

1-1-1998

The Symbionese Liberation Army movement: An historical, theoretical, and rhetorical analysis

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.25669/0ygh-cuv5>

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**THE SYMBIONESE LIBERATION ARMY MOVEMENT:
AN HISTORICAL, THEORETICAL, AND
RHETORICAL ANALYSES**

by

Crystal Joy Cox

**Bachelor of Arts
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
1996**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of**

Master of Arts

In

Communication Studies

**Hank Greenspun School of Communication
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
December 1998**

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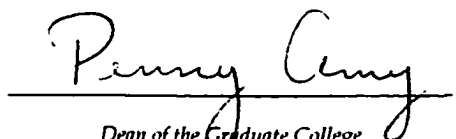
The Symbionese Liberation Army Movement:

An Historical, Theoretical, and Rhetorical Analyses

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Communication Studies


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ABSTRACT

The Symbionese Liberation Army Movement: An Historical, Theoretical, and Rhetorical Analyses

By

Crystal Joy Cox

**Dr. Richard Jensen, Examination Committee Chair
Professor of Communication Studies
University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

To understand the social movement of the Symbionese Liberation Army, one must examine the history, theories, and rhetoric of the organization. The extremist foundation of the Symbionese Liberation Army is directly reflected in the organizations communiqués, inner-group dynamics, and actions. Like most of the social movements before it, the Symbionese Liberation Army recognized the importance of media utilization. Without the media coverage the organization needed and desired, the Symbionese Liberation Army could not have gained the popularity and power it sustained throughout the duration of the organization's movement. This study will examine the movement of the Symbionese Liberation Army in relationship to the organization's foundation, actions, belief system, and rhetoric.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Richard Jensen for his guidance, continuous support, and patience. I could not have completed this project without you. I would also like to thank, Dr. David R. Dickens, Dr. Larry Mullen, and Dr. Gage Chapel for their assistance in making this project a reality.

The support that I have received from all of my committee members is greatly appreciated and I am truly indebted to all of you.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) was an organization often known primarily for the kidnapping of Patricia Campbell Hearst, which occurred on February 4, 1974. However, the kidnapping of Patricia Hearst was only one of many actions executed by the SLA. The kidnapping of Hearst was one episode in a progression of activities that would occur during the SLA's movement toward complete economic, social, and political liberation.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the history of the SLA from its correctional institution origins to its ultimate demise. This thesis will examine the SLA's rhetorically mediated communication tactics, its organization structure, and its intergroup ideologies and psyche. Significant research into the SLA is important because analysis of the organization will ultimately provide an understanding of the organization's behavior and actions in regards to their execution of Dr. Marcus Foster, the superintendent of the Oakland, California school district and the organization's San Francisco bank robberies. Through the exploration of reoccurring themes prevalent throughout the rhetoric and history of the SLA, this research will provide insight into this dynamic and complex organization and the movement that it constructed.

The SLA was a unique organization because unlike many other organizations. the SLA involved "...a black convict, intellectuals, upper middle-class whites, lesbians, all for the avowed purpose of uniting the downtrodden minorities in a massive assault on a corrupt capitalistic system" (Pascal and Pascal, 1974, p.76). In addition the SLA committed "America's first political abduction, acted out in the public eye" (Maguire and Dunn, 1974, p.2). This leftist organization aimed to unite and liberate African-Americans and other minorities through urban guerrilla warfare (Hearst, 1982). Although the majority of the members of the organization were Caucasian, the organization perceived itself to be a Black revolutionary organization created not only for the liberation of minorities, but for women and homosexuals as well: "What set the SLA apart from most other American revolutionary groups was its willingness to engage in murder and kidnapping and its bizarre interweaving of sexual and racial concepts into its political ideology" (Goshko, March 1976, p.A01).

Research on the SLA is important not only historically, but also socially and rhetorically. Analysis of the rhetoric of the organization, the organization's actions, exploration into the social and psychological ideologies of the group, and investigation into the infrastructure of the organization will provide a wealth of knowledge necessary in interpreting the dynamics of the SLA. Information and conclusions derived from various types of literature will provide insight into the motivation and ideologies of the organization and its rhetorical and social implications.

Literature Review

The literature reviewed for this research will fall under four distinct categories: 1.

Selected literature regarding the process, dynamics, and ideologies of social movements;
 2. Existing historical references deliberating the revolutionary activities of the
 Symbionese Liberation Army; 3. Communiqués and press releases from and about the
 SLA; 4. Documents and works about Patricia Campbell Hearst and her role in the SLA.

Two specific works will provide the structural framework for analyzing the social psychology of the SLA in relationship to the organization's beliefs, perceptions, and ideologies. The first source is Gabriel Mugny and Juan A. Perez's 1991 work, The Social Psychology of Minority Influence. This book addresses the complex and conflicting relationship between majority and minority influence in an organization or social movement and the implications of this conflicting relationship in regards to "the main line of a psychosociological model to account for both resistance to change and innovation" (p.9) within an organization.

Handley Cantrils' 1963 work, The Psychology of Social Movements reflects on the social movement process from a sociological and psychological framework. Through research into organizations such as the Nazis and lynch mobs, Cantril provides an interpretation of most social movements and the implications and purpose of these movements in various social contexts.

The contributions of Mugny and Pérez (1991) and Cantril (1963) will be utilized to explain the social psychology and ideologies of the SLA and the role this psychology played in the movement. Robert R. Blake and Jane Sruggley Mouton's chapter "Competition, Communication, and Conformity" (1961) in the book Conformity and Deviation (Berg and Bass, 1961), Joan V. Bondurant's 1971 chapter "The Search for a

Theory of Conflict” in the book Conflict Violence and Nonviolence by Joan V.

Bondurant and Joel Best and David F. Luckenbill’s 1994 Organizing Deviance will help to provide a structural framework for analyzing the participating members of the SLA and the intergroup dynamics prevalent within the organization.

The research of Blake and Mouton (1961) focused on the ways in which members of an organization maintain group solidarity and affirmation in the face of opposition. Blake and Mouton’s research suggests that members of an organization will resort to drastic and often violent measures in order to protect the organization from external conflict. For the purposes of analysis, Blake and Mouton’s findings will be applied towards the analysis of the coping mechanisms adopted by the SLA as well as provided insight into the organization’s interpersonal dynamics.

Bondurant (1971) expanded upon the work of Blake and Mouton in regards to intergroup dynamics. Bondurant’s analysis further expounds upon the subject matter by reflecting upon the role that conflict plays in an organization’s structure and the ramifications of this conflict. The author comprehensively examines the reasons why violence has remained the preferred tool in resolving conflict, while also exploring deviance and violence in regards to their effectiveness and desired impact on society. The 1994 work of Best and Luckenbill explore the world of deviants and deviance. The authors investigate the phenomenon of deviance by exploring the responsibilities of the deviant individual in relationship to the organization to which the deviant belongs. Best and Luckenbill explores the reciprocal relationship between the individual and the complex deviant group.

Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy's book, The Dynamics of Social Movements (1975) and Modern Social Movements by William Bruce Cameron (1966) address social movements in regards to their media usage and legitimacy bargaining. Zald and McCarthy provide insight into social movements through a variety of collected articles concentrating on the structure and overall theme of various social movements in regards to their media utilization. Cameron's contribution focuses on the methods and the process of radical social movements. Modern Social Movements (Cameron, 1966) incorporates a historical analysis and social theoretical framework to provide a foundation for interpreting most social movements. The operational definition of a social movement as defined by Cameron states that a movement "occurs when a fairly large number of people band together in order to alter or support some portion of the existing culture or social order" (Cameron, 1966, p.7).

The articles, "The Dynamics of Social Movements" by Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang (1960), "The Revolutionary Process: A Frame of Reference for the Study of Revolutionary Movements" by Rex D. Hopper (1950), and "Determinants of Innovation" by Lawrence B. Mohr (1969) are all represented in a book comprised of articles entitled Collective Behavior and Social Movements (Genevie, 1978). All of these articles investigate the ways in which organizations like the SLA advance and interact with society in relationship to their group objectives.

Revolutionary Change by Chalmers Johnson (1966), The Strategy of Social Protest by William A. Gamson (1975), and Beyond Revolution: A New Theory of Social Movements by Daniel A. Foss and Ralph Larkin (1986) all seemingly approach the complex process of revolution from its violent and militant connection. These texts

investigate the causes of social movements and the rebellion process. Johnson's 1996 work addresses revolution in relationship to guerrilla warfare tactics, while Gamson (1975) and Foss and Larkin (1986) approach revolution from its innate violent tendencies and complex processes.

Ghetto Revolts: The Politics of Violence in American Cities (Feagin and Hahn, 1973), The Wretched of the Earth (Fanon, 1963), Black Skin, White Mask (Fanon, 1967), and White Racism (Feagin and Vera, 1995) will be utilized in conjunction with the works of Johnson (1966), Gamson (1975), and Foss and Larkin (1986) to investigate the causes and ramifications of revolt in relationship to the SLA movement.

To employ a comprehensive analyses of social movements in application to the Symbionese Liberation Army, The Natural History of Revolution by Lyford P. Edwards (1970) and Anatomy of Rebellion by Claude E. Welch, Jr. (1980) will also be examined. Both of these authors provide an in-depth historical analysis of revolution and the symptoms that proceed throughout the birth, life, and death of a movement. These works will be directly applied to the SLA because they provide an historical analysis into the political and social evolution of various types of movements similar to that of the organization.

The majority of the SLA movement was rooted in Black social, political, and economic equality. Although the SLA was a predominately White organization, its movement is quite similar in approach, ideology, and theory to other Black revolutionary movements. Both the Black Panther Party and the Nation of Islam employed various extremist tactics similar to the tactics adopted by the SLA. To better understand the SLA as an extremist organization, the work of John George and Laird Wilcox (1996),

American Extremists: Militias, Supremacists, Klansmen, Communists, and Others, will be applied towards analyzing the SLA's actions, perceptions, and rhetoric.

Although there is a wealth of literature available in regards to social movements, their ramifications, their process, and their infrastructure, little scholarly work has been conducted exploring the military agenda, organizational activities, organizational structure, and the stratification of the SLA. A majority of the literature regarding the SLA tends to focus on Patricia Campbell Hearst and her experiences within the organization. Marilyn Baker and Sally Brompton's (1974) book, Exclusive! The Inside Story of Patricia Campbell Hearst and the SLA will be utilized to explore the psyche of the leftist organization, its development, and the motivations behind the SLA's militant activity.

Richard M. Pearlstein's 1991 work, The Mind of the Political Terrorist, demonstrates the complex ideologies and psyche of the political terrorist and extreme leftist organizations. Pearlstein explores the troubled life of Donald "General Field Marshall Cinque Mutume" DeFreeze, the notorious ringleader of the Symbionese Liberation Army and his impact on the organization. Pearlstein explores the psychological impacts of DeFreeze's problematic past as a framework to comprehend his revolutionary actions, rebellious attitude, and militant communication tactics.

The Symbionese Liberation Army distributed and circulated volumes of communiqués and recordings to the FBI, California based television stations, radio stations, and newspapers. Archival recordings of SLA speeches and communiqués provide an in-depth look into the reality of the organization, its purpose, and its structure.

Newspaper clippings and profiles from Washington and California based newspapers and electronic media will be explored as well.

In addition to the works of Pearlstein and Hearst, these books and articles will also be employed to provide insight into the rhetoric and movement of the SLA as well: “Black Power: The Dimensions of a Slogan” (Brooks, Spring, 1970), “The Rhetoric of Black Power: A Moral Demand” (Burgess, April, 1968), “The Rhetoric of Radical Black Nationalism: A Case Study in Self-Conscious Criticism” (Campbell, Fall, 1971), “A Resource Unit On Black Rhetoric” (Edwards, September, 1973), “Redefinition of Self: A Comparison of the Rhetoric of the Women’s Liberation and the Black Liberation Movements” (Hope, Winter, 1975), “The Trust Establishing Function of the Rhetoric of the Black Power” (Larson, Spring, 1970), The Rhetoric of Revolution (Katope and Zolbrod, 1970), Rhetoric of Black Revolution (Smith, 1969), and The Voice of Black Rhetoric (Smith and Robb, 1971).

Patricia “Patty” Hearst and her role in the SLA has remained a topic of great complexity and debate. As the most prominent member of the organization, literature surrounding Patty Hearst is abundant. A majority of the literature circulated regarding the SLA is from the recollection and perspective of Patty Hearst as a member of the organization. Therefore, a significant amount of the literature reviewed for this research will be derived from communication predominately focusing on Patty Hearst’s time with the organization.

Patricia Hearst’s 1982 book, titled Every Secret Thing, provides an in-depth look into Hearst’s life before, during, and after the SLA. Hearst explores the psychological, emotional, social, and physical ramifications of the organization’s structure. This book

also provides a brief insight into the lives of the other SLA members and their experiences within the organization as well.

Works such as My Search for Patty Hearst (Weed, 1976), Bound and Determined: Captivity, Culture-Crossing, and White Womanhood From Mary Rowlandson to Patty Hearst (Catiglia, 1996), Patty Hearst: From Heiress to Revolutionary (Maguire, 1974), The Making of Tania: The Patty Hearst Story (Boulton, 1975), and The Strange Case of Patty Hearst (Pascal, 1974), provide insight into Patricia Hearst as an individual in relationship to her membership in the SLA while also investigating the SLA's psychological and emotional influence on Patty Hearst and the movement's social implications and historical ramifications. The organizational structure of the SLA is mentioned predominately in regards to Hearst's role in it. Less is mentioned about the organization before her kidnapping.

The literature regarding social movements in general is abundant. However, there is very little literature available that focuses specifically on the SLA as a social movement. This study is important not only because of its historical ramifications, but also because its implementations provide insight into the actual organization's members, their ideologies, and the structural foundation of the group. Approaching the SLA movement from a social movement perspective will ultimately provide a better understanding of the organizations actions, rhetoric, intergroup communication, and media utilization tactics. This research will provide a wealth of insight into the SLA's movement through the implementation of the theories and structural frameworks derived from literature that directly relates to the organization.

Through the utilization of theoretical, historical, and social frameworks in application

to the SLA, the organization can be assessed appropriately as a entire group and not as separate entities within an organization, as often depicted in the literature that primarily focuses on Patty Hearst. All of the literature reviewed for this study will be incorporated together and applied systematically and theoretically towards the SLA's birth, life, and violent destruction.

Methodology

The data for this research will be acquired through literature surrounding social movements and the Symbionese Liberation Army. Analyses into the SLA will be conducted through qualitative methods. Manuscripts and communiqués from and about the SLA will be analyzed and explored for their insights into the radical activities and rhetoric of the SLA. The literature will be explored in terms of its content, structure, and form.

The references necessary for this research will be generated from two sources. The primary informational source for the print based and audiovisual based resources focusing on the SLA will be derived from various libraries across the country accessible through The University of Nevada, Las Vegas' interlibrary loan system. Although this method of conducting research is essential for this particular type of investigation, there are still limitations regarding material availability. There is wealth of literature available regarding the kidnapping of Hearst and the criminal activity of the SLA, but little intellectual research has been documented authoritatively regarding the SLA social movement in reference to the organization's utilization of rhetoric, print and electronic media, intergroup ideologies, and organizational goals.

The literature that will be utilized for the purposes of this research will be reviewed in this order: 1. Selected literature regarding the process, dynamics, and ideologies of the social movement; 2. Existing historical references discussing the revolutionary activities of the Symbionese Liberation Army; 3. Communiqués and commentaries by and about the SLA; 4. Documents and works about Patty Hearst and her role in the SLA. All of the sources utilized for this study will be analyzed for the primary purpose of exploring prevalent rhetorical and theoretical themes evident throughout the rhetoric and movement of the SLA.

The selected works which will be analyzed regarding the process, dynamics, and ideologies of the social movement will include: The Social Psychology of Minority Influence (Mugny and Perez, 1991), The Psychology of Social Movements (Cantril, 1963), "Competition, Communication, and Conformity" (Blake and Mouton), Conformity and Deviation (Berg and Bass, 1961), "The Search for a Theory of Conflict" (Bondurant, 1971), Conflict: Violence and Nonviolence (Bondurant, 1971), Organizing Deviance (Best and Luckenbill, 1994), The Dynamics of Social Movements (Zald and McCarthy, 1975), Modern Social Movements (Cameron, 1966), "The Revolutionary Process: A Frame of Reference for the Study of Revolutionary Movements" (Harper, 1950), "Determinants of Innovation" (Mohr, 1969), Collective Behavior and Social Movements (Genevie, 1978), Revolutionary Change (Johnson, 1966), The Strategy of Social Protest (Gamson, 1975), Beyond Revolution: A New Theory of Social Movements (Foss and Larkin, 1986), The Natural History of Revolution (Edwards, 1970), Anatomy of Rebellion (Welch, 1980), Ghetto Revolts: The Politics of Violence in American Cities (Feagin and Hahn, 1973), The Wretched of the Earth (Fanon, 1963), Black Skin, White

Masks (Fanon, 1967), and White Racism (Feagin and Vera, 1995). The content of these works will be analyzed collectively to provide greater insight into the SLA members, communiqués, and actions. These sources will ultimately provide perceptiveness into the reoccurring themes surrounding the rhetoric and actions of the complex organization.

George and Wilcox's 1996 work, American Extremists: Militias, Supremacists, Klansmen, Communist, and Others will be utilized in this research for the purpose of exploring the rhetoric and actions of the SLA as well. The literature will ultimately provide an in-depth look into the SLA and the motives behind their terrorist and criminal actions, while also providing a greater understanding of the tactics instituted by the organization to maintain intergroup solidarity and loyalty.

The manuscripts, speeches, and communiqués by and about the SLA will be analyzed in order to provide a greater understanding of the communication tactics utilized and manipulated by the organization, while also providing insight into the rhetoricians and theorists who contributed to the ideologies of the movement. The literature selected will be employed collectively to provide a look into the actual dialogue, opinions, and actions of the organization. The works which will further explore the ideologies, movement, and rhetoric of the SLA include: "Black Power: The Dimensions of a Slogan" (Brooks, Spring, 1970), "The Rhetoric of Black Power: A Moral Demand" (Burgess, April, 1968), "The Rhetoric of Radical Black Nationalism: A Case Study in Self-Conscious Criticism" (Campbell, Fall, 1971), "A Resource Unit On Black Rhetoric" (Edwards, September, 1973), "Redefinition of Self: A Comparison of the Rhetoric of the Women's Liberation and the Black Liberation Movements" (Hope, Winter, 1975), "The Trust Establishing Function of the Rhetoric of Black Power" (Larson, Spring, 1970), The Rhetoric of Revolt

(Brandes, 1971), Protest, Reform, and Revolt: A Reader In Social Movements (Gusfield, 1970), The Rhetoric of Revolution (Katope and Zolbrod, 1970), Rhetoric of Black Revolution (Smith, 1969), and The Voice of Black Rhetoric (Smith and Robb, 1971)

Patricia Hearst and her role in the SLA continues to be a topic of great controversy and debate. To better comprehend the role that Hearst played in the SLA movement, these books will be utilized as well to gain greater insight into the SLA and their most notorious member: My Search for Patty Hearst (Weed and Swanton, 1976), Bound and Determined: Captivity, Culture-Crossing, and White Womanhood from Mary Rowlandson to Patty Hearst (Catiglia, 1996), Patty Hearst: From Heiress to Revolutionary (Maguire and Dunn, 1974), The Making of Tania: The Patty Hearst Story (Boulton, 1975) and The Strange Case of Patty Hearst (Pascal and Pascal, 1974).

The literature selected for this will be utilized for the purposes of answering these questions: Who were the primary rhetoricians and theorists that influenced the SLA? What were the reasons for the terrorist and criminal actions enacted by the SLA? What role did the California prison reform movement play in the establishment and structuring of the SLA? What were some of the tactics instituted by the SLA to maintain intergroup solidarity and loyalty? What methods of communication did the SLA movement manipulate and utilize? How did the members of the SLA perceive their movement? How did the public perceive the SLA? and What contributed to the demise of the Symbionese Liberation Army?

CHAPTER 2

THE MOVEMENT

The University of California, Berkeley was a sanctuary for revolt and protest during the 1960s and 1970s. The Vietnam War and The Free Speech Movement ignited a new fondness for the ideologies of Karl Marx and Mao Tse-tung. Berkeley had become the “radical stronghold of the world” (Baker, 1974, p. 104) and the Symbionese Liberation Army was a direct descendant of the Berkley student protest movement.

The members of the SLA consisted of Donald David DeFreeze (General Field Marshal Cinque Mtume), Russell Little (Osceola), Joseph Remiro (Bo), William Wolfe (Cujo), Angela Atwood (Gelina), Camilla Hall (Gabi), Patricia Monique Soltysik (Zoya), Nancy Ling Perry (Fahizah), William Harris (Teko), Emily Harris (Yolanda), and Patricia Campbell Hearst (Tania). Except for Donald David DeFreeze, all of the other SLA members were white, middle-class students with no prior radical political affiliations or criminal histories.

All of the SLA members chose to be addressed only by their Swahili African names. According to SLA members, their Swahili names represented freedom and rebirth, whereas their birth names represented bondage and slavery. For the revolution “their former ‘slave’ names had been renounced forever” (Hearst, 1982, p. 48). The members of the SLA also renounced their bourgeois status symbols and in turn adopted

the seven-headed SLA cobra as their symbol of prestige and power. The members exchanged their bourgeois dialect in exchange for vulgarity, their credit cards for ammunition, and their family and friends for revolution.

The Background

Patricia Soltysik, Camilla Hall, Willie Wolfe, Russell Little, Bill Harris, Emily Harris, and Angela Atwood began their official quest towards establishing a revolutionary army through their infiltration of the California prison system. Colston Westbrook, a Black studies professor from the University of California, Berkeley, sponsored semiweekly classes at Vacaville Prison in San Francisco, California. This program was eventually called the Black Cultural Association (BCA). The BCA was permitted by prison officials to invite social activists Soltysik, Hall, Wolfe, Little, Atwood, and Bill and Emily Harris to Vacaville to engage in constructive dialogue with troubled Black prisoners. These activists were to conduct courses on subject matters that would ultimately aid the prisoners in developing self-sufficiency once they were released from prison. However, these Berkeley students chose the BCA as a platform to feed already corrupted individuals with revolutionary rhetoric and theories. Both the BCA and the radical propaganda of the Berkeley students, “served as an incidental means through which DeFreeze would learn to justify his actions” (Pearlstein, 1975, p. 79).

Those who participated in the BCA considered themselves a part of the continuously expanding California prison movement (Pascal and Pascal, 1974). In September 1972, the BCA would eventually serve as the catalyst for a new organization that DeFreeze would organize called The Unisight. The Unisight was a group designed and established to discuss the special problems of the Black family (Pascal and Pascal,

1974). The Unisight, under the leadership of Donald DeFreeze, would ultimately serve as a foundation for the Symbionese Liberation Army. The SLA, like the BCA and the Unisight, would continue to view prisoners as one of “the largest single ‘class’ of oppressed people and also the largest potential source of revolutionaries” (Hearst, 1982. P. 70).

In December 1972, Donald DeFreeze was transported from Vacaville Prison to Soledad Prison. In less than a year DeFreeze miraculously escaped. After his escape DeFreeze made his way to the home of Patricia Soltysik and Nancy Ling Perry. DeFreeze’s escape from prison would inevitably set the stage for the Symbionese Liberation Army, one of the most notorious organizations in American history.

The SLA would first command the attention of the world after their assassination of Dr. Marcus Foster, the superintendent of the Oakland School District. The SLA decided to kill Dr. Foster because they saw him as an enemy of the people. The SLA disapproved of Dr. Foster’s initiative to utilize identification cards for all children in the Oakland School District. According to the SLA, this proposal aimed to identify those students who were perceived as being potentially violent in the hopes of segregating them from the general student population (Hearst, 1982). Consequently, the SLA declared that there were no other productive means available to the organization in terminating Foster’s proposal, therefore death seemed to be the most effective and only alternative for the movement.

The SLA would inevitably gain massive attention on February 4, 1974 when the organization kidnapped Patricia Campbell Hearst, the daughter of the extremely wealthy media guru Randolph Hearst. Patricia Hearst would become the most notorious prisoner

of war in U.S. history. The Hearst dynasty was everything that the SLA deemed intolerable. Patty Hearst was kidnapped by the SLA because she represented the oppressive capitalist system that aimed to handicap the spirits and the lives of “the people.” The SLA perceived Randolph Hearst to be a “corporate liar” and exploiter of the people, manifested through his position as the chairman of the “fascist media.” Mrs. Randolph Hearst was perceived by the SLA as an oppressor of Blacks in Africa through her University of California Board of Regents membership. The SLA believed that the University of California Board of Regents supported apartheid and the murder of Black women and children in Mozambique, Angola, and Rhodesia through their financial investments in Africa (Pearlstein, 1975).

The SLA’s disgust with the Hearst family and the exploiters of the world, prompted the organization to kidnap Patty Hearst on February 4, 1974. The kidnapping was designed to provide the SLA with the prestige and media attention that it both needed and desired. The seriousness of the organization was further reinforced when it released *Communiqués #3* shortly after Patty’s abduction to KFPA radio station in San Francisco claiming responsibility for the “arrest” (see Appendix I). Through this communiqué, the SLA provided itself with the communication tools that it needed to gain publicity for the movement. The murder of Dr. Foster and the kidnapping of Hearst placed the SLA not only on the FBI’s most wanted list, but on America’s most feared and powerful list as well.

During the initial part of Hearst’s captivity, she endured approximately nine weeks of sexual abuse, emotional trauma, inadequate food, and reeducation classes. Under the direction of Cinque, Patricia Hearst would further enhance the SLA’s

popularity by completing her first recorded message to the public regarding her captivity (see Appendix II). This communiqué, like the ones before it, captivated the attention of the media industry and the American people as a whole.

The members of the SLA sent another recording to KFPA radio in San Francisco, demanding that Randolph Hearst give every Californian in need \$70 worth of meat, vegetables, and dairy products. This gift was to include people with welfare cards, social security pension cards, food stamps, disabled veterans' cards, medical cards, parole or probation papers, and jail or bail release forms (Hearst, 1982). The People In Need (PIN) food distribution program served as a "gesture of good faith" from Randolph Hearst. This "gesture of good faith" had to be established before the SLA could begin negotiations for an official ransom demand. Nevertheless, the demands of the SLA were not met and Patty Hearst was not released because the price of the program was estimated to be \$400,000,000 and Randolph Hearst only contributed \$2,000,000 worth of food.

Through continuous reeducation courses, Patty Hearst was eventually convinced to join the SLA. She changed her name to Tania, a woman who died fighting along with Che [Guevara] in Bolivia for the people of Bolivia (Pascal and Pascal, 1974). Hearst would prove to the world her true revolutionary status when she and the other SLA members robbed the Hibernia Bank in the Sunset District of San Francisco. The \$10,680 stolen from the bank was seen as being both legitimate and necessary by the SLA because "it was all justified as a revolutionary expropriation of the corporate-military state's property for the benefit of the peoples' war" (Hearst, 1982, p. 132).

The SLA would eventually head to Los Angeles where Patty Hearst and Bill and Emily Harris were involved in a shoot-out at Mel's Sporting Goods in Inglewood,

California. The other SLA members eventually heard of the shoot-out at the sporting goods store and immediately fled their safehouse confident that Patty Hearst, Bill Harris, and Emily Harris had been apprehended, although they had not. The police would eventually trace a parking ticket left in one of the SLA's abandoned vehicles to the safe house of Cinque, Cujo, Gelina, Gabi, Zoya, and Fahizah and a massive shoot-out ensued. The SLA undoubtedly had the LAPD police department outgunned. It took five hundred police officers to kill a half-dozen SLA members. The SLA members ultimately choose to die rather than surrender (Baker, 9174). Thus, after the death of their six comrades, Patty Hearst, Bill Harris, and Emily Harris continued to remain underground for seventeen more months until they were eventually apprehended by the authorities.

There are a variety of explanations for the Symbionese Liberation Army movement. The actions, psychology, and ideologies of the movement can be appropriately explained by applying various theories from a wide array of theorists and scholars.

Exploring The Extremists

John George and Laird Wilcox's 1996 work, American Extremist: Militias, Supremacists, Klansman, Communist, and Others explores American extremist organizations like The Nation of Islam, The Black Panther Party, and the Ku Klux Klan. The findings of George and Wilcox can be directly applied to the SLA movement as well since they are also represented in the extremist category. George and Wilcox's findings were generated from over six-hundred interviews with self-proclaimed extremists throughout the country.

One of George and Wilcox's primary findings suggests that extremist organizations "try to discourage critical examination of their beliefs by a variety of means, usually by false logic, rhetorical trickery, or some kind of censorship, intimidation, or repression" (p.61). Thus, the SLA like most other extremist organizations, utilized rhetorical trickery, censorship, intimidation, and repression to discourage criticism of their movement. In the beginning of the movement, the SLA would often intimidate and repress the media and their right to critique the movement by threatening the press with the possible murder of Patricia Hearst if the organizations demands were not met in their entirety. For example, the SLA had demanded that there be no press or police officers at the People In Need food distribution and they also demanded that their communiqués be printed in their entirety in the newspapers. These demands prompted both the media and the police to roll over and play dead for fear of endangering Patty's life (Baker, 1974). Patty Hearst's safety had become the primary concern of the nation, and knowing this, the SLA was able to make numerous demands on both the authorities and the press. "The media became its de facto captive, obeying all the terrorists' demands" (Baker, 1974, p.71).

The SLA had the ability to further handicap the coverage and the investigation of the movement by issuing a series of death warrants for those who negatively criticized or refused to support the actions and operations of the organization. These death warrants became an effective method of intimidation. Many of those who were targeted by the SLA refused to comment on the movement for fear of being reprimanded by the SLA. Death warrants issued by the SLA had the ability "to discourage critical examination of their beliefs" (George, and Wilcox, 1996, p. 61).

The Symbionese Liberation Army also employed a variety of character assassination tactics into their movement by attacking the character of their opponents rather than dealing with the facts or issues raised regarding their movement and its ideologies. The extremist will question the motives, qualifications, past associations, and alleged values of their critiques, but extremists object when this is done to them (George and Wilcox, 1996). This tactic is most obvious when the organization continued to relentlessly attack Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Hearst. The SLA would consistently refer to the Hearst family as “capitalist pigs”, “corporate liars”, and “oppressors of the people.” According to Patty Hearst (1982), Cinque was skilled at “castigating my father for owning a chain of newspapers, magazines, and television and radio stations which he said supported the fascist corporate-military state and accusing my mother, as a member of the California Board of Regents of being insensitive to what they called crimes against the people” (p.61). However, the SLA objected strenuously when critics attempted to assassinate the character of their members. Like other extremist organizations, the SLA also chose to “attack the character of an opponent rather than deal with the facts or issues raised” (George and Wilcox, 1996, p. 56).

The SLA movement can be further explained through the examination of the double standards employed by the organization. According to George and Wilcox (1996), extremist organizations like the SLA often advocate double standards because the “Extremist generally tends to judge themselves or their interest group in terms of their intentions, which they tend to view generously, and their critics and opponents by their acts, which they tend to view very critically. They would like you to accept their assertions on faith, but they demand proof of yours” (p.57).

The SLA's "advocacy of double standards" is quite evident throughout the organization's history. The SLA repeatedly alleged that the movement was designed and implemented for the people. The SLA believed that their movement was an outer manifestation of the inner love that they had developed for Blacks and other oppressed people of the world (Hearst, 1982). The SLA rhetoric declared that "they loved the people. They had forsaken their past bourgeois lives to pick up guns and fight for the people to show their love" (Hearst, 1982, p. 73). The evidence of the utilization of double standards is quite evident when the SLA members demanded that their supporters and critics judge them generously according to their intentions, which they also expected to be accepted on faith alone (George and Wilcox, 1996) and demanded that their opponents be judged critically according to their acts. The Hearst family was negatively depicted by the organization because of the Hearsts' relationship to their corporate influence, capitalist associations, and bourgeois lifestyle. The SLA perceived Randolph Hearst as "the corporate chairman of the fascist media empire of the ultraright Hearst Corporation, which is one of the largest propaganda institutions of this present military dictatorship of the military-armed corporate state that we now live under in this nation" (Maguire and Dunn, 1974, p.8).

Although the SLA desired to be judged according to the intentions of the organization, they still relentlessly demanded that the Hearst family be perceived in relationship to their oppressive acts against the people. Instead of evaluating the intentions of the Hearst family, the SLA demanded that Randolph Hearst "repent publicly and to prove his sincerity with a gesture of good faith-namely, feeding the poor" (Hearst, 1982, p. 64). The organization required the public to accept their movement on a faith

basis, but the organization refused to extend this courtesy to the Hearst family. The Hearst family would ultimately have to prove the sincerity of their intentions and their willingness to help the people through the P.I.N. food distribution program.

The SLA's plan to work for the people, "...was based upon a clear understanding and analysis of the enemy and its actions against the lives and freedom of the people" (Boulton, 1975, p. 122). Although the SLA's intentions were to be accepted on public faith, the actions of the organization painted a more hostile reality. In disagreement with the SLA ideology, Boulton (1975) has this to say: "The SLA claims it speaks for 'the people.' This heady assertion flies in the face of the reality of most people's reaction to the Foster slaying and the Hearst kidnapping. The nature of the SLA's actions guarantee that the masses of people have no say at all about the course of the SLA's decisions. It reduces people to passive spectators, and further reinforces the view that the Left is a bunch of wild-eyed adventurers, removed from ordinary life, living in a fantasy world of revolution, guns and romantic acts" (p.122).

The SLA's obsession with representing the oppressed people in society provided the organization with a type of necessary moral superiority over others (George and Wilcox, 1996). The organization found great appreciation in sacrificing and struggling for the people, while consistently discrediting those who were indoctrinated into the bourgeois mentality and lifestyle. The members of the SLA inflicted their moral superiority complex most often on Patty. The organization perceived her bourgeois upbringing to be inferior to the more humble and sacrificing lifestyle that the members of the organization had adopted.

According to Patty Hearst (1982), the SLA "did not hesitate to berate me a

bourgeois weakling” (p. 85). Patty recalls Zoya (Patricia Soltysik) on one occasion saying to her: “Your such a bourgeois bitch! You have no idea what poor people are like. They can’t afford the luxury of your bourgeois morals” (Hearst, 1982, p. 54). By continuously attacking Patty and her family, the members of the SLA became prouder of their struggles to abolish their own bourgeois desires. The organization’s success against the struggle for inner capitalist desires gave the SLA a sense of superiority over those who had yet to begin truly fighting for the causes and lives of the oppressed people.

The SLA movement can also be examined in relationship to what George and Wilcox (1996) call their “doomsday thinking.” According George and Wilcox (1996), extremist organizations “often predict dire or catastrophic consequences from a situation or from a failure to follow a specific course, and they tend to exhibit a kind of ‘crisis-mindedness’ ” (p. 59). The SLA utilized the “doomsday thinking” technique throughout the entire movement. The organization employed this order of thinking when it declared to America that “should any attempt be made by the authorities to rescue the prisoner, or to arrest or harm any SLA elements, the prisoner is to be executed” (Hearst, 1982, p. 43). The SLA also declared that as long as its demands were adhered to, Patty would be maintained in adequate physical and mental condition, and would remain unharmed (Baker, 1974).

The organization also utilized “doomsday thinking” within its organizational infrastructure. The organization’s “crisis mindedness” was present in its anticipation of an inevitable revolution that would transpire on America’s soil. This state of consciousness resulted in the organization becoming consumed by the presupposed revolution. According to Patty Hearst (1982), the members “talked about it all the time,

increased combat drills and weapons drills, simulated battles and target practice, stripped our weapons and reloaded them, renewed our criticism/self-criticism meetings, and fantasized about our own brave world” (p. 174). However, this “crisis mindedness” would eventually consume the organization and transform itself into a form of paranoia. Patricia Hearst (1982) recalls the impact that this “crisis mindedness” had on the organization:

...resuming our day-to-day routine of combat drills, exercises, and marathon discussions, a new intensity crept into our lives, a combination of revolutionary zeal and sheer paranoia. We were running out of time. We were mesmerized by Cinque’s certainty that here we were in May and the revolution was going to begin in earnest sometime this summer, in only a matter of months. He insisted that we had to train harder to prepare ourselves for the leadership roles that each of us would have to assume when the fighting took to the streets. Everyday, Cin talked of the revolution (p. 184).

The SLA had become convinced that the revolution would ensue and “doomsday” would erupt once the people saw the government for what it really was.

Extremist organizations indulge the “belief that it’s okay to do bad things in the service of ‘good’ cause” (George and Wilcox, 1996, p. 59). This is evident during the SLA’s bank robberies. The organization believed that the bank robberies were “justified as a revolutionary expropriation of the corporate military state’s property for the benefit of the people’s war” (Hearst, 1982, p.132). Although, Patty’s kidnapping was initiated because of the crimes her mother and father had committed against the people (Boulton, 1975), the SLA believed that their bad deeds were justifiable as long as those deeds benefited the struggle. Like other extremists, the SLA would “deliberately lie, distort, misquote, slander, defame, or libel their opponents and/or critics, engage in censorship or

repression, or undertake violence in ‘special cases.’ This is done with little or no remorse as long as it’s in the service of defeating the communists or fascists or whomever” (George and Wilcox, 1996, p. 59).

Although the SLA was not a religious organization, it did on occasion use supernatural rationales to justify its beliefs and actions. According to George and Wilcox (1996), extremist may “claim some kind of supernatural rationale for their beliefs and actions; their movement or cause, they believe, is ordained or looked upon favorably by God” (p. 59). For instance, once Cinque was quoted by Patty Hearst as saying: “I really am a prophet. I am here on earth to lead the people. I know Fahizah always believed that, but I didn’t really know until today” (Hearst, 1982, p. 210). Hearst (1982) declared that his statements were similar to those of Christ when he spoke to his disciples.

The SLA was also notorious for entertaining various conspiracy theories. Those conspiracy theories materialized from the organization’s distrust of the FBI and the police. The SLA believed that the government intended to eliminate radical uprisings and revolutions which aimed to overthrow the capitalist state. According to the SLA, “The police were working overtime to suppress small uprisings here and there, which were not reported in the press. They were trying to smother the embers of revolt” (Hearst, 1982, p. 209). The SLA had become convinced that the police and FBI were designing plots against them in order to eliminate the organization.

In understanding the extremist organization and their traits, one must recognize that “political extremist tend to be very prone to both conscious and

unconscious distortions of various kind. Simply put, they prefer to believe what they prefer to be true. The extremist tends to be the ideologue in purest form, i.e., the a priori thinker who believes what he must believe, regardless of evidence to the contrary” (George and Wilcox, 1996, p. 9).

The Social Psychology of the SLA

The psychology of the SLA is as complex as its movement. To appropriately understand the ramifications of the SLA and its strong influence as a minority group, it is important to recognize that minority organizations, unlike majority organizations, are governed by their own rules and laws. While the majority conforms to the dominant norms established by the United States government, the SLA was following the guidelines established by the United Symbionese War Council according to the Geneva Convention (see Appendix III).

The SLA was powerful in nature because it had the ability to cause social instability through its criminal acts and radical ideologies. According to Mugny and Pérez (1991), “Since the minority has the ‘power’ to create a social conflict by its behavioral consistency, it necessarily builds social and psychological barriers between itself and the targets of its potential influence” (p. 17). Some of the social and psychological barriers instituted by the SLA included extortion, kidnapping, robbery, assault, and threats. The SLA ultimately aimed to influence both the majority and the minority into accepting the reality and future of the oppressive, White, capitalist system through the utilization of psychological and social obstructions. The SLA members were masterminds at producing

psychological turmoil in their targets whether those targets were the Hearst family or California law enforcement officials. The organization had the ability to extort money from the Hearst family, control the media, and dictate the actions of the police through psychological domination. Patty's safety had become the number one priority of the Hearst family, the media, and the police. Knowing this, the SLA moved their social and psychological barriers into action. The organization began to demand that the police, the Hearst family, and the media obey their every order to ensure that Patty remained alive. For fear of endangering her life, all parties involved agreed to cooperate with the SLA, further affirming the power of the organization's influence.

The SLA, like most other minority organizations, was more accepted by young college students than older adults. This is not surprising since the members of the organization were primarily young, educated, revolutionists. Even after the movement concluded, graffiti and posters declaring, "Long Live The SLA," "We Love You Tania," and "Long Live The Cobra" were praised and admired by young people throughout the country (Marilyn Baker and Sally Brompton, 1974). The research of Mugny and Pérez (1991) confirms that "the minority group would obviously be judged more negatively by adults than by youths, and also as less credible since its members were not considered to be a spokesman for an alternative, nor were they viewed as sure of themselves, open minded, realistic, or responsible" (p. 66). Thus, the adults who comprise the majority group traditionally have difficulty being influenced by progressive minority organizations such as the SLA and vice versa.

The majority organization overwhelmingly has the ability to create a substantial

amount of conflict because “the minority group’s attributes are first constructed in reference to the norm and the majority group then in reference to the relationship between the majority and the object of debate” (Mugny and Perez, 1991, p. 84). The SLA, like most other minority groups, broke away from the societal norms established by the dominant group and adopted a new set of norms structured primarily for the purposes of the revolution that was to come. The psychosocial dynamics employed by the SLA appropriately equipped the organization to both confront and dominate its social influence and impact on the rest of society.

Understanding the sociological and psychological aspects of the SLA is essential to the understanding of the movement. Based upon Handley Cantril’s 1963 work, The Psychology of Social Movements, the members of the SLA can be categorized as complex social psychologists in their own right. Like other scientists, the social psychologist deals with problems firmly rooted in a social context. The SLA, like the social psychologist, explores those phenomena relevant to the common man while finding it difficult to be open-minded about theories and ideologies contrary to their own experiences (Cantril, 1963).

The SLA’s closed-mindedness was merely a reflection of its belief system. The organization believed that in war there could be no middle ground. “Either you are the people or the enemy” (Hearst, 1982, p. 172). The SLA refused to compromise its socially constructed ideologies and theories.

Cantril (1963), like George and Wilcox (1996), and Mugny and Perez (1991), explored extremist organizations similar to the SLA. Cantril’s (1963) findings suggest that the psyche of social movements inevitably will involve the use of slogans and

symbols, such as flags, various insignia, or caricatures of the enemy. The SLA's symbol, the seven-headed cobra, was the primary symbol incorporated into the movement. The seven-headed cobra symbol was drawn on walls at SLA hideouts, SLA paraphernalia, and on SLA writings.

In addition to the SLA cobra, the slogans of the organization had a great significance for the movement as well. The Maoist slogans that permeated the SLA clan, as recalled by Patty Hearst (1982), included: "Dare to struggle and dare to win" (p. 71), "A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another" (p. 71), and "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" (p. 71).

Although Mugny and Pérez (1991) and Cantril (1963) explore the social psychology of social movements without investigating the SLA, their theories and findings are generalizable enough to apply to the SLA as well. The findings of Mugny and Pérez (1991) and Cantril (1963) suggest that movements like that of the SLA "stress individuality and the variety of men's capacities and traits, but somehow neglect the relationship of men to the social context in which they live" (Cantril, 1963, p. xi).

Exploring the Deviance

According to Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton (1961) in their article "Competition, Communication, and Conformity," members of organizations like the SLA "will conform to protect or to enhance his group" (p. 199). Blake and Mouton (1961) suggest that members of an organization will resort to deviant means in order to attain

victory for the group. The SLA believed that unlawfulness was the most effective way to attain one's goals in a corrupt society. They also believed that "revolutions could be fought and won against capitalism only through force and guns, and not through theory or books or lectures" (Hearst, 1982, p. 53).

The SLA further postulated that revolution could only be achieved through absolute group conformity. This conformity required that members within the organization recognize that "white people were incapable of directing the struggle. Moreover, whites were not to be trusted in a leadership position because historically, they had proven themselves to be traitors to the cause of oppressed people" (Hearst, 1982, p. 73-74). The members of the SLA were willing to fight to the death against those who refused to conform to their ideologies. Patty Hearst (1963) recalls the opposition she endured at the hands of the organization for not renouncing her bourgeois belief system:

While I may have looked upon their beliefs with disdain, they, in turn, held my life style and my beliefs in utter contempt. Just about everything I thought was white, they said was black and they were determined to re-educate me. My values, to them, were bourgeois bullshit. My relationship with Steven Weed had been bourgeois and sexist. He had been using me, exploiting me, they said. The enjoyment I felt in cooking and baking was bourgeois and sexist. Engagement rings were ostentatious and a symbol of male proprietorship. Marriage was strictly a middle-class institution, enslavement of women. Monogamy was typical bourgeois mentality, denying freedom to men and women. Every bit of my relationship with Steve, in their eyes, had been bourgeois, reactionary, and beneath contempt. Spending money on indoor plants, art work, oriental rugs, and new furniture for our apartment had been bourgeois materialism and a waste of good money which would better have served the poor and oppressed (Hearst, 1982, p. 73).

According to Blake and Mouton (1961), the SLA's actions are congruent with the philosophy that exclaims that "When the dominant theme of action is to win, individual member reactions are remarkably uniform, constituting a high degree of conformity in the direction of protecting group interests through actions which move the

group toward victory” (p. 200). Thus, the SLA chose to utilize murder, kidnapping, extortion, and robbery to obtain victory over the bourgeois government. In addition, Blake and Mouton (1961) further suggest that if people within the organization(s) value their membership, then they will ultimately resort to drastic measures to protect their organization’s solidarity.

Comprehending the SLA means unequivocally understanding the organization’s use of violence. The SLA perceived the use of violence to be an indispensable weapon in their social movement. Violence was utilized to bring the SLA what dialogue and patience couldn’t. The SLA’s assassination of Dr. Marcus Foster was brought about because the SLA felt that they had no other choice in the matter. The organization believed that they had exhausted all of its resources in relationship having its demands met. Town hall meetings, conferences, and protest proved to be unsuccessful in swaying Foster and his supporters. The organizations’ belief that Dr. Foster intended to violate the civil rights of Black children with his identification card initiative inevitably sparked a seed of violence in the movement.

The reality of the Dr. Foster saga prompted the SLA to ask, “How then, are freedom and equality to be secured when policies appear to infringe upon individual civil rights” (Bondurant, 1971, p. 6)? According to Bondurant (1971), this question can be answered by recognizing that “the revolutionary readily turns to destructive acts to achieve his ends; the radical may well argue that only through violence can change be brought about the anarchist is caught in the dilemma of having to resort to violence to overcome what he views to be violent, coercive nature of the state” (Bondurant, 1971, p. 7).

The SLA's reliance on deviance to advance the movement is impossible to ignore. The organization resorted to violence as the primary and most effective method for fueling the revolution. To the SLA, the revolution could only be obtained by taking by force what they felt rightfully belonged to the people. Patty Hearst (1982) confirmed this sentiment in her book, Every Secret Thing, when she recalls Teko (William Harris) mentioning that, "Only revolutionary killings of the police and prominent business and political figures would serve to bring on the class struggle" (p. 295). However, this ideology was not just internalized by Teko, but by all of the other members as well.

The SLA was highly skilled in executing its deviant plans, whether those plans included robbery, kidnapping, or evading arrest. The organization possessed all of the essential ingredients to make it a successful organization. The organization was extremely skilled in developing techniques for the purposes of carrying out deviant acts, generating the ideologies needed to justify the actions, and utilizing the weaponry pertinent to completing the deviant action (Best and Luckenbill, 1994). To ensure the maximization of the skills that the organization had acquired, the SLA members supported each other by teaching one another various deviant skills, offering each other support, and protecting each other from the authorities (Best and Luckenbill, 1994).

The SLA, like many other deviant organizations, provided its members with the protection it sought, the support it needed, and anything else the members within the organization lacked or needed. But the question still remains: What makes an individual join and remain in a deviant organization? According to George and Wilcox (1996), "Most social psychologists and sociologists feel that one of the more important elements related to psychological make-up causing one to join a movement is desire for

recognition and favorable regard by others. For some people, if favorable attention is unattainable, perhaps notoriety will do. If what is desired is to be noticed (and thus demonstrate one's importance or effectiveness), then 'bad' attention will serve the function equally well as 'good' attention" (p. 71).

Advancing the Purpose

Advancement of the SLA movement and its purpose could only be achieved completely through a revolution. Like many other Black movements, the SLA perceived revolution to be the most effective tool in solidifying desired change. The SLA perceived long-term programs of violence aimed at overthrowing the existing government to be the most beneficial for the organization (Cameron , 1966).

Once the SLA radicals instituted terrorism into their militant activity, the organization gained unprecedented ground as a movement. Through terrorism the organization had equipped itself with the tools necessary to publicize the purpose of the movement. The organization wanted the people to recognize that their terrorist actions were "based on a clear understanding and analysis of the enemy and its actions against the lives and freedom of the people" (Hearst, 1982, p. 94). However, instead of fueling the movement and its cause, the criminal acts of the SLA directed the organization towards its destruction. Historically, "at the point where the revolutionist resort to illegal acts of violence, the authorities step in and try to suppress them. Often the revolt dies at this point" (Cameron, 1966, p. 135).

The terrorist strategies instituted by the SLA were essential to the organization's goals and objectives. The militant tactics of the organization refers to the manner in which a social movement goes about attaining its goals and objectives (Lang and Lang,

1960). Unlike passive resistance, the SLA perceived active resistance to be the only means of securing a future for the organization. Through active resistance, the SLA was able to outwardly express the prevalent abuse, unfair discrimination, and injustice plaguing the oppressed people of America (Hopper, 1950). The organization's acts of active resistance enhanced the movement's inventiveness and creativity in a way that ultimately developed an organizational pattern of protest (Mohr, 1969).

The SLA recognized that "A revolution, in certain respects, resembles an elephant. The elephant is the slowest breeding of all living creatures, and a revolution is the slowest forming of all social movements" (Edwards, 1970, p. 16). Hearst (1982) recalls this sentiment when she declares that "Yolanda expounded during one lengthy discussion on her belief that the revolution definitely would not be won in any of our lifetimes; nevertheless, it was a worthy goal to which to devote our own unimportant personal lives" (Hearst, 1982, p. 176). Although the members of the organization realized that they might not live to see the revolution, they all agreed that the Symbionese Nation of the future would be honored with statutes, monuments, and parks dedicated to its everlasting memory (Hearst, 1982). But to attain this everlasting memory, the organization recognized that the status quo would have to lose its dominance through guerrilla warfare.

The Guerrilla Warfare Strategy

Guerrilla warfare is "a form of warfare in the technical sense in which all war involves the use of armed men to annihilate the men and arms of an enemy" (Johnson, 1996, p. 160). The SLA comrades considered themselves to be urban guerillas who were determined to overthrow the fascist government through precisely planned military

actions. “As urban guerillas, they intended to fight the revolution in the streets of major cities, just as revolutionaries elsewhere fought in the jungles” (Hearst, 1982, p. 74).

Chalmers Johnson’s (1996) work, Revolutionary Change best describes the SLA’s denomination of guerrilla warfare through the examination of tactics utilized by Mao Tse-tung in 1929. Mao’s guerrilla strategy as described by Johnson is as follows: “The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass, the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue” (p. 160). However, it is important to note that guerrilla warfare is often infiltrated by one military force that is significantly weaker than the other military force. Although the SLA’s military force was significantly weaker in number and strength in relationship to the military force of the capitalist state, the organization set out to compensate for its deficiencies through training, effective leadership, and weaponry skills (Johnson, 1966). The organization employed the guerrilla tactics employed by Mao Tse-tung in order that the organization might effectively lead the oppressed people of America into the revolution that was guaranteed to come. The organization worked diligently at perfecting its combat drills, physical calisthenics, and weapons practice (Hearst, 1982).

Guerrilla warfare requires obedience and dedication from its members. Historically, to become a guerrilla warrior much like the individuals in the SLA, “unusual standards of discipline are inculcated through rigorous indoctrination, reinforced by the irreversibility of soldier’s commitment in joining the revolutionary movement” (Johnson, 1966, p. 162). The SLA took great pride in its strenuous urban guerrilla admission process. Patty Hearst (1982) had this to say about her indoctrination into the SLA:

Why were they bombarding me with this kind of information for hours and then for days, to the point of saturation? At one point, Cin explained that as

revolutionaries it was their duty to “educate” me about the “peoples army” and the goals of the SLA. Revolutionaries, he said, did not simply hold prisoners in solitary confinement “like the pigs did.” He instructed all members of the unit to spend time with me in an effort to teach me the “truth” about the oppression of the people, the state of the world, and how it was all explained in Marxist, Maoist, and communist writings (p. 47).

According to Johnson (1996), “Every guerrilla strategist, from T. E. Lawrence to Chè Guevara, has insisted on the need for intensive education of rebel soldiers” (p. 163).

The re-education of potential SLA revolutionaries involved denouncing almost every aspect of bourgeois life. Hearst (1982) recalls the SLA’s reaction to her bourgeois mentality:

They were appalled at the red nail polish on my fingernails at the time of my “arrest”. That was a flaunting of capitalist narcissism. “Poor people don’t paint their nails.” My sports car was a capitalist toy that was an affront to starving people (p. 73).

The SLA believed that the people desired and needed a revolution that would ultimately lead the oppressed and neglected of America into a promised land free of capitalist ideologies. However, Johnson (1966) claims that the “use of terrorism to coerce support indicates that the population is basically opposed to revolutionary change” (p. 162). Johnson (1966) further concludes that “the resort to violence must be in response to real needs of politically organized peoples if it is to be accepted by them as humane, logical and tolerable behavior” (p. 165). Thus, according to Johnson’s theory, one can attribute the SLA’s short-lived movement to a lack of public support and public demand. Those actions, which seem illogical, inhumane, and intolerable to the people, will inevitably be seen in the same light by the capitalist state.

Once an organization like the SLA violates the established norms and laws of the American people, law enforcement must operate in a fashion that aims to protect the

citizens from the violators of the norms. Thus, Cinque realized the serious implications of guerrilla warfare, according to Patty Hearst (1982). when she recalled him saying: “We are all revolutionaries. And if the pigs don’t shoot and kill us, like they’d like to, then they’re going to put us in jail and throw away the key. We’re revolutionaries, and they’ve got to put us down, if they can” (p. 391).

Although Cinque and the other members of the SLA perceived its actions to be necessary, it is not unusual for the Left to perceive its actions as guerrilla warfare when the Right regards the guerrilla warfare to be terrorism (Foss and Larkin, 1986). The SLA confirms the theory that “political violence and social movements comprehend overlapping terrain” (Foss and Larkin, 1986, p. 125).

Violence was the primary tool necessary for the advancement of the SLA and the anticipated revolution that was to come. Violence is ultimately “an act of last resort by those who see no other means of achieving their goals. In this view, the challenging group frustrated by its inability to attract a significant following and gain some response from its targets of influence, turns to violence in desperation” (Gamson, 1975, p. 81). Thus, violence never proceeds without opposition from the establishment. The SLA recognized this opposition and aimed to use the enemy’s dissatisfaction to their advantage according to this statement made by Hearst (1982):

The effect of this unrelenting guerrilla warfare would be to force the police and even the National Guard to take countermeasures against us, which would entail increasing police oppression in the black and poor neighborhoods. The naked use of force would enrage the people, who would rise up and join the SLA in battling the ruling class (p. 194).

Although this strategy seemed to be unsuccessful for the SLA on a large scale, the

extermination of the organization by the police did increase support for the organization among many radicals and sympathizers throughout the country.

The Los Angeles police department was criticized by family members of the victims and SLA supporters for acting in an inhumane and unprofessional manner when Cinque (Donald DeFreeze), Fahizah (Nancy Ling Perry), Zoya (Patricia Soltysik), Cujo (William Wolfe), Gelina (Angela Atwood), and Gabi (Camilla Hall) died from smoke inhalation, wounds, and burns caused by LAPD incendiary grenades. According to Gamson (1975), this violence should be expected when a social movement is annihilated because “the threatened authorities turn to repression. But this attempted repression simply adds fuel to the fire, bringing new allies to the cause of the challenging group and increasing its chances of ultimate success” (p. 81).

Understanding the SLA’s utilization of guerrilla warfare requires one to analyze signification of white racism in the organization and the movement’s declaration to eradicate it. The SLA believed that most Whites did not want to sacrifice their capitalist mentalities to attain full racial justice for the oppressed of America. The organization believed that violent guerrilla warfare was the only way to suppress white corruption, especially since various forms of non-violent protest had drastically failed to overthrow the capitalist state. The SLA perceived other movements to be completely ineffective.

Patricia Hearst recalls:

Time after time, each of the other left-wing or radical groups were castigated by the SLA comrades. Most of all they despised the Black Panthers, the strongest and best known of these groups. The crime of the Black Panthers was that they had “sold out,” and given up their guns and violence to embrace counterrevolutionary social activities, such as free breakfast programs in Oakland. The Weather Underground were “phony revolutionaries” because they only did “symbolic” bombings in which no one was killed...the SLA thought the Communist Party in the United States was “all theory and no action” and

therefore “reactionary.” Jane Fonda, the outspoken actress, was deemed “the worst kind of fascist.” Liberals such as Jane Fonda sought social changes through legislation that tended to pacify the people and to delay the people’s uprising against the fascist state. Liberals were doing more harm than good for the people (Hearst, 1982, p. 84-85).

The SLA was convinced that beyond educating whites about their capitalist faults, there must also be “social and political action to restructure completely the basic institutions of the United States” (Feagin and Vera, 1995, xiv). The SLA further accepted the notion that White racism had to be “extirpated at its roots in every major institution” (Feagin and Vera, 1995, p. xiv) as well. The SLA was disgusted by “The violence with which the supremacy of white values is affirmed and the aggressiveness which has permeated the victory of these values over the ways of life” (Fanon, 1963, 35). The SLA, like Fanon (1967), recognized the significance of fighting the establishment through guerrilla warfare. Guerilla warfare ultimately meant revolting against centuries of white oppression directed at the exploited and enslaved.

Guerrilla warfare not only served to overthrow the government of the oppressors, but it also served to free the SLA members from restrictions established by the capitalist society. The organization discarded the institution of marriage and monogamy and adopted sexual freedom and lesbian relationships as an alternative lifestyle. According to Edwards (1970), revolutionaries often adopt “a rapid change in ideas regarding marriage, divorce, prostitution, illegitimacy, and similar social problems. But the change goes on at so rapid a rate that necessary moral restraint is in many cases lost” (p. 131). However, Patty Hearst (1982) claims that “It was ironic that all of the SLA sisters believed in the liberation of women, and yet the men in this cell acted as though the women were there to

serve them sexually” (p. 165). Nevertheless, the SLA’s inconsistency is not at all unusual. No social movement exists in total harmony or equilibrium (Welch, 1980).

Through guerrilla warfare the SLA aimed to ultimately “dramatize both the complex problems that now confronted American cities and the urgent need for solutions to these problems” (Feagin and Hahn, 1973, p. 1). Although the movement was short lived, the organization’s utilization of violence and deviance insured that the message of the organization was heard loud and clear by the American people. The SLA’s movement will undoubtedly remain one of the most notorious terrorist movements this country has ever known. Memories of the organization are still evident on the walls of Berkeley, California buildings. Messages like: “Six Burned, So You Can Learn” “Sisters For The SLA,” “The SLA...The Tip Of The Iceberg,” “Only Those Who Do Nothing make Mistakes. Right On SLA,” and “We Love You Tania” (Baker and Brompton, 1974) serve as constant reminders of the fallen urban guerrillas who tried to change the world, one revolution at a time.

The Purpose of Tania

The SLA’s kidnapping of Patricia Hearst provided the organization with the notoriety that it desperately sought. Before the Patricia Hearst saga, the SLA lacked the attention necessary for a successful social movement. The decision the SLA made to abduct Patty proved to be extremely beneficial for the organization. According to Patty Hearst (1982), the SLA gained notoriety and the SLA became famous, a new household word.

The kidnapping of Patty Hearst brought a new form of terrorism onto America’s soil. In addition, “it is the only kidnapping in which the victim whether coerced or not,

rejected her freedom and joined her captors” (Pascal and Pascal, 1974, p. 6). But undoubtedly, “The Patricia Hearst kidnapping has become a psychological horror story, riddled with uncertainties and bizarre twists” (Pascal and Pascal, 1974, p. 6).

Although Hearst’s captivity was emotionally and physically devastating for her in the beginning, Patty eventually began to sympathize with the organization’s goals and beliefs. As time progressed, Patty became “increasingly more enthusiastic about her participation as she finds her position within the group” (Castiglia, 1996, p. 90). Once the SLA began to question Hearst’s racial ideologies and bourgeois beliefs, she became more sympathetic to the plight of the organization. Hearst’s reeducation classes forced her to confront the capitalist mentality she had embraced before her captivity. Her acknowledgement of the revolutions infesting Puerto Rico, Mozambique, the Philippines, and various other countries in the Third World, forced her to discard the bourgeois and sheltered Hearst dynasty mentality forced upon her throughout her life (Hearst, 1982). Hearst began to realize that prior to her capture she had been sheltered and ignorant in regards to foreign affairs, politics, and economics (Hearst, 1982), but the SLA had equipped her with the necessary information she needed to be a prosperous revolutionary.

Through the SLA, Patty “moves from a challenge to her racial stereotypes and the politics they support to an examination of class-defined systems of gender socialization and inequality” (Castiglia, 1996, p. 92). Patty Hearst’s new found liberation within the SLA proved to be extremely beneficial for the organization. According to Hearst, (1982), “Cinque and his comrades could not hide their delight and delusions grandeur over the widespread blast of publicity given to them in the press as a result of my kidnapping. I was their passport to fame and popularity (p. 52-53). Patty Hearst herself had become a

celebrity in her own right, even more so once she became Tania. Only when Patty began to denounce her bourgeois and sexist upbringing in exchange for becoming the revolutionary Tania, did the FBI begin to regard her as a radical criminal and not the poor and helpless kidnap victim she was once perceived to be.

The Birth of Tania proved to be the most important SLA commodity. The kidnapping brought the attention and notoriety not experienced with the murder of Dr. Foster. And just as the SLA members indulged in the Tania escapade, so did Patty herself. She willingly began studying the works of Mao Tse-tung, Karl Marx, and George Johnson. She internalized the SLA's "Codes of War", mission statements, and declarations. The purpose of Tania was to ultimately bring the SLA to the attention of the world

The SLA kidnapped Patty Hearst for the primary purpose of bringing the organization to the attention of the capitalist world. The Tania affair provided the organization with the momentum that it needed and desired to carry forth the objects of the movement. Although the SLA will always be remembered in relationship to Patricia Hearst, her connection to the organization insures that the SLA will never be forgotten. Thus, Tania successfully fulfilled her purpose to forever immortalize Cinque and his radical disciples.

CHAPTER 3

THE RHETORIC

Social movements are ultimately “products of the interaction of people mutually influencing each other” (Gusfield, 1970, p. 2). Thus, the rhetoric utilized by a movement serves as a reflection of this interpersonal interaction. Therefore, in order for one to appropriately analyze and critique the SLA, one must give significant attention to the rhetoric adopted by the organization.

Although most of the members of the SLA were white, the rhetoric of the organization was similar to that of various Black revolutionaries and nationalists. The organization perceived itself to be the spokesperson for denouncing past and contemporary discriminatory practices including slavery, segregated accommodations, disenfranchisement, inadequate education and unfair job hiring practices (Smith and Robb, 1971). Like Brandes (1971), the SLA also believed that “revolutionary rhetoric is not only influenced by the stages through which a revolt passes, but it also interacts with the points on which the Old Regime has permitted dysfunction. Religion, nationalism, communism, human rights, and internationalism all influence and are influenced by rhetoric” (Brandes, 1971, p. 14).

The language of the SLA provides positive affirmations for Blacks, while denouncing the worthiness of the White establishment. In Black nationalism, “No

effort is made to unify America; all energy is expended for inducing unity among black Americans. The Black nationalists contends that the unity of Black Americans is a necessary step for the eventual unity of the nation” (Smith, 1969, p. 5). According to Hearst (1982):

The concept of Third World leadership was very important to them. They believed that only black and other oppressed people could lead the struggle for freedom. Only Third World people and other oppressed people could know the proper direction which the struggle should take at any given time. White people were incapable of directing this struggle. Moreover, whites were not to be trusted in a leadership position because, historically, they had been proven themselves to be traitors to the cause of the oppressed. The white brothers and sisters of this combat unit were very proud and fortunate to have the leadership and direction of their black General Field Marshal (p. 74).

The SLA, like many Black nationalists, also believed that “The rhetorical strategy is based on this rationale of movement: Anything that facilitates black unity is good; anything that indicts white America is good” (Smith, 1969, p. 6). Through the rhetoric of the SLA, the organization had the opportunity to express its dismay at White America’s fascist system.

The strength, eloquence, and vengeance expressed in the rhetoric of the SLA is impressive. Although the organization was predominately White, the SLA’s rhetoric had a way of appealing to African-Americans. According to Smith (1969), other than Blacks themselves, only idealistic White youth with a sense of rational and personal have historically responded to the conditions of Blacks in this country. An excerpt from a communiqué written by Teko (Bill Harris) and Yolanda (Emily Harris) taken from Hearst’s 1982 work Every Secret Thing, affirms this sentiment accurately:

Greeting to the people. My name is Teko. I am a white revolutionary and soldier in the Symbionese Liberation Army. I have a message for all of my white brothers who have not yet come forward to fight for the freedom of all the people. Contrary to what many of us may think, the special privileges we as a group have

gained for ourselves through the oppression of all other people has never secured for us the freedom we desire. White men must understand that they will live under the threat of death as long as they continue to oppress the members of any class or group who have the strength and determination to fight back (p. 123).

Teko futher concludes:

White men themselves have only one avenue to freedom and that is to join in fighting to the death those who are aspire to be slave masters of the world. Many of us have been 'bold' enough to intellectualize about revolution, but far too chickenshit to get down and make it. Most of us have been nearly fatally stricken with the vile sickness of racism. Again, most of us have been immobilized by our sexist egos and have watched and done nothing as our sisters have rushed us into battle. We have fooled ourselves into believing that Madison Avenue piggery will bring us eternal bourgeois happiness. If we haven't bought into the racist, sexist, capitalist, imperialist program, we have 'greened-out' in Mendocino and New Hampshire. To Black people, who lead our struggle to freedom, we have proved to be the racist punks of the world when we kick back and live off the blood and lives of the people (p. 123).

The SLA understood that its revolutionary rhetoric consisted of understanding the techniques of argumentation (Katope and Zolbroad, 1970) and the study of black history and literature (Edwards, 1973). The rhetoric of the SLA was rooted in the studies and philosophies of not only Karl Marx and Mao Tse-tung, but also Malcolm X and Marcus Garvey. Through the study of Black history, the SLA began to regard the rhetoric of Black Power as an essential tool in ensuring that their voices were heard.

According to Burgess (1968), "the rhetoric of Black Power is a response to a long history of communications between White and black in American culture- finally putting Negro citizens unmistakably on the offensive, stating their claims as citizens and human beings" (p. 122). Consequently, the SLA as a predominately white organization took it upon itself to be the voice of Black Power, by righting the wrongs of the government in relationship to the suffering of Blacks. Through the rhetoric of the organization, the SLA proved that one did not have to be Black to advocate Black Power.

The voice of the SLA was further exemplified through the organization's symbol, the seven-headed cobra. The seven-headed cobra served as a visual and rhetorical symbol for the organization. The SLA's first public document was a leaflet circulated throughout the Berkley community. This leaflet explained in great detail the rhetorical and visual significance of the SLA's symbol. The organization declared in this leaflet that the venom of the seven-headed cobra would destroy the fascist insects that preyed upon the oppressed people of the world (Boulton, 1975). The cobra, according to the SLA, represented the strength and dedication of the organization:

The seven memberships of our federation are men and women who are black, brown, yellow, red, white, young, and old.

Each member lives and speaks and fights for the best interests of all within the body, just as no on head of the cobra can be attacked without the others rising to strike with venom in self defense to destroy the attacker.

The SLA will build and fight for the socialist unity of all oppressed peoples. A cry from any one of us will echo in the body of our common ear and we will attack out of instinct and in defense for our survival (Boulton, 1975, p. 48-49).

The circulated leaflet also disclosed the names and meanings of the seven heads on the cobra. According to Boulton (1975), "the 'seven principles' were printed on the leaflet in three languages: Swahili, which some Black cultural nationalists expected to become the true language of Black America; Spanish, spoken by California's huge population of Mexican migrants and Chicanos; and finally English" (p. 48). The SLA's first public document outlined the subliminal meanings of the seven-headed cobra in great detail (see Appendix IV).

Although the utilization of the leaflets proved to be a beneficial communication device for the SLA, the organization's ideologies and psyche are most vividly expressed in the organization's communiqués. The communiqués provide an in-depth look into the

organization and its principles. Through the SLA's communiqués, the organization was able to gain significant support for its movement while simultaneously instilling fear into its "fascist" critics. No other means of communication utilized by the organization proved to be more insightful than its communiqués.

The SLA's communiqués were rhetorical enforcers of the SLA's ideologies. According to Lang and Lang (1961), "The content of the official doctrines for which a movement stands are collectively designated as its ideology" (p. 100). The SLA's "Codes of War" and the organization's communiqués included an overview of the organization's mission, the tactics that were to be carried out to ensure victory for the organization, and the organization's extreme dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs. According to Patricia Hearst (1982), "the SLA operated under a sort of constitution which spelled out what he [Cinque] called the 'righteous' conduct of urban guerrillas in the war against the fascist state" (p. 44).

The SLA utilized its rhetorical skills and devised multiple communiqués that both perplexed and captivated the country. Without a doubt, the Symbionese Liberation Army members proved to be as passionate about their rhetoric as they were about their militant activities.

The Feminist Influence

The rhetoric of the SLA exhibits a substantial feminist influence. The SLA movement not only fought for the liberation of oppressed races, it also devoted a great deal of attention to the liberation of women. Since most of the members of the SLA were women, it not surprising that the rhetoric of the organization exemplified the afflictions and concerns of women as well. The women of the SLA were primarily responsible for

writing, editing, and delivering the organization's document and communiqués. Women were a dominant force in the SLA (Baker and Brompton, 1974). In the SLA communiqués, "The only major editorial correction that appeared in them, again and again, was the reversal of the order of 'man' and 'woman' and 'men' and 'women' and when they had written of the Ages of Man, 'Man' became 'people'. The 'woman' always came before the 'man' in Symbionese rhetoric" (Baker and Brompton, 1974, p. 57).

The rhetoric of the SLA women was confident and combative. The freedom that the women desired can be best exemplified in an excerpt from a tape message delivered by Fahizah (Nany Ling Perry) as written by Patricia Hearst (1982):

We women know the truth as it has been revealed in our lives. We turn our rage toward the enemy in a direct line down the sights of our guns. We must turn our anger toward those who profit off our suffering and have our anger be reflected in military tactics that utilize people's violence against men and women who are the monsters of capitalist violence. Until we meet in the streets may we have a strong back like that of the gravedigger (p. 96).

The SLA women found Black nationalism and the rhetoric of Black nationalism to be of profound importance to them because they perceived the Black experience to be undifferentiated to the plight of the women. According to Hope (1975), it is understandable why the SLA women took such a keen interest in the Black Power movement:

Both the black movement and the women's movement arise from perception of reality. Their oppression is biologically based. Black oppression is based on race, the condition of blackness. Female oppression is based on sex, the condition of femaleness. Since the oppression finds its source in primary conditions of biology- generally unalterable facts of identity, both movements have faced the issue in the only way possible, rhetorically. Because no legislation nor any weapon can make black white or women men, both groups had the redefine an oppressive identity (p. 17).

The women within the SLA believed that Black Power philosophies could be applied to the liberation of women as well. The rhetoric affirmed the Black Power belief that “the cause of the problem is generally associated with the control of goods, services, and as a result, of people by the White power establishment (Larson, 1970, p. 54). Since the women perceived the white establishment to be both the oppressors of blacks and women, it seemed unrealistic to them to lead the SLA movement towards liberation because of their race. The SLA believed that only a Black person could lead the struggle towards equality because of their array of oppressive experiences. To assure that the liberation of women, as well as the liberation of “the people” was attained in the revolution, the women of the SLA adopted the Black Power belief that violence could serve as the obvious outcome in establishing freedom. This sentiment is further affirmed by Gelina (Angela Atwood) in this excerpt from one of her communiqués as cited by Patricia Hearst 1982 work, Every Secret Thing:

A warning to the fascist military-corporate state: We have declared revolutionary war upon you, the enemy of the people, and our seriousness and determination will not be swayed by any number of U.S. government-inspected super-pigs, for those you have hunted are now hunting you (p. 96).

Through the rhetoric, history, and philosophies of the Black power movement, the women of the SLA were able to provide a foundation for the revolution that was to emerge. The SLA women believed that the freedom of blacks would inevitably lead to the freedom of all oppressed people, including women.

Communiqué Utilization

The SLA’s communiqués were rhetorical reflections of the organization’s belief system. The organization’s love for the oppressed of the world, its need for revolution,

and its desire for power is clearly expressed in the organization's communiqués.

Through the communiqués, the SLA developed an efficient platform for increasing the notoriety and influence of the organization.

The communiqués of the SLA were saturated with references to the U.S. prison system. The SLA believed that although prisoners were oppressed, they were still "...the largest potential source of revolutionaries" (Hearst, 1982, p. 70). According to Weed and Swanton (1976), "it had become increasingly clear that the prison system was the key to the SLA's origins, philosophy, and rage. If they had a soft spot it had to be the plight of their comrades behind the walls. Their communiqués were filled with references to California's concentration camps, strip cells, and political prisoners" (p. 25).

The SLA believed that its communiqués were mirrors to the organization's revolutionary soul. To ensure that the mission and ideologies of the organization were clearly understood, the SLA repeatedly incorporated the words like, "fascist," "Amerikkka," and "pig" into the communiqués to describe law enforcement officials, the government, and capitalism. The SLA believed that the "pigs" were fascist individuals seeking to destroy the subordinates of Amerikkka through economic and social oppression.

The SLA's utilization of slogans, buzzwords, radical phrases and clichés (George and Wilcox, 1996) was particularly incorporated into this excerpt from a SLA communiqué recited by Cinque (Donald DeFreeze):

However, to this I would say yes. You do, indeed, know me. You have always known me. I'm that nigger you have hunted and feared night and day. I'm that nigger you have killed hundreds of my people in a vain hope of finding. I'm that nigger that haunts you now. Yes, you know me. You know us all. You know me, I'm the wetback. You know me, I'm the gook, the broad, the servant, the spik.

Yes, indeed, you know us all. and we know you- the oppressor, murder and robber. And you have hunted and robbed and exploited us all. Now we are the hunters that will give you know rest. And we will not compromise the freedom of our children.

Death to the fascist insect that preys on the life of our children (Hearst, 1982, p. 69).

The emotion, vehemence, and exasperation displayed in Cinque's communiqué, is also manifested in Hearst's communiqué to her parents and the public:

You are a corporate liar, of course you will say that you don't know what I am talking about, but I ask you to prove it. Tell the poor and oppressed of this nation what the corporate state is about to do, warn black and poor people that they are about to be murdered down to the last man, woman, child.

The communiqué continues:

I should have known that if you and the rest of the corporate state were willing to do this to millions of people to maintain power and serve your needs, you would also kill me if necessary to serve those same needs. How long will it take before white people in this country understand that what happens to a black child happens sooner or later to a white child? How long will it take before we all understand that we must fight for our freedom?

Hearst further explains:

I have been given the name Tania after a comrade who fought along Che in Bolivia for the people of Bolivia. I embrace the name with the determination to continue fighting with her spirit. I embrace the name with the determination to continue fighting with her spirit. There is no victory in half-assed attempts at revolution. I know Tania dedicated her life to the people, fighting with total dedication an intense desire to learn, which I will continue in the oppressed America people's revolution. All colors of the string in the web of humanity for freedom (Hearst, 1982, p. 126-127).

In order for the SLA to gain both the attentiveness and sustenance the communiqués needed, the organization strategically manipulated and utilized the print and electronic media to the fullest. Aware of the importance of the communiqués, the SLA demanded that all of the organization's communications be printed in full in the newspapers and played in their entirety on the airways. To ensure that their demands

were adhered to, the SLA threatened to harm Patty Hearst if their communiqués were not publicized. This initiative came about as the result of the “capitalist establishment” failing to announce the “arrest” of Patty Hearst. Hearst (1982) recalls the situation clearly when she wrote:

Cin told me angrily that the “stupid mother fucking pigs were trying to play games’ with the SLA by not announcing my arrest.” He said that there had been absolutely nothing in the paper about it. But the SLA was far ahead of the police and FBI in this operation and the “warrant” for my arrest would be sent to the media. This time the SLA would make certain that all its communiqués were published in the media so that “the people” would know what was really going on (p. 42).

Without the media, the SLA would not have been able to generate the visibility that it needed. Although the SLA believed that the press was a conglomeration of bourgeois pigs and the news media were all owned by fascist multinational corporations (Hearst, 1982), the organization still needed and desired the assistance of the industry. According to Hearst (1982), “the SLA wanted the publicity as much as they wanted the food program. With me in their clutches, the SLA was now famous, a household word. Cin came to believe he was all-powerful, and his followers, all seven of them, lived in the same fantasy world” (p. 81). Hearst (1982) further exclaims that “Cin and the others were delighted when Walter Cronkite or John Chancellor or some other national news commentator reported on the SLA. For them, a national news broadcast, coming out of New York or Washington, meant that the SLA was a national organization and not confined in the San Francisco area. They bragged when the SLA was the lead item in any newscast” (p. 84).

Through the media, the SLA believed that they could rally the people to the SLA cause (Hearst, 1982). The organization aimed to saturate the media with radical SLA

propaganda and leftist ideologies. The proliferation of rhetoric in conjunction with the SLA's actions would propel the organization and its movement forward into the revolution that was to inevitably come. Zald and McCarthy (1979) believes that this attention on media utilization can be explained in this way:

If support is mobilized from outside the group the experiences deprivation, communication processes and the mobilization of third-party support must become a central focus. In modern society the mass media are a major form for this communication. Movement leaders and organizations seek to use the media to portray grievances and to engage in legitimacy bargaining with their opponents (p. 3).

The SLA believed that its mission and goals could be best attained through its communiqués. The SLA's communiqués were filtered through various media outlets to insure adequate publicity and notoriety for the SLA members. Because of the SLA's communiqués, the organization received the attention that it needed. Social movements seek to utilize those communicative tools which can best be utilized in aiding in the survival and prosperity of the organizations, and for the SLA, that tool was the print and electronic media.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Discussion

The Symbionese Liberation Army was an organization quite different from any other American extremist organization. The SLA's racial composition, feminist influence, and militant acts made it one of the most complex and feared organizations in American history.

The SLA's actions were both fearless and well calculated. From kidnapping to bank robberies, the SLA was able to gain the coverage it needed by the media, while also instilling the fear it desired in its enemies and critics. The SLA, like other social movements, recognized the necessity for media coverage. Through the media, the SLA's communiqués were heard, its ideologies were expressed, and its radical actions were analyzed.

Unlike most other radical movements, the SLA used threats and manipulation to ensure that the movement received the media coverage it needed to survive and advance. Through the organization's utilization of death warrants and demands, it was able to remain in the public eye throughout the entirety of the movement. However, the movement could not have gained the prominence it did, if it had not been for the threats and relentless demands the organization placed upon its critics and the electronic and

print media. The media covered SLA events and printed its communiqués in entirety for fear of being harmed and possibly endangering the life of Patty Hearst. Nevertheless, the manipulation tactics incorporated by the SLA proved to be beneficial to the organization and its mission.

The SLA also desired public visibility in order to gain support from the people. The organization believed that continuous media coverage would rally the people to the SLA cause (Hearst, 1982). Although many people did seem to admire and respect the SLA for what it was attempting to accomplish for the poor in regards to the People In Need food distribution program, many were still frightened to be a part of the movement. For many individuals and organizations, the actions and the ideologies of the SLA were deemed to be too radical:

Cin and the others were absolutely disgusted with the various radical groups in the Bay Area which had failed to take part in the food program or had failed to rally to the revolutionary cause. The SLA wanted to lead the way to revolution, but the other groups were 'too chickenshit' to join in the revolution. Time after time, each of the other left-wing or radical groups were castigated by the SLA comrades (Hearst, 1982, p. 84).

The lack of significant public support is not unusual for a minority organization. Historically, it has been quite difficult for minority organizations to gain immediate support for their movement when their motives and actions are in opposition to the majority culture. Gabriel Mugny and Juan A. Pérez (1991) have this to say about minority support:

Minority influence looks radically different. Indeed, it tends to be weak, inexistent, or negative when exerted at the direct, manifest, or public level: when people do not refuse resolutely to adopt a minority's idea or action, they at least hesitate to do so, in the eyes of others as well as in their own. A "positive" relationship with a minority appears to be difficult, if not out of the question (p. 4).

Through violence, the SLA aimed to gain greater notoriety and support for the organizations. The utilization of militant acts and violence insured the organization continuous media coverage. However, the violence and actions utilized by the organization would eventually lead to the demise of the SLA. True enough, the media coverage did provide the visibility the movement needed, but at the same time this visibility prompted opposition by the authorities. According to William Gamson (1975), violence "...is an act of last resort by those who see no other means of achieving their goals" (p. 81). Gamson (1975) further explains that "...the challenging group, frustrated by its inability to attract a significant following and gain some response from its targets of influence, turns to violence in desperation. However, this merely hastens and insures its failure because its actions increase the hostility around it and invite the legitimate action of authorities against it" (p. 81).

The Symbionese Liberation Army was ultimately destroyed because the authorities were "...frightened by the growing strength of the challenging group and unable to halt its rising power by legitimate means, tottering on their throne and unwilling to make concessions, the threatened authorities turn to repression" (Gamson, 1975, p. 81).

Conclusion

Without a doubt, the Symbionese Liberation Army was one of the most radical, complex, and efficient organizations in America's history. Through the organization's kidnapping of Patricia Hearst, its successful bank robberies, the organization's active

bombings, and the utilization of violence, the SLA became one of the most respected and feared organization of the 1970s.

Never before had the country been introduced to such a vicious band of predominately White, middle-class students. The SLA's militant rhetoric, feminist ideologies, prison foundation, and sexual freedom further shocked an already socially rebellious country. Of the organizations that emerged during the 1970s, the SLA by far was the most prominent and radical.

The SLA's ability to kidnap and convert a seemingly normal woman into a revolutionary, its efficiency in extorting millions of dollars to feed the poor, its efficiency in planning a series of robberies, its precision in evading the law, and its desire to live and die for the people made them one of the most powerful organizations in recent years.

The SLA members were prepared to live and die for the revolution that was to come. Each member faced the reality of death each day and affirmed his/her commitment to it. Through death, the SLA believed that its ideologies and ambitions could live on through its supporters. Evading death was not an option for the SLA soldiers. Patricia Hearst (1982) has this to say about the organization and its allegiance to the people:

Death stalked the foul air in that safehouse. More than ever before, all of them talked of death. Hardly a day or night went by but that someone mentioned death and others quickly took up the subject. They went beyond the concept of death being beautiful. It became a necessity. The subject came up at meetings and in casual conversations again and again. The only way the SLA would ultimately prove to the people that it meant what it said was by dying for the cause. It would be 'too demoralizing' for the oppressed people to see freedom fighters sent to prisons, where they would be kept helpless by their oppressors. There were already too many freedom fighters in prison. Besides, the SLA Codes of War prohibited surrender. Either we would win the revolution or we would die fighting for it. Only then would the people understand that even though we were whites, we truly meant what we had said in all our communiqués. We would be heroes or we would be martyrs (Hearst, 1982, p. 209).

The SLA through its ideologies, actions, and rhetoric, made its radical impression on American history. The SLA was the first and last organization of its kind. No other movement comprised of mostly white, middle-class, women has had the social impact and notoriety that the SLA had. The SLA is not only important in regards to the organizations composition and actions, but most importantly the movement of the SLA is historically significant as well.

Implications for Further Research

This study investigates the movement of the SLA from an historical, theoretical, and rhetorical perspective. However, significant research into the background of the SLA members could possibly reveal some insight into the actions of the organization as well.

Exploring the college experiences, family life, and relationships of the SLA may help to explain where the members motivations, hostility, and rebellious nature derived from. Although Pearlstein (1991) provides an overview of the abusive and criminal past of Donald DeFreeze and Weed and Swanton(1976) and Hearst (1982) provide insight into the life of Patricia Hearst, more is still needed to be known about the members of the SLA.

Research into the past of the other SLA members is not as thorough as it could be. Future research into the SLA movement should ask: What motivated these students to embrace the radical lifestyle? Why did these individuals join the SLA and turn from their Christian upbringings, traditional families, and childhood friends? Who were the individuals in their lives that influenced their thoughts and behaviors in college? Were there any personality flaws or negative characteristics that would make these individuals

prone to radical activity? Were there instances of guns and violence in the childhood of the SLA members? and What do their family and friends have to say about their personalities before and after the SLA?

Talking and interviewing the family, friends, employers, and acquaintances of the SLA members will provide both quantitative and qualitative insight into who these individuals really were and how the movement came to be. This type of research into the SLA is essential because it can not only assist in understanding the organization and its members, but the research could also generate findings which may be applicable to the understanding of other social movements as well.

It is quite obvious that those in the SLA did not become radicalized over night. Further research into this area can better explain how this progression occurred and eventually spread into the development of the Symbionese Liberation Army.

APPENDIX I

COMMUNIQUE NO. 3

On the afore stated date, combat elements of the United Federated Forces of the Symbionese Liberation Army armed with cyanide loaded weapons served an arrest warrant upon Patricia Campbell Hearst.

It is in the order of this court that the subject be arrested by combat units and removed to a protective area of safety and only upon completion of this condition to notify Unit #4 to give communication of this action.

It is the directive of this court that during this action ONLY, no civilian elements be harmed if possible, and that warning shots be given. However, if any citizens attempt to aid the authorities or interfere with the implementation of this order, they shall be executed immediately.

This court hereby notifies the public and directs all combat units in the future to shoot to kill any civilian who attempts to witness or interfere with any operation conducted by the people's forces against the fascist state.

Should any attempt be made by the authorities to rescue the prisoner, or to arrest or harm any SLA elements, the prisoner is to be executed.

The prisoner is to be maintained in adequate physical and mental condition, and unharmed as long as these conditions are adhered to. Protective custody shall be composed of combat and medical units to safeguard both the prisoner and her health.

All communications from this court MUST be published in full in all newspaper, and all other forms of media. Failure to do so will endanger the safety of the prisoner.

Further communications will follow: (Hearst, 1982, p. 43-44).

APPENDIX II

Hearst's First Taped Message To The Public

Mom, Dad. I'm OK. I had a few scrapes and stuff, but they washed them up and they're getting OK. And I caught a cold, but they're giving me pills for it and stuff.

I'm not being starved or beaten or unnecessarily frightened. I've heard some press reports and so I know Steve and all of the neighbors are OK and that no one was really hurt.

And I also know that the SLA members here are very upset about press distortions of what's been happening. They have not been shooting down helicopter or shooting innocent people on the streets.

I'm kept blindfolded usually so that I can't identify anyone. My hands are often tied, but generally they're not. I'm not gagged or anything, and I'm comfortable.

And I think you can tell I'm not really terrified or anything and that I'm OK.

I was upset, though, to hear that the police rushed in on that house in Oakland and I was really glad that I wasn't there and I would appreciate it if everyone would just calm down and try not to find me and not making identifications because they're not only endangering me but they're endangering themselves.

I'm with the combat unit that's armed with automatic weapons and there's also a medical team here and there's no way that I will be released until they let me go, so it won't do any good for somebody to come in here and try to get me out by force.

These people aren't just a bunch of nuts. They've been really honest with me but they're perfectly willing to die for what they are doing.

And I want to get out of here but the only way I'm going to is if we do it their way. And I hope that you'll do what they say, Dad, and just do it quickly.

I've been stopping and starting this tape myself, so that I can collect my thoughts. That's why there are so many stops in it.

I'm not being forced to say any of this. I think it's really important that you take their requests very seriously about not arresting any other SLA members and about following their good faith request to the letter.

I just want to get out here and see everyone again and be back with Steve.

The SLA is very interested in seeing how you're taking this, Dad, and they want to make sure that you are really serious and listening to what they're saying.

And they think that you've been taking this whole thing a lot more seriously than the police and the FBI and other people. Or at least I am.

It's really up to you to make sure that these people don't jeopardize my life by charging in and doing stupid things, and I hope that you will make sure they don't do anything else like that Oakland house business.

The SLA people really have been honest with me and I really I feel pretty sure that I'm going to get out of here if everything goes the way they want it to.

And I think you should that way too, and try not to worry so much. I mean I know it's hard, but I heard Mom was really upset and that everybody was at home. I hope that this puts you a little bit at ease so that you know that I really am all right.

I just hope I can get back to everybody soon.

The SLA has ideological ties with the IRA, the people's struggle in the Philippines and the Socialist people in Puerto Rico in their struggle for independence, and they consider themselves to be soldiers who are fighting and aiding these people.

I am a prisoner of war and so are the two men in San Quentin. I am being treated in accordance with the Geneva Convention, one of the conditions being that I am not being tried for any crimes for which I'm not responsible for.

I am here because I am a member of a ruling class family and I think you can begin to the analogy. The people, the two men in San Quentin are being held and are going to be tried simply because they are members of the SLA and not because they've done anything.

Witnesses to the shooting of Foster saw black men. And two white men have been arrested for this. You're being told this so that you'll understand why I was kidnapped and so that you'll understand that whatever happens to the two prisoners is going to happen to me.

You have to understand that I am held to be innocent the same way the two men in San Quentin are innocent, they are simply members of the group and have not done anything themselves to warrant their arrest.

They apparently were part of an intelligence unit and have never executed anyone themselves. The SLA has declared war against the government and it's important that you understand that they know what they're doing and they understand what their actions mean,

...And that you realize that this is not considered by them to be just a simple kidnapping and that you don't treat it that way and say "Oh, I don't know why she was taken."

I'm telling you know why this happened so that you will know and so that you have something to use, some knowledge to try to get me out of here.

If you can get the food thing organized before the 19th [of February], then that's OK and just speed up my release.

Today is Friday, the eight, and in Kuwait the comrades negotiated the release of their hostages and they left the country.

Bye. (Hearst, 1982, p. 56-58).

APPENDIX III

Codes of War of The United States Symbionese Liberation Army

Penalty by Death

All charges that face a death penalty shall be presented to a jury trial made up of the members of the guerilla forces. The jury shall be selected by the charged also. The charged shall select his or her defense, and the trail judge shall select the prosecutor. The jury shall number at least three-fourths of the remaining members of the cell, and the verdict must be unanimous.

1. The surrender to the enemy
2. The killing of a comrade or disobeying orders that result in the death of a comrade.
3. The deserting of a comrade on the field of war:
 - a. Leaving a team position, thereby not covering a comrade.
 - b. Leaving a wounded comrade.
4. The informing to the enemy or spying against the people or guerrillas.
5. Leaving a cell unit or base camp without orders:

Any comrade may leave the guerrilla forces if she or he feels that they no longer feel the courage or faith in the people and the struggle we wage. A comrade, however, must follow to Codes of War in doing this: that is, he or she must inform the commanding guerrilla of their wish to go from the guerrilla force. Thereupon, the guerrilla in command will release them in a safe area. This ex-combatant may only leave with his or her personal side-arm. REMEMBER, this is the ONLY way a comrade may leave the SLA; any other way is deserting, punishable by death.
6. All paid or unpaid informants operating within the community against the people and the guerilla forces are sentenced without trial to immediate death.

Penalty by Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action should be primarily to aid the collective growth of the cell, so that through positive action the mistake is understood. All charges that face disciplinary action shall be under full control of the guerrilla in command, and she or he shall weigh all evidence and shall decide the verdict, and if needed, direct the disciplinary action to be taken by the charged comrade necessary to correct him or her.

1. Lack of responsibility and determined decisiveness in the following orders.
2. Non-vigilance or leaving of [sic] an assigned post without orders. Lack of responsibility in maintaining proficiency in all guerrilla skills, especially shooting.

3. The failure to sever all past contacts or failing to destroy all evidence of identification or associations.
4. Killing of an unarmed enemy.
5. Tortures or sexual assaults on either comrade or the people or the enemy.
6. Criminal acts against the poor or comrades or guerrilla forces.
7. Malicious cursing or any kind of disrespect to those in command, a comrade, or the people.
8. Deceiving or lying to fellow comrades or the people.

Conduct of Guerrilla Forces Toward the Enemy Soldier and Prisoners

1. Prisoners of war shall be held under the terms of the Codes of War, they shall be provided with adequate food, medical aid, and exercises.
2. All U.S.A. military rank and file forces shall be allowed to surrender, upon our conditions of surrender, and thereupon they shall be carefully and fully search and interrogated. All prisoners are to receive instruction on the goals of the Symbionese Liberation Army and the released in a safe area.
3. All weapons, medical and food supplies, maps, military equipment and money are to be confiscated and turned in to the guerrilla in charge.
4. Under no conditions shall any rank and file soldier be relieved of his or her personal property.

Conduct of Guerrilla Forces Toward the People

All guerrilla forces shall conduct themselves in a manner of respect towards the people, and shall when able and safe to do so, provide food and other aids to the people. They shall when possible inform the people of the goals of the United Symbionese Federation and encourage other women and men to join our forces, and serve the people and the fight for freedom.

All comrades have one main responsibility, that is to struggle to win and stand together, so no comrade stands alone, all must look out for each other, all must aid the other, black, brown, red, yellow, white, man or woman, all or none.

This document may change from time to time, so officers are requested to follow the changes with discipline.

To those who would bear the hopes and the future of the people let the voice of their guns express the words of freedom.

Gen. Field Marshal
SLA
Cin

(Baker and Brompton, 1974, p. 143-146).

APPENDIX IV

The Meanings of the Seven Heads on the SLA Cobra

UMOHA-LAS UNIDAD-UNITY: To strive for and maintain unity in our household, our nation and the Symbionese Federation.

KUJICHAGULIA-LA LIBRE DETERMINACION-SELF-DETERMINATION: To define ourselves, name ourselves, speak for ourselves and govern ourselves.

UJIMA-TRABAJO COLECTIVO Y RESPONSABILIDAD-COLLECTIVE WORK AND RESPONSIBILITY: To build and maintain our nation and the federation together by making our brothers' and sisters' and the Federations' problems our problems and solving them together.

UJAMAA-PRODUCTION COOPERATIVA-CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION: To build and maintain our own economy from our skills and labor and resources and to ensure ourselves and other nations that we all profit equally from our labor.

NIA-PROPOSITO-PURPOSE: To make as our collective vocation the development and liberation of our nation, all oppressed people, in order to restore our people and all oppressed people to their traditional greatness and humanity.

KUUMBA-CREATIVO-CREATIVITY: To do all we can, as best we can, in order to free our nation and defend the federation and constantly make it the earth we all share beautiful and beneficial.

IMANI-FE-FAITH: To believe in our unity, our leaders, our teachers, our people and in the righteous and victory of our struggle and the struggle of all oppressed and exploited people (Boulton, 1975, p. 48-49).

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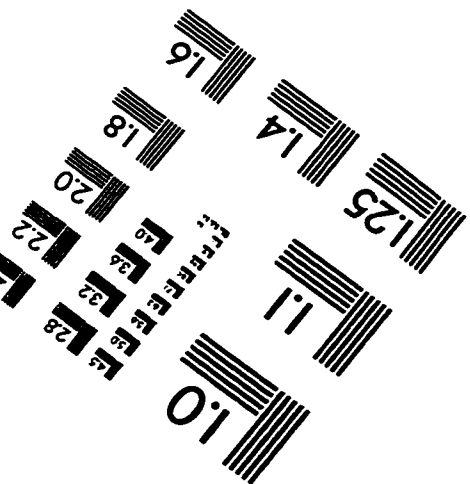
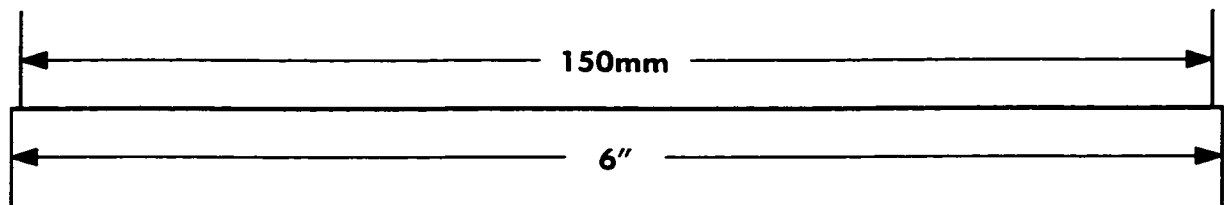
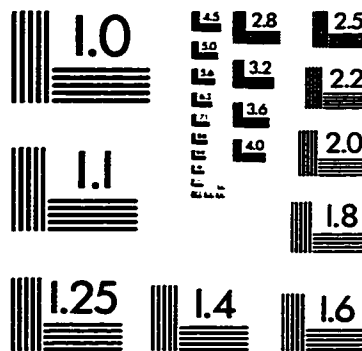
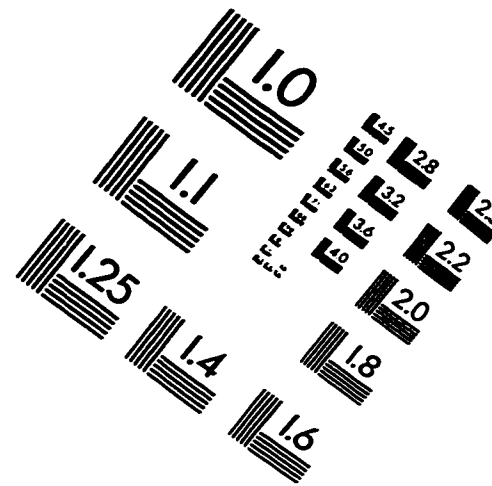
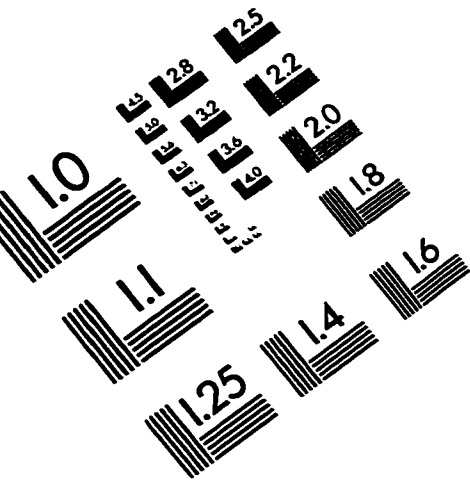
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and Rhetorical Analyses

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