designs, researching the history of a community, involving artists who are members of the community, and other means of recruiting expertise in subject matter that will connect with the community audience at a specific period in time. Some works may involve more extensive periods and/or processes of invention than others since public art runs the full gamut from a government commissioned work designed with a specific purpose in mind, such as the statue of a president, to collaborative mural projects that involve an artist along with members of the community.
Jeff Rice in his book *Digital Detroit* discusses the way digital networks can re-imagine the rhetoric of place. Here he specifically addresses invention:

Rhetorical invention is about the selectivity and/or creativity implicated in constructing a subject matter in a particular way. It would suggest that there is no ‘pure’ articulation of the past, but that the language, structural elements, arguments, tropes, narratives, justifications, and such in which the event is cast – as well as the availability of knowledge of the event to begin with – are invention resources available to culture. (13)

This has implications for public memory, meaning that public memory is constructed or invented from available rhetorical artifacts (Rice 13). With regard to public art, invention—while implying creativity and imagination—also relies on what is already available in the community tool box: personal narratives, public records, the ability of the artist to listen and selectively choose those elements that are most meaningful within the context, so many elements that provide the materials of invention while providing ties to what already exists within the community.

1.3.2 Style

The style, or form, that rhetorical expression takes can impact the meaning that is read by the audience. The two examples examined here are the design aesthetic and material choice of a work of art.

1.3.2.1 Aesthetics/Eloquence

Rhetoric and aesthetic are closely linked by some scholars. Some may see aesthetic experiences as rhetorical because of their ability to “shape citizens and citizenship (Blair, Dickinson, and Ott 33). Others link aesthetics/eloquence to rhetoric because it “…prompts people to change understanding, attitude, or intention, changes that are the ends of the rhetoric”
(Clark 113). Finally some see the aesthetic experience and rhetorical experience as being one and the same, “New understanding, new meaning, and new insight, felt and known, change us – our attitudes, our identities, and even our actions…rhetorical critics might well take notice of the rhetorical power inherent in the essentially aesthetic encounter that is a rhetorical experience” (Clark 133). Aesthetics, and therefore public art, can have rhetorical effect because of the power of an aesthetic encounter to challenge, change, and form opinions held by the audience, because aesthetic experiences can be transformational in the way rhetoric is able to produce the same results.

1.3.2.2 Material Selection

The material itself, like word choice, can play a rhetorical role. For example, in one installation in the manufacturing city of Detroit, the material choice for casting a bell had significance; the artist used steel, a common manufacturing material, instead of the traditional bronze to cast the bell (Art in Detroit 15). The bell is a reminder of the city’s heritage and identity. The sound emitted from the steel bell would echo this distinctiveness in the unusual peel sounded throughout the day. In another installation memorializing local firefighters, the traditional materials of granite and bronze were used to convey the dignity of the men who gave their lives in service to the community (Fleming 207). The material choices reflected the value the community placed on the lives of these men. In another memorial, the artist also chose the memorializing material based on his intent, “To remember them and simultaneously assert a measure of hope and resistance to loss and death, Hugh Timlin designed an elegant memorial whose contemplative character is reflected in the artist’s choice of a white marble with soft grey veining” (Nawrocki and Clements108). The style in the material choice for a piece of art signals a message to the audience. Using marble may indicate that a sculpture is meant to produce an
enduring meaning or that the subject matter is a traditional one. A statue made out of papier-mâché might denote the whimsical nature of the subject matter.

Some artists would argue that the material itself is part of the dialogical nature of art. One mural artist states, “They tell me to do a wall, and I go choose it. I won’t just take any wall, the wall has to talk to me and the wall was magnificent because it looked like a human form” (Gándara 36). In this example, the style of the wall tells the artist that it is the right one for her mural. This is a sentiment that might be expressed by sculptors, for example, in choosing a block of marble or a particular piece of wood that speaks to them of what it might become. In this case, the material may help dictate the final style of the object. Other artists use the style of the material to transmit inner thoughts and energy, not just a sculpture judged by the shape itself. For example, “Rodin responded to the smooth surfaces and cool images encouraged by the Beaux-Arts and academic tradition…by modeling figures whose rough, pitted surfaces express inner-most conflicts and feelings” (Nawrocki and Clements 66). There is an interaction between the artist, the material, and the style of the work of art.

Some materials play off each other, shifting style and meaning, as in the instance of one sculpture where, “The somewhat harsh juxtaposition of steel and marble – the first a modern industrial product and the second with its classical allusions – is yet another manifestation of the not-always-smooth continuum of the old into the new” (86). The choice of materials symbolized a relationship between time periods and highlighted the sometimes ragged transition from one time period or style to the next. In the case of one Detroit sculpture made of automobile bumpers, “Kearny’s steed, ironically, has been made from the very materials of the invention that marked the demise of the horse as a mode of transportation. Indeed, funds for Silverbolt were provided by several Detroit automotive companies” (Nawrocki and Clements 94). It is a
striking sculpture as the choice of material gives the horse a distinct stance and shape, literally replacing the materiality of a horse with an industrial material. The style of the art, through its choice of materials, tells the story of the evolution in the mode of transportation.

In one case, the material used in the memorial is intended to interact with the audience. The dark reflective rock chosen as the medium for the memorial was intended to “…[draw] the viewer in to the story being told within the space. Both the rock’s engaging and powerful presence and its reflective nature bring the viewer’s image into the memorial itself. As Clausen stated, ‘I wanted you to see yourself as you read about lives different from your own … . I want you to realize how different your life is from these firefighters’” (Fleming 206). While the artist and the subjects of the memorial are absent when the audience views the installation, the memorial itself and the material it is made of are there to speak for them and engage the audience on their behalf. Style creates a space for the interaction between members of the audience, the artist, and the art itself.

1.3.3 Memory

In classical rhetoric, it is the orator who uses memory in the preparation for the delivery of a speech or the accumulation of commonplaces and arguments for extemporaneous speaking. In the case of public art, while the artist may have employed their memory bank for purposes of invention and style or technique, the function of memory in rhetorical performance is filled by the memory site and/or work of art itself. It is the installation that becomes a vessel of memory for the audience. Particular attention is paid here to memory and memory sites, such as memorials and museums, because the case study included in chapter 4 takes place primarily on a military installation, a location where artifacts of public memory play an essential role.
Blair, Dickinson, and Ott in their book *Places of Public Memory* summarize six assumptions made about memory:

1. Memory is activated by present concerns, issues, or anxieties; 
2. Memory narrates shared identities, constructing senses of communal belongings; 
3. Memory is animated by affect; 
4. Memory is partial, partisan, and thus often contested; 
5. Memory relies on material and/or symbolic supports; 
6. Memory has a history.

Public art supports memory in all these capacities, particularly the fifth one: material and symbolic supports.

The techné of memory are many-fold. In relation to public art, Fleming suggests, “The designer needs to leave pegs for the imagination to hang on so that each generation can regenerate and reinterpret the meaning for their own time”…and gives the example, “The taste of the cookie was the memory peg that released this mental association from the past and thus enriched the experience as it was recalled” (17). Smell is another potent “memory peg,” that recreates a specific moment, person, place, or emotion from the past. These are some reasons why the location of a memorial site is so important, the closer to the actual event being memorialized the more likely it is to draw on these sensory elements of memory to recreate a particular place, time, and event.

Some would argue that not all memory techné are equal. Bergman and Smith offer that, “…the stickiest memories are those most fully experienced…with our bodies and senses” (166). One example of a historical site is found on Alcatraz Island located off the shores of San Francisco, a site of memory that holds competing narratives: that of the federal penitentiary (1934-1963) that held well-known criminals such as Al Capone and James “Whitey” Bulger, and that of the Native American occupation of the island (1969-1971) that claimed the land under the
Treaty of Fort Laramie between the U.S. and the Sioux Nation. Teresa Bergman and Cynthia Duquette Smith point out in their essay *You Were on Indian Land* that it is the memory of the penitentiary that is emphasized by the visitor’s experience, “At Alcatraz Island, the physical and sensorial experience [as visitors are invited to enter a cell or suggested to place their hands on the bars] strongly shapes the construction of historical memories and focuses visitors toward the disciplinary power of the state rather than the resistance efforts of the Native Americans.” Further “A more somatic experience of what it was like to live and protest on the island—conveyed via material experiences similar to those provided in the existing cell house tour—is required in order to bring Occupation memoires more fully to life” (182-183). Memory lives in public art more fully if audience is invited to participate bodily in the experience.

Blair, Dickinson, and Ott give special attention to the collective nature of memory. They argue that memory is public “…because ‘public’ situates shared memory where it is often the most salient to collectives, in constituted audiences, positioned in some kind of relationship of mutuality that implicates their common interests, investments, or destinies, with profound political implications” (6). Fleming supports this claim stating:

For most people, it is probably not the architecture that turns a physical locale into a well-loved place; it is more often the remembrance of human interaction that helps us to claim it…it is the recollection of patterns of life lived in a particular building or space that creates the ‘cornerstones; of mental association and gives such places a patina of affection. This is the vesting process. (14)

Places become meaningful because of shared experiences at a particular site. Public art, especially memorials, are designed to preserve the memory of those shared pivotal experiences.
In tandem with memory is the act of forgetting. The process of amnesia can be supported by public art or countered by it. Fleming argues, “But it should be the responsibility of the designers to mitigate the conditions of amnesia foisted on us by so many of our environments” (28). An example of an installation that does the opposite of this is the National Civil Rights Museum (NCRM) in Memphis, Tennessee. In the case of the NCRM, the relocation of a counter memorial placed across the street from the entrance to a more remote location on Freedom Plaza allows visitors to bypass Smith [a homeless woman who has set up a counter-memorial across the street in protest of the commercialization of King’s memory] altogether without ever knowing of her existence” (Armada 228). The authors problematize this move, pointing out that, “This victory, however, comes at the expense not only of Smith, but also of every day citizens, who lose a remarkable and rare opportunity to enter an experiential landscape that memorializes the civil rights movement at the same time that it draws critical attention to its own memory practices” (232). Allowing for Smith to set up her counter memorial across the street from the NCRM, they argue, would have been more honest, transparent, and ultimately more beneficial to their visitors.

It is clear from these examples, that these public installations and others like them are “writing” history with a particular perspective in mind. They facilitate some memories while allowing others, by intent or simple omission, to be forgotten. Their motivation may be to present an accurate history to their audience, visitors to the site, or emphasize those aspects that will draw the greatest number of paying visitors. There are ethical implications involved in representing history, fostering a specific narrative and contributing to public memory. According to Andreas Huyssen, “…we need to discriminate among memory practices in order to strengthen those that counteract the tendencies in our culture to foster uncreative forgetting, the bliss of
amnesia, and what the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk once called ‘enlightened false consciousness’” (232). Which memories are reinforced and which are “forgotten” by memorials is a political issue.

There are also ethical issues regarding the use of memory sites. Questions arise as to whether there is one true, authentic past, something static or whether truth shifts with time. This is something that can be seen today in the debate over whether to rename buildings and other locations, a form of memorializing, named after people who, while deemed worthy in the past of such recognition are now judged differently based on contemporary views of justice. An example is Georgetown University where two buildings named after previous school presidents involved in the slave trade, one authorizing the sale of slaves to pay off school debt and another serving as an advisor on the slave trade, will be renamed. The buildings, formerly Mulledy Hall and McSherry Hall, will temporarily be called Freedom Hall and Remembrance Hall until new names are selected (Shaver).

In some public art and memory sites, questions of authenticity, history, and memory don’t lie with the installation itself, but in the interaction of the audience with it. Performance and hauntology are two terms used to describe this interaction of audience and site. Performance is the acting out of history by the audience as they move through a space, and hauntology, a term coined by Jacque Derrida, is the presence of memory not fully understood in the present moment (Bowman 208-209). Regarding criticism of ‘staged authenticity’ of memory sites (artificial) vs. memory environments (authentic),

It betrays the essentialism that assumes ‘authenticity’ is a stable, pure, prediscursive quality or state rather than an emerging, shifting, differentially constructed one…In this particular case, I want to suggest that such an orientation allows us to focus less on the
epistemological issues of what a particular site ‘says’ or ‘knows’ or on the ontological question of the site’s ‘authenticity’ and to consider instead what might be called the ‘hauntological’ question of how the site recruits and mobilizes bodies to perform acts of remembrance. (Bowman 208)

One example taken from the Mary Queen of Scots House and Visitor’s Centre (MQSH) in Jedburgh Scotland, “As visitors tour the building, they tack back and forth between a state of flow and reflexivity – that doubled consciousness inherent to performance – where one part of them is walking in Mary’s footsteps, following her trail, while another is wholly aware that Mary may never have walked here at all” (Bowman 211). Such performances present an alternative to the discussion of the ethics of public memory, allowing memory to exist somewhere between “factual” information and lived experience. This philosophy shifts the power of memory performance from the authors, “writers of history,” to the audience who, through interacting with the site, creates memory through the physical reenactment of historic places, people, and events.

1.3.4 Arrangement and Delivery

Arrangement and delivery are discussed together here because in the arena of public art, there is overlap in their functionality. One example is the west side of the National Mall (The Mall) in Washington, D.C. It is arranged with two anchor monuments, the Lincoln Memorial at the west end and Washington Monument at the east; together these provide a sense of distance and orientation. Linking the two anchor monuments lays the reflection pool, a sky-reflecting ribbon that accompanies walkers from one end of The Mall to the other. The Mall is arranged so that if one stands at either anchor monument, the other is framed by the sky directly ahead, and eyes are drawn to it by the visual cue of the reflecting pond, a perfect vantage point and frequent location for photo-snaps. On each side of the reflection pool are individual monuments, visible
from the main walkway so that visitors can choose to stop and view each monument individually, potentially viewing each monument while making a complete navigation of the pool. There are no walkways or bridges to cross the pool and break its visual flow, so once visitors commit to walking, they must walk the entire length of one side then the other or turn back. There is no crisscrossing from monuments on one side then the other. Such an arrangement controls the flow of traffic and allows guests to view the monuments in a certain order.

The delivery of the monuments, they way they are “delivered” to the visitor as the monument is approached, is derived from the way they are arranged spatially, what surrounds them in their environment, and the sun hits them at a certain time of day, to name a few factors. As mentioned above, perhaps the most striking deliveries are the approaches to the two anchor monuments. They are delivered up close from the foot of the monument or inside the monument, or they can be delivered from a distance from the other end of the mall, giving an entirely different experience and perspective. The WWI and WWII monuments are delivered in strikingly different ways. The WWII memorial is grand and sweeping, a full-size plaza featuring an immense fountain with multiple arching sprays of water and encircled by stone pillars large enough to be individual monuments themselves. In contrast, prior to its restoration in 2010, visitors to The Mall had to almost stumble across the WWI monument that was set back in some overgrown landscaping and looked to be in need of a power-washing (hence the recent restoration). The Vietnam Memorial, located at the other side of the mall, has yet another delivery, drawing the visitor down a pathway that leads below ground level, so that the monument is delivered up close, so close that touching the memorial is encouraged. The surface of the memorial is highly polished and black, almost appearing wet, and etched into this reflective stone surface are names. The close proximity of the visitor to the monument
encourages them to read and even touch the individual names. This is an impressive monument when viewed from the distance of the main pathway, but it is extremely intimate in its delivery as one reads the individual names, touches the smoothness of the wall, and perhaps uses a pencil to make an imprint of the name of a loved one on a piece of paper, thereby taking a part of the monument home to remember the experience.

An example of delivery that includes oral rhetoric is the unveiling of a work of art. Several speakers may get up in front of an audience to talk about the story behind the new work, its subject matter, and intent. There may be a notable person, such as a mayor, curator, or other dignitary who leads the dedication that ends with the unveiling and public display of the installation. Such a ceremony lends credibility (ethos) to the installation and may help to create an emotional connection between the audience and public work as the audience has a shared experience (they were at the unveiling) to refer back to as well as making a possible emotional connection to the art through the project’s story. The delivery usually begins with the audience standing at a distance listening to the speaker while the work of art is covered, hidden from view. Once the speeches have ended, the art piece is unveiled and the audience is allowed to view the work up-close. This order of delivery with distant then close viewing of a work is not uncommon as it is natural to view the art as one approaches it from a distance then moves close to look at details, often reading a display plaque that gives useful information about the piece.

1.4 Place

Because of shared histories and stories, some places take on particular value as sites for public art and memorials. In fact in the introduction to their book *Places of Public Memory*, Dickinson, Blair, and Ott make the claim that “‘memory places,’…enjoy a significance seemingly unmatched by other material supports of public memory…” (24). Further, these places
are “positioned perpetually as the sites of civic importance and their subject matters as the stories of the society” [emphasis in the original] (28). A readily recognizable example is the location of the memorial to the 9/11 attacks in New York City. It is located on the site of the now destroyed Trade Center twin towers. A memorial in any other location could not have the same significance as the physical location where so many experienced the tragedy in real time on-site or through their television screens. It is not an exaggeration to say the site of the twin towers is considered sacred by many, having been made sacred through the spilling of the blood of so many during an attack on an American landmark. As Fleming writes in the introduction to The Art of Placemaking, “Place is not merely what was there, but also the interaction of what is there and what happened there” (14). The place itself evokes shared memories and experiences.

Such is the case with New York’s 9/11 Memorial that houses interactive educational programs, memorial events, and guided tours that further solidify the memory and story of 9/11. Gregory Clark, in his essay “Rhetorical Experience and the National Jazz Museum in Harlem,” asserts that experience and place are always intertwined, as he states: “[Experience] is a construct made from our encounters with places – including the people and events those places comprise – that gives us essential elements of identity and purpose” (116). People from all over the world and from all generations can visit the 9/11 Memorial to experience and interact with the memories and artifacts of the 9/11 attack, not in isolation, but alongside and in interaction with museum staff and other visitors who share the same experience of revisiting the traumatic national/international memory.

Place and the environment play a particularly important role in public art. As explained by muralist Lupe Casillas-Lowenberg, “When one creates art, there is an awareness of the environment – it is emotional, spatial, and spiritual action involving an audience or community”
Other muralists like Carlos Flores focus more on the physical environment: “The mural is another medium...light must be taken very much into account, as must the space in front of the wall. The architecture of the building must be borne in mind so that the two things won’t clash, and at the same time you’ve got to try to make it as free as possible. Outdoor murals are seen in the context of their environment, whether man-made structures, landscaping, sounds, smells, or fluctuating seasonal conditions.

Indeed the context of an art installation can influence its effectiveness. One example is in the use of juxtaposition, as in the case with the former federal prison Alcatraz where, “part of the rhetorical power of Alcatraz lies precisely in this visible juxtaposition between a life of freedom on the mainland and a life of rigid incarceration on the island itself” (Bergman and Smith 167). Standing outside of Alcatraz one can hear sounds of the San Francisco Bay, view the vast landscape just outside the bounds of Alcatraz Island, and experience a profound peacefulness from the landscape. All this makes the fierceness of the prison with its bars, small living spaces, and even dark solitary cells all the more striking.

Some environments impede the audience from viewing a public art installation properly, sometimes due to the environment changing over time. In the case of the installation Glacial in Detroit, polished steel plates were placed in a grassy field to simulate the view of flying over glaciers; however, over time the steel plates became less visible as the surrounding grass overgrew their edges (Nawrocki and Clements 167). Conversely, an installation can add to its environment, as in one instance where a larger than life statues “add power and majesty to the façade and mission of the museum they adorn” (Nawrocki and Clements 65). Public works inevitably interact with their surroundings. Sometimes this adds to the artwork; sometimes it detracts from it. Either way, these changes become part of the conversation of the public place.
1.4.1 Public Places and Accessibility

When talking about public art, accessibility is a factor. In *Art in Detroit*, the authors define public art as those works...“found mostly, but not exclusively, outdoors – in parks, plazas, and squares, on the exteriors of buildings, and in courtyards. Buildings or institutions that I have defined as public in nature encompass government offices, libraries, shopping centers, hotels, banks, hospitals, universities, and colleges” (Nawrocki and Clements xviii). Obviously this is a complicated matter. What is visible to the public is often owned by a private individual or business. The question arises as to who should have a say in what does or does not get displayed in public places. Private ownership in public spaces can lead to an environment that doesn’t reflect the values of the community or an over-commercialized space.

1.4.2 Non-Places/Blind Fields/Closed Spaces

In *Digital Detroit* Jeff Rice uses the term “non-place” to describe places within the city that have become void of meaning. He describes: “The ‘spectators’ of Detroit – the popular press, the nightly news, the daily conversations we hear and speak, and ourselves as we pity the city or look upon it in disgust – tend to totalize Detroit and make it a non-place” (9). By creating a Detroit that exists in the imagination as being one entity, rather than being made up of many separate parts, the diversity, character, and tensions within the city disappear. Only on a personal experiential level can someone connect with the city, as Rice states, “Non-places…lack relationships…People pass through these spaces, but the spaces remain as individualized, solitary encounters” (78). Rice gives an example of allowing the theme of abandonment to dominate the narrative of Detroit, and how visitors stopping in front of the abandoned train station downtown, symbolizing a decaying Detroit, are encountering a non-space, even perpetuating it by taking photographs. However, the awareness of non-spaces can be impetus to
create those relationships, history, and identity that will renew and re-establish the city as a place. Non-spaces can act as indicators that communities need attention (Rice 153). There are some spaces, Rice suggests, that are not open to influence and remain fixed.

1.5 AUTHOR/AUDIENCE RELATIONSHIP – ISSUES OF AUTHORSHIP AND EXCHANGE

Public art runs the full spectrum of the Author / Audience interaction. Studio art may reflect the artist’s introspection and self-expression. Community art, on the other hand, can be extremely collaborative. For the purposes of this study, the focus will primarily be on more collaborative projects.

Community projects are inherently more complex than autonomous work such as studio art. As the authors of Philadelphia Murals explain, the design process involves four elements: a triangle of influences consisting of local residents, donors, and the city; and the artist who acts as mediator between the other three (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 86). These actors can have an interesting relationship as public art projects can facilitate bridge building between disparate interest groups or segments of the community (Juárez 20) or lead to power struggles over messaging, representation, and funding.

In public art, there is a different sharing of authorship than might exist for art created in for exhibit in more traditional settings. Some artists will articulate that there is a distinct shift between their studio versus public art, such as murals. Artist Gaspar Enríquez, states, “My mural work deals with a wide spectrum of images and symbolism. My public art work is based on issues and concerns of the theme and the time. Since [the work] is public, there are compromises an artist makes” (61). Carlos Callejo, another mural artist, explains, “In contrast, the imagery and symbolism in my murals is easily understood, whereas my easel painting is more subliminal (65). Callejo goes further to differentiate between “…art for art’s sake and art which is rooted in
the human contemporary social context” (67). Public art, such as murals, are often reflective of the community environment, as Enríquez goes on to explain: “My work is a reflection of my environment and my experiences there….The neighborhood history keeps repeating itself with each passing generation…My work is a product of my environment – its past, present, and future” (60). Not only is the subject matter affected by the public nature of the art, but the audience’s response is paramount. Valdez, another studio and mural artist, explains, “What people are responding to, sometimes the rhetoric is more important than the work. It’s based on people’s impressions and also know who’s your audience” (78). What can be established is that community art projects are less about the artist’s creative vision and more about a shared vision based on the community’s expressed values and ideas.

There are risks involved in collaborating with groups of people. One is that the message of the mural may become “sanitized” as finding “lowest common denominator” can inadvertently “devalue its contribution to community dialogue” (Fleming 103). Another risk is allowing a small group of individuals or the artist him/herself to represent the voice of the community during the creative process.

Another way audience plays an authorship role is by the artist researching audience in the creation of the public art, as in the case of one New Orleans project that included renaming key streets. Part of the research process included soliciting names of streets from members of the public as well as members of the city government (Fleming 143). Involving members of the community in the review process can, on one hand, risk watering down a great idea by including too many voices, but on the other the project benefits from feedback over the course of the project (Fleming 135). In finding that balance, the artist plays an important role as mediator and
overall judge of what is at the heart of the community’s message, a message that must be
distilled into something representative, yet still cohesive and clear.

In some cases, the audience is narrow by the nature of the message, as in the case of
graffiti that involves tags that can be interpreted by only a small number of people (Fleming 98).
This limited audience means it is less accessible to the general public, again reinforcing the
argument that it is not truly public art.

If public art is in part about the interaction of the audience with the piece of work, then a
Hollywood work of public art featured in *The Art of Placemaking* describes how this works.
Visitors wind their way through a public space that tells the story of everyday people who “made
it” in Hollywood. At the end of this winding path is a large casting couch that visitors are
couraged to climb up on and even have their pictures taken, so that they can “pretend that they
too will one day become stars.” This same exhibit further creates accessibility of the audience by
making the stories “clichés that could, technically, happen to anyone (Fleming 132). Another
public artwork, this one in New Orleans enhances audience accessibility to the subject matter,
“By combining the well-known street markers with artifacts of the lesser-known New
Orleans…creat[ing] a cultural treasury that makes the essence of New Orleans culture accessible
to everyone” (Fleming 145). These examples points to a practice Linda Flowers refers to as
literacy, “a literate action taken to support agency, understanding, and justice; and a rhetorical
act built on the social ethic; and a strategic practice of intercultural inquiry” (Community
Literacy 7). This cultural literacy could also be described as education with a civic or social
purpose.

Another way the artist can include the audience is by increasing the physical and
emotional accessibility of the work. One way that artists can do this is by using the community
itself as subject matter. This allows the audience to more easily connect with the work of art. A Philadelphia artist explains, “In all my public work, the content would come from the community…I like the idea that every individual is just as heroic as a person who has fame. I like to make an everyday person rise above their environment” (Saligman 120). Another memorial to local firefighters in Boston, Massachusetts is made of highly polished granite etched with the names of fallen firefighters. It exhibits a similar sentiment of accessibility and relatability:

These [more recent monuments] often focus on the mass of lost lives rather than the traditional celebration of a singular exemplary heroes…This turn toward commemorating the common soldier rather than the famed general is popular because it helps address the identity crisis of public art, which needs to serve the viewing public through accessibility of form and content. To incorporate the audience within the design is a direct solution. (Fleming 207)

This same monument also included the viewer as the reflection of the person standing in front of the monument is reflected back to them in the mirror-like granite surface. Community art is often about real events and people, making inclusion of members of the community a natural choice.

Public art by its very nature is larger than life, viewed by large numbers of people, and highly accessible. It makes it an ideal target for direct and symbolic dialogue. Sometimes it isn’t only members of the public “defacing” a public work, but the establishment itself. In some cases “routine maintenance” damages a mural painted on a wall. Sometimes a necessary act, at other times this damage is the result of a new property owner painting over a mural or the wall owner not agreeing with the political message (Drescher 45). Not only is ownership of speech at question but also ownership of space or property. There is also the question of who belongs, as in
the case of some youth who use tagging as a means of “establishing a presence in their world” only to have it erased or painted over (Drescher 63). What some see as defacement may be seen by others as an attempt for those without a voice to be heard, to engage in some way with their environment, even if that interaction is discordant with its surroundings.

Artists can even get response to their work during the creation process if it takes place in an open arena. In the case of one muralist who while painting from a raised scaffolding was “the subject of praise, scorn, and lawn-chair criticism” (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 146). An interesting dynamic between artist and audience comes from the artist needing to shape their art, often seen from a distance, height, or other perspective not at eye level. This puts the artist in the position of needing to “fool the eye” of the audience by distorting the image to “maintain the perspective of the person on the street” (Phillip 126). The perspective of the audience is, literally, taken into account. Perspective does become reality as the image itself becomes warped to look “correct” to someone viewing it from an alternative direction.

Murals in public spaces can be seen as invitations or spaces for a modification/response. In one mural installation, the artist solicited a response from the audience through leaving space that invited physical modification of the painting. He explained this approach as “completely in keeping with the spirit of his work and the spirit of the community art in general, and he let [the content filling the mural’s open space] stay for several weeks…” (Drescher 43). Art in a public environment may be seen as a forum for open dialogue regardless of the original intent of the artist and those who install sanctioned messages.

Another audience response may be to steal a piece of art. Such was the case with one Detroit area statue that was first stolen in 2000 then replaced by a replica in 2002 (Nawrocki and Clements 198). In this case absence becomes a message, though more obtuse. The statue could
have been stolen by someone/those who liked it so much they wanted to own and display it at a location of their choice, or it may have been stolen, and even destroyed, out of a dislike for its message or aesthetic.

1.5.1 Empathy and Listening

On the other end of the spectrum from isolated studio art, projects where the artist and community have a shared role in authorship require the artist listen and internalize the messages and values of those their art will represent. Grant Kester in his book *Conversation Pieces* describes such an artist as “…defined in terms of openness, of listening…, and of willingness to accept a position of dependence and intersubjective vulnerable relative to the viewer or collaborator” (110). There is a time to talk, a time to listen, and a time to hash out shared understanding.

One way to develop empathy is found in the art of listening, described as a “period of openness, of non-action, of learning and of listening” (Kester 107). In one example, an artist approaches a project as an active listener, “learning from the residents’ personal stories and using these stories as the foundation for a series of plays” (Kester 181). Community art speaks to shared understanding, something that narrative is uniquely positioned to foster.

This redefining of artist as listener first, author second is conscious and begins to redefine what it means to be an artist. This approach to art reflects not just an alteration to method, but a new perspective on what is valuable. Grant Kester explains that these artists were not out to improve the audience, but to reflect their own stories, motivations, values. The art was a direct result of a process of dialogue and exchange with members of the intended audience. This changes the power relationship between artist, funders, subject matter, and audience/community: “Although the project made use of [the artist’s] skills as a sculptor (in the design and fabrication
of the concrete forms), it requires an equally important capacity for active listening and empathetic identification, a willingness to let the laborers guide her, rather than an imposition of her own a priori or formal values on them” (Kester 165). The relationship between artist and subject is symbiotic with the assumption that the art should reflect the character of the community and that this is where the beauty lies rather than trying to make the community something it is not, someone else’s idea of what it should be. It is not about a single vision, the artists, but a collective universal vision, something Kester refers to as “common sense” (Kester 108).

Of course this means the artist must make compromises, such as spending more time with the community to invest in relationships and gaining a deeper understanding of it (Fleming 113). It also requires the artist to be true to the values, wants, and needs of a community while at the same time creating art that is true to their own body of work (Rothenberg 135). There is also a sharing of recognition for the work itself since if a work is collaborative, the artist cannot take full credit. This may be part of the beauty of the work, as one architect notes, “That is what’s most interesting to us, rather than making an architectural statement of our own, making a statement of the community. This bridge is really a statement of the community and not of the architect” (Grover 26). This credit to the community rather than artist is analogous to citing another author’s words or ideas within one’s own text. While the author may have written the work produced, other’s words and ideas are embedded and lend credibility. That contribution is recognized.

1.6 Summary

The contemporary world of public art in all its vast range of possibilities goes beyond traditional visual, written, and oral rhetoric. It requires an expansion and reimagining of the
classic definitions of rhetorical terms and concepts. The next chapter will look specifically at the intersections of public art with less traditional notions of rhetoric and related fields.
Chapter 2: Public Art as Non-Traditional Rhetoric

As explored in Chapter One, public art expands the notions of traditional rhetoric. It also bleeds into areas of non-traditional rhetorics, such as Thomas Rickert’s *ambient rhetoric* and Jeff Rice’s exploration of how rhetoric interacts in networked spaces. This is because public art, as opposed to gallery or studio art, interacts with its environment in a unique way. It is viewed by an audience that is influenced by multiple factors, for example, by their feelings about the city they live in, the smells of nearby restaurants, the noise of passing traffic, and the distraction, perhaps, of driving in that traffic as they pass by. Public art isn’t viewed in a vacuum. In fact, it often is viewed by accident and may be viewed so repeatedly over time that it becomes part of the unconscious landscape waiting for the day when the viewer’s mindset brings them to see it as if for the first time again. Importantly, public art is part of the dialogue of public spaces. And that dialogue is often between members of the community who are in various positions of power, from a graffiti artist to an international corporation. Who funds an artwork or memorial, where it gets placed, whether it is maintained, whose hero is being celebrated - all these elements of public art speak to how power structures within the community informs its public art. The following chapter explores some of the ways that public art’s rhetorical nature is informed by and plays into these non-traditional areas of study.

2.1 NETWORKS AND MOTORIZATION

Networks of meaning and movement along networks/roadways speak to the meaning-making of public places, the context for public art. In *Digital Detroit: Rhetoric and Space in the Age of the Network*, Jeff Rice explores several terms that involve networks, movement, and the classification of data. *Network* is a familiar word, bringing to mind a pattern of relationships that form a circuited whole. There are networks of relationships, networks of roadways, and
networks of information, for example. The word “motorization” implies the energy behind motion. Jeff Rice uses motorization to describe the movement of ideas along networks of infrastructure: “motorization is a productive, folksonomic gesture…that actualizes objects to transfer information… (69). Physical and cognitive work are performed as a result of movement. Topics or topoi create movement of meanings along the network, forming folksonomy or a classification of information. Rice uses the example of a major roadway in Detroit, Woodward Avenue, that has come to symbolize the state of Detroit and houses historically significant memories. Woodward Avenue, at the height of its prosperity, was a place where one could find thriving automobile plants, a burgeoning cigar industry, and new residents. Traveling down Woodward, the themes of factory work and prosperity were in evidence. Today Woodward Avenue tells a different story, as someone traveling along its route encounters boarded up shops, neglected gardens, and now uninhabited factories. Historically accepted categories of information can be used by the rhetor to enhance the ethos of their argument (79), and by moving topoi of information, can create new relationships and meanings (80, 87). When the rhetor has shared knowledge with the audience, shared meaning from the networks of information in the environment, that rhetor gains credibility with the audience. Applied to public art this could mean incorporating images, symbols, and text that communicate mutually understood themes between the artist and audience, themes that are culturally relevant to the place they both inhabit.

_Folksonomy_ is a democratizing force of meaning creation. Folksonomy allows for something to be defined, not by a single definition that is static, but as the sum of dynamic interactions and connections (Rice 88). An artist who understands the network of topics is in a prime position to make use of this type of knowledge work. This means that potentially anyone can challenge existing systems of knowledge through utilizing and communicating their personal
network of experiences. The involvement of the individual in the creation of relationships, as a reference for information and images they encounter, puts them in the network of meaning-making as well (89). Not only does the individual affect the network, but as part of the network him/herself, he/she is subject to being transformed as elements interact and shift (99). One example is the Shepard Fairey posters produced for then presidential candidate Barak Obama. Fairey drew on several recognized images and themes to convey his and the country’s aspirations for an Obama presidency – the three-quarter turn of the head looking upward was reminiscent of a pose of previous president and figure of youthful hope John F. Kennedy; the red-white-and-blue background symbolizing America, and the word “Hope” standing for what many Americans hoped would be a new era, the first black president symbolizing progress and a better future. As Fairey states in a 2008 interview, “there were a lot of people who were digging Obama but they didn’t have a way to symbolically show their support. Once there was an image that represented their support for Obama then that became their Facebook image or their email signature…” (qtd. in Arnon). Fairey’s image became networked by those sharing the image, spreading the symbol of optimism that became synonymous during that time with the Obama campaign.

And yet while built through an individual’s perspective, there is the challenge “to build folksonomic linkages that are communal, personal, affective, and broad” (Rice 100). In addition, meaning is something that needs to be sustained, keeping a long-term, iterative process in mind. This staying power is brought about, in part, by finding and developing relationships. It is these personal connections are essential to revitalizing cities such as Detroit, because networks of meaning engage both the heart and the mind. Going back to the Obama Fairey poster, it is not enough to see the poster hanging on the street corner. The experience surrounding the viewing of the poster can assist in making the meaning stick; for example, seeing the poster on the National
Mall in the context of attending the presidential inauguration and sharing the historical moment with others.

Networks bring the opportunity for shifting information, experiences, and meaning-making. As such they can also shift power, power to control (Rice 20). This is a rhetorical challenge, to balance what is familiar and accepted with what is new and fosters change. In order to do this, networks must find connections between existing values and new modes of being. It could be argued that this balance wasn’t found for some Americans who were never at ease with an Obama presidency regardless of the images and messages of hope associated with its message, a message that did, however, connect with some citizens, particularly African-Americans.

While some public art draws on disperse networks and categories of information, examples of public art that are place-based are more commonly thought of as “community art.”

2.2 Community Art

Community art, of which murals are one example, is a unique art form and rhetorical genre, perhaps the most democratic, because it brings every day people’s voices into the public sphere, giving them input into what they will see and what message will be sent within their environment. Community art is about relationships and shared values. Tim Drescher, an authority on community murals supports this view as he states, “At the heart of each [mural] resides the relationship between artist(s) and the social community which will be the audience for the finished painting…The basic characteristic in all cases is the extensive participation with the people who live/work with the mural” (14). It is exactly this involvement of community, the collaboration between artist and community members to utilize images that are meaningful to them, that makes murals part of a more current movement in rhetoric, an assessment of rhetorical
effectiveness based on social value (Blair, Dickinson, and Ott 5). This social value can come from simply allowing members of the community, “just plain folks” to “express themselves and have a say in what they wanted to see every day in their neighborhoods (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 7). For the community members involved in the mural program, the value of having their voices heard is of significant consequence, and as such can be viewed as effective rhetoric.

There is one approach to community art that Grant Kester cautions against, what he refers to as an, “orthopedic” aesthetic, one that attempts to impose their view on “an inherently flawed subject whose perceptual apparatus requires correction” rather than engaging in a true collaboration (88). A community arts project that does not represent a true collaboration between artist and community members runs the risk of the artist imposing him/herself on the audience, presenting what he/she believes the community needs or pushing his/her own agenda. In this case, the mural might not be well received by the community or at least not as effective in representing the values of community members. While community art is one genre of the artistic field of study, visual culture/studies is a related, but cross-disciplinary field that opens new possibilities for the critical examination of the images of a broad spectrum of genres.

2.3 Visual Culture

Since public art can include such a broad range of images and mediums, visual studies brings new ways of seeing and exploring those images that the traditional art field does not. Sometimes referred to as visual culture, sometimes visual studies, the relatively new field of study is often taught as a cross-disciplinary field created by the cooperation of usually two departments – Art History and most often Cultural Studies, Anthropology, or Film Studies and is becoming a “quartet of art, culture, history, and visuality” (Dikovitskaya 64). The field of visual studies was created for a several reasons, which will be discussed below.
First, it broadens the artifacts that are open for study in the traditional Art History classroom, expanding the subject matter from classical art forms such as painting and sculpture to include the internet, animation, photography, advertising, posters, etc. (Dikovitskaya 74). Visual Studies is more egalitarian in that it views all objects and images as worthy of study within the larger cultural context. Visual studies is elastic enough to accommodate non-traditional, commercial, and up-and-coming genres such as digital and social media.

Second, it goes beyond the study of an object of art to include meaning and context, “In short, visual studies…pays close attention to the image but uses theories developed in the humanities and the social sciences to address the complex ways in which meanings are produced and circulated in specific social contexts (Dikovitskaya 53). This allows for new networks of meaning, “juxtaposing ideas and objects that have never been associated before” (Dikovitskaya 93). Visual studies opens up space for new combinations of ideas, the creation of new meanings, and resistance to existing ideologies.

Third, it introduces critical analysis of images, bringing to “…the study of images a reflection on the complex inter-relationships between power and knowledge” (Dikovitskaya 48). The importance of visual culture/visual studies is that it provides a critical dimension, and from that agency, to see and perform in the world differently, providing “a counterdiscourse or countercriticism, a way of learning and of looking at the world without the way one looks being controlled” (Conley 129). Visual culture exposes cultural inequalities, and therefore creates room for open dialogue and change.

It is not enough to be able to think critically, one needs to have the ability to see critically. Visual studies contributes to the disciplines of art and rhetoric by claiming “that the experience of the visual is contextual, ideological, and political” (Dikovitskaya 58). Images, it
might be argued, are just as, if not more important than, the written and oral word in engaging critically with the world around us.

2.4 Social Critical Theories

Building on the focus Visual Culture/Visual Studies brings to power relationships within the sphere of public art, Social Critical Theories are examined here. Social Critical Theories are important to rhetoric and public art because it addresses how individuals and systems of people operate in a field of power relationships. They exposes how structural inequalities allow institutions and privileged members of society to dominate and control the less powerful with the intent that those being subjugated can influence and manipulate their position though the critical use of language and images. Social Critical Theories are being included here because the case study explored in Chapter 4 takes place on a military installation where power relationships directly influence public art choices, and because public art, specifically community art, can provide a counternarrative to an environment dominated by the prevailing ideology. The following are key concepts in this area of study.

2.4.1 Habitus, Field, and Capital

The idea that people’s actions are directed by past experiences is not a new one. It is in the relationships that Bourdieu proposes between habitus, capital, and field, also known as his “thinking tools” that makes his theory of practice unique. This means that one’s actions are not simply a result of one’s history of experiences but also a result of one’s present circumstances, synthesizing “present and future,…social and the individual, the objective and subjective, and structure and agency” (Maton 53). It is worthwhile to define each of these concepts as they are interrelated. Habitus as defined by Bourdieu refers to those internalized aspects of an individual’s life experiences that make up their disposition. It is both structured and structuring,
structured “by one’s past and present circumstances such as family upbringing and educational experience” and structuring “in that one’s habitus helps to shape one’s present and future practices” (Maton 51). It is also both durable over time and transposable across a wide range of environments and situations where action is performed. Scholar Karl Maton summarizes, “…habitus focuses on our ways of acting, feeling, thinking and being. It captures how we carry within us our history, how we bring this history into our present circumstances, and how we then make choices to act in certain ways and not others” (52). As stated earlier, habitus is not the only factor that affects practice. Capital, one’s resources, and field, one’s place within society, play integral parts as well. Capital is generally thought of in terms of economic capital, but for Bourdieu it signifies a broader spectrum of resources, including linguistic, social, and cultural capital. These combine with one’s background and experiences to influence one’s position in the field. The field in turn is a “social space in which interactions, transactions, and events occurred” [emphasis in the original] (Thomson 67). One’s habitus along with various types of assets and position of power within the field will determine how one acts, combining both the structuring (agency-informed)/structured (rule-abiding) nature of habitus and what one is able to achieve in terms of assets and power. Habitus may also be shared by groups of people who have evolved within similar positions on the field and who share similar socio-economic backgrounds.

Habitus, field, and capital are frequent determinants of which public arts projects are funded and produced. Those with the most social and economic capital, those positioned favorably in the field of social relationships, and who have a habitus or background of successful civic projects are move favorably positioned to have their public art projects materialized. A shift occurs when someone from a different background manages to achieve recognition. An example is a recent National Portrait Gallery purchase of a work by Gaspar Enríquez, one of only a
handful of Chicano artists represented in the prestigious institution’s collection. This represents a shift in the habitus-field-capital for Chicano artists as a group as well as for the individual artists.

2.4.2 Performance

Performance is the physical embodiment or acting out of knowledge. Interactive public art This is powerful in several ways. In the case of one activist trying to draw attention to her message challenging the narrative of the National Civil Rights Museum (NCRM), her presence told a story the museum did not acknowledge, that its presence and the gentrification of the neighborhood were driving out many long-time residents, many of those African-American. In this case, “Although Smith [the activist] admitted she chose to live out on the street, her ability to perform indigence was important for garnering rhetorical leverage” (Armada 222). It is hard to deny the acting out of a narrative in real time sharing the physical space with the audience. It is a first-hand account of a truth that the museum cannot deny. Bearing witness to performance is a strong means of persuasion. In other cases, it is the audience that physically interacts with history. Interacting with the past, becoming part of the narrative, facilitates the internalization of that narrative. One example of public art that involves performance is the El Paso Museum of History’s continuing exhibit, “neighborhoods and Shared Memories” that features personal artifacts from residents in selected communities in the El Paso/Juarez region. The exhibit performs the lives of residents, past and present, as visitors walk through exhibit that is meant to “…preserve, interpret, and increase the appreciation for neighborhood history” (Current Exhibitions). Interactive public art, including exhibits that facilitate physical public interaction, imprint memories through personal experience, making the audience part of the performance of rhetoric.
2.4.3 Performativity and Sedimentation

Performativity as introduced by Alastair Pennycook in *Global Englishes and Transcultural Flows* draws attention to underlying conditions and signifying codes to explain how a performance shapes both language and identity (58). Not to be confused with performance itself, “performativity refers to ‘the elements that make performance both possible, or by virtue of which a given performance does or does not succeed’” (58). One of Pennycook’s objectives is to show that one’s actions aren’t simply natural acts of self-expression. Without using the terminology, Pennycook’s view is that performance is rhetorical. Performance is a social act, one that involves audience in a dialogic exchange that creates a space for epistemic development both of the social and the individual. It makes public acts intentional, dynamic, and transformational. Important to the critical analysis of language and race, performativity provides agency to the performer as it provides the opportunity for iterative change through repeated acts. This means that power resides within language to create and recreate reality. A person does not do what they do because of who they are, but are formed by their repeated public acts or performances. Performativity is a process through which the individual, in public view, using multi-modal language, negotiates identity of both self and community.

Key to Pennycook’s understanding of how identity is constructed through language is the theory of sedimentation. It is though repeated acts that layers of identity are built up over time. Referring to Butler, Pennycook states that “identities are a product of ritualized social performance calling the subject into being and ‘sedimented through time’” (72). An example of performativity and sedimentation is UTEP’s “Orange Fridays” when staff and students wear the school colors to signify school spirit, their identity as Miners, and support for UTEP sports teams. The involvement of public art is the UTEP symbols, such as the color orange, the image
of the Miner, and the pick ax, often silk screened on t-shirts and other wearable memorabilia. Orange Fridays are part of UTEP’s 100 Centennial celebration. The webpage providing information about the practice is headed by a large orange rectangle with the words “ARE YOU ORANGE ENOUGH? Utep ORANGE Fridays. PROVE IT ON FRIDAYS!” (Orange Fridays). The performance of wearing UTEP orange on Fridays and sedimenting the identification with UTEP by repeating the performance every Friday, both creates identification with UTEP and with the UTEP community.

Performativity and sedimentation are widely used in military culture through the emphasis on tradition, ceremonies, uniform dress codes (including prescribed clothing for civilians), proscribed roles for military family members, and the enforcement of policy and procedure, like repeatedly needing to present military ID at facilities or the high level of surveillance by military police to enforce laws such as speed limits, usually slower than off-post. Community art can provide a rare opportunity for military members to express individuality and personal identity.

2.4.4 MIMICRY

The rhetoric of public art allows for a response to a condition or practice known as mimicry. For example, a possible result of putting social pressure on UTEP faculty and students to wear orange on Fridays is that it can lead to a practice referred to as mimicry, where the individual is acting according to the social norm in order to fit in, but is not acting out of authentic expression of that person’s sense of identity. Homi Bhabha in his essay *Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse* describes the practice of mimicry, a survival technique used by groups of people of lower social status to fit in with the dominant culture. Mimicry hides difference, but does not produce an exact replica. It provides the illusion of
representation. As Bhabha notes repeatedly in his text, mimicry is characterized by ambivalence, meaning “almost the same, but not quite” [emphasis in the original] (115). As such, mimicry is ironic, both representing the original, which is acknowledged, while presenting difference, which is not (114). Mimicry is the result of a power relationship. There is an element of deception, perhaps conscious, perhaps not, in the art of repeating without representing, and self-deception on the part of the colonizer in not seeing the difference.

The difference between mimicry (out of coercion) and critical mimicry is that critical mimicry is engaged in consciously by the person performing the identity for their own purposes. Pennycook, in his discussion of global Englishes, describes how the individual can “assimilate, rework and reaccentuate” words [or appearances or actions] that while historically situated and partly belonging to others, can be appropriated by the individual and the local (72). This view emphasizes the power of the user to transform language rather than being subjugated by it. It also provides an alternative to uncritical mimicry, instead allowing the person performing language to contribute to its change. An example of critical mimicry in public art is Neil Mendoza’s “I Spy” exhibit that features four tablets set up to represent a human face (two eyes, a nose, and a mouth) tracking the visitor’s physical movements in the room through 3D camera technology. The experience imitates the tracking of a user’s online activity and represents the lack of digital privacy experienced by users of electronic devices such as smart phones (Gerhardt). This exhibit draws attention to the issue of online privacy by mimicking the practice of data mining in a way that users can experience in a visceral way by having human “eyes” follow their physical movements, an experience that is all but invisible to them when being done electronically by software programs monitoring their devices.
Relating mimicry to the military and public art, again it is community art that can provide relief for military mimicry, those who follow the norms of military life but who do not personally identify with it in all aspects. Those who are not part of a dominant ideology but find themselves in the position of mimicking its norms in order to fit in can benefit from involvement with community art as a means of asserting individual agency.

2.5 Summary

Public art extends the understanding of what rhetoric is, what it can do, and how far its boundaries extend into other disciplines. Examining some of these possibilities informs the study of public art and its practice. Public art can be a tool of structural change through performativity and sedimentation, appropriation through critical mimicry, or networking topics of community identity through repetition along motorways of movement. Not only a useful tool, public art as rhetoric can and does perform work. The ways in which public art performs work will be examined in the next chapter.
Chapter 3: The Rhetorical Work of Public Art

Public art is rhetorical, not only because it communicates information, evokes emotion, or tells a compelling story, but also because it performs work. It can help shape attitudes, build relationships between individuals, lead people to act. Public art can reinforce existing norms and accepted histories, such as monuments to civic leaders, or it can challenge the same, for example by portraying satirical images of those same leaders. Community art is especially suited for this task, as experiences at the local level can contradict official versions of important events and public figures. What follows are some examples of how public art performs rhetorical work of this dialogical nature.

3.1 Building Community and Shaping Identity

Public art, specifically community art, has a unique ability to bring people together through shared values, attitudes, and identities. By providing spaces for interaction and exchange, communities build shared narratives around their past, present, and future. What follows is an exploration of some of the mechanisms by which this is accomplished.

3.1.1 Symbolic Boundaries

Communities are defined by boundaries. They may be designated on maps on file at a county clerk’s office, announced by a sign placed at a community entrance, and include less physical designations such as social relationships. For example, as Anthony Cohen in his book, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, explains, “This consciousness of community is, then, encapsulated in perception of its boundaries, boundaries which are themselves largely constituted by people in interaction” (13). Boundaries are drawn to define the community in its relationship to what is outside the boundary. They demark borders, which are “relational rather than absolute; that is, they mark the community in relation to other communities” [emphasis in the
Borders create an “us” and “them,” those within the boundary and those without. The implication being that those within the boundary are like us, and those without are less so. One example is El Paso’s Lincoln Park located under the “Spaghetti Bowl” interchange. Visitors to the park will encounter dozens of murals painted on the underpass support columns featuring symbols and images that speak to the Chicano culture. Members of that community might feel at home, but outsiders to the culture, while appreciating the skill, colors, and size of the murals, might feel out of place as they do not speak the “language” of the symbolism and themes. And because visitors who do not understand the murals painted in Lincoln Park may not hang out there, there will be very little social interactions for them to connect with the place, become part of the community.

Public art employs commonly held symbols to generate meaning for community members. Importantly, as Cohen distinguishes, “Symbols do not so much express meaning as give us the capacity to make meaning” (15). These meanings help form culture, a socially constructed medium within which individuals operate and interact; “Thus, when we speak of people acquiring culture, or learning to be social, we mean that they acquire the symbols which will equip them to be social” (Cohen 16). By being able to function socially within the community, community membership is established and reaffirmed. For outsiders to become a part of that community, it will take a willingness to listen and learn, feel a little uncomfortable, perhaps, as they get to know people of another culture and let those people get to know them. The time and effort it will take for that process to occur acts like a barrier to entry. The artwork symbolizes this gap outsiders will need to cross. Even when there is not a physical boundary, symbolic boundaries exist because they exist in the minds of community members. They are a social construct.
Boundaries can also be used to let outsiders know they don’t belong, as in one example of a mural being a deterrent for drug dealers from entering the neighborhood, “In just a few weeks, Sheffield [a local resident] said, the mural’s presence forced drug dealers to take their business elsewhere. ‘They know our boundaries,’ she said, proudly. ‘This is our corner’” (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 149). The mural in question features two historical leaders from the neighborhood, people who dedicated their lives to improving their community. The area around the mural was also taken into consideration. Trash and debris were removed and a small park with benches, seedling trees, and fresh bark dust installed. As one resident explained why the project has had such an impact, “This corner is important. Most people use it to either come into our neighborhood or to leave. Already there’s a whole different feeling here” (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 149). Murals can assert that a community cares enough and has enough cohesiveness and involvement to come together on a project that asserts its identity and values. Troublemakers may be less likely to transverse the entry to a neighborhood when the symbolism of unity and pride are there at the threshold.

The use of symbols in creating boundaries is particularly effective because they can perform as an invisible fence, recognizable to insiders for whom the symbols have meaning and invisible for whom they do not. It is the ambiguity and versatility of symbols that is important. Because of this, “it is the very ambiguity of symbols which makes them so effective as boundary markers in community” (Cohen 55). Symbols require meaning to be given them by the community and interpreted by the individual. For outsiders, it is difficult to influence something you can’t perceive or don’t have the key for understanding.

Because individuals connect personally with the community’s symbols, they can feel personally attacked by the encroachment of outside influences (Cohen 109). This personal
identification with community can motivate individuals to defend it passionately, because they personally have so much at stake. In one example from a city located on the San Francisco Peninsula, a neighborhood group sponsored local murals in locations where tagging had previously occurred. One man in particular, acting on his own, became so energized in his efforts to fight graffiti that “he became a graffiti-busting vigilante, cleaning up and painting over tags sometimes without asking if homeowners wanted his help. (San Jose Mercury News qtd. in Drescher 78). This citizen group and determined individual were performing civic work by enforcing their ownership of the community, their responsibility to keep its boundaries clear and external, unsanctioned messaging out.

Social boundaries function symbolically in two ways: they provide community continuity as they “emphasize and reassert the norm” and create community by reject external norms (Cohen 63). In this way, the norm becomes the boundary. This can help explain why some communities and their members hold on so tightly to established norms and why change can meet such resistance. By changing norms, people are being asked to change who they perceive themselves to be. Public art that challenges these norms can also meet with resistance, and public art that reinforces norms is more likely to be supported and maintained.

3.1.2 Rituals and Myth

Rituals also play a significant role in establishing community boundaries. Rituals use rhetorical effect in two ways: at the group level they indicate the relationships of one group to another, while at the individual level they address the relationship of the individual to the group, and as a result of group membership, the individual’s relationship to the larger world (Cohen 54). Rituals apply to public art in several ways. One example is the statue of a seated John Harvard at Harvard University. Tourists and prospective students are told that rubbing the statue’s foot
brings good luck. Indeed, the left foot of the bronze statue is highly polished compared with the rest of the statue. There is a second ritual, well known by students but relatively unknown to tourists, that involves urinating on the statue under cover of darkness. Knowing about these rituals, puts the visitor and Harvard student “in the know” and makes them a type of insider. These two rituals seeming at odds with each other have sparked debate as well. One Harvard student questions the practice of urinating on the statue as he writes on the website College Confidential, “it just seems so callous for those Harvard kids to pee on that statue, because…it is a deliberate mocking of those tourists, and it seems like it is peeing on the aspirations of those students” (dmw123). The issue here is that the ritual of rubbing the statue’s foot for good luck serves to fool outsiders into believing they are insiders themselves, or “in the know,” but their performance of the ritual only serves to prove them outsiders. The insult is that not only are the outsiders fooled, but they are rubbing a surface that the true insiders have repeatedly covered with urine. This may be an unusual example of ritual and public art. A more traditional ritual is the dedication ceremony that often takes place when a new public art is unveiled to the public. While ritual involves performance of shared experience, myth is a type of speech.

Myth is what is perceived as true or natural based on a cultural narrative. Roland Barthes explains it this way, “What the world supplies to myth is an historical reality, defined, even if this goes back quite a while, by the way in which men have produced or used it; and what myth gives in return is a natural image of this reality” (58). Myth is accepted without question; it is a foundational understanding upon which other truths are established. In fact, myth doesn’t need to be explained; it is evident, without contradiction; it provides clarity (58). Interestingly, the statue of John Harvard serves as myth as well as ritual. It is also known as the Statue of Three Lies. Its inscription reads:
All three of those “facts” are myth: 1. The statue is not of John Harvard. Because an image of his likeness was not preserved, a 19th century Harvard student served as the model. 2. John Harvard is not the founder of Harvard, though it was his early financial support that helped establish the institution. In fact, the significance of his donation was large enough that the university was named after him. 3. The date on the statue is not the founding year, but the year of John Harvard’s endowment to the university. The statue serves to preserve a myth that while not entirely true, is meant to honor someone who made a significant contribution. The ritual and myth of the John Harvard Statue, in Harvard Yard may be slightly controversial to insiders, but importantly, to outsiders help to preserve the identity and legend of the university.

3.1.3 Civic Work of Memory Places

Memory places are repositories for public memory. Here, public memory is defined as “a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that helps a public or society understand both its past, present, and by implication, its future” (Bergman and Smith 164). The civic work of memory places, often sites of public art such as memorials or museums containing art or performances, is rhetorical. In the example of the National Jazz Museum of Harlem (NJMH), the work of the museum is to use an aesthetic, sensory experience to transform people’s identification with jazz culture and the jazz era, making it relatable to a wide range of visitors (Bergman and Smith 123). Not only does the museum offer an educational and enjoyable experience for visitors, its rhetorical objective is to reposition jazz as a more central American cultural element, rather than just belonging to one era and one group of people, in this case African Americans.
3.1.4 Placemaking

Placemaking is an important and relatively new addition to the rhetoric of public places, often involving installations of public art. Ronald Lee Fleming’s book *The Art of Placemaking: Interpreting Community Through Public Art and Urban Design* masterfully defines placemaking and modern society’s need for this transformative concept. Simply, Fleming defines placemaking as a “mix of art and culture” (13) that is produced by building “mental associations into a sustainable narrative that enriches sites and helps make them memorable” (Fleming 17). All aspects of public places – street signs, parks, statues, traffic noises, street corner vendors - contribute to the rhetorical message.

In some cases, especially with communities left vulnerable due to economic pressures, the public narrative can be co-opted by commercial interests. This is commonly seen in the example of ballparks across the country that give up their historical names for the revenue of selling the naming rights to large corporation. One example is the former Candlestick Stadium south of San Francisco that sold naming rights to 3COM in 1995 and has since gone through a series of name changes, ultimately being replaced by a new stadium currently called AT&T Park. There was local push back by some, calling the park “Corporation-stick Park,” “Dot.com Park,” Big Corporation Park,” or just stubbornly “Candlestick Park,” but over time most people have come to appreciate the additional revenue naming rights have produced and enjoy the new more comfortable stadium with all of its amenities. The tools of public narrative are powerful, and as such can be spaces of struggle for control over who will get to speak for the community and represent their interests. However, public art that does not reflect the values of the community will not be as effective, “That is, a sense of authenticity is a rhetorical effect, an impression lodged with visitors by the rhetorical work the place does” (Blair, Dickinson, and Ott 27).
Without authenticity, the effect of public art is diminished. A gentrified AT&T Park in San Francisco, California says something different about the community than Fenway Park with its historic Green Monster wall in Boston, Massachusetts.

Placemaking supports the ideology that public places should be democratic spaces: “Certainly, placemaking is a liberating concept, because it is egalitarian in its view that every place has a story to tell. No place is unimportant to the people whose memories dwell there” (Fleming 16). Murals, one form of art that in some cases may be described as democratic, can play a role in placemaking and bring value to a community. Murals bring together members of the community to form interpersonal bonds, shared experiences, as well as produce a product (the mural) that will be a lasting reminder of the community story.

Along these lines, placemaking is important because it becomes part of the fabric that makes up civic society. By bringing meaning to public places, society itself is strengthened (Fleming 16). Placemaking is a discipline, a concept, and a tool that when used in a democratic spirit can bring meaning back to public places in such a way that community members and visitors can create personal memories, shared interactions, and connection to place.

3.2 COMPETING VOICES AND VOICES OF RESISTANCE

Public art can either reinforce or counter popular stereotypes. It can reflect a cultural norm or question it. Public spaces are full of messaging, and public art fits right into that dialogue. One of the key roles of public art, particularly community art is to challenge the fixity of dominant ideologies. This is important because fixity and stereotypes are tools that can be used by the establishment or dominant culture to promote the naturalization of its ideas, using language and images to support its agenda. Sometimes this is done through the appropriation of someone else’s symbols and rhetoric, most effectively done when turning the original message
against itself (Drescher 44). Such was the case in the modification of cigarette billboards to display the health hazards rather than glamour of smoking (Drescher 44). This is critical rhetoric in action, understanding the weapons of images and language, and turning them back on those whose intent is to do harm.

Dialogical art is particularly skilled at creating dialogue between dominant and challenging ideologies. According to Grant Kester in *Conversation Pieces*, “Dialogical works can challenge dominant representations for a given community and create a more complex understanding of, and empathy for, that community among a larger public” (116). For example, in one work, “The Roof Is On Fire,” youth from Oakland, California, engaged in improvised dialogues on topics such as the portrayal of young people of color in the media and racial profiling. This project allowed the youth to assert their own identity, taking back agency from the mainstream media that often portrayed them as “one-dimensional clichés” (Kester 4-5). These representations are important because they serve to combat prejudices. A symbolic, subtly repeated message can be more effective in reaching changing ways of thinking than a direct didactic or physical attack. Community literacy and rhetorical agency are key skills that members of the public can engage to take their message beyond the personal realm and make it into a challenging, interactive, and transformative dialogue. Flowers in *Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement*, describes it this way,

In these scripts what counts for agency is not merely interpretation or self-expression but an act of *negotiated* interpretation and understanding that *has chosen to respond* to multiple voices – including those of history, context, values, and imagined outcomes. Moreover, these rhetorical agents are prepared to *go public*, to engage in a dialogue that listens, speaks, and expects a response to which they are prepared to respond. (205)
Going public, opening spaces for dialogical exchange, creates an environment where all voices can be heard and represented. This section will focus on three specific genres of public art that contribute to public dialogue: murals, graffiti, and memorials.

3.2.1 Murals

Murals are a highly rhetorical public art form. Historically, they have served to tell community stories, inspire resistance to hegemonic messages, and speak for those whose voices are underrepresented in the public sphere. Today murals are widespread; in fact, it can be argued that murals have never been more popular. For example, there are community mural programs in many major cities across the United States; the phenomenon of “mural towns” has been used to revitalize some communities by employing murals to create a new identity for the purpose of drawing tourist dollars; and new attention is being paid to mural traditions across the globe. In this section the rhetorical work that murals perform will be explored.

An important function of community murals is that they can contribute to a sense of community membership and build consensus. The process of making a community mural is often inclusive, involving members of the neighborhood in the design and sometimes painting of the mural. This is an important dimension of murals since they will belong to the community that will often be responsible for maintaining them. It is the community, not artist that is most important, as stated by Tim Drescher who has studied and written extensively about murals, “Local people sometimes like artworks done ‘for’ them, but their involvement with the work is then very different from one on which they have worked themselves. In both cases the artwork lends prestige to its location, but in community-based arts, its status as art (and relative survival) is dependent on public acceptance, not the reputation of the artist” (12-13). It is the partnership of artist and community that is highlighted, giving murals a unique blend of social
consciousness. In order for there to be a community mural, a community must be assembled, must come together in dialogue and build consensus. This is another function of the mural project, not just creating a physical piece of art.

The reason communities support certain murals is that they reflect the community’s values, contributing to their ethos within the community. This isn’t always the case. The simple act of asking what a community values rather than what it wants to see in the mural can help avoid producing images that represent “visual clichés” rather than something more meaningful (Drescher 14). And because community murals are often produced on location in a public place, they can elicit responses from community members even before they are completed. The process itself can create community bonds and positive interactions. And community building doesn’t stop when the mural is completed, since maintenance is an ongoing process. There are many ways people from the community can get involved from defending the mural against graffiti, protecting it from urban renewal interests, to pulling weeds and trimming trees from in front of the mural (Drescher 32; Golden, Rice, and Kinney 86, 136). Seeing children and others in the community contributing in a positive way to their environment enables others to see the community in a positive way, as a place to reach out, get involved, as well as have hope for its future.

3.2.1.1 Rehabilitation, Hope, and Renewal

Another crucial role that murals can play is in the rehabilitation, hope, and renewal that the mural can bring to individuals and the community. The actual process of coming together as a community in support of the mural project itself is a necessary step in healing a community (Casillas-Lowenberg 42). The mural brings a sense of well-being through imagery, but also in
the support community members feel as they participate as a group in bringing positive change to their neighborhood.

Mural projects also provide an opportunity to involve younger members of the community who may have been involved in graffiti and other illegal activities. Some programs were involved with the community long-term rather than as a one-off project (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 42). Bringing hope and revitalization into a community is a process of rebuilding relationships and mindsets, it takes time. It also takes monetary investment (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 52). Investing in public art and institutions is an investment in people, particularly community projects such as Philadelphia’s that involved youth in public work.

Involving the children in bettering the neighborhood led to others volunteering to help maintain the murals and areas around them (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 47). Murals not only attract positive interactions, but to deter negative ones, as in the case of one mural that served as, "a permanent reminder to drug dealers and other criminals in the area that their presence would not be tolerated." (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 144). Murals signal that people care about their community, that positive things are happening, and that people are involved. Murals in turn give back by providing inspiring images, giving hope for the future, and providing opportunities for members of the community to come together.

Sometimes it is the image and symbolism that are intended to create a feeling of hope. In one mural featuring a waterfall, the artist explains, “[waterfalls] symbolize ablution… It’s basically what we’re doing with the mural program. We’re cleansing the past” (Uribe 81). Some murals are designed to inspire a change in mindset Children are often featured in murals inspiring hope and are obvious symbols of the future, particularly when a community’s children are portrayed in ways that demonstrate their potential and positive impact.
As in the mural of the children working in the garden above, gardens are often themes in neighborhood murals, and areas around murals, sometimes vacant lots, can serve as locations for planting neighborhood gardens. Neighborhood gardens can lend a sense of control, being able to change things for the better, as well as linking residents to a shared history and sense of identity through ties to the land (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 67). Gardens, like children, are living and growing, a promise of sustenance for a healthy community. They also link people to nature and the land on which they live, the physical neighborhood. Gardens also provide opportunities for neighbors to work side-by-side toward a common goal.

3.2.1.2 Murals Educate

Importantly, murals can educate. A Puerto Rican neighborhood relied on their murals to educate their youth about their past, since the local schools did not cover it (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 69). Community murals are particularly important since the images that will be seen on a day-to-day basis will affect attitudes and identities. It is important that they reflect the stories and values of the community. As explained by artist Carlos Callejo:

Murals can be a great way of reaching thousands upon thousands of people, since they are located in public places, accessible to everyone. They are a wonderful form to educate and inspire. Murals tend to fill a need for honest communication between all people on a non-verbal level. Muralists often communicate ideas which often get neglected by our politicians and media or newspapers, ideas which need to be explored in the public’s eye. (68).

Murals are powerful mirrors of cultural values.

Murals can perform a range of civic work, from revitalizing neighborhoods, inspiring hope in communities, and bringing important topics to the forefront of public discussion. Their
messages are amplified because they are easily accessible by a wide variety of people and whenever one happens to be passing by.

3.2.2 Graffiti

Graffiti is generally excluded from the definition of what is considered “art.” Even many muralists would describe graffiti and tagging as being in another category. There are several reasons for this, as one artist explains, “…graffiti doesn’t tell you anything. It just says that this barrio doesn’t like the other one, then they write over each other’s markings and that’s all it says. It doesn’t bring anything aesthetic, it doesn’t tell you anything you didn’t already know about the ones who are doing it” (Flores 59). That same artist admits that graffiti and art may come from the same motivation, “Graffiti has never been an art and never will be. But the impulse that moves kids to mark up walls is essentially the same as that of the artist who wishes to be something, to stand out” (Flores 58). Others see graffiti artists as doing something illegal and undesirable, describing them as “graffiti gangs” (Golden, Rice, and Kinney 138). Cities such as Philadelphia, PA and San Jose, CA have established anti-graffiti initiatives to redirect the efforts of those involved in graffiti writing into a more positive civic engagement (Fleming 98). Others see graffiti and tagging as signs of urban decay and gang activity (Drescher 32, Fleming 100; Golden, Rice, and Kinney 52).

Some would disagree with this dismissal of the value of graffiti. As one graffiti artist explains, “The whole thing with graffiti is to get away with what you’re doing and to leave something of beauty” (Harris qtd. in Fleming 27). Perhaps the most famous graffiti artist is the man who calls himself “Banksy,” an international guerilla artist, explains the attitudes of others toward graffiti and its status as legitimate this way:
Despite what they say graffiti is not the lowest form of art. Although you might have to creep about at night and lie to your mum it’s actually one of the more honest art forms available. There is no elitism or hype, it exhibits on the best walls a town has to offer and nobody is put off by the price of admission.

…

The people who truly deface our neighborhoods are the companies that scrawl giant slogans across buildings and buses trying to make us feel inadequate unless we buy their stuff. They expect to be able to shout their message in your face from every available surface but you’re never allowed to answer back. Well, they started the fight and the wall is the weapon of choice to hit them back.

(Banksy 8)
Banksy makes a fringe opinion seem convincing, in part because of his skill at rhetorical persuasion. He asks the reader to question the societal worth of traditional art and sanctioned speech.

Banksy’s work is highly political and rhetorical in nature. It is being examined here in some detail because it is an example of what graffiti and any public art can be. First, it is meant to encourage dialogue through challenging things that have become normalized. Some of his art speaks directly to the establishment or to his audience. In one example, he stencils the words “WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?” in front of a security camera pointed at a blank concrete wall (86-87). In several tourist locations around Europe where tourists often pose for pictures or snap shots he stenciled, “This is not a photo opportunity” (122-123). Often, the establishment responds by removing his artwork, and in one case in San Francisco, selectively altering an “official” notice he had stenciled on a large empty white wall,

    POST NO BILLS

    AUTHORIZED

    GRAFFITI AREA

    CITY OF SF    NO LOITERING

So that it read:

    POST NO BILLS

    CITY OF SF    NO LOITERING (63)

in essence, appropriating his signage and repurposing it. Some members of his audience alter his works for their own effect as well, as in one picture showing the Mona Lisa carrying a rocket

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launcher, modified by an anonymous artist to depict the face of Osama Bin Laden and later removed altogether by authorities (26-27).

While it is difficult to condone the vandalism that Banksy perpetrates at the expense of others, the value of what he is trying to do, the democratizing of the public sphere, is worth debating. As he “defaces” public and private property, there is also value in his exercise of free “speech,” his creative, yet destructive challenge to authority and public norms. It is a prime example of rhetoric that walks the fine line of constructive subversion and indulgent vandalism.

3.2.3 Memorials and Memory Places

Memorials and places of memory play a particularly impactful and multi-faced role in socially engaged rhetoric. The following are examples of how memorials facilitate negotiated meaning and dialogue.

3.2.3.1 Traditional vs. Local

There is an interesting comparison, some might say competition, between the rhetoric used by traditional voices, such as government, and local voices representing a community. Looking at the practice of memorializing complex events such as war provides a window into the motivation and intent behind the rhetoric of each side. This critical understanding of public rhetoric is important because “Rhetoricians also take discourses, events, objects, and practices to be partisan. That is so, in the most basic sense, because these phenomena are symbolic, and hence partial” (Blair, Dickinson, and Ott 4). It speaks to issues of power between the establishment and local citizenry, as Bryan Taylor explains in his essay about nuclear museums in a cold-war era, “…nuclear museums in the United States continue to serve as sites of struggle for the control of rhetoric that mediates public understanding of nuclear weapons development” (57). While the official story may emphasize the safety of nuclear weapons, their containment
and achievements, others may categorize nuclear weapons as putting people at risk and as a destabilizing force. Which point of view is expressed or what combination of the two involves rhetorical choices and has an impact on how visitors are intended to think about the history of nuclear weapons and their use.

There is a case to be made for public spaces to be more democratic in nature. If public spaces are forums for a fight over control of public opinion, they are inherently political. The right of freedom of assembly and free speech speak to the rights given to citizens in the public domain. Many times, however, public spaces tell a narrative that benefits those in power. John Bodnar writes in his essay Bad Dreams about the Good War, “Because images and words cast within the frame of tradition seek to aim the lens of remembering toward the sacred and the mythical and away from the literal and the tragic, they have served well the interests of nation-states that have waged war and those people within the nation that seek to find in war’s tragic aspects some noble purpose” (140). This is critical in maintaining citizen faith in a nation that has asked its citizens to support a war effort:

Grievous losses in wartime can undermine the bonds of loyalty individuals have to a nation-state. That is why public remembrance of war is such an important subject in postwar cultures. The meaning of violent conflicts has to be cast in the most virtuous of terms if the destruction and ruptures that war brings to towns and families is to be accepted as a legitimate policy of the nation and if sacrifices are to be seen as redemptive rather than regrettable. (140)

Narrative makes all the difference in how citizens and communities view the injuries that war inherently visits on them. It legitimizes a nation’s decision that could otherwise lead to a grievous loss of support by those who elect its leadership into power. It also allows for the
healing of a nation if the cost is outweighed by the overarching good of the action taken. It is the public narrative that influences the support and will of a nation to fight wars at a great cost. Many citizens want and need to hear the traditional narrative regarding war. In this sense these official narratives benefit more than just those in power. One example of such a traditional memorial is the World War II Memorial located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. where, “Most observers have noted how its classical design and celebration of national victory tended to invoke traditional ideals of patriotic honor and national unity…There is no sign of ‘mangled’ bodies or dispirited veterans…Some 400,000 American deaths are now represented by 4,000 gold stars” (Bodnar 143). By focusing on noble themes and victorious symbols, the tragedy of war can be masked by its story of noble purpose and patriotic values.

In contrast to traditional memorials, local memorials often reflect specific sacrifices made within the community they represent. Bataan Death March memorials are one example where the contrast can be seen, “…the remembrance was dominated not so much by victory or heroic accounts of war but by expressions of sorrow and regret…For these veterans the war was less about national unity and victory, and almost entirely about suffering and surviving long enough to simply make it home” (Bodnar 150). These local memorials gave specific details such as the names of the dead and the inclusion of actual weaponry and equipment. This is an example of public art serving to tell a counter-narrative, rhetoric aimed at challenging and changing perceptions.

3.2.3.2 Counter Memorials

Another way to respond to a public art installation, specifically a memorial, is to install a counter-memorial. Blair, Dickinson, and Ott explain “…public memories may be challenged by different versions of the past, by introduction of different information or valuations” (9). This is
the case with the Detroit memorial to Joe Louis. The memorial funded by *Sports Illustrated*, consists of a fist suspended from a four-legged scaffold. There is no context to the clenched fist nor is it accompanied by a boxing glove. The fist is disembodied and its symbolism open to interpretation because of its lack of context. In fact in 2004, two white men vandalized the sculpture by whitewashing it, leaving behind written statements that indicated the vandalism was in response to the killing of two white police officers, allegedly by a black man. “Thus vandalism of *The Fist* became their rhetorical response to the situation…The men’s account of their action suggests that The Fist…evokes [a] fear of racialized violence…The public sculpture provided a space to articulate those fears visually” (Gallagher and LaWare 94-95). A piece of public art more directly attributable to Joe Louis may have evoked more respect and been less open to interpretation. This to a certain extent represents failed rhetoric on the part of the designers.

After “The Fist,” as it is frequently referred to, was unveiled, a group including Joe Louis’ widow moved to create an alternative statue, a “larger-than-life, full-length bronze of Louis in fighting gear – shoes, boxing shorts, and gloves,” in other words more closely symbolizing the stature and accomplishments of Joe Louis rather than reducing him to a black fist (Nawrocki 36). As explained by Victoria Gallagher and Margaret LaWare in their essay *Sparring with Public Memory*, “The countermemorial reflected a desire to take the memorializing process out of the hands of the cultural elites and corporate control, making the memory of Joe Louis into something more reflective of the community’s perception of appropriate memorial sculpture” (107). In any case, counter-memorials establish dialogue in a concrete way that allow and promote the conversation to continue into the future.

Countermemorials play a rhetorical role by providing an alternative view of history and identity. Though sometimes providing conflicting views, memorials and countermemorials,
demonstrate “…the clash of competing memories can produce additional memorial effects characterized by ambiguity and unresolved tensions that designate everyday citizen-tourists as the agents who must negotiate through the uncertainty” (Armada 233). This isn’t necessarily a bad thing. It actually puts the audience in a position of authorship, allowing the audience to play a greater role as interpreter of multiple competing/entwined messages in a shared story.

3.3 SUMMARY

Rhetoric has the ability to both construct and challenge community narratives. On one hand, rhetoric helps build community boundaries and identity, on the other it allows groups within that community to enter into dialogue that challenges and produces counter-narratives. Some of this tension arises from the official or traditional stories of governments and those in power (even commercial interests) and the local stories of individual members. It is this ongoing dialogical exchange that allows communities to negotiate difference, find compromise, and ultimately survive the natural rifts that develop over time. What follows is a case study that examines how public narratives and public art intersect with military culture and individual agency, demonstrating just this dynamic.
Chapter 4: A Case Study: Murals at Fort Bliss

In September 2005, I married a U.S. Army soldier in a fairy tale wedding in the Cadet Chapel at West Point, NY. I was a Californian living and working in the San Francisco Bay Area; he was stationed in a joint assignment at Travis Air Force Base outside of Fairfield, California. Our two worlds intersected the only way two such diverse worlds could: through online dating, of course. Less than a year after our wedding my husband was given orders for his next assignment, and I said goodbye to my family and friends, left my job, rented out my townhouse, packed up my dog, and moved with my new husband to Yongsan Garrison, Seoul, South Korea. What I didn’t realize was that I was also leaving my identity behind and donning a new one issued by the U.S. military.

At age 39, I was an independent person who had spent many years building a life that included home ownership, a job with one of the leading software companies in the Bay Area, and an active lifestyle spent hiking and running trails with my dog and friends. I thought I knew who I was and was a confident person. Yet when I arrived at my husband’s duty station where he was taking Battalion Command, I quickly learned that I was a “dependent;” a “beneficiary;” a “battalion commander’s wife;” a “military spouse;” someone requiring “sponsorship” (my husband’s); and when asked for my social security number, they meant my husband’s. Also, being part of a “command team” (team meaning the Battalion Commander and his/her spouse) meant volunteering my time to support the soldiers and families in my husband’s unit, while my husband enjoyed a position that came with a job title, career advancement, written job description, salary, and the respect those naturally entail. At that point, I knew something dramatic had happened to my life, but I couldn’t have said how it happened, who did it, or why I was so upset. I didn’t have the words or concepts to explain it to myself let alone anyone else.
I stayed upset for the two years we were in South Korea and the two years we lived in Virginia after that. When we moved to El Paso, Texas where my husband was to take another command, at that point I decided to go back to school to earn my doctorate at the University of Texas at El Paso. I applied for the program in Rhetoric and Composition because I wanted to be better at using words to explain myself, and there were things I wanted to write about. I was also motivated by a sense of self-preservation, an attempt to keep my center of gravity in the civilian world rather than being overwhelmed by the “command team” ethos. My coursework in the Rhetoric and Composition program introduced me to materials that have been helpful in articulating how and why my experience being married to a soldier challenges me personally. Examples include structural inequality as explained by Critical Race Theory, Thomas West’s praxis of shelter, and Paulo Freire’s banking system of education, but most central to this case study is the concept that rhetoric is public work, that it can help transform identities and bring about systemic change.

The introduction to this dissertation tells of how an assignment to create a digital mural and digitally install it on a photograph of a real location led to an actual public arts project, *Murals at Fort Bliss*. This public arts project serves as the case study for this dissertation. This case study will do the following: create context by taking the reader on a visual tour of Fort Bliss at the time I lived there from 2010-2013, take a rhetorical look at the network of communication that started the project and created the project team, and examine the narratives behind each of the three murals and their locations.

4.1 **A Visual Tour of Fort Bliss, Texas**

Military installations are unique places. They are often on federal land surrounded by a local community, and the two at best share a symbiotic relationship. Many of those living and
working on the installation come from around the country and world only to spend a few years before moving on. The military has its own police, court system, housing, healthcare system, and much of the infrastructure one might find in a local municipality. In fact, they have much in common with what Foucault refers to as “heterotopias.”

Foucault, in his work *Of Other Spaces* defines “heterotopia” as a counterspace, a real place that is located outside of the normal places of society and which contain characteristics of multiple places in varied relationship to each other in time and space. Examples include zoos, theatres, prisons, gardens, brothels, and cemeteries. The term is a play on the word “utopia,” an unreal site that serves either as an idealized version of society or a version “turned upside down” (231). While heterotopias as Foucault envisions them are often sites of imagination and invention, they can also serve to embody a dominant ideology. Such is the case with U.S. military installations. Military installations are simultaneously training sites; housing communities; workplaces; parade fields; historical sites; parks; locations for museums, cemeteries, and schools; and commercial spaces. They also serve as a central place for those who consider themselves part of the military community. It is the military installation where often veterans, reservists, and active duty and their immediate family members buy groceries, pick up prescriptions, go bowling, attend a movie, and receive medical services. Civilian members of the military community, such as Department of the Defense (DoD) employees, local politicians, business owners, and other community leaders attend ceremonies and functions where they are employed or invited as guests. While a military installation is formed structurally by boundaries, buildings, open spaces, and gateways, the military community is formed around ideology communicated through signifiers such as monuments, slogans, style of dress, physical
appearance, and language. By exploring Fort Bliss, Texas, with a focus on public rhetoric, the community, its culture, and values can be better understood.

The reason why the case study starts with a visual tour of Fort Bliss is that I believe we are influenced by messages in our environment. The names of streets, subjects of monuments, advertising, and other markers communicate the values of a community and tell us as individuals and members of different groups, how, where, and whether we belong. Fort Bliss represents a military installation, specifically the one where I was living when the idea for the murals project came to fruition. The fact that it had recently undergone a major transformation from an Air Defense installation to a post housing an entire Division (for example, transforming Biggs Airfield into what is now East Bliss, home to 1st Armored Division - its brigades, battalions, and company HQs; soldier and family housing; and all supporting facilities) was also a factor. Billions of dollars had recently been invested in new buildings and infrastructure due to the congressionally authorized Department of Defense 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process that worldwide closed some military installations while expanded others, including Fort Bliss. This expansion created the opportunity to bring new ideas to fresh, untouched wall-spaces. It also marked a time of change in the culture of the installation as a new division sought to make its mark and an increased population of soldiers and families arrived at Fort Bliss for the first time. For these reasons, the environment of Fort Bliss plays a central role in the dialogue that has shaped the murals project. The following visual tour will provide the stage for the rest of the case study.

When one thinks of military rhetoric, battlefield metaphors, the use of acronyms, and posturing such as that used by North Korea may come to mind. These may be the most common forms of military rhetoric that member of the civilian population come across. Yet, if one
ventures onto a military installation of any significant size, such as that of Fort Bliss, one will
discover an abundance of another kind of rhetoric, that found in the realm of public rhetoric –
museums, cemeteries, parade fields, signage, etc. Certainly, one more familiar with military
culture is more likely to pick up on such indicators, while a visitor with little military exposure
may take things more at face value, losing some of the meaning or viewing less critically. On the
other hand, those with long histories with the military may not pick up on those signs that have
become naturalized for them in their environment. An example might be someone within the
military community who doesn’t take notice that every single house on post has a flag flying by
the front door, whereas someone from the civilian community might find it noteworthy. Public
recognition indicates what is meaningful within the community context.

One can examine the dozens of memorials, dedications, and road and parade field
designations to uncover those people and actions that are deemed to be valuable enough to
promote to public memory. The environment such as signs when entering and leaving gateways,
what is for sale in shops, and public art are also included in displays of visual and public rhetoric.
According to social anthropologist Anthony Cohen, communities are defined both by similarity
with others members of the community and with the differences found with non-members. For
this reason, he focuses on community boundaries, those places where social interaction forces
distinctions between who is welcome as part of a community and those who are considered
outsiders (12).

4.1.1 Defining Boundaries

At a military installation, the points of entry are well defined. This serves the purpose of
controlling entry and exit from the installation as well as notifying those entering of their rights.
For example, at a point of entry, it is typical to encounter signs that read “Welcome to Fort
XYZ” and “You are now entering a military reservation; you are subject to search at any time” (see fig. 4.1). There are also notices warning that cell phones are restricted except when used with hand-free devices and reminding those entering of restrictions on prohibited weapons (see fig. 4.2). Encircled by security fencing, gateways require those entering to show identification such as a Department of Defense issued military ID or other government issued photo ID such as a driver’s license. Fort Bliss in 2013 was an open installation, meaning that anyone could enter any of the gates in operation by presenting a government issued photo identity card. The policy signified the close relationship between the City of El Paso and the installation of Fort Bliss. Security concerns are always in evidence, however, as each time a vehicle passes through the gate the driver must stop to provide IDs for inspection and potentially a physical search of the car, something that can be witnessed on a regular basis as vehicles are searched for cause or at random.

Fig. 4.1. LTG Richard T. Cassidy Gate (Cassidy Gate), Fort Bliss, Texas. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2013.
For those living on post, the precautions experienced at gateways are reminders of what can be a very real threat. One of the first things I noted when arriving at Fort Bliss was that around the corner and down the street from our new home, there were military police vehicles posted at the entrances at both ends of an access road that runs behind the Commanding General’s (CG) home and those of his immediate neighbors, other high ranking officers. This was an immediate red flag that security was a real concern, and I later learned that the CG was receiving regular death threats, not uncommon for someone in his position. Over the course of living on Fort Bliss, there were occurrences where roads were closed down due to an on-post homicide/suicide at a gas station/shopette located at a main crossroad on post, a situation in progress involving a suicide risk at that same location, military police responding to threats at the residence of the CG, and other reminders that while feeling highly protected living on a military installation we might also be at heightened risk from threats from both within and outside the community.

Perhaps more notable in regard to safety and risk than the signage entering post is the signage one encounters when exiting the installation. At the Biggs Army Airfield main gate,
those leaving pass a sign that reads: “4 EASY RULES TO BE SAFE!” and another that reads: “SEEKING HELP IS A STRENGTH!” (see fig. 4.3). The most visible sign, however, when leaving any gate on Fort Bliss is that of the preventable death tracker (see fig. 4.4). A green light means that no preventable death has occurred that day, and the digital counter to the left shows the number of days since the last preventable death. If the red top light is flashing, a preventable death has occurred and the digital counter reads zero days since the last preventable death. For those familiar with what types of preventable deaths are most likely to affect soldiers, this sign most often speaks to preventable motorcycle deaths and suicide. This also explains the sign that provides information on who to contact if the reader of the sign needs help. These signs are part of Fort Bliss’ “No Preventable Soldier Deaths campaign.” A visitor less familiar with preventable deaths might think of training accidents, but work related accidents account for only a small percentage. For those within the military community, the overall message of the signage is that community members need to be on the alert both for their own mental health and the mental health and risk behaviors of others. In fact, being on guard is a central message of the signs leaving the military installation. The arch over the gateway leaving through the Cassidy Gate reads “Your Freedom and Safety. Guard Them Every Day.”

Fig. 4.3. Signage, Biggs Army Airfield main gate, Fort Bliss, Texas. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2013.
Other points of entry that require military identification for admittance are merchant facilities operated by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES). Examples of these facilities include the commissary, post exchange (PX), and other vendors such as the on-post barber shop. At the time of entering the store and at the point of purchase, customers are required to display their military identification. Visitors may accompany card holders, but must be signed in at the point of entry and cannot make purchases. A typical experience entering one of these facilities includes passing by an individual wearing an identifying smock and standing next to a podium where a notebook is open for guests to be signed in. There are signs notifying patrons of the 100% ID check for those not wearing uniform (see fig. 4.5). Those wearing a military uniform may pass through without displaying ID. The message here is that there is a contract in place requiring the vendor, AAFES, to restrict admittance to their facility. These facilities offer military discounts, often clearly noted on sales tags, and do not charge tax even on consumer goods such as electronics. Another message is that there are different levels of membership within the community, those wearing a military uniform, those holding DoD issued identification, and those who are “guests” of one of the two.
The boundaries on a military installation serve primarily to provide security, to keep out threats, and to remind those leaving post to guard their safety and be alert. They also communicate that the installation is a highly controlled environment under the oversight of men and women in uniform. Civilians requiring access must hold appropriate identification and obey many of the regulations governing the soldier population. This is not a laissez-faire environment, but one that requires attention to and knowledge of the rules and customs in order to fit in. In addition to the military installation serving as a type of heterotopia, there is also the element of Foucault’s Panopticon where military personnel and those working on the installation are always present to enforce the rules, from monitoring restricted access facilities to ensuring drivers are following the 20 mph speed limit within the boundaries of housing communities.

4.1.2 Commercial Sites – Everyday Rhetoric

Freedom Crossing at Fort Bliss is the largest open air shopping complex in the Army worldwide. It is located in a central location on West Bliss and visited by both residents and
visitors to the installation. The open air corridor of restaurants and shops is home to more than a dozen temporary posters covering what will be future storefronts. These posters can be categorized into four themes: patriotism, soldiers, families, and shopping. The overall color scheme created by signage is red, white, and blue (see fig. 4.6). The impression given to those visiting the area is that the stores are signifying the ideology of patriotism through the use of color, and this symbolism communicates both a dedication to the country but the military and its service members as well. Members of the military community may read patriotic symbolism as being supportive to their values and way of life. This ostensibly will translate into increased sales for those businesses. What is interesting is that according to the Deputy Garrison Commander at the time, the overwhelming response to a survey conducted at the time of planning for Freedom Crossing made it clear that soldiers, when not at work, wanted a non-military environment (Cauthers). The strong ideological connection, perhaps even conflation of patriotism with the military, gives a mixed message about the nature of this location intended as a military-neutral place of escape for shopping and entertainment.

Fig. 4.6. Commercial poster on wall at Freedom Crossing, Fort Bliss, TX. Artist unknown. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2013.

Many of the Freedom Crossing merchants have contracts with Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), the retailer on U.S. Army and Air Force installations worldwide, and as such require customers to show their military ID before entering the store and when
making a purchase. This means that these merchants know their customers are activity duty military as well as family members and veterans who hold military ID cards. The targeting of family member customers is obvious through some of the product displays. One of the most interesting is the display of the maternity clothing line New Recruit (see fig. 4.7). The display sign in the PX has a pink color scheme and features a young woman who is in an advanced stage of pregnancy and holding her belly. The anchoring words are the brand name. The message is clear— the future child of this pregnant woman who is holding a military ID and shopping in the PX will one day enter military service. If there is any doubt, walk over to the infant clothing section, and there are bibs with a picture of a military uniform on them (see fig. 4.8). The packaging includes a baby’s face at the top of the bib, which provides the illusion that the baby is a soldier. Other displays within the PX offer teddy bears wearing military uniforms, yellow ribbons signifying a deployed loved one, t-shirts that label the wearer a “Proud Army Mom” and other tchotchke-type items that identify the wearer or user as being a member of the military community, whether a child holding a bear or a parent wearing a t-shirt. These are military pride signifiers, and in fact, one such display within the PX is topped with a sign “Military Pride.” These commercial items are ready-to-use rhetoric - ready to display, wear, or gift courtesy of Army vendors.

Figure 4.7. New Recruit display sign at Post Exchange, Freedom Crossing, Fort Bliss, Texas. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2013.
4.1.3 Memory Places

Preserving history, recognizing achievements, and memorializing lives of sacrifice and leadership are important aspects of military culture. Because of this, military installations can be seen as places of public memory, places where memories are preserved, historical events have taken place, and where people act out traditional ceremonies and performances such as military reviews. This section takes a look at the role memory places have in the public rhetoric of Fort Bliss.

Dickinson, Blair, and Ott in their edited collection *Places of Public Memory* make the case that memory happens within groups and that public sites of memory are particularly suited for memory displays. They identify six characteristics of public memory collectively agreed upon by memory scholars: “1. Memory is activated by present concerns, issues, or anxieties; 2. memory narrates shared identities, constructing sense of communal belonging; 3. memory is animated by affect; 4. memory is partial, partisan, and thus often contested; 5. memory relies on material and/or symbolic supports; 6. memory has a history” (6). The implication is that the monuments and dedications found on Fort Bliss have been selectively constructed to reflect both historical events and people with relevant present day concerns and priorities for the purposes of
eliciting an emotion and sense of shared identity within the community that holds their symbols as meaningful. These authors also argue that “…memory is rhetorical and that memory places are especially powerful rhetorically” (2). Being effective rhetorically implies that the rhetoric being employed is meaningful to a particular group both due to its ability to affect group emotion and in its use of shared signs to communicate meaning (3). Some areas on Fort Bliss that are particularly rich in memory sites are located along Sheridan Road within the Fort Bliss Main Post Historic District. This area is recognized by the National Register for Historic Places (Ellsworth et al. 128) and is bordered on one side by Colonel’s Row (a strip of houses historically occupied by Colonels and Generals) and on the other by the old polo grounds, now identified as parade fields (see fig. 4.9).

4.1.4 Memorials to Women

Memory places are often sites for memorials. The focus in this case study is on memorials to women because, as a female living on Fort Bliss, the presence or absence of memorials to females gave me a certain impression of the role women have played and the place they hold within this military community. This is part of the rhetoric of Fort Bliss, particularly for someone sensitive to the role of women in the military and extended military community.

At Fort Bliss there are hundreds of building dedications, road namings, parade field namings, and names listed on monuments and plaques. However, of these, there are just two buildings dedicated to female soldiers, two female names listed on a plaque of fallen soldiers at the memorial Field of Honor, various civilian wives mentioned by name only on plaques dedicated to their soldier husbands, and one conference room named after a civilian female volunteer in the main Army Community Services (ACS) building. There are also three gravesites for three horses and a dog on the grounds of the Old Fort Bliss Replica Museum. It may seem odd to include animals’ memorials along with female memorials, but when conducting the visual survey of Fort Bliss, I originally thought two of the graves belonged to women, perhaps wives. It was only after reading more closely that I was realized these markers were for animals, not female companions, and as such may speak to the early absence of females on Fort Bliss. One of the horses’ graves has a simple marble marker engraved with the name “Lady,” the other grave marker is for two animals owned by COL G. P. Tyner, a horse named “Miss McClure” (1910-1935) memorialized as “A Dependable Charger” and a Boston terrier named “Gin” (1922-1935) (see fig. 4.10). The third marker is a vertical gravestone for a horse named “Gary Owen” (1919-1934). The grave markers located on the small grounds of the Old Fort Bliss museum are a relic
from a time when men, animals, and very few women inhabited the post. These memorials point to an historic period of absence of women at Fort Bliss.

Figure 4.10. Grave marker, Old Fort Bliss Replica Museum, Fort Bliss, Texas. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2013.

The two building dedications are the most visible signs of recognition of the service of female soldiers. The oldest dedication is the Army Community Services (ACS) building named after the founder of ACS, LTC Emma Marie Baird, who is described on her plaque as “a pioneer in designing soldier and family programs that resulted in the establishment of Army Community Services in 1985.” Within the ACS building are several displays to include her medals earned, one of the uniforms first worn by ACS workers, and several pictures of her in uniform and receiving awards. The second building is the Gooding Educational Facility dedicated to Lykisha T. Gooding (1972-2011) (see fig. 4.11). Her plaque begins “1SG Gooding’s remarkable career had a tremendous impact on those she served with and the Soldiers she led.” It ends with one line: “1SG Gooding is a true hero.” What the plaque does not say is that Lykisha was killed in the early morning hours of November 28, 2011 in her home by a fellow soldier in her unit after that soldier also shot her husband, wounding him when he opened the door. Their eleven year old son who was home at the time was able to escape the scene, and the husband, himself an active duty soldier, while wounded, was able to shoot the assailant non-fatally as he left. After leaving the Gooding home, the soldier who had killed Gooding and wounded her husband was shot and
killed by a female in his home (Dupont). That day the preventable death alert flashed red and the number of soldiers lost in preventable deaths went up by two counts. This building dedication is a tribute to the service of a great soldier, but also a reminder of the problem of violence against women in the military and the sometimes fatal nature of a culture where gun ownership and marksmanship training are common.

Figure 4.11. Plaque, Gooding Educational Facility, Fort Bliss, Texas. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2013.

The memorial Field of Honor located on the corner of Sheridan Road and Cassidy Road is dedicated: “In remembrance of the soldiers of Fort Bliss who gave their lives during Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, and New Dawn. You will never be forgotten” (see fig. 4.12). Of the sixty-four names, two are female, SPC Lori A. Piestewa of the 507th Maintenance Company, 11th ADA BDE, and CSM Marilyn L. Gabbard, Joint Forces Headquarters, FWC 14. What is significant about their units is that one is a support unit and the other a headquarters unit, typical units for female soldiers because of their previous ban from serving in combat roles. Perhaps also significant about this memorial to recent deaths is that ten of the sixty-four names belong to support/maintenance units, units less likely in previous wars to receive casualties. Since support units are also involved in transportation, though not going out on patrols, they are at risk for Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), a more modern type of
offensive tactic and one that characterizes the diffuse nature of the battlefield. As a female viewing this memorial, the message received is that while women may serve in the military (perhaps including family members who “serve” alongside their soldier), it is only those members of the community who give their lives that are valued enough to be honored by preserving their memory. Overall, looking at all of the memorials to women, the three themes are: the traditional roles women play (the two structures named after female soldiers being an education building, education being a profession often associated with women, and a building belonging to Army Community Services that typically provides services for family members); violence against women in the military (with the memorial to 1SG Gooding); and the limited roles that women have traditionally filled in the military (support and HQ companies).

![Field of Honor Memorial](image)

Figure 4.12. Field of Honor Memorial at Sheridan Road/Cassidy Road, Fort Bliss, Texas. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2013.

4.1.5 Cultural Change and Exceptions

Military culture is conservative as is typified by phrases such as “go with what you know.” After touring Fort Bliss, it would be easy to characterize the military as falling victim to the mentality described by Foucault when he wrote: “The great obsession of the nineteenth century was, as we know, history: with its…themes of ever-accumulating past, with its great preponderance of dead men… “(1). Yet, there are signs of change on Fort Bliss. Housing key Army Community Services programs, the Family Resiliency Center located on Border Road
directly behind the historic Queen Ann homes lining Sheridan Road replaced the 90 year old Officers Club in 2010. Officers’ Clubs throughout the military are traditionally members-only clubs open to officers of Lieutenant Colonel rank and above. Their reduced numbers nationwide, falling in the Army from nearly 100 in the early 1970s to only 7 in 2013, reflect a cultural and demographic shift of the Army’s population. The loss of Congressional appropriations funding in the 1980s, an increase in the number of young married officers, and the deglamorization of alcohol within the military have all contributed to closings (Copeland). The closing of the Fort Bliss Officers Club in 2009 included the closing of its pool, and when in 2010 the newly renovated Family Readiness Center (FRC) FRC was opened, so was the newly repurposed community pool opened to all residents of Fort Bliss and their guests.

A similar change can be seen on Sheridan Drive, also known as Colonels’ Row. By observing the name plates accompanying address plates on the front of homes, it can be seen that of the sixty-three houses lining Sheridan Road opposite the parade fields, six are occupied by General Officers (GOs), three by Command Sergeant Majors (CSMs), thirty-eight By Colonels (COLs) and Lieutenant Colonels (LTCs), six by Majors (MAJs), two by Captains (CPTs), and eight do not have a name plate (due to functioning as VIP guest quarters, temporary lodging, and vacancy). There are two reasons for the presence of personnel other than GOs and COLs: The first is the privatization of on-post housing management has increased the emphasis on maintaining 100% occupancy in order for the management company to maximize profits in the form of receiving soldiers’ Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) payments. This can mean placing officers of lower ranks such as MAJs and CPTs in some of the smaller bungalow homes. The second is that those placed on Sheridan Drive are there because of the Key and Essential Personnel list (GOs, senior Division Staff, Brigade Commanders, and Battalion Commanders)
maintained by the Garrison Command and approved by the Installation Commander (Sanders). Exceptions are made at the discretion of the Installation Commander; therefore, the composition of Colonel’s Row is to some extent determined by the philosophy of the highest ranking GO on post. Including more junior officers and higher ranking non-commissioned officers (NCOs) on Colonel’s Row is a significant change from previous policy, due in part to privatization and in part because of broader cultural shifts.

While the inclusion of CPTs and MAJs along Sheridan is less controversial because of their officer status, the inclusion of CSMs as non-commissioned officers (NCO’s), specifically the Installation CSM who lives in GO quarters and the USASMA Commandant whose school is located on East Bliss, are more significant. In fact, the home on Sheridan currently occupied by the USASMA Commandant was recently dedicated to the first sergeant major of the Army, William O. Wooldridge (Stadel). The inclusion of NCOs on Sheridan Road is an exception to policy (Sanders), and this may be seen visually through the lack of signage in front of their homes, with the exception of the USASMA Commandant. While officers in command positions have signs in front of their homes with their unit crest, title, and unit motto, this is not true of their counterpart NCOs. For example, the commander (CDR) of the Brigade Modernization Command (BMC) has a sign in front of his house, but the CSM of BMC does not. This would seem to indicate that the NCO member of the command team does not have a standard sign and/or would live in housing not specifically designated for those in command positions. So, while the officer-NCO relationship is commonly referred to as a “command team,” the relationship between team members does not appear to be an equal one, and indeed it is not. According to the military hierarchy, the lowest ranking officer outranks even the highest ranking
NCO. The fact that NCOs are now, though as exceptions, housed alongside their officer counterparts seems to reflect the evolving nature of Officer/NCO relations.

4.1.6 Examples of Assimilation and Talking Back

Though traditional rhetoric dominates the landscape in a military installation, there are examples of the internalization of these traditional messages and of talking back. This discourse is important because in order for meaning creation to occur, a practice of discourse is required (Foucault 61). The communication between the military installation and members of the military community is such a discourse. The response of members of the community can be found, for example, in the form of bumper stickers, the motto of the Officer Spouses Council Association, and a song co-written by one of the General Officer’s wives.

The spouse of the highest ranking officer on Fort Bliss, as a leader of the Fort Bliss Officer and Civilian Spouse Association (OCSA), has established the group’s motto, “Bloom where you are planted.” This slogan can be found on the organization’s website, Facebook page, and in their gift shop amongst other places of display. What does this slogan mean and why does it hold significance for spouses within the military community? One interpretation is that being “planted” is being subject to an action that someone else takes and over which you have little control, in this case receiving Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders from the Department of Defense. This is nearly always the case for military families. While a family may choose to live with other family members or remain where they are and split up the family between two locations, a soldier’s orders to relocate (PCS) are non-negotiable for the soldier. Using the analogy of a plant being moved from one spot to another, survival depends upon roots being pulled up and replanted. If the roots remain where they are and the plant is severed from them before being moved, that plant will wither and die in the new location. So, one must put down
roots wherever the Department of Defense chooses to relocate the soldier if one expects to survive and thrive, as the term “bloom” implies. The use of the word bloom also indicates that the spouse should be attractive and possibly fragrant regardless of the circumstances. It is as much a mental state as physical appearance. This motto may be taken as positive encouragement, the sharing of personal lessons learned, or an unrealistic and possibly unwanted expectation that spouses should be not just resilient, but always pleasant in the process. It gives up individual agency to external forces regarding the PCS while taking responsibility for being someone that you and others find pleasing and attractive. Using different imagery, but with some of the same values in mind, is a song written by army spouses in 2007.

At a recent farewell for the spouse of the CSM for the William Beaumont Medical Center, a song sheet was handed out for those in attendance to read as they sang together as a group (Appendix 4-1). The lyrics were entitled, “The Charm of the Army (A Tribute to the Army Wife)” and have been posted to websites such as We Served Too: A Military Family Forum and Loving a Soldier. Living the Life. Those familiar with Virginia Woolf’s The Angel in the House, may see some parallels in the description of an Army Wife. The lyrics of the second verse of the song read:

She’s a ribbon tied up yellow. She’s a blessing. She’s a prayer.

She’s a neighbor and a teacher and a willing volunteer.

She is hope, she is faith. She’s an open garden gate.

You’ll see it when you look into her eyes.

She’s the one and only Army Wife! (Green)

The words of the chorus also speak to the mobility of life in the army, a common and recognizable military theme as the chorus reads:
Through thick and thin,

Her legacy her life.

She’s the one and only Army Wife! (Green)

Just as Virginia Woolf’s Angel of the House is an idealized version of what society expects a woman should be and do, this song communicates what is praised about an army wife. The difference is that Virginia Woolf was critiquing these expectations, where as the song is not; it is embracing them. One of the differences between Woolf’s Angel and a spouse in the military is that it is not usually males within the military community who signify what a wife should be; instead this task is the responsibility of other women, especially spouses of those of higher ranks and in command positions. Just as the division/installation commander’s spouse identified the slogan post-wide for spouses, “Bloom where you are planted,” so other leadership spouses, as they are called on Fort Bliss, influence those of lower ranks. For example, it is common for Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) to be run by the spouse of the unit’s commander or at least by another spouse who has volunteered for the position. Those spouse FRG leaders pass along key information from the command to spouses as well as organize fundraising and family/soldier appreciation events. They model the expectations for a spouse’s behavior to other FRG member spouses. Soldiers cannot give orders to spouses or other civilians, but they can influence through their FRG leader, often their spouse, and the norms within spouse culture. Spouses respond by
wearing unit pins and other signifiers such as “Hooah” pins to indicate their membership within the unit.

There are other ways that military family members show their membership and pride in the military community. Bumper and window stickers are two common ways. Driving through any of the parking lots or housing areas on Fort Bliss, one will see examples such as the common use of people stickers to represent family members, including pets. Sometimes names or labels will be used such as the picture of a “Proud Army Family” (see fig. 4.13). What you will not see is a sticker declaring love for a civilian spouse. It is always pride in being associated with the military either as a retired veteran with words such as “Once a marine, always a marine;” family member, “I love my soldier” or “Half my heart is in Afghanistan;” or their identity as a member of the military community “Proud Army Wife” (see fig. 4.14). Since it is the active duty soldier who is at the heart of the military community membership, either through their personal service or being sponsored by one as a family member, it is the support of and commitment to the soldier and the Army, as well as one’s own personal sacrifices (personal sacrifice being highly valued in the army), that is important to reaffirm and display.

Figure 4.13. Proud Army Family. Window sticker on vehicle, Post Exchange parking lot, Fort Bliss, Texas. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2015.
Figure 4.14. *I ❤️ My Army Man*. Window sticker on vehicle, Post Exchange parking lot, Fort Bliss, Texas. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2015.

4.1.7 Summary

This is only a partial list of public rhetoric on Fort Bliss. Even so, certain patterns can be identified by categorizing and examining the meaning of the artifacts included in this chapter. It is clear that the military installation is an organization and community with a focus on safety and prevention. The military police, organizations such as the Wellness Fusion Campus that focuses on mind-body health, and garrison signage such as that posted at exit/entrance gates provide daily reminders to be on the alert, stay fit, be resilient, and seek help from support services when needed. This lends to a culture that is highly sensitive to physical and mental health, is thinking about threats to themselves and others on a regular basis, and has a clear distinction between military and civilian worlds.

While the military community may be tight knit, there are levels of membership. At the heart of the community there is an inner circle of active duty soldiers distinguished by years of service and rank that other members of the community are measured against. The next level out is retired veterans and the family members of active duty soldiers. The next ring includes civilians who work within agencies and units to provide continuity within the Department of Defense. In the outer ring are community leaders and visitors to the installation. While males have dominated the ranks of active duty soldiers, and this is reflected in their recognition through memorials and
dedications, females have taken a back seat in supportive roles within support/maintenance and headquarters units. This is changing, and as more females fill roles designated as combat positions and, as a result, die in higher numbers, as well as begin to fill higher ranking leadership positions, it can be assumed they will be recognized in greater numbers. Family members are often given pins, plaques, and certificates as public recognition for their “service” to the military, but are rarely if ever memorialized. This implies that while family members and others providing support to the military and family units are widely seen as playing an essential role, it is the active duty soldier that is making the greatest sacrifice and representing those values that the military most highly regards.

It is because of this deep seated cultural belief that other members of the community spend so much time pledging their allegiance to the active duty soldier and displaying their pride of membership in the military community (as noted earlier in the use of car stickers and wearing of unit pins, for example). This mentality is represented by a picture on the room key I was recently given while staying at a hotel on a military facility in San Diego (see fig. 4.15). It pictures a returning soldier surrounded by his family, all heads turned toward the soldier, the family wearing their best clothes and the patina of the “perfect American family” welcoming their soldier home.

Figure 4.15. Room key. Navy Lodge North Island, San Diego, California. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2016.
There are strong ties between the military and surrounding civilian community, however, and it is from this space of exchange that one can expect at least some cultural change to take place. When I first imagined bringing murals to Fort Bliss, I assumed it would be my community on Fort Bliss that would make up my circle of support. In part, this was true. The military community has been extremely supportive through encouragement and providing access to the facilities that will receive murals. However, the military population on any military installation, including Fort Bliss, is constantly changing, so building a team of people that will quickly (in terms of the life of the project) move on to other places, is not realistic. There are also very clear fundraising guidelines that preclude the involvement of active duty soldiers and by extension their family members, as well as anyone working for or under contract with the Department of Defense. For these reasons, I turned toward the civilian community to build a team. This had the added benefit of involving people knowledgeable about fundraising in the local community. It has been the network of El Pasoans I have met through Fort Bliss and other settings that have built the project into one that is making progress toward achieving its goals. The next section will explore those relationships and how they were formed.

4.2 Rhetorical Look at the Network of Communication

Part of the public work of rhetoric is creating a network of community through the use of strategic rhetoric and relationships. One of the requirements of public art is that many intertwined networks must come into play in order for the project to be completed and installed. In fact, Jeffrey Grabill in his essay “On Being Useful: Rhetoric and the Work of Engagement” states, “The rhetorical is and creates particular kinds of connections furthermore, to be useful as a public rhetorician…is to become one who understands associations and, in understanding them, becomes a creator of associations” (195). That has been true for Murals at Fort Bliss whose
mission statement includes partnering with the local community to bring military members and their families in contact with the region of El Paso through the storytelling of murals. The success of the project depends on partnering with the local community and gaining permission and buy-in from key personnel on Fort Bliss. Below are some chains of relationships that make up the community that has contributed to and been part of Murals at Fort Bliss. Each relationship came about because of a unique set of circumstances, timing, rhetorical approaches, and historical relationships. The following diagrams depict these relationships and how they came together to create not just community, but an active performance, and hopefully a physical product.

4.2.1 Formation of Project Team

Figure 4.16. Formation of Project Team. Lindsay Hamilton. 2016.
There are two things to note about the project team. First, all of the team members, with the exception of Tracy Yellen, President of the fiscal sponsoring organization, have personal ties to Fort Bliss: Gaspar Enríquez was brought to Fort Bliss as a child to receive a gift at Christmas time, establishing an emotional bond with the military; John Baily’s company Tigua, Inc., is a unit guardian for 212th Fires Brigade, and John is President of the local chapter of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA), an organization that exists to represent the political interests of the military and its community; John Cook is a veteran formerly stationed at Fort Bliss as well as the Mayor of El Paso during Fort Bliss’ expansion from 2006-2011; and John Robbins is a retired LTC and former business owner in El Paso.

Murals at Fort Bliss isn’t establishing new ties between individuals and Fort Bliss but is re-establishing ties or engaging people already contributing to Fort Bliss in tangible ways. For example, John Robbins runs Soldier Art Workshop, a program that he and his wife largely fund and that supplements MWR class offerings in the Arts, an area of MWR programs that was cut following 9-11 (Fox). Something to note is that no one from Fort Bliss is on the project team, because members of the military as well as those who work for the Department of Defense are precluded from being involved in any fundraising activities. There are several people Murals at Fort Bliss coordinates with to secure the resources of the building locations and execute legal documents and advice, but these individuals are not overtly involved in day-to-day business.

The second point is that half of the project team has had their position change over the course of the project. John Baily, for example, didn’t become President of the local AUSA chapter until 2015. While I knew his predecessor for a period of years, John was more willing to dive into the project and become personally involved in raising funds. This speaks to the interplay of chronos (the time it took between meeting John when his company, Tigua, Inc., was
my husband’s brigade unit guardian and his becoming AUSA chapter president four years later) and kairos (making a point to talk with John about the project when the opportunities arose, such as attending AUSA’s national conference in DC in 2014 and 2015, a rare opportunity to speak in person with John after I moved from El Paso via MA to DC). One difference between John and his predecessor is that his predecessor is highly connected within the El Paso community, whereas John moved to El Paso in 2010. Tigua, Inc. that employs Baily as its CEO is also actively engaged in doing business with the government, winning its first government contract in 2011 under Baily’s new leadership. Murals at Fort Bliss further strengthens Baily’s partnership with Fort Bliss and the El Paso community, re-establishing his place in the field, so is in line with his professional interests as well, as it may increase his social capital.

Another example of the interplay between chronos and kairos, is the time between knowing the O’Rourke family, Beto and Amy, as parents of one of my daughter’s classmates in 2010-2012 and attending a 2014 Twilight Tattoo ceremony in Washington D.C. with my husband who happened to be escorting O’Rourke, now Congressman, as part of his job as Chief of the Army House Liaison Division for the U.S. Army. The kairotic moment was having a brief moment alone to talk with O’Rourke after the ceremony was cancelled due to weather. Just as it started to rain, O’Rourke asked for my elevator speech about the project. That brief moment resulted in O’Rourke responding to my email with the recommendation to contact Tracy Yellen for assistance in fundraising. That short but pivotal conversation with O’Rourke probably wouldn’t have had the same effect had it taken place when we first met back in 2010. It was more than three years in the making, yet those five minutes talking about the project were some of the most impactful in the project’s history.
4.2.2 Obtaining a Non-profit Fiscal Sponsor

Fundraising is the area where there has been the most trial and error. Getting fiscal sponsorship for the project evolved from a very difficult process resulting in hearing “no” (Women’s Club of El Paso) to an easy process resulting in hearing a “yes” (Paso del Norte Foundation - PDNF). The take-away here is that approaching the right organization and having the right introduction makes for a much smoother relationship building than cold-calling an organization based on a recommendation that isn’t a good fit. Having the introduction from O’Rourke made the likelihood of success with PDNF much higher than Michael Tomor, then Director of the El Paso Museum of Art, simply mentioning Jill Prilliman with the Junior League and my contacting her without the introduction. In the first case O’Rourke shares his social

Figure 4.17: Obtaining a Non-profit Fiscal Sponsor. Lindsay Hamilton. 2016
capital with me; in the second I am approaching Prilliman without an existing relationship to create the connection.

There is also a clear path of progression from the color red (no), to orange (almost), to yellow (yes). This represents persistence, but also a learning curve. It is interesting to note that the communities where I spent the most time, UTEP and Fort Bliss, were not where I got my best leads, though people there were trying to help. The best leads came from parents at my daughter’s school, Trinity First Day School (TFDS). I believe the physical location of the school in downtown El Paso played a role. Downtown is where government offices and many non-profit, finance sector, and business offices are located. This put me in contact with people who had inside connections with people such as O’Rourke, first a member of the city council then congressman; Solis, a public defender; and from the previous chart, then Mayor Cook.

This diagram also represents Bourdieu’s field. Different people and organizations have varying levels of social and economic capital. For example, an introduction from O’Rourke, a local congressman, was extremely useful and led to the very fruitful partnership we have today with PDNF. If I had talked with Adair Margo at an earlier time, she might have been my fiscal sponsor, but at the time we signed our contract, her pro bono accountant had just passed away, leaving her without a valuable resource. Because of this factor, and others I may not have been aware of, Margo was feeling resource bound and canceled our contract just days after it was signed.

4.2.3 Physical Products – Professional Rhetoric

Networking isn’t the only professional skill required for a project to succeed. Murals at Fort Bliss, like most projects, has resulted in many professional work products. As stated by
Grabill, “Rhetoric is work, a type of discursive work that is difficult to do and which is taught, often, in conjunction with what we understand as ‘professional work’ – managing projects, coordinating activity, learning and using information technologies, working well with others, communicating effectively. These are the skills of assembly” (On Being Useful 205). The following work products, many undergoing iterative changes over time, were created as part of the Murals at Fort Bliss project (See table 4.1):

Table 4.1. Professional Work Products. Lindsay Hamilton. 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Product</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>Lindsay Hamilton</td>
<td>* Dr. Witherspoon, UTEP</td>
<td>* Looking for fiscal sponsorship from UTEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Mr. Mark Cauthers, MWR</td>
<td>* Provide update and maintain interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Fundraising Meeting</td>
<td>* Form fundraising committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Potential Donors</td>
<td>* Solicit donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website &amp; Video (Appendix 4-2)</td>
<td>Lindsay Hamilton</td>
<td>Anyone interested in project</td>
<td>* Provide organized, comprehensive information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Provide portal for donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Legitimize the project through meeting expectation/requirement for project website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Applications</td>
<td>Lindsay Hamilton</td>
<td>Grantor Organizations</td>
<td>Solicit grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiegogo Site &amp; Video (Appendix 4-3)</td>
<td>Lindsay Hamilton</td>
<td>Anyone interested in donating to project with a focus on individual donations</td>
<td>Solicit donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift Offer Letter (Appendix 4-4)</td>
<td>Lindsay Hamilton and Danny Peters, Chief, Administrative and Civil Law Division Office of the Staff Judge Advocate</td>
<td>* Commanding Officer, U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Bliss, TX</td>
<td>* Offer unsolicited donation of mural(s) to Secretary of the Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Commander, William Beaumont Medical Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift Acceptance Letter (Appendix 4-5)</td>
<td>Danny Peters</td>
<td>* Commanding Officer, U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Bliss, TX</td>
<td>* Accept unsolicited donation of mural(s) to Secretary of the Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Commander, William Beaumont Medical Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project proposal and quote</td>
<td>Gaspar Enríquez</td>
<td>Lindsay Hamilton</td>
<td>Provide scope of work and quote for mural work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table Title</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td>Gaspar Enríquez and Lindsay Hamilton</td>
<td>Create legally binding agreement between Gaspar Enríquez and Murals at Fort Bliss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift Instrument</td>
<td>Paso del Norte Foundation and Lindsay Hamilton</td>
<td>Create legally binding agreement between Paso del Norte Foundation and Murals at Fort Bliss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Marketing Packet (Appendix 4-6) | Lindsay Hamilton | * Provide information  
* Solicit larger donations |
| Information Sheet (Appendix 4-7) | Lindsay Hamilton | Provide concise information in a one page format. |
| Fundraising Spreadsheet | Fundraising Team | * Summarize potential donor information and target revenues  
* Summarize donor levels  
* Put all fundraising info in one place |
| Donor Contact Spreadsheet | Fundraising Team | Summarize donor contact information for effective team communication and tracking |
| El Paso Times Article (Appendix 4-8) | Dave Burge, Reporter | * Build project awareness  
* Reach potential donors  
* Build project credibility  
* Create reusable communication reference |
| Questionnaires (Appendix 4-9 & 4-10) | Lindsay Hamilton | Soldiers and DoD cardholders, patrons of Soto gym and Freedom Crossing  
Better understand who is using facilities and what content they want to see in a mural. |
| Questionnaire Results Summary (Appendix 4-11) | Lindsay Hamilton | Artist  
Summary of all responses to questionnaire. |
| Model Release Form | Gaspar Enríquez | Gain legal permission to use soldier images. |
| Emails | Various | Email traffic regarding murals project. |
| Meeting Agendas | Lindsay Hamilton | Keep meetings on focus and on time |
| Meeting Notes | Lindsay Hamilton | Summarize meeting discussions and action items for future reference |
| Mural Drafts | Gaspar Enríquez | Fort Bliss Garrison, MWR, William Beaumont Medical Center, potential donors  
Provide an idea of what the mural end products will look like for the purposes of gaining feedback and promoting the project. |
The work products are important as communication tools. They provide information, create an emotional connection, and communicate the community membership and credentials of those supporting and participating in the project. They also establish credibility regarding the professional level of the project, demonstrate the commitment level of the project team, and facilitate the networks responsible for fundraising, making donations, creating media buzz, and generating public support. Professional communication skills are essential and often required in order to be effective as someone practicing networked rhetoric. For example, it is common for grant applications to ask for a project’s website. This type of rhetorical product is one means of legitimizing the project while providing text, images, and video to inform and connect the audience.

Something to note is that these work products may change over time, they are often iterative as information changes, such as the artist’s quote being revised or adding a new location, or the author becomes more educated. For example, the 2011 questionnaire was created at the beginning of my course studies at UTEP, the 2016 questionnaire after studying public art for my dissertation. The focus of the 2011 questionnaire is on what type of art and images people want to see in the murals. The focus on the 2016 questionnaire is on personal values, stories, and attitudes. This change in focus is a direct result of my research readings.

4.3 MURAL NARRATIVES

Of course fundraising is only a part of the process. Locations have to be selected, artists need to be commissioned, and the subject matter needs to be developed and approved. The stories behind each of the murals and their locations are informative of the evolution of a community project and the process of meaning-making. Even as I was revising this chapter,
changes were occurring to the mural design authorship, design process, and building accessibility. This is the nature of public art. The environment, community needs, and community relationships are constantly changing over time. The project must adapt to stay relevant.

4.3.1 Soto Fitness Center

When I first approached Fort Bliss Garrison Command about locations for a mural, I was directed to contact Moral Welfare and Recreation (MWR) because this organization was interested in putting a mural in a newly constructed gym, the Joshua W. Soto Physical Fitness Center (Soto). The main reason for wanting the mural at that location was that in another gym on post, the Mitchell W. Stout Physical Fitness Center (Stout), there is an existing mural, Desert Storm, painted by Mr. Ernesto Pedregón Martinez and “dedicated to the valiant men and women of the armed forces who distinguished themselves during the Persian Gulf conflict” (Texas Veterans Blog) (see fig. 4.18). This mural contains several crests representing the branches of the armed service and most importantly, in this instance, the crest for the previous commanding unit. Fort Bliss had recently come under the command of the 1st Armored Division (1AD), and they were eager to replace the existing unit crest in the Stout gym mural with their own as well as have their crest displayed on the new mural for the Soto gym (see fig. 4.19). Ultimately the issue of the crest at Stout gym was resolved by a decal of the 1AD crest being applied over the old crest so that it seamlessly became part of the mural.
Kairos played a key role in receiving quick buy-in, even enthusiasm, for the murals project. The timing of the issue with the crest at Stout and the incoming division was fortuitous for the introduction of the idea of bringing new murals to Fort Bliss. The conditions were right to create a kairotic moment for the introduction of the mural that provided the 1st Armored Division the opportunity to display their own crest in their new gym. In addition, there was a precedent for placing a mural at the entrance to the gym, providing ethos for the project because I was not the first person to suggest a mural by a local artist would enhance the building environment. These favorable conditions were completely serendipitous.

Soto became the first location for the murals project. It offered two adjacent walls at the entrance to the facility. This location ensured the accessibility of the mural to the public, even if members of the public without Department of Defense (DoD) cardholders are not permitted to
enter the main portion of the building except during special events. The instructions communicated by MWR to the artist, Enríquez, were that 1AD would like to include its crest somewhere in the mural. My suggestion to Enríquez, when talking with him about the project in general, was that what I saw missing from existing images was something organic to El Paso. We also conducted twenty-five interviews with soldiers at the gym and at one of the local support battalions. In addition, Enríquez met with a local historian, John A. Hamilton, who shared some historical images. Including historical elements brings memory to life for soldiers and family members who may not be familiar with the history of Fort Bliss. One wall would contain images from 1AD and Fort Bliss to include soldiers and the types of equipment used by 1AD. On the other wall, Enríquez drafted a local scene to include the original chapel located on the first Fort Bliss.

One thing to note is that the questionnaire for Soto (Appendix 4-9) focused on the rhetorical element of style by asking the respondent what type of art they would like to see around the post or at the gym. It would have been more useful to ask respondents what is most important to them, what they value most about being a soldier, the military community, or El Paso, for example. The questionnaire being developed now for the Freedom Crossing mural (Appendix 4-10) asks questions such as what key experiences have shaped who they are today, what does El Paso and/or Fort Bliss mean to them, and other questions that focus more on what symbols and images that may be most meaningful to them.

The purpose of the interviews was to better understand what the audience of the murals would be interested in viewing. Enríquez also mentioned that those who would be approving placement of the murals and donating toward the murals like data. The interviews and photographs of soldiers lent ethos to the mural drafts because it indicated that research had been
done prior to the murals being designed and because images of soldiers in the murals would be realistic portrayals of the 1AD unit uniforms, hair styles, etc. Some soldiers might even recognize themselves in the mural.

The feedback I received when circulating the two mural designs with neighbors was to question why someone who is overweight, the man holding the child at the far right, would be in a mural in the gym and that the local scene did not look like America. It looked more like Mexico (see fig. 4.20). What I find interesting about the juxtaposition of these two murals is that the 1AD mural represents a military unit, an image that for many may inspire patriotic feelings about being U.S. American, while the local mural calls into question what the United States is/looks like. The fact is that the military serves and protects all of the U.S. regardless of ethnic origin, culture, or historical boundaries. The reality is that both murals represent what it means to be American, together a reminder of the diversity that is the U.S. The images will mean different things to different viewers.

Figure 4.20. Local Scene. Draft design courtesy of Gaspar Enríquez. Joshua W. Soto Physical Fitness Center, Fort Bliss, Texas. 2011.

The comment that the local man is overweight is a reflection of who soldiers may expect to be at the gym on post. Most people using the gym are young and fit, a norm in the military culture. Being overweight is cause for being put on notice, “profiled,” by the military for not being able to physically meet the requirements of their military duty, possibly ending in
separated from the military if physical fitness standards are not met within a set period of time. Therefore, there may be some bias against placing someone who does not appear to be able to meet military standards of fitness within an environment that seeks to motivate people to do so.

The rhetoric at the Soto Gym is mainly informational or motivational. There are stands holding flyers providing information about different programs, fitness events, and classes held at the gym. Signs and television screens also provide messages about news and timely announcements. Artwork at the gym tends to be of the motivational variety stressing military values such as duty, patience, and honor. While the murals are appropriate for the location, the location itself is rather busy with existing messaging, and the audience will be moving rather quickly through the entrance area approaching the main reception desk to present military identification. Those entering the gym will need to redirect their gaze upward in order to view the details of the murals.

4.3.2 Mendoza Soldier Family Care Center

The location at Hugo V. Mendoza Soldier Family Care Center (Mendoza) was one that I found while touring East Fort Bliss looking for mural locations. When I first entered Mendoza and turned around to face the two-story wall at the entrance, there was immediate recognition that this was a spectacular wall for a mural (see fig. 4.21). There are very few competing messages, the wall is bathed in natural light from floor to ceiling windows on two sides, and there are no structural obstructions such as air conditioning ducts. It was made for a mural.
Figure 4.21. Proposed mural location at entrance to Mendoza SFCC, Fort Bliss, Texas.
Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2010.

The inspiration for the wall was taken from the location and those who use the building – soldiers, veterans, and family members. Enríquez also has a personal story that can be found in one of his original designs pictured here. Growing up in El Paso’s Segundo Barrio, he was brought to Fort Bliss to receive a Christmas present. This memory has stayed with him over the years and gives him a special love for members of the military. The original design was a collage of images of children, soldiers, and families (see fig. 4.22). It was in between versions that the artist through his creative process evolved the design, and the current draft moved from collage to simple image, that of a soldier walking toward the flag and holding the hand of a child who is looking up toward her (see fig. 4.23). At once you can see the back story of Enríquez and the soldier, but it is an image that many military families can relate to, the tension between fulfilling their military duty and their duty to family.
The personal story behind this image is why, I believe, it has such strong emotional power. It also uses universal themes such as the connection between a parent and child, and the sometimes conflicting relationship between duty to country (or job) and family. The image is the opposite of the iconic image of soldier being reunited with child that one usually sees in the media. Here the soldier is not facing the viewer while embracing the child. Instead the soldier’s back is to the viewer and the soldier is turned away from the child and toward the flag, while the child never-the-less continues to gaze up at the soldier (one might assume parent). There is the
image in the viewer’s memory bank of what the soldier is normally doing (embracing the child in reunion) to what they see in the mural image (turned toward the flag and away from the child whose focus is on them). This makes the mural image more complex for the viewer, asking them to grapple with feelings that may be conflicting. It is the recognition of daily sacrifice that a soldier makes, the hard and constant choice between duty to country and duty to family, that draws emotions to the surface that are much more difficult to process than the momentary, but joyous image of reunion. It is also what makes this image instantly recognizable as true to life.

Kairos was a factor with this mural as well, with Enríquez’s inclusion of a female soldier in the design. When Enríquez had requested that we include female soldiers in the interviews we did at the support battalion for the Soto mural, I didn’t understand the purpose for this request since at the time I didn’t see female soldiers as being central to the military story. They primarily serve in headquarters batteries and support battalions since these types of units do not include combat positions. It was only later that I started to connect Enríquez’s focus on female soldiers into the greater context of political changes that were occurring that would lead ultimately to the recent decision to allow female soldiers to compete for all positions within the military. I don’t think this was what made Enríquez include female soldiers, but rather was more indicative of females in his artwork in general. Making the soldier in the mural design a female soldier was kairotic, an inadvertent response to political changes occurring within Congress and military leadership.

The feedback I received from the mural at Mendoza came from the 1AD Division Commander in 2013, then MG MacFarland, through a telephone conversation with his wife. It was later put in writing in an email from the commanding officer at Mendoza, COL Marc Caouette (Appendix 4-12). The feedback was that we needed to include a second soldier (male)
in the mural since the mural would appear in a family care center. I had a strong emotional reaction to this, which I tried to temper when on the phone with the Commander’s wife. I had already made the connection between Enríquez’s focus on female soldiers and the timing of changes occurring in the culture and laws surrounding women in the military. The female soldier in the Mendoza mural was a kairotic opportunity to showcase a woman representing all soldiers, just as the male child represented all military children. In addition, there was the question of what is a family. There are single parent households in the military, same-sex parent households, dual military career parent households, as well as the traditional male-female parent household with only one parent being military. Adding a male soldier to the existing image would represent only one type of “family,” the dual military career family, not the most common in the military community. Importantly, the clinic itself is already named after a male soldier, SPC Hugo V. Mendoza. His name is prominently displayed at the entrance to the building, and his biography and picture are located at the entrance to the reception area of the clinic (see figs. 4-24 and 4-25). No one appears to have thought it important enough to represent the family nature of the clinic by dedicating the building to a soldier of each sex.

Figure 4.24. Hugo V. Mendoza Soldier Family Care Center. 2015. Fort Bliss, El Paso, Texas. William Beaumont Army Medical Center. Web. 5 February 2016.
Since military commanders tend to rotate out every two years, the Commanding General who made this request is no longer at Fort Bliss, so I am not sure this is still an issue. When the artist, Enríquez was notified of the request, he was open to modifying the draft (Appendix 4-13). If this mural gets funded and the request to add a male soldier to the mural design is brought up again, I will have a conversation with command regarding the necessity of this change. Since I never was able to have this conversation with the CG who made this request, I don’t know what his motivation was, whether having a male soldier was actually seen as necessary (or “natural”) in order for the mural to represent all soldiers using the facility; I really can’t know. What I do know is that letting a female soldier represent all soldiers is a shift for women in the field of military culture, one that puts them on more equal footing with male soldiers.

Visual rhetoric, such as community art, can be particularly adept at questioning existing cultural norms. Involving Enríquez, a Chicano artist who has an affinity for soldiers yet has never produced military images, brings this type of transformative power. His personal/local story of the soldier giving him a gift brought a powerful connection with the audience using otherwise traditional military symbolism. It shed light on a tension that traditional military symbolism doesn’t often recognize. There is a personal story interwoven with traditional images, and this makes the mural unlike anything else you would see on Fort Bliss. It is emotionally
challenging and at once recognizable. It brings truth into the picture rather than the usual stock imagery, for example an eagle holding the flag in its beak. Enríquez also didn’t follow the unwritten rule that female soldiers aren’t often used to represent all soldiers, and chose to paint a female soldier holding the child’s hand. Changing the imagery on post changes the rhetoric, and by extension, the culture.

4.3.3 Freedom Crossing Grand Food Court

When the Soto Fitness Center and Mendoza SFCC were identified as mural locations, neither required a Department of Defense (DoD) card, such as military ID, for entrance. Today both do. For this reason, during a fundraising meeting held in July 2015, at the Paso del Norte Foundation offices in El Paso, TX, one of the participants, Richard Dayoub, President of the Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce, recommended that we add this location because it is open all members of the public. His argument was that if we didn’t have a publically accessible building as part of the project, we would be missing one of the objectives of the project, as per the project’s website introductory video, “It is intended that these murals will draw the local community to visit Fort Bliss and experience the dramatic transformation this military installation in their backyard has experienced over the last decade” (Hamilton). While this expanded the scope of the project, it was a good time to address the issue since we were just beginning to market the project to potential donors.

Enríquez and I visited Freedom Crossing following the fundraising meeting, identified a two potential locations – The Grand Theater and Freedom Crossing Grand Food Court. The theater manager let us know that they would charge us to have the mural at the entrance to the theater, which put it out of the question, but after meeting with the General Manager at Freedom Crossing, Danaria Farris, we decided on the Food Court location (see fig. 4.26). The Freedom
Crossing location has since become the first priority of the murals project as it the cost for the mural is lowest, foot traffic is highest, and it has the widest audience since all members of the public are welcome. This is an example of listening to the community and modifying the project in response to their wishes. It also represents the intent of the project to produce murals that are publically accessible, something that has become less the case for the Soto and Mendoza locations. This approach of listening has paid off. The location currently has $30,00 raised toward the $52,500 mural budget, and work will begin on the design mural as soon as the contract between Murals at Fort Bliss and Gaspar Enriquez is signed in May 2016.

Figure 4.26. Proposed location at end of Freedom Crossing Grand Food Court, Fort Bliss, Texas. Photograph by Lindsay Hamilton. 2015.

4.4 SUMMARY

Public art is best viewed within the rhetorical, cultural, historical, physical, and community contexts. It interacts with existing messages, such as commercial ads and government signs; responds to and informs public values; changes with the physical environment such as lighting, seasons, weathering of materials, the obscuring by competing structures, and human interaction such as repeated rubbing of a surface; political context; knowledge and experience of audience members; and other elements. Public art is living just as the community is living and changes over time. Just as the art exists in context, so does the process of creating and maintain the art. There is no one author or owner of public art. It exists within a network of
individuals who act on behalf of the community to solicit input and represent its interests. Every work of public art has a unique history and story of cooperation. These stories are stories of community.

Working on Fort Bliss presents a unique set of circumstances since there are restrictions on fundraising that would not exist in the civilian sector, but benefits as well coming from the local El Paso community already being involved in supporting the military, making the murals project just one in a long list of endeavors that the civilian community helps fund. This project/case study used existing networks of relationships, professional rhetorical tools such as those described by Grabill, and classical rhetorical appeals to inform and connect with a targeted largely civilian audience. The result will be murals that will bring local stories to the existing traditional military rhetoric on the installation of Fort Bliss, bringing something new in the perspective of a local Chicano artist.
Chapter 5: Applications for Rhetoric and Writing Pedagogy

The following chapter proposes a pedagogy based on the lessons learned over the course of this dissertation and experience working on Murals at Fort Bliss. Not all of the lessons learned can be incorporated neatly into a semester-long course, but concepts can be introduced at any level that are meant as building blocks to be added to over the course of a student’s academic career and beyond. Some ideas may simply be seeds worth planting and others might be broken down over courses covering multiple semesters. Others may be best applied through the teaching of professional skills such as software skills and writing styles associated with business administration. Since the case study began in the classroom and will extend beyond earning my degree, it should be no surprise that the pedagogy here allows for creativity in its approach and application. What is proposed here is simply a suggestion or starting point.

5.1 Theoretical Foundation

What I propose is a Rhetoric and Writing Studies (RWS) pedagogy that aligns rhetoric with identity, community, and public engagement. Theoretically the pedagogy draws from Scandinavian activity theory, which is based on Vygotsky’s foundational work with activity theory while expanding on it to “dialectically link the individual and the social structure” (Engstrom, Miettinen, and Punamaki 19). This theory also considers not just the internalization of societal norms for action, but also takes it further to include critical self-reflection resulting in externalization and transformative innovations by individuals that then may develop into new norms (33-34).

Another influence is Cushman and Green’s praxis of new media that focuses on three principles: everyone involved in a project has critical knowledge to contribute, that current technologies and media should be produced in coordination with participants, and that a multi-
disciplinary process of inquiry and problem solving should be followed (181). Cushman and Green describe an ethically based immersion in community for the purposes of investing rhetoric practitioners in producing high-end writing products that assist in creating knowledge according to the needs of the stakeholders. Students are invested in the community, responsive to the community, and assist in bringing rhetorical skills and usable products that meet the community’s needs (186). There is an ethic of care for the community, of adding value, and investment in knowledge production.

Yet another influence is Marshall Ganz’s *Public Narrative*. His use of personal narrative to connect individuals with communities for the purposes of social action played an important role in my communication strategy for *Murals at Fort Bliss*. Ganz’s use of narrative to reach the “head and heart,” connects individuals to others, forming a community of change agents through shared values and a sense of urgency, of kairos, that action is needed now (Introduction to Public Narrative 5). More will be said about this rhetorical tool in the next section.

5.2 TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

The following topics are part of the teaching philosophy of the proposed courses. They are accompanied by examples from *Murals at Fort Bliss*, graduate coursework, or other public arts projects.

5.2.1 Dialectic vs. Banking System of Education

It is important to keep in mind, as instructors of Rhetoric and Writing Studies (RWS) that teaching using a banking method does little more than to foster the practice of imitation. A banking system of education attempts to “fill” the student with knowledge. It is a philosophy of teaching that practices a one-way communicating of knowledge. Lectures can be examples of
this type of education. A dialectic method of teaching involves a two-way exchange of ideas and knowledge.

Seeing students as valuable sources of knowledge based on their unique experiences is key. As described by Pablo Freire: “the oppressed are not ‘marginals,’ are not people living ‘outside’ society. They have always been ‘inside’ – inside the structure which made them ‘beings for others.’ The solution is not to ‘integrate’ them [leading to mimicry/imitation], but to transform that structure so that they can become ‘beings for themselves’” (75). This is a call for RWS instructors to “engage in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization” (76). Teaching students to mimic something they do not fully understand or have not learned to appropriate and transform is to dehumanize them as well as the instructor in the process.

The banking method doesn’t recognize the process of change that occurs through education - a reciprocal, dialectic exchange between instructor and student that makes both language and society living and transforming. This is also related to using an abundance model rather than deficit model in approaching students where building strengths is the focus rather than “fixing” deficiencies. This is particularly important for those who will be involved in the production of public art and public spaces of dialogue. Allowing for students to apply their personal experiences and cultures to what they learn in the classroom provides the foundation for creativity coming from a place of strength and authenticity. Related to this approach is avoiding a deficit model of education.

5.2.2 Building on Student Strengths vs. Deficit Model of Education

The implication of reviewing the deficit model of education for the RWS field is one of inclusion. Clearly RWS should value the habitus of all individuals as potentially valuable to the field in scholarly contributions and as artifacts of history and culture. As instructors, RWS
members, can assist students in developing a critical consciousness, becoming what Bourdieu calls the New Intellectual, a result of the traditional/academic intellectual and organic intellectual working together. Historical inequalities and resulting differences in habitus should not be viewed from a deficit perspective compared with Standard English and other such norms within academia. Having a different habitus should not affect the cultural and other types of capital that one has within the social field, especially that of the university. Having a diversity of experience in the classroom contributes to more layered classroom discussions, broader perspectives expressed, and new avenues of thought for students and instructors. One example from the classroom was a course I took as an elective, a cross-disciplinary course taught by Dr. Pineda in the Department of Communication. The course, Immigration and Popular Culture, was taught from the perspective of Mexican-American immigration, and while I thought I was taking the course as an outsider, I have come to understand the position of family members in the military community as having many parallels to immigrants and partial citizens. Without the perspective of others in the course and the course itself, this is not an understanding I probably would have come to on my own.

5.2.3 Teaching Standard Practices

The implications for the Rhetoric and Writing Studies classroom is that while standards, such as Standard English, are important, it is learning to critically examine those standards and deciding how to navigate them, to use them for one’s own purpose, that is important. Learning to use language rhetorically rather than reproducing a standard is what makes RWS education valuable. This is of particular importance for non-monolingual or non-Standard English speaking students who do not fit the ideal English speaker mold (Grant and Lee 45). “Sounding right” and producing a formulaic essay may prepare students for specific life situations such as applying for
a job, but does not allow for the expression and development of the individual student or community.

Ultimately, producing students who mimic a standard is not beneficial for the university either. Students who can “pass” as native English speakers but do not have the critical skills to navigate audience, culture, and identity may be successful to a certain extent, but not to their full potential, and the university will engage in mimicking what the ideal university should look like rather than reflecting its community. However, standards can play an important voice in marginalized groups being heard in the mainstream. Being able to use standard English in the right context can lend the message credibility and increases the likelihood that it will be heard and taken seriously. The goal of the course is to teach standard communication methods and less traditional modes of production such as twitter and code-switching as tools that can be used to meet the diverse communication needs of the student.

In addition to learning to use standard languages critically, is the need to expand what is taught as standard. Some schools in California are beginning to teach coding in kindergarten as part of their standard curriculum (Kamenetz), “…a trend toward increasing emphasis on code as a fundamental literacy” (Kamenetz). In fact, Bill DeBlasio, New York City Mayor, recently announced a program to teach computer science at all grades levels, “A computer science education is literacy for the 21st century” (qtd. in Kamenetz). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, expanding what is considered standard literacy to include language like computer coding, social media genres, and professional software tools is a necessary discussion in order to prepare students to engage with others rhetorically outside of academia.

Allowing for the inclusion of non-Standard language uses, non-traditional genres, and professional communication skills is critical for community project work. It lays the foundation
for inclusive projects that incorporate all community members in a meaningful way, respects tradition, and creates an ethos of care and value.

5.3 IN PRACTICE

The components of the pedagogy include readings, reflection journals, class discussion, software skills acquisition, and both individual and collaborative multi-modal projects. The curriculum would be broken into two undergraduate classes to be taken consecutively, the second course building on the first. The intention would be for undergraduate students to take the courses during their first or second year to allow time for their involvement in the community to develop and potentially continue throughout their tenure at the university. This is not service learning, per se, because of the approach being not short-term or time defined by the courses, but a means of students becoming aware of ways they might want to engage with their communities throughout their lives. This might mean engaging with existing organizations, such as non-profits or student government, or it might consist of more entrepreneurial and/or grass-roots efforts.

5.3.1 Need for Professional Skills

Professional skills are what in Chapter 4 I reference as Grabill’s “professional work” (On Being Useful 205), otherwise known as business writing but including multi-media products such as websites and video editing software. When I took the course Computers and Writing with Dr. John Scenters-Zapico, I was ambivalent about spending time learning Photoshop to create my digital mural and learning video editing software to create our weekly video journals. Learning software skills took up a lot of class time, and at least in my case, time in the evenings and weekends. I questioned whether as writers we really needed these skills, but have come to appreciate them as some of the most important. The use of professional communication genres and the supporting software tools would be encouraged in both semester courses.
The rhetorical work of professional communication products and social media are essential. Coming up with an idea and making it happen depends on being able to connect and communicate with others, stay organized, keep on schedule, and often address legal needs in the forms of contracts and, for fundraising, following legal guidelines and restrictions. In the case of *Murals at Fort Bliss*, there were numerous work products involved: websites, videos, business cards, presentations and marketing packets, fundraising and donor spreadsheets of information, legal contracts, and others. There were also innumerable email exchanges, meeting notes, agendas, and some Facebook traffic. This is the necessary work that supports the performance of rhetoric - meeting its legal, organizational, communications, and other business requirements. It not only creates the possibility of rhetorical engagement but is rhetorical itself, utilizing pathos to connect with the audience it is trying to reach, using logos to provide important information, and establishing ethos through the perception of professionalism and care.

5.3.2 Public Speaking

Public speaking is part of public narrative and would be something that would be stressed in both semester courses. Public speaking is also integral to classical oral rhetoric--the five canons of rhetoric being invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. All these come into play whether memorizing short blurbs for when interviewed by reporters (memory), leading an engaging discussion or giving a dynamic speech (delivery), writing a business plan (arrangement), coming across professionally in a business meeting (style), or thinking on your feet when asked to justify a fundraising goal or an impromptu elevator speech (invention). Just like writing, speaking is also a means of communication and discovery. Being comfortable and competent speaking in front of small and large groups is a necessary skill unless you have someone to do all the talking for you. Whether it is leading a meeting in person, hosting a
conference call or video chat, making conversation at a networking event, or recording a video for a website, connecting with others through speech is part of being an effective communicator.

If one of the goals of the rhetoric and composition is to foster engaged rhetorics, then oral rhetoric, not just written rhetoric, needs to be taught as well as practiced inside and outside of the classroom. I will mention here that the same course, *Computers and Writing*, that had us learning Photoshop and re-envisioning our environment by creating digital murals had us present those mural designs publically in a local coffee shop. Public speaking goes along with developing and practicing other professional skills in the safe and supportive environment of the academy.

5.4 **First Semester**

The goal of the first course would be for students to have a better understanding of their own identity, how they connect with their community, some of the civic issues they are concerned with, and how they can begin to participate in and influence public dialogue. The curriculum would include an exploration of self and community through reading, journaling, and the activist tool, *Public Narrative*.

5.4.1 **Readings (examples)**

The following readings promote an exploration of self-identity, family, community, place, and career.


Scenters-Zapico’s book is an anthology of works that examines the many facets of identity – language, place education, work, love, and privacy. Individual essays explore the complexity of these themes from a multi-cultural perspective. The reader through
reading, reflection, and discussion gains insights into how identity is formed and personal meaning created.


Villanueva’s book, in addition to being an example of beautiful non-academic writing, explores identity from the perspective of someone who has lived between multiple cultures and has a critical awareness of who he is, how he relates to others within his communities, and the structural powers that are at play in his life as he works his way “up the ladder” of academia yet still struggles with many of the same hardships from his past. He raises questions of cultural acceptance and the ability of the individual to transform him/herself. While the book is written from a unique perspective, it is one that anyone can either relate to or benefit from experiencing.


MacLauchlan’s books focus the reader on the small details of physical place where one grew up, the places of meaning experienced through interaction that connects the characters with their land, family traditions, and people they love. This is important because these small details are poignant markers of what is important to us, those things we want to remember, those experiences, people, and places that create meaning, and that tell us who we are.

### 5.4.2 Reflection Journals

Reflection journal entries would be completed outside of class time and would respond to prompts from the assigned readings and class discussions. The intent is for students to relate the readings to their own specific life experiences; for example, after reading *What You Know First,*
identifying those places, people, songs, memories, etc. that they hold closest to heart and that influence the way they think of themselves and how they connect with their family and community. Reflection journals would also be used following assignments and at intervals in preparation for and post class discussions.

5.4.3 Public Narrative

Something *Public Narrative* fosters is rhetorical agency, the ability to participate in and help shape community dialogue. The Narrative of *Self, Us, Now* is a method developed by civil rights activist Marshall Ganz, now a Senior Lecturer at Harvard University and founder of The Leading Change Network, an organization that recruits, trains, and develops community leaders.

There are three distinct speeches that when linked together make up the narrative. First is a story of *Self*, a narrative of key life experiences that include three main elements–challenge, choice, and outcome. It is a story that explains the source of your motivation to do what you are doing, and it builds credibility and trust. The story of *Us* mirrors the story of *Self*, but from the perspective of the community–key choices at specific moments in time, involving real people. The story of *Self* and the story of *Us* are linked by shared values. It is these shared values that build the relationship of community. The story of *Now* provides a sense of urgency to why those shared values are being threatened or are at risk today. It is a call to action.

Students would through the course of the semester write, perform, and get feedback on the three speeches, culminating in a final event where students delivered their full narratives. These narratives would become the basis for the projects assigned in the second semester course.

5.5 Second Semester

The goal of the second course would focusing on engaging rhetorically with the community through multi-modal assignments that allow for imagining/testing engagement
strategies that could at some future date be implemented outside the classroom. Writing, software and business tools--such as writing an Opinion Piece, recording and editing a public service video, acting as a project manager, or creating a website, for example--would be utilized as part of these projects.

5.5.1 Projects (examples)

Students, after learning and practicing the tool of public narrative, would define their goals for engaging with their community and would choose which genre would be most effective in reaching their intended audience. This could range from a website, letter to the editor, digital mural, digital sculpture or memorial, poster, or video. Projects would include both collaborative and individual efforts to reinforce working independently and in teams.

In the end, students need real tools to accomplish the ideas they have. In addition to students knowing how to think critically, they also need to know how to communicate strategically and effectively with others in order to affect change. Students need real communication and production tools in order to achieve their goals. Software skills could be learned during concurrent electives, through University workshops, or in the student’s own time. Coaching in the classroom could be done as the expertise of the instructor and time allow.

5.5.3 Topics for Classroom Discussion/Outside Classroom Postings (examples)

Each of these topics would be discussed in the classroom and serve as potential launching pads for out of class blackboard discussions. These topics relate to community engagement. Students would be required to reflect on each topic and apply it to their life experiences.

5.5.3.1 Engaging in the Dialogue of Public Places

Recognizing that public places are places of dialogue and imagining engaging in that dialogue as an individual or member of an organized group, is an important awareness that can
begin in the classroom. One of the first insights that led to *Murals at Fort Bliss* was that there is dialogue taking place in public spaces. It could be a billboard for a casino across from a church or street signs guiding pedestrians and traffic. There are messages all around us. While the first step was to become conscious of the messages that I was encountering in my environment, who was producing them and who they were targeted toward, the next step was to wonder who was allowed to enter into the existing conversation. Could I, for instance, contribute to the dialogical exchange and by extension shift or expand the perspective? I believe these questions are important if public places are to become more democratic, allowing more voices to be heard.

If there is no room for alternative voices to be heard, this is something I believe citizens should try to create within their own civic environments. These spaces don’t need to be limited to murals, but can mean providing venues such as coffee shop poetry readings, a homeless newspaper, or a speaker’s corner such as that found in London’s Hyde Park. Being heard should be considered a human right, and it is not reserved for those with the most money and authority. This journal topic would focus on what messages the students’ environments are communicating to them and what they would want to contribute if they could.

### 5.5.3.2 Listening and Empathy

When engaging in work with a community, whether as a volunteer or even as a paid employee, it is important to have the awareness to begin by listening. Listening to what the community wants is vital to a successful partnership, meaning gaining cooperation and participation necessary to reach the end goal. In the case of *Murals at Fort Bliss*, I began the project because I wanted to see murals on Fort Bliss; I wanted to bring change to my environment; I had seen the need. It didn’t start with listening at all. But I had to start listening if I wanted support for the project. For example, there are currently three locations for the murals:
one I identified (Mendoza), one Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) identified (Soto), and one the President of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce identified (Freedom Crossing). The location I found is the one I think of as the “holy grail” of locations – it is the largest, least obstructed, most prominent, and best lit location. The other two locations are much busier with competing messages and are more average as walls go. But, it is the other two locations, Soto and Freedom Crossing, that are getting the most attention and receiving funding. They have less square footage than Mendoza (by almost half), and therefore, lower price tags (murals are priced per square foot of artwork), higher volumes of traffic, and more diverse audiences than Mendoza. These locations may not be as “special,” but they are where people want to see murals, and that is what counts because that is what will get funded. Students journaling on this topic could think about reasons why listening and empathy have been important in their personal lives either as good or failed examples. This could even extend to relationships within the family.

Students journaling on this topic could think about reasons why listening and empathy have been important in their personal lives either as successful or failed examples. Students could start by considering the roles of listening and empathy with familiar people such as their family members and friends. They could then be asked consider how listening and empathy can be extended to the public sphere, such as in the choice communities make in funding and producing public art.

5.5.3.3 Enabling the Work of Others

Enabling the work of others goes hand-in-hand with listening and empathy. Students might have a tendency to think about what they want to accomplish rather than working with others and supporting the work others are already doing. The notion that our work as practitioners of rhetoric may lie, at least in part, from enabling the work of others is one that has
captured my interest since I first read Jeffrey Grabill’s quote in his essay *On Being Useful*, “These two methods – assembling a public and supporting performances – are essential to effective public rhetoric and fundamental to the notion that rhetoric might more usefully be understood as enabling the work of others” (193). As much as my motivation to study rhetoric and composition and to pursue bringing murals to Fort Bliss stems from my own personal story, it has been clear from the moment I tried to Photoshop my first mural design that I wouldn’t be successful on my own. That realization has only grown as I realize how much my vision of bringing murals to Fort Bliss, and by extension having an impact in my community, depends on the involvement of others. And the list of others has steadily grown. While I won’t list them all here, I will mention a couple of the key players, the first being the artist, Gaspar Enríquez, whose brilliance immediately led me to trust his artistic vision rather than imposing my own. Students journaling on this topic can think about how their own skills might be best used in supporting others to accomplish their goals. Again, this could begin within their family relationships then extending to their wider social, academic, and professional networks.

5.5.3.4 Networking

Relationships can have a purpose beyond being purely social. Many students may already understand this. For example, one reason for joining a fraternity or sorority is to develop relationships that can be helpful beyond college. To others, the value of networking might be less obvious. *Murals at Fort Bliss* exists because of people I knew directly or was introduced to through a mutual friend/acquaintance. An introvert with the tendency to be independent, forming partnerships, even close friendships, doesn’t come naturally to me. But networking is a skill that is essential to getting anything done. Someone can have a great idea that is incredibly important to them, but unless they can form relationships with people to approve, organize, and fund the
project, the idea becomes an example of failed rhetoric. Engaged rhetorics require forming relationships with others, developing trust over time, and understanding where others have strengths that you don’t. Journaling about networking can help students realize the networks of people they already have in their lives and think about areas like professional organizations where they can develop strategic new ones.

5.6 SUMMARY

The pedagogy proposed here builds real-world skills that are intended to not only contribute to students’ understanding of community engagement, but to lead them to take action outside of the classroom. The foundation comes from self-reflection; understanding connection with place, people, and community; and having the practical skills ready when a need arises for critical action. While the courses are intended to build on each other, they are not the end of the learning process. These skills are intended to be put into practice in some shape or form in students’ communities at the right time, place, and circumstances.

The classroom assignments and discussion, and out of class journaling are all designed to bring awareness of the community into the classroom and ultimately the involvement of the individual student into their community. The classroom instructor acts as a guide and facilitator to that journey that is in large part informed by students’ unique backgrounds, communities, and social concerns.
Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, “To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.” Being yourself could be described by the word “authenticity,” which is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as “the quality of truthful correspondence between inner feeling and their outward expression; unaffectedness, sincerity.” Since I cannot embrace the identity that the military would like me to embrace, that of military wife, performing the identity created a lot of internal dissonance. My coursework in the Rhetoric and Composition program at UTEP and my involvement with Murals at Fort Bliss represent a journey in the renegotiation of my identity as a person and within the military community.

Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, the idea that people’s actions are directed by past experiences, explains why my life before entering the military community affected my choices in how to acculturate, why I made the counterintuitive decision to enter a full-time doctoral program and work 20 hours a week as an Assistant Instructor during a time that my husband’s job, Brigade Commander, would place high demands on my time and energy. It didn’t make sense unless someone knew who I had been up to that point - someone who needed independence, my own accomplishments, and had a competitive spirit that drove me to keep pace with my husband’s career advancement.

My position within the field was that of a family member, a spouse to a Brigade Commander. While I did not have the capital my husband did as a Commander and active duty soldier, I did benefit from it. His capital, his rank and position (position in the field), gave me access to other individuals with capital. For example, I knew the Division and Garrison Commanders and had met the head of Moral, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) at previous events. Those established relationships meant that I would be listened to when I had the idea to
bring murals by a local artist to Fort Bliss. I also brought social capital of my own from being involved in the local community. I knew Adair Margo, an influential El Pasoan in the Arts community, and Gaspar Enríquez, a locally recognized artist, through a series of introductions starting with the mother of one of my daughter’s classmates at Trinity First Day School. These were individuals who were respected and accomplished within the local community and as a result gave me and the project I was proposing capital. And by introducing the project, by stepping outside of the traditional military spouse role, I was changing my position in the field. This was reflected in the ways I began defining myself on the project website and other literature, as “Founder” and “Project Manager,” Project Manager being a title I had held in my previous professional life. This renaming is a rhetorical tool, as Flowers writes, “And when social categories such as race, sex, class, or disability use the quiet tool of definition to oppress people by ‘defining them,’ a critical step in breaking this marginalizing power has been to go public through the literate act of renaming” (Going Public 137). Renaming myself signaled that I was in control of my identity, not the military.

My previous work (habitus) as a project manager aided me in being convincing in this role with Murals at Fort Bliss. I needed to be equally convincing as a member of the military community as I was presenting myself as a project manager. The better I was at doing both, allowed others to accept me as an insider to the military community and take me seriously as a professional person. I did this through my use of language and professional skills, for example, bringing prepared presentations on my iPad with me to meetings.

It is a direct result of the theorizing of my position within the military community as a “spouse” through my coursework at UTEP that I have been able to perform myself into a changed position within the field of the military structure. While I am still contributing to the
community, I no longer feel like Freire’s “being for others,” as I am beginning to participate on my own terms. This went beyond my initial goal in enrolling in the Rhetoric and Composition program - understanding what had happened to my life, how the power relationships had shifted, when I married my husband and entered the military community. My goal was to understand and be able to articulate what had happened, but what I learned beyond that was how to act from that knowledge to affect change in my life (field and capital) and community (contributing to its capital through the murals program).

By my performing different roles as a “military spouse,” (doctoral candidate, project manager, etc.), it opened up a space for others in my position to imagine doing the same and for the military to be more open to the possibility of taking them more seriously in this capacity. This has been one of my justifications for sometimes expressing my thoughts and behaving in non-traditional ways within the military community - I know that while I may be challenging military traditions, I am providing an example for others who feel they would like to follow non-traditional paths, as well as opening a space for discussions that might lead to changes in perspective.

One of the ideas I found comforting, if slightly subversive, when it was introduced in Dr. Mangelsdorf’s English 6320 Critical Theories class was the idea of the menace of mimicry, that I could be acting out an identity that wasn’t mine (that of a military wife) while using that identity to achieve my own goals. Of course, my motivation was not sinister, but came from a spirit of wanting to fight back while contributing to my community in a positive way.

And this is key - the idea that critically conscious mimicry and other forms of subversion can be powerful tools of transformation and identity realization. One can remain true to oneself while appropriating or sampling from others. This idea is critical to accepting, rather than
rejecting, the change in identity that inevitably comes from entering a new culture. It is the difference between wanting to fight to hurt and fight to change in a positive way. It would be easy for me to speak out about the things I dislike about the way the military has appropriated me as a resource and used labels to place me in their hierarchy (though I may do this in the safe space of my home or the classroom). Far more rewarding and productive, however, is challenging military culture by contributing to it in a positive way, through the murals project, and as a result, strategically refashioning who I am within the community and what resources I have to contribute to it.

The implication for me has been that while military traditions are important, it is learning to critically examine those traditions and deciding how to navigate them, to use them for one’s own purpose, that is important. Learning to use language rhetorically rather than reproducing a standard is what makes Murals at Fort Bliss valuable. The murals, hopefully, add to the culture of Fort Bliss rather than reproducing what is already there. This contribution provides the possibility of shifting the hegemony.

Whether or not military culture can change to allow more freedom of identity for non-military members (i.e., family members), is debatable. Military family members are by definition (hence the label “military” family member) there to provide a home for the soldier to return to and provide support to each other in times of crisis. However, there is some evidence of this happening, such as policies that include hiring preferences for military spouses and the transferability of soldier educational benefits such as the 911 G-I bill to family members, both providing access to identities and the building of personal capital outside of the military realm.
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Appendix 4-1: Lyrics for *The Charm of the Army*

**The Charm of the Army**

(A tribute to the Army Wife)

Written by: Pam Green, Angie Dickinson, Vivian Maheu & Renee Willis – Original Material

2007

She’s the Charm of the Army.

She is strong, she is true,

To her soldier, to her country, to the red, white and blue.

She is spirit, she is soul. She is young, she is old.

She’s a sister and a friend for life.

She’s the one and only Army Wife!

She’s a ribbon tied up yellow. She’s a blessing. She’s a prayer.

She’s a neighbor and a teacher and a willing volunteer.

She is hope, she is faith. She’s an open garden gate.

You’ll see it when you look into her eyes.

She’s the one and only Army Wife!

**Chorus:** House to Home

Coast to Coast

Hand to Heart

Post to Post.
Through thick and thin,
Her legacy her life.

She’s the one and only Army Wife!

She’s a smile and a hug. She’s a tear but she’s tough.

She is hospitality with a heart that’s full of love.

She’s a goodbye, she’s a howdy.

She is shy, she is rowdy.

Her heart is big and sure to sacrifice.

She’s the one and only Army Wife!

Back to Chorus (repeat last line 3 times and add “Hoo-ah!”)
Appendix 4-2: Website

The full website can be found at: www.muralsatfortbliss.com.
Appendix 4-3: Indiegogo Site

Access to the campaign website can be found at: https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/murals-at-fort-bliss--2/x/10025153#.
Appendix 4-4: Sample Gift Offer Letter

Lindsay Hamilton  
9105 Bramble Place  
Annandale, VA 2003  
Lkathami@gmail.com  

December 1, 2014  

Joseph Moscone, Garrison Manager  
U.S. Army Garrison  
1741 Marshall Road  
Fort Bliss, TX 79916  

Dear Mr. Moscone,  

I, Lindsay Hamilton, am offering an unsolicited donation of two murals (details below), free and clear of all encumbrances and/or conditions, to the Secretary of the Army, acting on behalf of the United States of America, to have and hold the property forever. All rights, ownership, and possession of said property is relinquished to the Army. No specific privileges or special concessions are expected in return for this offer.  

Mural Details (combined):  
• Estimated value: $51,000 (includes research, artist designs, materials, and installation)  
• Estimated size*: 300 sq. ft.  

Sincerely,  

Lindsay Hamilton  
Doctoral Candidate, Rhetoric and Writing Studies  
University of Texas at El Paso  

* Size of murals is based on the measurements of the walls above the entrance to the Soto Fitness Facility. The gift of the murals is not conditional upon the murals being placed at that location.
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY GARRISON, FORT BLISS
1741 MARSHALL ROAD
FORT BLISS, TX  79916

December 18, 2014

Office of the Garrison Manager

Ms. Lindsay Hamilton
9105 Bramble Place
Annandale, Virginia  22003

Dear Ms. Hamilton:

On behalf of the United States Army, I am pleased to accept the gift of two murals and their installation at Fort Bliss, Texas.

These murals will greatly improve the aesthetics at Fort Bliss, and will showcase some of the talent of the local El Paso community. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss, and finalize, the details of the project. Please accept my appreciation for your generous and thoughtful gift.

Sincerely,

Joseph Moscone
Garrison Manager
Appendix 4-6: Current Marketing Packet

Murals at Fort Bliss

In partnership with
Paso del Norte Foundation

Contents

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- The Artist 4
- Locations 5
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  - Soto Fitness Center 11-16
  - Mendoza Soldier Family Care Center 17-22
- Donation and Contact Information 23
Appendix 4-7: Information Sheet

Murals at Fort Bliss Overview

What we are doing

- This project will result in three murals for three locations located on Fort Bliss, TX.
- The proposed locations for the murals are: 1. Joshua W. Soto Physical Fitness Center, 2. SPC Hugo V. Mendoza Soldier Family Care Center, and 3. Grand Hall Food Court at Freedom Crossing.
- The locations were chosen because of their high traffic volumes and the food court specifically because it is easily accessed by the civilian community (no DoD card access required, unlike Soto and Mendoza).

Who is involved

- Gaspar Enríquez, Artist
- Tracy Yellen, Executive Director, Paso del Norte Foundation, Project sponsoring organization
- John Baily, President, AUSA Omar Bradley Chapter and CEO, Tigua, Inc.
- Lindsay Hamilton, Founder, Doctoral Candidate UTEP, married to active duty soldier, and lived on Fort Bliss 2010-2013
- Building owners of proposed locations have signed gift acceptance letters for the murals. This means we have full permission to move forward with project, but owners are in no way involved in the oversight of the project or fundraising activities. They are in the loop in terms of approving designs, providing access to the locations, making sure we are following legal regulations, and accepting ownership of murals once completed and installed.
  - Fort Bliss Garrison Command - Soto Gym and Freedom Crossing
  - William Beaumont - Mendoza SFCC

Why it’s important

Background: Fort Bliss has undergone a recent significant transformation and expansion in terms of building footprints and population. The military has a greater presence in the El Paso area than ever before. Many people working and living on Fort Bliss are not familiar with the area (When Air Defense commanded the installation there was a smaller pool of soldiers and their families rotating through Fort Bliss with repeat tours, but with 1st Armored Division now in command there is greater diversity of branches rotating through for the first time.). There are also many new buildings with prime wall space and a noticeable lack of local art/culture represented.

- The murals will bring soldiers and their families, veterans, and others visiting these high traffic buildings into contact with local El Paso regional culture, a culture rich in history and partnership with Fort Bliss (est. 1849).
- It will be the first military themed art by Gaspar Enríquez.
- The mural at Freedom Crossing, because it is accessible to non-DoD cardholders, will welcome visitors from the local El Paso region to Fort Bliss by representing local culture on this military installation.

Timeline

We will begin work on murals individually as they are funded.

Origins of Project
The project began as an outgrowth of an assignment for a graduate course at UTEP. The assignment was to digitally create a mural and virtually install it on a real physical location. I chose to place my mural for the assignment on Fort Bliss. It was while researching a location for my digital mural that I realized I didn't see local culture represented in the new state-of-the-art buildings on Fort Bliss and that bringing murals by a local artist to Fort Bliss was something to pursue. Adair Margo put me in contact with Gaspar Enríquez, I contacted Garrison Command regarding locations, and it moved forward from there.

Updated: 12/17/2015
Appendix 4-8: El Paso Times Article

The full version of the article can be found at:
The group has set up a website, MuralsAtFortBliss.com, to take donations in a couple of ways. Money can be donated directly through the website to the Paso Del Norte Foundation, which is serving as the fiscal agent for the project. The group has also set up a crowdfunding mechanism to raise money for the project, which can also be accessed through the website.

“The idea is to connect a soldier who has moved to this region and who may or may not be here for very long and connect them to this incredible area,” said Tracy Yellen, president of the Paso Del Norte Foundation.

El Paso artist Gaspar Enríquez, whose work has been featured in exhibits nationwide, has been commissioned to design and create the murals. He said he may hire a handful of local artists to help with the project.

The murals may give soldiers and their families more incentive to explore El Paso and venture out from the post, Enríquez said.

Enríquez, who grew up in Segundo Barrio in South El Paso, is the perfect artist for this project, Hamilton said.

“I love that he is local and sees things from a local perspective and will bring a fresh take on military themes, but he is coming from a place of real respect and love for the military,” she said.

The first phase of fundraising will end on Jan. 30, but the website will remain live and people and businesses can continue to donate there through both methods after that date, Hamilton said.

The group will also seek contributions from businesses, foundations and individuals who have a philanthropic desire, Baily added.

The initial goal is to raise enough money about $45,000, to do the first mural which would be located at Freedom Crossing, Hamilton said. That mural would be done first because it has the lowest price tag but would have the highest volume of visitors, she said. Freedom Crossing is open to the public, while the other two proposed locations are only accessible to Department of Defense Identification cardholders.

The group would like to raise enough money to get the Freedom Crossing mural started by the end of 2016.

Learn More

You can donate by going to MuralsAtFortBliss.com.

Volunteers are also needed to get involved in the project.

Information: John Baily, jbaily@tiguainc.org
Appendix 4-9: Questionnaire 2011

Frontera Retórica
Murals Project at Fort Bliss

Soto Fitness Center
October 3, 2011

We are currently interviewing soldiers and family members for a proposed mural at the Soto Fitness Facility. Your responses will be used to help develop the theme and images for the mural. We are also collecting statistics regarding who has been interviewed to ensure a representative sample of the population using the gym has been given the opportunity to provide input. Your time and thought are appreciated. All questions are optional.

Name: __________________________ Unit: __________________________

Email: __________________________ Phone: __________________________

☐ I would rather not be contacted in the future regarding the mural's project.
☐ I only want to be contacted regarding the mural's installation when it has been completed.

Where are you from? __________________________

What were you doing before joining the Army? __________________________

What kind of art do you like? __________________________

What are your interests/hobbies? __________________________

What kind of art would you like to see around the post or gym? __________________________

What do you think about graffiti art (not tagging)? __________________________

Would you consider being part of the images in the mural? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, would you be willing to sign a release form? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Appendix 4-10: Questionnaire 2016

Freedom Crossing
April 2016

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect community input for a proposed mural at the Freedom Crossing Grand Food Court. Your responses will be used to help develop the theme and images for the mural. All questions are optional.

Name: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Status: ☐ Active Duty ☐ Veteran ☐ Family Member ☐ ☐ Civilian

Age: ☐ 25-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+ ☐ Don't know

Email: __________________________ Phone: __________________________

☐ I would rather not be contacted in the future regarding this mural's project.
☐ I only want to be contacted regarding the mural's installation when it has been completed.

Where are you from? __________________________

What key experiences have shaped who you are today? __________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What organizations or people are most important to you? __________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What do El Paso and/or Fort Bliss mean to you? __________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What people or images would you like to see in a mural at the Food Court? __________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Would you consider being part of the images in the mural? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, would you be willing to sign a release form? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Appendix 4-11: Questionnaire Results Summary 2011

Portion of spreadsheet showing one response out of twenty-five.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>R1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location of Interview</td>
<td>Soto Gym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Interview</td>
<td>10/5/2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Jane Doe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>WBAMC ACO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Jane.Doe@us.army.mil">Jane.Doe@us.army.mil</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>###-###-####</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would rather not be contacted in the future regarding the murals project.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I only want to be contacted regarding the mural's installation when it has been completed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where are you from?</td>
<td>Sanford, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were you doing before joining the Army?</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kind of art do you like?</td>
<td>painting, sculpture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your interests/hobbies?</td>
<td>hiking, rock climbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kind of art would you like to see around post or gym?</td>
<td>sculpture, painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think about graffiti art (not tagging)?</td>
<td>very expressive and says a lot about what’s in it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you consider being part of the images in the mural? Y/N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If so, would you be willing to sign a release form? Y/N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4-12: Email Chain Requesting Addition of Male Soldier

Portion of chain containing request w/highlighting of key passages.

-----Original Message-----
From: Caouette, Marc L COL USARMY MEDCOM WBAMC (US) <marc.l.caouette.mil@mail.mil>
Sent: Thursday, December 26, 2013
To: Lindsay K. Hamilton [mailto:lkathami@gmail.com]
Subject: RE: Mural Project for Mendoza Clinic (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Ms. Hamilton,

Hope your holiday season is filled with peace, joy, and love. MG McFarland, our 1AD Commanding General has requested the mural be modified to include another Soldier (male) to the portrait.

Thank you and Happy New Year!

SOLDIER FAMILY FIRST!

MARC L. CAOUETTE
COL, MS
Commander
William Beaumont Primary Care & Soldier Readiness Command
SPC Hugo V. Mendoza Soldier Family Care Center
11335 SSG Sims Street

Fort Bliss, TX 79918
Tel: 915-742-1382

Primary Care Vision - Inspired and empowered health professionals operating the trusted and preferred primary healthcare home of all Team Bliss beneficiaries.

-----Original Message-----
From: Cortez, Raymond R III MSG USARMY MEDCOM WBAMC (US)
Sent: Thursday, December 26, 2013 11:46 AM
To: Caouette, Marc L COL USARMY MEDCOM WBAMC (US); Black, Shay R MSG USARMY MEDCOM WBAMC (US); Gianunzio, Kevin D 1SG USARMY MEDCOM WBAMC (US)
Cc: Caouette, Marc L COL USARMY MEDCOM WBAMC (US)
Subject: RE: Mural Project for Mendoza Clinic (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Sir,

From talking with COL Heimall, MG McFarland wants another Soldier (male) added to the mural due to it being a Family Sol

Care Center.

Thanks,

Raymond R. Cortez
MSG, USA
CHIEF CLINICAL NCO, WBAMC
Office: (915)742-2325
BB: (915)838-4241
raymond.r.cortez.mil@mail.mil

“All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing...” Edmund Burke

-----Original Message-----
From: Caouette, Marc L COL USARMY MEDCOM WBAMC (US)
Sent: Friday, December 13, 2013 3:45 PM
To: Cortez, Raymond R III MSG USARMY MEDCOM WBAMC (US)
CC: Black, Shay R MSG US ARMY MEDCOM WBAMC (US); Gianunzio, Kevin D 1SG US ARMY MEDCOM WBAMC (US)

Subject: FW: Mural Project for Mendoza Clinic (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

MSG Cortez,

Here is the rendition of the mural from Ms. Hamilton. It contains a Soldier and a child. If the desire is to have an additional family member we need to let her know.

You can see the proposed site is the tall wall between the War Room hallway and the South entrance to the clinic.

Before giving her the "go-ahead" I had consulted Mr. Sposato about this to receive confirmation the mural project had already been approved.

SOLDIER FAMILY FIRST!

MARC L. CAOUETTE
COL, MS
Commander
William Beaumont Primary Care & Soldier Readiness Command SPC Hugo V. Mendoza Soldier Family Care Center
11335 SSG Sims Street
Fort Bliss, TX 79918
Tel: 915-742-1382

Primary Care Vision - Inspired and empowered health professionals operating the trusted and preferred primary healthcare home of all Team Bliss beneficiaries.
Appendix 4-13: Email Chain Responding to Request to Add of Male Soldier

Same email chain: Response to request to add male soldier with key passages highlighted in yellow.

LINDSAY K. HAMILTON <LKATHAMI@GMAIL.COM>

to Marc

COL Caouette,
Happy Holidays to you too! We are enjoying a white Christmas here in Boston. Hope El Paso gets a dusting of powder soon.

Thank you for passing along the request from MG MacFarland. It is always good to know about these things sooner rather than later. I know the artist, Mr. Enríquez, is up to his eye balls with work for the ball park murals right now and don't expect him to do any further work on the Fort Bliss murals until we have completed fundraising, so we are good on time as far as discussing the final image.

I plan on launching the fundraising campaign in the spring and will keep you posted.

Hope your New Year is full of love, joy, and good health!

Lindsay

LINDSAY K. HAMILTON <LKATHAMI@GMAIL.COM>

to Gaspar, Phyllis

Hi, Phyllis and Gaspar.

I am passing along a note from COL Caouette, the commander for the Mendoza Soldier Family Care Clinic. He is forwarding a request from MG MacFarland, Commander of Fort Bliss and 1AD, that a male soldier be added to the mural at the Mendoza facility.

I have let COL Caouette know that we don't expect any further work on the image until we have completed fundraising and can reopen the discussion on the final image as that time comes closer. There is no expectation that anything be done right now.

If you do have any thoughts about this suggestion, I would be interested to hear them. I had a very strong reaction, some of which I relayed to MG MacFarland's wife when she first contacted me with his suggestion several weeks ago. I don't think it is an issue now unless you are open to letting me use the Mendoza SFCC mural image in the process of fundraising.

Regarding fundraising, I am planning a campaign that would start in the spring and would like to get your input as far as what you are comfortable with my including, such as any of the mural images.

Happy New Year to the two of you. I trust 2014 will continue to bring good health, lots of work, and love.

PHYLIS PRICE RIOSAND@EARTHLINK.NET VIA SBCGLOBAL.NET

to me

Hi Lindsay, hope all of you had a great Christmas and are looking forward to an even greater New Year.

Looks like you really have to jump through a lot of hoops to get this project done, it takes so long to get approval that by the time you think it's done MG MacFarland will be going some where else. I like the lady and child but if he wants to add a male figure and I say no then the project doesn't get done because he will not approve it. So, Lindsay I'm going to let you decide since you are the one that is doing so much
My best to all of you and have a great New Year. By the way how are you doing with your PhD program?gaspar

From: Lindsay K. Hamilton <lkathami@gmail.com>
To: Gaspar Enríquez <genrio4709@sbcglobal.net>; Phyllis Price <riosand@earthlink.net>
Sent: Friday, December 27, 2013 2:15 PM
Subject: Fwd: FW: Mural Project for Mendoza Clinic (UNCLASSIFIED)

Thank you both for the encouragement and always kind words. Working with Gaspar and wanting others to see his work has been a major incentive to keep going with the project regardless of what happens with the images.

Regarding MG MacFarland’s request, I have, through my reading, begun to understand the importance of collaborative work and allowing the various community voices be heard in the project. In fact, this is in part what my dissertation will address: the process of meaning making/defining community values through collaborative art projects and whose voices get heard. I have completed my first draft of the dissertation prospectus and will submit a 2nd draft once Naomi is back in school in January.

I agree that MG MacFarland may be gone by the time the final image is approved, so realize that his request may not be as big a factor as it may seem right now. In any case, I would make an argument that the male soldier not be included, and David has advised doing this in a face-to-face meeting if/when the time comes with MG MacFarland or the next commander.

My focus right now is on building a fundraising campaign for this spring, something I have not done before. I believe I have a solution, Fractured Atlas, for the non-profit issue and am looking at raising funds online through a crowd-sourcing site, Kickstarter or Indiegogo, in addition to direct mail to El Paso/Fort Bliss community members and applying for grants.

I hope you are both getting time off to relax and enjoy life over the holidays. We send our love and best wishes for a wonderful 2014!

Lindsay
Vita

Lindsay Hamilton spent her early years in her parents’ hometown of Ventura, California. After the family moved to Lake Oswego, Oregon she attended Lakeridge High School, spending her junior year abroad as an American Field Service (AFS) student on the island of Cyprus. Following her graduation from high school in 1985, she entered the University of California, San Diego where in 1989 she earned her B.A. in Anthropology. Following graduation, Lindsay moved to San Francisco, California where she briefly studied Chinese medicine at the American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine before enrolling at California State Hayward, earning a dual MBA in Marketing and Human Resources in 1997. Lindsay stayed in the San Francisco area, working in the software industry in Corporate Operations. After marrying an active duty soldier in 2005, Lindsay relocated several times, and while living in Alexandria, Virginia audited courses at the National War College in 2009/2010. In 2011, after relocating with her family to Fort Bliss, Texas, Lindsay entered the University of Texas El Paso’s (UTEP) doctoral program in Rhetoric and Composition.

While pursuing her degree at UTEP, Lindsay worked as an Assistant Instructor and served as Assistant Director of the University Writing Center and Digital Archive of Literacy Narratives. She also founded a public arts project, Murals at Fort Bliss. She has received several grants including the Baker Hernandez Grant from the English Department, Graduate School Travel Grant, and College of Composition and Communication’s Childcare Grant. Lindsay is co-author of an article published in the Spring 2014 issue of Computers and Composition Online. She has presented her work at the 2012 and 2013 NMSU/UTEP Graduate Conferences as well as the Conference on College of Composition and Communication in 2016. Following graduation
Lindsay will continue to manage *Murals at Fort Bliss* and pursue projects related to community placemaking.

Contact Information: Lkathami@gmail.com

This thesis/dissertation was typed by Lindsay Kathryn Hamilton.