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INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION AS EPIDEICTIC RHETORIC
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ETHICAL BRANDING

A Dissertation

Submitted to the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Tricia Giannone McFadden

December 2017

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Tricia Giannone McFadden

2017

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION AS EPIDEICTIC RHETORIC
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ETHICAL BRANDING

By

Tricia Giannone McFadden

Approved November 3, 2017

Dr. Janie Harden Fritz
Professor
(Committee Chair)

Dr. Ronald C. Arnett
Professor
(Committee Member)

Dr. Richard Thames
Assistant Professor
(Committee Member)

Dr. James Swindal
Dean, McAnulty College and Graduate
School

Dr. Ronald C. Arnett
Chair, Communication and Rhetorical
Studies

ABSTRACT

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By

Tricia Giannone McFadden

December 2017

Dissertation supervised by Dr. Janie Harden Fritz

Traced to ancient scholarship, rhetoric, and the philosophy of communication and through interpretive perspectives, rhetoric, narrative and ethics have been established grounding of communication and social structures. IMC has emerged as a contemporary genre of epideictic rhetoric with ethical obligations to our postmodern polis. Through the redefining of the branding metaphor within an ethical, grounded and narrative framework, the focus on ethos and connection to the audience through Schrag's "fitting response" may combat the previous challenges of narrative and marketing and its deconstructive effects. IMC as communicative praxis engages branding discourse in action with texture as the bonding agent between the brand and audience, thereby, opening a dialogue to conduct IMC within an ethical framework in a dynamic global marketplace.

DEDICATION

For my mother, Virginia “Ginny” Giannone, the one whose example in life
and faith still guides me today – even from the Heavens. Believe.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank Duquesne University's Department of Communication and Rhetorical Studies for this enriching journey. Through the guidance, support, and wisdom of my mentors, Dr. Ronald C. Arnett, Dr. Janie Harden Fritz, Dr. Richard Thames, and Dr. Calvin Troup, I have arrived at this point a changed person with true appreciation of the discipline, praxis-oriented scholarship and teaching, and the humanities in the marketplace. Thank you. Dr. Janie Harden Fritz, words cannot express my appreciation for you, your dedication, and your continued faith in me. Without this program, without my mentors, and without grounding in philosophy and theory, I would not be the person or teacher that I am today. Learning is a blessed gift.

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“By speaking of communication as a mode of human existence I mean that in our speaking and listening and in our writing and responding we to a great measure constitute the beings that we are. One could speak of this as the ontological dimension of communication. It is through communication that we become who we are.”

-Calvin O. Schrag

Chapter 1: Schrag's Interpretive Lens

“The interwovenness of communicative praxis is an interweaving of discourse and action, language and nondiscursive practices, speech and perception, yielding a holistic space of expressive intentionality.”

-Calvin O. Schrag

This work originates out of an interest in Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), Communication Ethics in the Public Sphere, Rhetoric and Narrative. A professional background in marketing and continuing admiration for the words of Aristotle, Calvin O. Schrag and Walter Fisher inform my entrance into the conversation. This dissertation calls upon Schrag's communicative praxis as a constructive hermeneutic framework and embraces the work of Fisher's notion of narrative.

The ethical challenges of IMC are predominantly discussed through either a personal experience perspective or through a critical literature approach. The personal experience approach commonly reflects the metaphors of “deceit,” “suspicion” and “spin.” For example, a consumer is disgruntled by a brand's claims of a product that did not meet his/her expectations or feels that the product was falsely marketed. The consumer forms a negative perception of the product and/or brand that inhibits future communication and trust between the brand and consumer and, quite possibly, creates negative word-of-mouth public relations. It is also important to consider that practitioners leave the profession for ethical reasons. Such situations position deceitful practices in the field against one's own conscience and “traditional” moral standards.

Through the critical literature approach, the focus turns to the “good-bad” dichotomy of traditional business. The “good” view is that IMC works as a part of the

capitalist economy; thus, promoting healthy markets through the branding, marketing and selling of goods and services. Sut Jhally argues advertising and marketing as the most powerful and systematic storyteller of propaganda in our culture. Such commercial discourse is “the ground on which we live, the space in which we learn to think, the lens through which we come to understand the world that surrounds us” (3). Jhally argues that this dominant system fueled by economic growth and the very consumer culture that it has nourished is destroying society.

Both perspectives contribute discussion to the ethical challenges facing this evolving new philosophy of marketing and branding. Each provides an external approach to the interpretation of the processes and outcomes of IMC practices towards the audience –one at the micro level and the other at the macro level. The personal perspective connects IMC to how it affects “me,” while the critical approach opens up the discussion to how IMC affects the marketplace as a whole. Both perspectives add to the overall conversation regarding the ethical challenges of IMC from audience-focused approaches, but what about the voices within—looking from the inside out to address the ethical challenges of IMC?

By transcending the personal and critical perspectives, this project will focus on perspectives involving IMC and branding practitioners and organizations involved in the internal workings of IMC in today’s marketplace. How can an organization develop and practice a redefining of branding within an narrative and ethical IMC approach in a dynamic, contested marketplace that from the start is marked with cynicism and suspicion?

Working from a constructive view of IMC as a form of epideictic rhetoric, rather than the more traditional deliberative perspective, this project will explore ways to conduct epideictic IMC and branding within an ethical framework, while engaging and contributing epideictic commonplaces.

IMC has by this nature a rhetorical calling forth of more than just a target audience; the ethical and rhetorical embeddedness demands attention to a truly pivotal role that IMC plays in society. Among rhetorical theorists, particularly Aristotle and Heidegger, rhetoric is “something that can ‘move,’ and thereby advance, the moral consciousness and conduct of people. Rhetoric plays a crucial role in articulation of civic virtue and morality; it is evocative; it calls” (Hyde 256). The marketing messages are not just promoting a product; the persuasiveness and lure are appeals to deeper lifestyle, cultural and socio-political messages and a “who are we” picture. IMC functions as a type of evocation that demonstrates a “showing forth” (*epideixis*). The rhetorical characteristics are existential connections into everyday life, where human life is impacted. Rhetorical appeals to the foundations and dimensions of human experience in terms of truth, beauty, goodness and unity are commonly embedded metaphors.

According to Calvin O. Schrag, “discourse and action are *about* something, *by* someone, and *for* someone” (Communicative Praxis xii). He continues, “Communicative praxis thus displays a referential moment (about a world of human concerns and social practices), a moment of self-implicature (by a speaker, author or actor), and a rhetorical moment (directedness to the other) (Communicative Praxis xii). *About, by* and *for* is about content, agency and responsiveness. One needs to be responsive to the other;

sensitive to the content and the way the message is communicated and attentive to the rhetorical demands of the environment and historical moment.

IMC engages discourse and action through *about*, *by* and *for* through an integrated marketing philosophy that originates with a corporate or brand narrative. According to Kellogg on Integrated Marketing, IMC's three major components are: "integrating the marketing effort over more finely tuned segments; integrating over time and other dimensions of consumer behavior; and, thirdly, integrating over measured media and other communication opportunities" (Iacobucci & Calder 9). IMC becomes part of the cultural traditions over time with connection through epideictic commonplaces and sensitivity to the historical moment. Schrag states:

We are situated in a tradition and a form of life in such a way that we make purchases on their delivered prejudices and become party to a state of expectancies and anticipations. We live through life's experiences by living out of a past and into a future. ("Interpretation" 110)

IMC is *about* corporate narrative, *by* the practitioners and *for* the internal and external publics. The communicative praxis of IMC engages the *for* through both referential and rhetorical moments.

Traditionally, IMC has been a field of marketing that bridged the gap between an organization, its product(s) and its current and potential audiences through a production orientation (Groom 3). Yet, in today's marketplace, "an engaged reality of interactivity" defines the narrative playing field, thus demanding much more from IMC. The meaning must be situated; the structure matters. Schrag's speaker and in IMC terms practitioner is thought of as "decentralized, redistributed, and resituated within a network of

interdependencies” (“Interpretation” 105). Narrative evolves not only through the *by*, but also through the *about* and *for*. “Narrative as communicative interaction suffers a plurality and diversity that is as pluralistic and diverse as the expressions of communicative praxis itself, involving stories about the world of nature, historical events, fictional characters, ethical practices, human behavior, institutional developments—and no doubt more” (“Interpretation” 105). Schrag also looks to previous narrators and their interlocutors, as well as a vast cultural tradition of historical trends and institutions to create the narrative. “All of these have a voice in the story that is being told” (“Interpretation” 105). Schrag explains:

The rhetorician, by trade and function, is a story-telling animal, assigned to the task of involving his/her hearers to become participants in the stories about the discursive and institutional practices of humankind. Rhetoric affects its own strategies of emplotment, articulating the ethos of the community, delineating possibilities for thought and action, marking out alternatives for social change, by telling stories about the actors and events that make history. (Resources 141)

The interpretations of such narratives are formed through both self and social understanding that are at times in unison, and at times in conflict with each other. Narrative and rhetoric are woven together in the creation of meaning through social history and traditions. “Narratives are always incarnate in the social history and the traditions which they offer an interpretation. They are the ‘texts’ in which and through which self and social understanding proceed (“Interpretation 105”), thus, defining the textuality of Schrag’s communicative praxis.

Schrag's Philosophical Ground

Schrag has been labeled a “continental” philosopher, yet he resituates himself more specifically within the American tradition of philosophy and “between the either/or that has demarcated the continental and analytic philosophical traditions” (Ramsey & Miller 4). His work engages many philosophers, including associations with the philosophical movements of phenomenology, existentialism, hermeneutics, pragmatism, deconstruction and postmodernism (Ramsey & Miller 5). Ramsey and Miller, in their interview with Schrag, highlight that the philosopher makes every effort to “communicate in spite of difference,” yet has consistently refused to align himself with any of these movements (5). Schrag has engaged conversations with the representatives of these movements, including Heidegger, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Marx, Ricouer and Derrida, yet, in his own words, he has “distinguished positiontaking from issues” within his own work (Ramsey & Miller 6).

Schrag’s philosophical roots find their ground in the connection between philosophy and rhetoric which originated with the Greeks, specifically Plato and Aristotle. Schrag’s very theoretical ground is based upon rhetoric and communication as innate voices within philosophical discourse. Schrag moved phenomenology into communication maintaining an existential connection into everyday life—a movement of high-level theory into everyday life.

From thoughts of the role of hermeneutics, the workings of interpretation in deliberation, speech, and collaborative action and the polis, to the origin of praxis, Aristotle’s Rhetoric is Schrag’s fertile foundation. In Schrag’s discussions of communicative praxis, his understanding of virtue and fitting response are theoretically

Aristotelian. There is a responsibility of philosophy to society that Schrag emphasizes, as he reminds us of the recurring questions that Plato raised in The Republic.

The notion of praxis is one of the strongest channels to Aristotle through Schrag. As communication and praxis become unitary in Schrag's communicative praxis, each notion holds multifaceted dimensions. The Greek term "praxis" is commonly translated as "practice" and is also understood as "action," "performance," or "accomplishment." The etymology of praxis references a sense of doing, acting, performing and accomplishing. "Aristotle further molded the term with "a specific semantical pivot first by contrasting praxis with *theoria*, distinguishing praxis as the sphere of human action and accomplishment from theory as the domain of rigorous science" (Communicative Praxis 19). Aristotelian praxis demonstrates as "different sort of knowing than that which issues from *theoria*" (Communicative Praxis 19). As the notion of "practice" is unreflective, praxis is reflective.

Through further determination, Aristotle moves from *theoria* to *poiesis* in terms of defining praxis through "its directedness toward the achievement and maintenance of the virtuous life among the citizens of the polis" (Communicative Praxis 20). Ronald C. Arnett and Pat Arneson discuss historical common sense as deeply tied to the notion of praxis. Such common sense may help one to understand an ideal, as it is guided by the possibilities and appropriateness in a given historical moment (Dialogic Civility 44). Praxis moves "abstract" theory to the interpretation and application of theory into action in the historical moment. Thus, it is through Aristotle, that Schrag finds his tailored depth of praxis.

The very intentionality of communicative praxis as the communication of something *for* someone is Aristotelian as it demonstrates the directedness of thought and discourse to the audience. In the Rhetoric, Aristotle describes the art of rhetoric as one that should not annoy the audience and does “whatever it is we have to expound to others” (1404a, 4-10). “It was thus that Aristotle could seize the opportunity to emphasize the role of the audience in the rhetorical situation and see the telic aim of persuasive discourse in the direction of the hearers of the discourse. The discourse of rhetoric was *to* and *for* others” (Resources 128). The further extraction of rhetoric from *techne* by Aristotle aids in the fuller development of rhetoric as an art, thus leading to deliberative rhetoric and its tie to the common good of the polis. “The relevance of rhetoric is also evident in the wider scenario of bridging discourse and action with the solicitations of community and the requirement for communication. Persuasive discourse and action are directed to the ‘other’—to the hearer and to the reader” (Resources 116). The rhetorical performance is designed for the audience and its response. Thus, the art of rhetoric reflects the “interests for the rhetor and hearers alike, and the rationality of practical wisdom as a guide for deliberation and action” (Communicative Praxis 183). “Ethical responsibility, as the performance of the fitting response, is saying and doing that which is fitting within the intertextualized voices and contextualized practices occurrent within the polis” (Convergence 49). Rhetoric is oriented to that which is deemed good for the polis through communication-oriented discourses and action. The whole concept of communication praxis manifests in a call for the “ethic of the fitting response.”

Schrag's Connection to the Rhetoric and Philosophy of Communication

Schrag's work, according to Michael Hyde is "the opening of a dwelling place where the scope and function of rhetoric can be thought out in terms that are respectful of the art's potential for constructive action" (The Ethos, xiv). Schrag's theoretical foundation is based upon the interwoven tapestry of rhetoric and philosophy. Together, rhetoric and philosophy join together in constructing reality and "employing a concept of truth" (Resources 123). Schrag strongly argues that one cannot step outside the history of the two disciplines, as they each "display their own genres of discourse, knowledge regimes and peculiar constellations of disciplinary practices (Resources 147). The ground for further exploration is the dynamics of rationality that exist between them.

Again, Schrag emphasizes a strong overall tie to society—the polis. Recurrent with the Greeks, particularly Plato and Aristotle, Schrag views philosophy as holding responsibility to the polis. Schrag asks, "What is the good state and what are the resources for setting it up?" (Matustk). These are deeply practical, yet socio-political questions of what are deemed good for the polis that are intertwined with personal identity and goals. Schrag refers to "transversal rationality" to aid in the discussion of the constantly changing social and political waters in terms of a global dialogue that strives for common ground in a sea of cultural differences. Transversality is a metaphor that provides "a sheet anchor against hegemonic aspirations to absolutize a particular political platform, or a set of prescribed folkways and customs, or an established religious institutions" (Matustk). Schrag's transversality is one of a call to acknowledge an otherness and the need to coexist with the other. The situation of rhetoric within philosophy encompasses an integrative force and function that flows toward

“community-informed and communication-oriented discourses and action” (Resources 117). The underlying foundation is one of applicable understanding and communication to society, where transversal rationality charters the resources of the fitting response.

Schrag positions a “new humanism” as opposed to the critique of traditional humanism based on the self through communicative praxis. This non-agent centered “new humanism” is *about* a response to texture, *by* an embedded agent and *for* an embedded historical moment. His proposed notion recognizes the issue of texture and embeddedness of the agent to work through an interchanging world. Communicative praxis is situated in *about* something, *by* someone and *for* someone, and there is no communication without aboutness.” Communicative praxis is discourse in action. The notion explains communication and praxis as a unitary, yet multifaceted phenomenon with a third term texture that mediates the two. Texture is the “bonding feature” of communication and praxis, an “intertexture within their common space” (Communicative Praxis 23). David Crownfield further explains texture “as a system of semiotic differences in which linguistics signs and structures are interwoven within a diversity of practice and with patterns of difference in the world . . . a kind of multimedia structuralism” (270). Schrag states, “Communicative praxis is textured by an interplay of speaking, writing, and language on the one hand, and by an interplay of individual acts and social institutions on the other” (“Interpretation” 102). Texture drives the nature of discourse. It is a communicative figure, symbolizing the interplay of discourse and action and the linkage of communication and praxis. Texture calls attention and sensitivity to the historical moment that is involved. From a humanities perspective, one must understand texture to understand the situational implications.

An embedded agent is situated between texture and agent; life lives between texture and agent. How one is situated within a given story is a major question for Schrag. Schrag sees the embeddedness of the agent in an ongoing story that matters; it is the connection to everyday life. The rhetorical component is central to an embedded agent's having persuasive influence. One needs to listen to the embeddedness of the agent and to the environmental influences, such as cultural, social, political and economical influences. Structure does matter. It is the story in which one is embedded that textures meaning. Discourse becomes an ongoing element of the overall story.

In The Resources of Rationality, Schrag discusses a particular network of “we-relationships” and communicative interactions that are embedded in the topos of rhetoric. The strong tie between community and rhetoric is explained in terms of topography. “Community makes up the topography of rhetoric; rationality energizes its economy” (Resources 135). The topography includes speakers and practitioners, as well as audiences, who have an ethos and historical moment in common. The topography of communicative praxis cannot be limited to poetic discourse, as it is “a terrain of prosaic dwelling, interests and concerns of everyday life as they pertain to the material conditions of our socio-historical existence, requiring the activation of pragmatically oriented problem-solving strategies” (Resources 146). The topography is *about, by and for* community, thought and action.

Commonly, in investigating such conditions, the *techne* of rhetoric is the dominant factor, whereas the actual condition of living in a persuaded moment is lost. Schrag states:

It is an investigation of these existential conditions of being persuaded, of the persuasiveness of rhetorical discourse as an orientation toward shared understanding and collaborative action, that brings us directly to the issue of the relevance of reason for the rhetorical art. And it is only through a specification of such conditions and contents that one will be able to distinguish rhetoric from propaganda, manipulative practices, and coercion. (Resources 137)

A distinguishing factor of the art of rhetoric is the revealing and interplay of *good reasons*. “Persuasiveness, the condition of being persuaded, requires the giving and receiving of *good reasons*, the evocation of new perspectives of beliefs and new patterns of action” (Resources 137). These *good reasons* become “effectual” through the three components of the economy of rhetorical rationality as praxial critique, articulation and disclosure. “Rhetoric persuades by critiquing, articulating and disclosing” (Resources 137). Praxial critique stems from the discernment and assessment of the concrete forms of the interplay of discourse and action operating within communication praxis.

Closely aligned with praxial critique, “the function of articulation, rendering an account, making manifest, enunciating a perspective, letting something be seen and heard” is the second component of the economy of rhetorical rationality (Resources 139). This concept originates from the Greek understanding of logos through both Plato and Aristotle. According to Schrag, articulation links rationality more directly with speech, discourse and language, while rhetoric becomes an explicit rhetoric of action. (Resources 140). “More specifically, the discourse of rhetoric is a collaborative discourse about the proper beliefs and actions required to maintain the virtuous life of the community”

(Resources 140). The strong bond between rhetoric and community reflects ethical communication, thought and action for the common good.

Thirdly, the final component of the economy of rhetorical rationality may be understood as an extension of articulation, as disclosure brings to light that what is to be seen and heard. “Articulation is a search for meaning; disclosure is an event of reference” (Resources 141). Through disclosure stories are heard and interpreted as being *about* something by determining a system of reference. “Because of its communicative orientation, which is always a matter of discourse and action, rhetoric exercises a particular hold of the lifeworld” (Resources 142). Within the space of praxis, discourse and action play off one another through various forms of life, noting accepted beliefs, perspectives and narratives. Praxial critique in the economy of rhetoric moves with life and its practices in times of continuity and in times of discord. Schrag engages a rhetoric of communal practices, a “rhetoric of lifeworld,” that expands far beyond the constricts of poetic and literary thinking. Rhetoric is transversal through thought, action and life.

Revisiting Schrag’s concept of *about*, *by* and *for*, the amalgam of communication and praxis reflects the interwoven nature of philosophy and communication. The reflection on discourse and action as being *about something*; as being initiated *by someone*; and as being addressed *to and for something* uncovers a moment of clarity to “a world of nature and culture; a moment of hermeneutical self-implicature, indexing a decentered subject as speaker/author/agent; and a rhetorical moment in which discourse and action are seen as directed to an engaged interlocutor.” (Communicative Praxis ix). It is through *about*, *by* and *for* that the cohesive nature of the texture of communicative praxis takes form.

Schrag and Epideictic Rhetoric

Ancient rhetorical theory defined epideictic rhetoric as counter to pragmatic discourse that was primarily involved in matters of the polis. Epideictic rhetoric was not concerned with political or deliberative matters, but that of celebratory rhetorical situations. “It addresses the celebrative situations of a community or a society in which values are created and commemorated” (Walker 9). In contemporary society, IMC demonstrates an overt tie to public business matters within a capitalistic society, yet IMC also can be understood as a major story-teller in the creating and commemorating of social values; therefore, illustrating epideictic qualities in its persuasive and artistic nature.

IMC, as a type of evocation, reveals a “showing forth” (*epideixis*). The epideictic connection in Schrag originates in the very principal figures of discourse and action within the expressive landscape of communicative praxis. “The display of meanings in discourses and actions unfolds within a holistic space of expression” (Communicative Praxis 32). Texture acts as the mediating figure between communication and praxis, while guiding the interaction of discourse and action, language, and perception, speech and embodiment (32). Through communicative praxis, epideictic rhetoric flourishes between the interplay and performance of discourse and action. Public and personal life come together as an orchestrated shared experience through community involvement and interaction. Texture guides the manner and style in which messages are conveyed and communicated. It is the “bonding of communication and praxis as an intertexture within their common space” (23). These messages are embedded within “the background of the

tightly woven fabric of professional and everyday life, with its shared experiences, participative relationships, joint endeavors, and moral concerns” (22). Schrag explains:

Communication, in its variegated postures, is a performance within the topos of human affairs and dealings that comprise our social world, making these affairs and dealings an issue not only by questioning, informing, arguing, and persuading, but also by planning, working, playing, gesturing, laughing, crying and our general body motility. (22)

The rhetoric that exists is both rhetoric of speech and rhetoric of action. Praxis expresses through communication. As communication is a qualification of praxis, praxis is also a qualification of communication, thus determining “communication as a *performing* and an *accomplishing*” (22).

The texture of communicative praxis involves not only spoken and written discourse, but also the actions of individuals, communities, institutions, cultures and history. “It includes also the texture of human projects, of motivations and decisions, of embodiment, and of wider processes of social formation” (Communicative Praxis 24). Communicative praxis uncovers an epideictic rhetorical nature that addresses and celebrates the values and situations of society through texture. Texture structures and surfaces the meaning within human discourse and action. In Schrag’s words, “the interwovenness of communicative praxis” yields “a holistic space of expressive intentionality” (31). Expressive discourse and action are embedded within a shared system of social meanings. “It is precisely this space of the ‘between’ that identifies the landscape of communicative praxis, on which are located the performatives of communicative rhetoric” (Resources 129). Messages that are formed through the layers

of social, cultural and historical meanings are conveyed through communicative performances to a wider public.

Postmodern IMC

Scholars, such as Brown (1999), Proctor and Kitchen (2002), argue that marketing and postmodernism are already interwoven, especially in terms of the consumer. “One of the central tenets of postmodernism as applied to marketing and communication relates to the nature of consumer behavior” (Proctor & Kitchen 2002). Successful marketing strategies are challenged to execute the most integrated creative strategies through all communication touch points through a personalized approach.

“Postmodernism argues that perhaps consumers do not really know what they want, only what they do not want . . . Postmodernists approaches shroud the straight marketing question of ‘What can be done to satisfy customer needs and wants?’ with ambiguity” (Proctor & Kitchen 2002). Procter and Kitchen stress that consumers and stakeholders are better informed in today’s market, irrespective of the levels of education (2002). They are effectively judging not only the product and services, but also the marketing communication and the corporate entity marketing to them. Through such a perspective and social pressure, the challenge to marketing as a rational formal process of analysis, planning, implementation and control is widely held.

Firat and Venkatesh (1995) identify five key features of postmodern marketing: hyperreality; fragmentation; reversed production and consumption; decentered subjects; juxtaposition of opposites; and, as a general consequence of these conditions, loss of commitment and brand loyalty. Proctor and Kitchen position hyperreality as “the most widespread manifestation of postmodernism on the current marketing scene.” Consumers

now look for a “simulated reality.” Such a “simulated reality” is recreated in shopping malls, hotels, restaurants and theme parks. “Hyperreality, then, provides the opportunity to present customers with previously un-encountered experiences where the customer can exercise choice and spend money in a creative way” (Proctor & Kitchen). Urban centers are now more than just shopping malls; they are theme parks for adults and children alike. Going to the mall is not just a shopping outing, it is a themed experience energized through a marketing spectacle. Marketers now have to offer a diversity of themes for the postmodern consumer—a consumer who is no longer satisfied settling on just one.

In life, fragmentation is the lack of commitment to any single way of living. In a postmodern market, fragmentation characterizes consumers, markets and the media. First, consumers are no longer presenting a modern unified, centered demographic. Instead marketers are seeing consumers as “a jigsaw collage of multiple representations of selves and preferences even when approaching the same product category” (Proctor & Kitchen). Second, fragmentation of markets into small and smaller niche markets is standard, thus reflecting postmodern marketing as “rapid, rabid, frenetic and volatile” (Proctor & Kitchen). Finally, the media is characterized by fragmentation of various forms of print, broadcast, Internet and outdoor advertisements that “increasingly resemble each other and rarely connect to a central, unified theme or focus” (Proctor & Kitchen).

Reversed production and consumption is related to the consumers’ loyalty to images and symbols. The symbols continuously shift; therefore, consumers’ loyalties cannot remain fixed. “Because of the shifting nature of the symbolism of consumer wants and needs, it is no small wonder that marketers might conclude that consumers do not

know what they want, but only what they do not want” (Procter & Kitchen). What is symbolic today in a desirable manner might not be tomorrow. Where does this leave marketers? Postmodern marketers need to be experts in research with extensive, ongoing strategic efforts to be able to provide some sense of predictability of what messages to execute to influence the consumers/stakeholders. Consumers also want to be more involved in production of the product/service to suit their own self-image; they are becoming engineers of a personalized product. Technology has opened numerous doors in this area, as consumers can create, step by step, their very own reflections of themselves through customized products. From NIKE’s top selling athletic shoe to Apple’s latest iPhone, the product is an extension and self-reflection of the consumer’s tastes, style and image. “It represents a further step towards an inevitable interrelationship of customers and organizations, where customers become partners in the production, creative and marketing processes of the organization” (Procter & Kitchen), thus, demanding more from the organization in terms of initiative, customization and creativity.

Unlike their modern counterparts who are defined by occupation, social class, and other like-demographics, postmodern consumers are defined as decentered subjects with focus on psychographics and life style studies, and they are on the move. Procter and Kitchen state:

Postmodern consumers seek to feel good in separate, different moments by acquiring self-images that make them marketable, likeable and/or desirable in each situation or moment. The ability to switch image and represent different

selves by switching products that represent images is considered as a liberation from monotony, boredom and the necessity to conform. (147)

In order to appeal to these decentered subjects, juxtaposition of opposites is a marketing attempt to attract and engage this “fleeting” postmodern consumer. Marketers must execute an approach that leaves an open palate for creative and interactive consumer dialogue with an overall emphasis on form and style. Brand image must be consistent, fresh and exciting.

The traditional elements of the metanarrative of modernity, such as industry and technology, have been challenged by consumers’ loss of trust and credibility. This is a time of competing narratives, and marketers must learn to engage this “chaos.” “Marketing strategies and communication that provide the possibilities for critical play with chaos and disorder will empower contemporary consumers, give them greater control over the order they wish to see in their lives, and simultaneously benefit marketing organizations” (Procter & Kitchen). Brown (1993) further outlines the postmodern marketing framework with focus on three tendencies of the postmodern consumer: readiness for living a perpetual present; emphasis on form/style; and greater acceptance of or resignation to states of disorder and chaos.

The Ethos of Branding

Isocrates associates ethos with one’s genuine character and the call to civic responsibility. Such character is naturally held to a rhetorical competence to utilize language in a skillful and artful manner with good intentions in mind. By “habituating himself to contemplate” such deeds, the orator will “feel their influence . . . in all the actions of life.” (Antidosis, 277-78). Aristotle’s use of the term ethos takes on a

significant change from Isocrates' understanding. Unlike Isocrates, Aristotle associates ethos with the actual rhetorical competence in the orator's discourse, not in the orator's reputation. Aristotle extends the understanding of ethos towards artistic ability through rhetoric.

In contemporary IMC, branding becomes a longterm metaphor within IMC. The brand value and brand equity are not simply situated in the visual components of the brand such as a logo or a tagline, or the positioning of the brand promise, but must exist in the heart of the brand and organization itself. Alasdair MacIntyre's work offers grounding and a potential philosophical foundation to ethics within IMC to guide practice and implementation of strategies. Within this approach, the ethos of branding finds a place of importance and thus forming a greater commitment and responsibility to the effects on consumers and society as a whole. The ethos of rhetoric makes use of our inventive and symbolic capacity to construct dwelling places that are stimulating and aesthetically, psychologically, social, and perhaps theologically instructive (The Ethos, xiii). Schrag adds, "*Ethos* antedates specific ethical prescriptions and prohibitions and marks out a region of knowing and working together . . . (Hyde, The Ethos, vii). IMC provides a foundation for the metaphor of branding to exist within an ethical framework that influences overall marketing strategy. Williams states:

The man who wishes to persuade people will not be negligent as to the matter of character [ethos]; no, on the contrary, he will apply himself above all to establish a most honorable name among his fellow-citizens; for who does not know that words carry greater conviction when spoken by men of good repute than when

spoken by men who live under a cloud, and that the argument which is made by a man's life is more weight than that which is furnished by words? (66).

Hyde elevates the ethos of rhetoric to a structural component of communication; therefore describing the ethos of rhetoric as the “architectural” function of the art. He explains:

. . . its practice grants such *living room* to our lives that we might feel more *at home* with others and our surroundings. The ethos of rhetoric would have one appreciate how the *premises* and other materials of argument are not only tools of logic but also mark out the *boundaries* and *domains* of thought that, depending on how their specific discourses are *designed* and *arranged*, may be particularly inviting and moving for some audiences. (The Ethos, xiii)

Situating the ethos of rhetoric within IMC is a pivotal aspect in forming effective branding and creating brand value that holds integrity, strategy and sustainability in a postmodern marketplace.

Narrative and IMC

Narrative is a philosophical response to post-modernity. Informed by the rhetoric and philosophy of communication, a narrative approach to branding, would offer a redefining moment of this branding metaphor. IMC and narrative walk hand-in-hand. One's integrated marketing communication strategy must fit within the given narrative. At the heart of the narrative is the mission. An ethical branding campaign must be guided by grounded and guided by the mission of the narrative that it is representing.

The difference between grounded and groundless marketing is the lack of understanding of narrative and mission. IMC that extends the mission of an organization,

while strategically communicating its narrative across consumer contact points in the marketplace is effective, grounded branding. IMC can be conducted ethically and well through this understanding and appreciation of narrative and mission. Grounded IMC must also answer to the call of responsibility and duty. Thus following Schrag's notion of "fitting response."

To move forward, understanding the alignment of conventional marketing communication with modernity and addressing the ethical conundrum of modern marketing practices tied to propaganda is pivotal in establishing the historicity. The challenge of narrative lies in the establishment of an ethos of the branding metaphor through an enlightened ethical framework in order to provide praxis-oriented implementation strategies in today's international marketplace. Through the interpretive perspectives of Calvin O. Schrag, Walter Fisher and Alasdair MacIntyre, who lays the foundation for Fisher's work, narrative may be explored with foundational substance to assist in the redefining of a postmodern branding metaphor within an ethical framework of IMC.

The beginning of this project focuses on the history, evolution and significance of IMC and branding from contemporary origin through the postmodern marketplace. Discussion shifts to the ever-changing dynamics of the marketplace and the marketing response, the alignment of conventional marketing communication with modernity, and the ethical conundrum of marketing practices tied to propaganda.

The connection to epideictic rhetoric originates in the ancient conversation, epideictic rhetoric was seen as an alternative to the common forms of political and deliberative discourse. Epideictic rhetoric was tied to celebratory situations of the polis

that commemorated moments and values. The deliberative nature implied more of a pragmatic approach with focus on courses of action to public and political affairs of the polis. Like Aristotle, Heidegger understands the importance of pathos in connecting the audience through an emotional process to be moved to thoughtful action. The audience must be addressed directly and put into the “right state of mind,” while the orator’s attention to the specific situation and the orator’s own awareness of the issue. “The enthymeme, ethos and pathos work together: the moving of the passions (taking something to heart) is a prerequisite of persuasion; truth alone is not sufficient to guide the thoughtful actions of human beings” (Hyde, The Ethos, xviii).

According to Cicero, epideictic rhetoric held the persuasive power to help form and promote values, belief systems and attitudes about the way one should live. Through this sense of epideictic rhetoric and through the Aristotelian focus of the audience and the rhetorical appeals of ethos, logos and pathos, one may position that contemporary IMC holds the same functions as epideictic rhetoric in a contemporary capitalistic marketplace, while also integrating a holistic consumer experience.

Through the perspectives of Calvin O. Schrag, Walter Fisher and Alasdair MacIntyre, the chapter focus is embedded in the philosophy of communication’s interpretive approach to narrative and the assets that narrative may provide to redefine the metaphor of branding within an ethical and grounded framework of IMC. One must also explore the challenges of narratives and implementation strategies. Schrag’s concept of communicative praxis functions as a framework to conduct ethical and grounded IMC in the marketplace.

Through a contemporary analysis of IMC and branding, the chapter focuses on where we stand today in industry and how to implement narrative through IMC and branding in a global marketplace. By assessing the challenges of the global marketplace and IMC branding efforts, narrative stands as a response to post modernity.

By first addressing the definition of ethics in the marketplace, the project moves to understand the various types of ethical issues that may occur within IMC in a postmodern marketplace. The major ethical frameworks that are common throughout the literature are discussed then moving towards specific issues relating to targeting, the use of persuasive appeals, and the role of culture. The advantage and disadvantages of codes of ethics are also examined.

Working in a department that is situated in a solid applied approach to business, I am the only faculty within a humanities orientation to marketing. I view this as a unique opportunity and a welcome challenge to defend the importance of the humanities in an applied field. This final focus of this project concentrates on the importance of liberal arts in the marketplace with a praxis orientation of the teaching of IMC. Through the redefining of the ethos of branding, narrative and ethical frameworks are engaged to meet commonplace outcomes of higher education. The praxis orientation will lend a better understanding of implementation strategies in the higher education classroom to better equip students with the philosophical and theoretical grounding they need to become more strategic, critical and ethical decision makers in this international marketplace.

The project is embedded in the premise that ethics and narrative are integral components of effective IMC and branding communicative strategies. Traced to ancient scholarship and philosophy of communication and through interpretive perspectives,

rhetoric, narrative and ethics have been established grounding of communication and social structures. IMC has emerged as a contemporary genre of epideictic rhetoric with ethical obligations to our postmodern polis. Through the redefining of the branding metaphor within an ethical, grounded and narrative framework, the focus on ethos and connection to the audience through Schrag's "fitting response" may combat the previous challenges of narrative and marketing and its deconstructive effects. IMC as communicative praxis engages branding discourse in action with texture as the bonding agent between the brand and audience, thereby, opening a dialogue to conduct IMC within an ethical framework in a dynamic global marketplace.

Chapter 2: Origin and Evolution of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)

“Integrated marketing communications is a way of looking at the whole marketing process from the view point of the customer.”

-Philip Kotler

Since the advent and formal conception of integrated marketing communication (IMC) in the late 1980s, this prevailing concept has gained international attention from both academe and the marketplace. The emergence of IMC has become one of the most significant examples of development in the marketing discipline (Kitchen, 2003). IMC is still subject to varying terms, such as “new advertising,” “orchestration,” “360 branding,” “total branding,” “whole egg,” “seamless communication,” “relationship marketing,” “one-to-one marketing,” “integrated marketing,” and “integrated communications” (Kliatchko, 2002).

The IMC concept became well known on an international scale during the 1990s, yet a common understanding of its meaning and generally accepted definition was not established. Kotler (2003) tied the ultimate purpose of marketing to deliver a higher standard of living. “If we use a more limited definition we could say that marketing is a societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, and freely exchanging products and services with others” (Kotler 2003, p. 9). The key aspect in the IMC concept is value, according to Holm, which can be defined as a ratio between benefits and costs (2006). A review of the literature reveals that definitional and theoretical issues still remain unsettled and contributions continue to be made to theory building on IMC.

From the early focus of IMC on the tactical aspect of coordinating marketing messages together with a variety of communication mediums to generate a consistent

brand image, IMC then shifted toward a more strategic orientation. The basic rationale underlying the transition that if IMC refers to nothing more than tactically delivering commercial messages through a mixture of marketing and promotional tactics, then it does not deserve to include the term “integrated,” the connotation of which goes beyond a mere mixture of everything without strategic discretion” (Tsai, 431).

Pivotal changes in the marketplace, media and communications, and consumers brought about a natural evolution in marketing perspective that emerged as IMC. On a macro level, deregulations of markets, globalization of the economy of consumption fundamentally changed the marketing condition (Holm, 2006). These changes were propelled by advances in information technology and caused a major shift from the mass marketing, product-centered theories of marketing that defined the 1950s and 1960s, to the more consumer-centric, database driven, interactive and measurable approaches of integrated marketing communications (Schultz, 2003a). “The competitive arena of today bears little resemblance to that of the mid-1990s” (Blythe, 2000, p.10). Holm (2006) furthers that non-differentiated mass markets rarely exist today. Engel *et al.* (1994) claimed that appealing to unidentified individuals in a mass market is increasingly becoming dead. One basic consequence is that the traditional emphasis on heavyweight mass communication campaigns, is replaced by more direct and precisely targeted promotional activities aimed to reach the single individual (Holm, 2006).

Schultz and Kitchen (2000a) further that four elements impel changes in the contemporary marketplace, and, therefore, the practice of marketing and marketing communications –digitalization, information technology, intellectual property and communication systems. The methodologies, practices and schools of thought about

marketing and communications that prevailed during the mass marketing and mass communication have paved the way for new realities affecting the marketplace and marketing communication strategies.

Various voices of IMC theory emerged in the early 1990s, including Northwestern University. In 1991, Northwestern University, in cooperation with the American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As) and the Association of National Advertisers in the United States conducted the first noted national survey among consumer goods advertisers on the subject of IMC (Caywood & Ewing, 1991). The study's aim was to better understand the concept of IMC, to examine the extent to which IMC is being practiced by major U.S. advertisers, and to understand the importance and value of traditional advertising agencies in a marketplace where IMC has increased.

The Northwestern University study on the understanding and practice of IMC set the stage for several other studies not only in the United States (Duncan & Everett, 1993; McArthur & Griffin, 1997; Schultz & Kitchen, 1997; Gould *et al.*, 1999), but also internationally: New Zealand (Eagle *et al.*, 1999); a multi-country study from the England, United States, New Zealand, Australian and India (Kitchen & Schultz, 1999); Thailand (Anantachart, 2001); South Africa (Kallmeyer & Abratt, 2001); the Philippines (Kliatchko, 2002); and Australia (Reid, 2003).

Discussions on the varying definitions of IMC continue to be a focal point in the field of marketing communications literature. Kitchen and Schultz (1999) argue that since the early 1990s, with the exception of the United States, there has been little process in moving IMC beyond the "one-sight," "one-sound," view. Duncan and Everett (1993) concluded that since IMC is both a concept and a process, it would be difficult to arrive at

any stagnant definition of IMC. Nowak and Phelps (1994, p. 51) studied three broad concepts of IMC from a practitioner-based perspective. The first concept was the ‘one voice’ concept, where integration was viewed as a “clear and consistent image, position, message and/or theme, across all marketing disciplines or tools.” The second was “integrated” marketing communications concepts that focused solely on advertisements that not only increased brand image, but also influenced consumer behavior. The third concept was the “coordinated” marketing communications, which focused on the coordination among the various marketing communication tools, including advertising, sales promotion, and public relations, with the end goal of producing holistic communications campaigns.

Adding to the IMC conversation, Brown (1999) itemized numerous perceptions reflected in the IMC literature on what IMC is or should be: “attitude of mind,” “one spirit,” “one strategy,” “synergy,” “equal status,” “merging disciplines,” “stakeholder emphasis,” and “marketing orientation.” Beard (1997) established a more arguable stance that besides the lack of agreement on IMC definitions, the real issue is viewing IMC as both a concept and a process. Beard positioned two particular principles of IMC that have appeared to be themes in his literature review: ‘campaign message deigned to speak with one voice’ and ‘campaign messages attempting to elicit a measurable, behavioral consume response.’

In a New Zealand study, Eagle *et al.* (1999) concentrated among marketers and advertising agency executives focused on the “new” versus “nothing new” paradigms in relation to the IMC concept. One of the results was that IMC is just not just marketing or management fad, but a pivotal change in the basis of marketing and communication

practice. A contrary conclusion from Cornelissen and Lock (2000) and Cornelissen (2001), questioned the validity of the IMC concept. The scholars favored that IMC is just one more marketing and management fads fabricated by the marketing ‘gurus’ and that it lacks theoretical development and definition solidification. Schultz and Kitchen (2000b) developed a rebuttal to such claims with the explanation that IMC is still in a ‘pre-paradigm stage of development’ and its value will develop through further research and experience in the field.

Furthering the conversation of the concept development of IMC, Kliatchko (2002) argues that IMC may be considered ‘conceptually old but operationally new.’ He establishes that the two fundamental principles of integration or coordination itself and consumer orientation are conceptually old. The operationally new concept finds itself within advancements in technology to position integration and customer focus into actual practice.

Phelps and Johnson (1996) explored the challenges of identifying which exact measures to use when assessing research studies on IMC application in firms, due to the lack of clear consensus of the IMC concept. A study by Hutton (1996), argued that IMC could aid in redefining the purpose of marketing communications towards a more humanistic approach to marketing communication relationships. Hartley and Pickton (1999) coined the “mindscape” of marketing communications. This “mindscape” consisted of corporate communications management, marketing communications management, and consumer contact management, refers to the various activities in the marketing communications mix that allow for a way of thinking towards making the various elements work together. Gould *et al.* (1999) examined issues

affecting organization integration between agencies and clients and its role in effectively implementing IMC programs.

Schultz and Schultz (1998) marked a significant milestone in IMC conceptual development. They proposed a defined shift in focus from understanding IMC as marketing communication tactics and operations to viewing IMC as a ‘business process.’ The notion behind this shift is that this perspective allows for the present as well as the future scope of IMC as it develops through practice and theory. Shultz (2003b) furthers the concept of IMC as what he coins the ‘next generation IMC,’ a concept that allows for “the new requirements of consumer-focused organizations in a new and emerging marketplace, involving the acquisition, maintenance, growth, and migration of customer groups, and their income flows over time” (Kliatchko, 2005). With the focus of technology, Peltier *et al.* (2003) elaborate on the increasing importance and potential of the interactive nature of new media and its important role in engaging interaction through the ‘interactive IMC’ approach.

Issues on measurability of IMC programs are an ongoing focus of scholars and practitioners since the early development of the IMC concept. Jeans (1998) examined a workshop conducted by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, where the attendees underscored the importance of integration and its direct relation to market share. The concerns focused on the question about whether or not the effects of integration can be quantified and how it can be achieved and measured. Low (2000) conducted a study that illustrated that executing IMC may be strongly related to better marketing results in quantifiable terms of sales, market share and profits. Schultz (2003a) organized a comprehensive overview of the developments in IMC since its inception in the late

1980s, including the increasing demands for marketing and marketing communication practitioners to be accountable for marketing communications investments.

Through the IMC literature, the lack of agreement on the definition of IMC continues along with varying perceptions on the understanding and practice of it. It is established that both academics and practitioners regard IMC as the major communications development of recent history (Kitchen and Schultz, 1999). Various studies support the benefits that IMC delivers to the marketplace (Duncan & Everett, 1993; Schultz & Kitchen, 1997; Kitchen & Schultz, 1999; Anatachart, 2001; Kliatchko, 2002; Spickett-Jones *et al.*, 2003), among the benefits are: improved coordination, centralization, and greater consistency of marketing communication programs (Duncan & Everett, 1993; Moriarty, 1994; Anantachart, 2001; Kliatchko, 2002); and increased message impact and creativity stemming from a focused and clearly defined strategy (Schultz & Kitchen, 1997; Kitchen & Schultz, 1999; Anatachart, 2001); Maskulka *et al.*, 2003; Spickett-Jones *et al.*, 2003). The benefits of integrating the use of various marketing communication disciplines, particularly public relations, have also been explored in research and practice (Moriarty, 1994; Kitchen & Moss, 1995; Gronstedt, 1996; Caywood, 1997; Harris, 1998; Hutton, 1999).

In both the academic and practitioner perspectives, the differences in concept articulation, principles, and applications of IMC are the most common areas of discussion. Kliatchko (2005) identifies the most relevant points of difference in the IMC literature as:

“1) Disagreements on definitional issues and scope of IMC; 2) difficulties arising from the view that IMC is both a concept and a process; 3) contentions on

whether IMC is merely a fad; 4) controversy over turf battles on who leads the integration process; and 5) conflicts on agency and client relationships, organizational structures, and compensation issues.

The previous conversation has focused more on the practice, tactics, tools, procedures, and application and on the various benefits that IMC can deliver to the marketplace and organizations (Kliatchko, 2005). The need for a theoretical understanding is a current trend in IMC literature. Shultz and Kitchen (1997) affirmed in an exploratory study of IMC in U.S. advertising agencies that the literature on IMC has previously focused largely on application rather than understanding of IMC's basic theories. They recommend that theory building on IMC and the development of a more relevant IMC definition are crucial for furthering the growth and practice of IMC.

Evolution of the IMC Definition

Six definitions of IMC, as outlined by Kliatchko (2005), are discussed. The definitions were selected on the basis of their acceptability among scholars and practitioners who have done exploratory work. Three definitions originate from the pioneers of IMC from Northwestern University, Shultz, Duncan, Nowak and Phelps, and Kliatchko.

The first formal definition of IMC was developed at Northwestern University in 1989. This definition was used in a survey of major advertisers and advertising agencies in the United States, sponsored by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As), the Association of National Advertisers, and Northwestern University (Schultz & Schultz, 1998). This definition has been the most widely used since 1989 and most often cited by scholars and practitioners (Duncan & Everett, 1993; Nowak & Phelps, 1994;

Belch & Belch, 1995; Baldinger, 1996; Duncan & Caywood, 1996; Lloyd, 1996; Petrison & Wang, 1996; Phelps & Johnson, 1996; Russell & Lane, 1996; Beard, 1997; Brown, 1997; Cayood, 1997; Shimp, 1997; Burnett & Moriarty, 1998; Grunig & Grunig, 1998; Harris, 1998; Koekemoer, 1998; Schultz & Schultz, 1998; Sirgy, 1998; Wells *et al.*, 1998; Eagle *et al.*, 1999; Gould *et al.*, 1999; Kitchen & Schultz, 1999; Anantachart, 2001; Kallmeyer & Abratt, 2001; Peltier *et al.*, 2003). This definition states that IMC is:

A concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategy roles of a variety of communication disciplines – general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations – and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact.

The 4As illustrates the call for a “synergistic” marketing communications plan that uses multiple tools of marketing communications other than the traditional modes of mass advertising and benefits on the strengths of each tool with the goal of achieving the most effective impact with the target consumers (Kliatchko, 2005). The unifying element of one communication strategy is identified as the pivotal grounding of the IMC strategy with the integration of the various tools; synergy cannot be achieved when the tools are used independently without supporting each other (Brown, 1997).

The echoes of ‘one spirit’ or ‘one voice’ are implied through this definition of the effective coordination of the various tools through strategic planning to create clarity and consistency of image in all marketing message through the communication tools and consumer touch points (Nowak & Phelps, 1994; Brown, 1997). The “seamless” and “classless” integration is also implied through the breakdown of walls that previously

separated the various communication tools and eliminate any prejudice or hierarchy among the communication tools (Kliatchko, 2005). “Thus allowing the the merging of these various communication tools to work together effectively without losing the identity and the individual differences and strengths of each tool (Brown, 1997).

Kitchen and Schultz (1999) in their multi country study on IMC among advertising executives revealed weaknesses in this particular definition. Respondents claimed the definition lacked specific elements, such as measurability and quantification analysis drive for results, consumer orientation, aspects of creativity, cost-effectiveness, cost efficiency and interactivity. Duncan and Caywood (1996) also found inadequacies with this definition, including the exclusion of consumers and prospects, and how effectiveness may be achieved.

Kliatchko (2005) summarizes the three major implications form the limitations of this definition. First, the emphasis put on the benefits that may be yielded from the combination of various communication tools further accentuates the limited understanding and prevailing notion among practitioners that IMC is concerned with only the effective use of multiple communication tools. Second, the absence of references on consumers and other relevant stakeholders in the definition ignores the centrality and importance placed on the audience from the IMC perspective. Viewing the whole marketing communication process through the perspective of the consumer is the heart of the whole IMC process and strategy. Third, measurability issues cannot be underestimated for IMC to be more widely accepted and practiced. IMC scholars, such as Schultz & Walters (1997), Schultz (1998), Schultz & Kitchen (2000a), propose financial models and evaluation tools that should be explored and applied to further strengthen the

potential of IMC strategic planning and establish increased credibility and direct contribution to achieving results.

In 1991, Don Schultz and his colleagues at Northwestern University proposed a revised definition of IMC that articulated concepts of IMC that had not been addressed in the definition just two years earlier. This definition states:

IMC is the process of managing all sources of information about a product/service to which a customer or prospect is exposed which behaviorally moves the consumer toward a sale and maintains customer loyalty. (Duncan & Caywood, 1996)

The focus in this definition turns towards the consumer or prospect, which is the heart of the IMC concept. Kliatchko states, “There also in an implicit emphasis placed on nurturing a relationship between the brand and the customer. Moreover, it highlights the need for behavioral responses from customers or prospects for an IMC campaign to be effective” (2015). This definition opens the conversation beyond the limitations of individual communication tools to the inclusion of all possible contact points between the brand and the consumer. The weakness with this definition is that it fails to include that IMC is also a concept and not just a process. Kliatchko (2005) highlights that it also leaves out the elements of strategic thinking and measurability in the IMC planning process.

Tom Duncan introduced his first interpretation of IMC in 1992. He viewed IMC as: The strategic coordination of all messages and media used by an organization to collectively influence its perceived brand value (Duncan & Caywood, 1996). This definitely plays upon the synergy through the coordination of all messages and

communication tools. Low conducted a study on IMC using this very definition by Duncan as a basis for the interviews he conducted among senior U.S. marketing managers. Upon asking each interviewee to define IMC, he concluded that all of the respondents defined it as a management practice. The most common element found in the responses was the coordination of marketing communication tools. Low concluded that his finding supported his adoption of Duncan's 1992 definition.

In 1994, Duncan and Caywood (1996) suggested limitations to the previous definition based upon the definition limited the messages and media used to those that the brand sought to deliver. Duncan revised the definition as follows: IMC is the process of strategically controlling or influencing all messages and encouraging purposeful dialogue to create and nourish profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders (Duncan and Caywood, 1996). The revision was based on a move from attitudinal change to behavioral change by stating 'creates and nourishes profitable relationships.' The emphasis on long-term relationship building with all stakeholders, thus expanding the target market to include, not only consumers and prospects, but also employees, regulators, the community, and other parties involved in an organization is also a key aspect of the revised definition.

One challenge to this definition is that the phrase 'controlling and influencing all messages' may mislead others to a traditional view of marketing that all marketing messages are under the control of marketers is the phrase. As Schultz *et al.* (1996) explain, the outside-in perspective that IMC takes highlights the fact that messages may be both controlled and uncontrolled, and thereby requiring the management of both

favorable and unfavorable communication originating from all possible sources, with some of it beyond the control of marketers.

Another weakness of this definition is the failure to include the communication channels to be employed in order to obtain the end goal of ‘encouraging purposeful dialogue.’ In contrast to the 4As definition that emphasized the variety of communication tools, “the absence of any reference to communication channels in Duncan’s definition downplays an inherent concept in IMC of examining closely the relevant contact points and most effective channels of reaching out to multiple targeted markets” (Kliatchko 2005). One last inadequacy is that measurability and evaluation of IMC programs are also not made elaborate in this definition. The earlier observation on the 4Ps definition revealed that among marketing communication practitioners measurability and evaluation are top concerns, as supported by various studies (Duncan & Everett, 1993; Schultz & Kitchen, 1997; Kitchen & Schultz, 1999).

The fourth definition of IMC discussed is from Nowak and Phelps (1994), who focused on conceptualizing the notion of IMC, rather than providing a straightforward definition. Their work explored three areas of conceptualization: *one-voice marketing communications*, *integrated communications*, and *coordinated marketing communications*. Kliatchko (2005) further explains that *one voice marketing communications* creates ‘a clear and consistent image, position, message, and/or theme across all marketing disciplines or tools.’ *Integrated communications* incorporates a creation of both a brand image and a behavioral response is generated from marketing communication channels. *Coordinated marketing communications* connects ‘integrated’ with the notion of ‘coordination’ of all marketing communication tools, such as

advertising, public relations, direct marketing, sales promotions, etc. The overall aim is to create a holistic campaign to engage the synergy among the communication tools that builds brand awareness and overall brand image, while calling forth a behavioral response from the target audiences. The conceptualizations provided by Nowak and Phelps add to the IMC conversation by providing more depth into the explanations to the understanding of the IMC concept, yet narrowly focus on the most basic notions of the concept, which is one voice, thus failing to ‘transcend these fundamental ideas’ (Kliatchko, 2005).

In 1998, Don Schultz and Heidi Schultz proposed a new definition of IMC based on past studies of IMC as well as the experiences of organizations that have implemented the IMC approach. Schultz and Schultz (1998) definition of IMC is defined as follows:

IMC is a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute, and evaluate coordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communication programs over time with consumers, customers, prospects, and other targeted, relevant external and internal audiences.

This definition, according to the authors, lends focus to the business process, which sets it apart from the previous definitions. This definition is the most comprehensive definition of IMC to this point in the literature, as it encompasses most of the concepts associated with IMC. Schultz and Kitchen (2000) further comment:

This definition first focuses strategy – a strategy of communication that is clearly related to corporate mission, values, and needs, but relates equally to brand mission, values, and needs. At both levels executives will need to develop resonance and consonance in terms of brand identity. (5)

In addition, this definition transcends the understanding of the term brand communication from its traditional view to all contact points between the organization and its brands and the consumers or prospects. The phrase ‘relevant internal and external audiences’ suggests that IMC programs include and nurture long-term relationships with all key internal and external stakeholders and are not limited to marketing communications towards on consumers.

Kliachko (2002) conducted a qualitative study among CEOs and senior executives of advertising agencies and marketing directors of client organizations in Manila to examine how IMC was understood, accepted and practiced. The Schultz and Schultz (1998) definition of IMC was used in the study based upon the definition being the most recent definition available during the time research was conducted. The findings illustrated the both agency and client respondents found the definition ‘correct and holistic.’ A few drawbacks of the definition revealed that the respondents found the definition too long, generic, and unclear on the immediate value and benefit of IMC.

Reviewing the evolution of the IMC definition through, the literature suggest the conceptualization of the IMC concept has developed considerably since its inception in the late 1980s. The enhancement of the concept from one-voice, coordinated, and consistent concept to a more strategic consumer-oriented and measurable approach to brand communication planning is apparent (Kliachko, 2005).

Kliatchko’s (2005) research and analysis of current literature of IMC, led to his proposal of a new definition of IMC based on the framework proposed by Schultz and Schultz (1998), but elaborates, according to Kliatchko, “the nature and essential qualities of IMC with greater precision and clarity.” His definition states: IMC is the concept and

process of strategically managing audience-focused, channel-centered, and results-driven brand communication programs over time. (23) The definition consists of four main elements:

1) IMC is both a concept and a process; 2) IMC requires the knowledge and skills of strategic thinking and business management; 3) IMC is hinged on and distinguished by three essential elements or pillars – audience-focused, channel-centered, and results-driven; and 4) IMC involves an expanded view of brand communications. (23-24)

This definition is distinguishable among the previous definitions as it articulates these three essential and unique elements or pillars of IMC, which expand the overall principles of the IMC concept.

The Three Pillars of IMC

The first pillar of IMC is that it is audience-focused, therefore, reinforcing importance of the target audience at the heart of the IMC concept from beginning of the strategic planning and formulation to the creative execution, media planning, and message delivery, while including both internal and external audiences. Building and strengthening positive relationships with an organization's internal audience is crucial to the health of the organization and a brand as it fosters loyalty and strength within and a stronger sense of belonging and stewardship. "The use of the term audience rather than consumer is deliberate, as it gives prominence to the fact that IMC programs are not directed solely to consumers, but to all relevant publics of an organization" (Kliatcho, 2015 p. 26). This concept opens IMC strategies to focus on the idea of multiple markets, which differs in traditional advertising planning approach where campaigns are directed

solely to one market, typically the consumer (Moore & Thorson, 1996). Within the IMC concept, the multiple-market approach moves past the traditional advertising planning approach where the consumer segment is defined broadly through demographics and psychographics. IMC seeks to clearly and concisely identify relevant and valued audience groups for a particular brand. For example, an infant formula, such as Similac, targets not only their primary target of first-time mothers and mothers in general, but also pediatricians and hospitals as important influences and decision makers in the consumer-buying process. Similac proudly displays the #1 Brand for Hospitals seal-of-approval, as well as the stamp of Pediatrician Recommend on its branded marketing communications and packaging. All audiences involved will then require distinct, yet integrated, marketing communication strategies as part of a comprehensive IMC strategic plan.

The second pillar of IMC is that it is channel-centered, as it involves an integrated approach to planning and managing the coordination of appropriate channel of communication, as well as other brand contact points. The aim is to reach and connect with target audiences through multiple channels through coordinated action. The enhanced concept of brand communications in IMC (Schultz & Schultz, 1998) allows for a myriad of communication channel possibilities, from traditional television, radio, and print, non-traditional media, such as grass-roots marketing, elements of the marketing mix, and digital and mobile marketing. It is important to note that the various functions in the business process within an organization also need to be managed and coordinated under a strategic umbrella, thus resulting in a holistic, effective and synergistic brand communications mix.

Media neutrality is also an important inherent notion of the IMC concept during media planning and buying processes. Avoiding media bias allows for the target audience to be the focus point or driver of the strategy, not the media channels. This strategic approach utilizes ‘zero-base planning method.’ This means that budget allocations are determined by the marketing communication objectives to be achieved and not mandated by management (Kliatchko, 2005). Through this pillar of the IMC concept, resources are strategically examined to maximize resources to attain objectives and desired results.

The final pillar of IMC is that it should be results-driven. The accountability factor is addressed in this pillar, as IMC programs are to be measurable and accountable for business results. This is done through a process of custom valuation of the identified markets, and estimating return on customer investments (ROCI) (Kliatchko, 2005). Longitudinal studies of verifying and evaluating financial investments at certain points over time to track the effectiveness of IMC campaigns are preferred methods within this pillar. The financial measurement tools employed in IMC reinforce its orientation towards measuring behavior responses rather than attitudes and communication effects, such as brand awareness), and measuring outcomes, instead of outputs of the total brand communication program over time (Schultz & Walters, 1997). The value focus is what is received in return (ROCI), not on what is spent for marketing communication efforts. This element of the IMC pillar establishes a fundamental value to IMC that was lacking before in previous definitional grounding.

The three pillars of IMC illustrates an interrelationship that is consistent with the IMC planning models posited earlier by Schultz *et al.* (1996) and Schultz and Kitchen (2000a). The precise identification of multiple and relevant markets (audience-focus)

stems from a greater understanding of marketing research and consumer analytics. From this point of identification, it is then possible to examine the most effective marketing communication channels (channel-centered) and contact points to reach the target audiences and establish a long-term relationship. The IMC approach then evaluates the effectiveness of the IMC program based on the income flows (results-driven) the organization gains from the identified markets, through a process of market valuation and measurement of actual returns on the investments in those markets (Kliatchko, 2005).

Perspectives of IMC

The 21st century marketplace has changed strategies from the marketing of products and services to the marketing of consumer experiences. Since this turn, many marketing researchers have agreed that marketing's fundamental mission is to manage the consumer experience (Tsai, 432). Researchers, Pine and Gilmore (1999) were among the first to welcome the arrival of the experience economy era, which demands a new philosophy of marketing with emphasis on the consumer experience. Consumer experience has become the core element beyond the selling and marketing of a product or service. In *The Experience Economy*, Pine and Gilmore (1999) position this concept with the assertion that the marketplace is to be understood as a theatrical stage, engaged with actors, scripts, and audience (consumer) participation. Scholars such as Carbone (1998) warn against the myopic view that the marketplace is still in the commodity business. The real business now is one of a greater demand that represents value created through the dialogue between the brand and the consumer experience.

Two key, yet distinct, perspectives of IMC are strategic communications and strategic brand management. In the late 1990s, Schultz (1998) emphasized the brand

element as integral to IMC through the strategic communications perspective. The brand is to be what the consumers want, demand and equate to value. In order to satisfy these consumer wants and needs, the strategic communication functions of the brand must be highly integrated and unified. Tsai defines the two basic propositions brought forth by this perspective:

- 1) IMC is a coordinated marketing communication processes, which focuses on unifying a firm's communication efforts across the spectrum of marketing communication disciplines to target multiple audiences with a message congruent to their expectations;
- 2) IMC is to facilitate one-voice as well as situational brand communication, which emphasizes unity among various communication vehicles and promotional tools to reflect brand image that, in addition to being consistent in different contexts, is also preferred by different target consumers. (434)

Duncan (2001), a strategic communication theorist of IMC, further expands this understanding of IMC through five key strategic communication elements for effective IMC. First, IMC is based upon cross-functional design with support from top and senior management. Second, the "outside-in" marketing research aids in determining consumer perceptions and market trends and is the heart of IMC. "The outside-in database acts as an engine for the sequential various marketing communication activities (Tsai, 434).

Third, marketing message and activities, operating in a synergistic manner, must abide by the principles of consistency, integration, clarity, systematization, economics, and concentration. The fourth element focuses on the broad scope of target audiences and stakeholders. Lastly, two-way and symmetric communications is the grounding of a tailored relationship across multiple audiences.

To summarize the strategic communications view of IMC, IMC is conceptualized as integrating all communication tactics and practices internal and external of a firm, “in pursuit of a communication environment in which the brand represents itself through the multi-facets of communication endeavors geared around building a consistent and preferable brand image” (Tsai, 434). The overall goal being that the target consumers’ perception of the brand is through strategically crafted integrated marketing platforms.

Strategic brand management, the second perspective of IMC, includes more of a total quality management (TQM) of the overall brand into the IMC conversation. The concentration on communication elements is still pivotal, yet the TQM concentration and dual-brand positioning expand the depth of the IMC. This perspective led to an updated of the traditional 4Ps of theory of marketing management (product, price, place and promotion). The two principles to characterize this shift are: 1) Strategic brand management is an alignment of total quality management with IMC; 2) Brand positioning should emphasize both functionality and symbolism (Tsai, 435).

In the mid-1990s, the most notable TQM/IMC project was the Awareness, Trial, and Usage study that focused on the effectiveness of 1) marketing communications in improving consumer awareness of the brand, 2) promotional offers in increasing consumer trial of the brand, and 3) manufacturing in strengthening consumer recognition of product quality (Tsai, 435). The findings illustrated that all three measures contribute to the maintaining of constant consumer usage of the brand. Haynes, Lackman, and Guskey (1999) further theorized IMC to be incorporated into TQM. Their findings formulate the understanding that effective brand management is achieved through aligning TQM principles with IMC strategies, “hence formulating synergistic strategy

and execution in the manufacturing and marketing of the brand” (Tsai, 435). Through this perspective brand management is becomes strategic, produces long-term results to meet consumers’ needs on various levels. Strategic brand management from this point forth became a combination of TQM and IMC.

An additional element of IMC from the strategic brand management perspective is tied to the dual brand positioning theory that grounds itself in that the functionality and symbolism of the product brand impact marketing effectiveness. Bhat and Reddy (1998) offer further support through an empirical study on the consumer perceptions of different product categories and found that functionality and symbolism affect similarly on consumer evaluations of both utilitarian and expressive product brands. IMC is pivotal in positioning the brand not only in terms of quality, but also in terms of symbolic meanings to the consumer target. The particular areas of focus including establishing the brand concept, designing the brand attributes, selecting the precise brand contact points, and planning the brand message execution to connect and remain connected to the complexities and of the consumer over a long term relationship.

IMC: From Tactics to Strategy

Kitchen and Schultz (2000) identified four stages of IMC: tactical coordination of promotional elements, redefining the scope of marketing communications, application of information technology to financial and strategic integration. In their studies they found that a majority of firms are wedged in the first two stages, some are moving into stage three and very few have moved to the final stage of strategic integration. A conclusion from the literature review is that there are barriers to developing IMC from tactics to strategy (Holm, 2006). If we accept that communication is the foundation of all human

relationships (Duncan, 2002), we also have to accept that only strategically oriented integrated brand communications can help business to reach as sustainable competitive position. To better understand the full meaning and process of IMC, Smith *et al.* (1999) developed three distinguishable elements of the IMC concept:

1) Manage and control of all market communications; 2) Ensuring that brand positioning, personality, and message are delivered synergistically across every element of communication and are delivered from a single consistent strategy; and 3) The strategic analysis, choice, implementation, and control of all elements of marketing communications, which efficiently (best use of resources), economically (minimum costs), and effectively (maximum results) influence transactions between an organization, and its existing and potential customers, consumers, and clients. (24)

Smith *et al.* (1999) also developed a tool to illustrate marketing integration as occurring at one or more of seven levels of integration to better equip the fluid movement from tactics to strategy. The levels and corresponding degrees of integration are:

- *Vertical objective integration*: The marketing communication objectives fit with marketing objectives and overall corporate objectives
- *Horizontal/functional integration*: The marketing communication activities fit well with other business functions of manufacturing, operations, and human resource management.
- *Communication mix integration*: All of the twelve communication tools are being used to guide the customer/consumer/client through each stage of the buying process and all of them portray a consistent message.

- *Creative design integration:* The creative design and execution is uniform and consistent with the chosen position of the product.
- *Internal/external integration.* All internal departments and all external employed agencies are working together to an agreed plan and strategy.
- *Financial integration:* The budget is being used in the most effective and efficient way ensuring that economies of scale are achieved and that long-term investment is optimized.

The scholars argue that the most important and grounding level is vertical integration, as no effective marketing communication objective can be developed if it is not directly linked to specific marketing objectives and relevant corporate objectives.

Training and education may be one of the most challenging hurdles facing this IMC integration. The American Association of Advertising Agencies' study on "The Status of Integrated Marketing Communication" states that the first barrier to agencies' assuming the role of total coordinator is that corporations perceive the talent level of people at advertising working on other communication media as inferior to those working in general advertising (Schultz, 1991). In a study by Eagle and Kitchen (2000), a perceived IMC barrier identified by advertising agency respondents was the lack of up-front planning and training as a limiting factor. One suggested that effective IMC implementation "requires people whose professionalism is bigger than their ego . . . skilled and knowledgeable people who will consider all forms of communication." An overwhelming finding of this study was that respondents endorsed the overarching objectives of all participants as being "brand guardians," but acknowledge the dire

importance of “considerable education, re-education, training or up skilling was required to change particular mindsets” (Eagle & Kitchen, 2000).

IMC has emerged as a powerful tool in the field and one of the most significant examples of development in the marketing discipline. IMC has not only become the most innovative marketing communications function supported by practitioners, but also has intrigued the likes of communication and business scholars. IMC has radically changed the face of marketing and communication since its emergence in the late 1980s. To fully deliver on the IMC promise, IMC must move beyond a mere process that is situated in revamping of a traditional marketing mix to a synergistic, dynamic and resilient paradigm focused on the target audiences and stakeholders that continues to evolve.

Moving towards the next chapter, the focus shifts to establishing IMC as epideictic rhetoric. The conversation begins with an Aristotelian perspective of epideictic rhetoric, while anchoring contemporary foundations of IMC to the ancient art. Contemporary ideas on IMC as epideictic rhetoric are explored through the main communicative lens of Calvin O. Schrag.

Chapter 3: IMC as Epideictic Rhetoric

*“Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion. This is not a function of any other art.”
-Aristotle*

Situating IMC as a contemporary form of epideictic rhetoric establishes an entrance into the understanding of grounded versus groundless IMC. This entrance engages philosophical and theoretical perspectives to embed the ethical dimensions of the rhetorical nature and practice of IMC. Introducing the connection to narrative, which through narrative’s very nature has a rhetorical component, further situates IMC within an epideictic rhetorical perspective.

McKenna touches upon the notion that contemporary advertising holds significant resemblance to the very elements that establish epideictic rhetoric in the 1998 article “Advertising as Epideictic Rhetoric.” I further this initial conversation to examine IMC as a form of epideictic rhetoric within the Aristotelian tradition, as advertising is a strategic component of the contemporary marketing mix. An additional supporting factor is the natural evolution of the field of advertising to what we see as IMC today. “With that change, IMC began to focus on customer-centric data and database-driven communication programs. That change moved the entire field of communication out of tactical activities into managerial and strategic use of marketing communication” (Kellogg ix).

IMC functions as a comprehensive philosophy of marketing that examines the whole marketing rhetorical situation through the eyes of the consumer (audience). This turn may be seen as Aristotelian as the emphasis of the audience becomes greater and of more importance as a pivotal contemplative role of the rhetorical marketing situation

within particular contexts. To understand the marketing situation, the brand must first understand and know the audience. According to Kotler, “Integrated marketing communications are a way of looking at the whole marketing process from the viewpoint of the consumer” (23). This shift capitalizes on synergy among the promotional marketing mix through re-alignment of the communication platforms to create brand awareness, build positive images, identify prospects, build channel relationships, retain consumers, break through the marketplace clutter, and, ultimately, maximize ROI. The ultimate goal is to build long-term brand value through measurable results with the consumer (audience) at the heart of the process.

To commemorate the history of an Aristotelian tradition, predecessors such as Socrates and Plato are pivotal cornerstones in the path paved by Aristotle. The love for theoretical philosophy and practical philosophy through critical engagement of dialogue and argument differentiated Aristotle among the ancient philosophers. The Aristotelian understanding of *theoria* is tied to that which is considered universal, where *praxis* is concerned with particularities that are tied to human choice and change. Theoretical wisdom is defined through truth, while practical wisdom is rooted in action. The continuing Aristotelian conversation of theory and action is a fruitful grounding for the understanding of IMC as a form of epideictic rhetoric in today’s global marketplace.

Particularly, epideictic rhetoric, originating in ancient rhetorical theory, was understood as an alternative to the deliberative discourse of the polis. Traditionally such rhetoric was grounded in politics and business matters. Deliberative rhetoric summons the audience to decide through a particular course of action in such matters of politics or the marketplace. Epideictic rhetoric, on the other hand, requests observation from the

audience about the logos of the speaker through *theoria*. The audience is given this very pivotal contemplation role in forming ideas in response to the rhetoric.

As technology progresses and marketing messages become more customized and strategic, society is saturated with more persuasive messages than ever before and through various creative mediums and touch points. Corbett and Connors noted advertising as probably the most rhetorical persuasive device in today's marketplace (205). This concept has become even more applicable over the years as we move into this elevated engagement of strategically crafted marketing messages weaved into everyday life through the advancement of technology.

The integration of persuasive messages in every day life presents many IMC opportunities and utilization of IMC tools through abundant traditional to highly sophisticated mediums. The persuasive messages reflect the economical, sociological, political, psychological, and ethical values, attitudes and presuppositions on what life is to be. IMC becomes an embedded story that echoes the values of that society and can be viewed through the activities, interactions and communication of given target audiences, communities and society as a whole, much like the ancient rhetorical art of epideictic rhetoric.

Ancient Traditions of Epideictic Rhetoric

In order to understand the future, one must look to the past. The ancient ideas of rhetoric provide insights into the continuously emerging contexts of communication and IMC in today's global marketplace. Theorists such as Kenneth Burke stresses that revisiting ancient rhetoric is applicable to contemporary communication scenarios.

Through “Rhetoric of Motives,” Burke provides a comprehensive analysis of traditional rhetorical genres, as well as principles, in application of contemporary situations. Burke also examine all persuasive discourse in society as fundamentally rhetorical. Through this examination of the traditional rhetorical structure and ideas, Burke meticulously defines through modern contexts, situations, and conditions. Burke begins from Aristotle’s definition of rhetorical genres and moves to identify advertising as complex and even problematic (Attitudes, p. 360). Tom Morris voices through Aristotelian tradition in “If Aristotle Ran General Motors” the issues of ethics in business and management. In “Learning to Read the Signs,” F. Byron Nahser suggests an understanding of commercial pragmatism that has its origins in the ancient conversation regarding inquiry (6). Nasher also refers to the origin of commercial pragmatism having its origins in the ancients (46-47).

There are a number of noted studies that strongly advocate using classical rhetorical ideas in contemporary contexts. These include Bizzell and Herzberg’s “Rhetorical Tradition,” Corbett and Connor’s “Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student,” and Kathleen Welch’s “The Contemporary Reception of Classical Rhetoric.” These credited studies illustrate support within the field of humanities to bring new communicative situations under the ancient rhetorical lens. These theorists also merit significant argument against the opposing arguments of bringing the old into the new as “anachronistic or ahistorical and trivial” (McKenna 104-105).

To illustrate the connections between epideictic rhetoric and IMC, the first step is to explore the commonalities as persuasive communicative platforms. As explained by Sullivan, the ultimate goal of epideictic rhetoric is not to cause an action from the

audience directly, but “let a course of action appear for audience from the foundations of what has been commended” (45). The audience is a part of the communicative context and is assigned a role to form ideas in response to the presented discourse, not a swift ruling in a specific case. Epideictic rhetoric commanded a different genre of rhetoric all together, as “it addresses the celebrative situations of a community or a society which values are created and commemorated” (Walker 9).). According to Cicero, epideictic rhetoric also is a form of rhetoric that molds and encourages certain values, beliefs, and presuppositions for which a society or culture lives and exists. A Ciceronian perspective of philosophy is a measure by which one may base practice on wisdom, that would guide and teach the principles of argumentation, dialectics, invention, and eloquence (“De Oratore,” p. 89-91). Cicero emphasizes that a philosophically informed rhetorical education is pivotal in the experience of a good orator. In his “De Inventione,” Cicero states, “Philosophy! The guide of our lives, the explorer of all that is good in us, exterminator of evil” (54). His argument is that without the study of rhetoric, society would lack order in life.. Cicero also views the relationship between philosophy and rhetoric as philosophy enables people “to communicate within one another by language and writing, as philosophy is the “inventor of laws, teacher of morals, creator of order” (54).

This Ciceronian perspective allows for reinforcement discourse of societal values and provides grounding for other forms of rhetoric to function in society. Through this notion, epideictic rhetoric may be related to the ethical formation of communicative action in society. It may be argued that IMC grasps a comparable role as epideictic rhetoric in contemporary capitalistic societies within the global marketplace.

Through an Aristotelian lens, it is apparent that epideictic rhetoric is not deliberative in the approach and role of the audience (Chase 295). Deliberative rhetoric places responsibility on the audience to make a judgment or course of action in public or political business (Rhetoric 1358b8-1358b20). Epideictic rhetoric calls for more contemplation or observation of the logos of the speaker for given societal settings (Rhetoric 1358b21-1358b28). This Aristotelian view is similar to that of Isocrates regarding the nature of epideictic rhetoric, yet the differentiating point is the place of the audience in rhetorical action. As Aristotle defines rhetoric “as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion. This is not a function of any other art,” Aristotle’s emphasis on the audience as a part of the invention process is evident (Rhetoric 1355b27).

In Plato’s “Phaedrus,” Socrates explains that it would be less difficult to discuss Athenian war heroes with the Athenians in a funeral oration; it would be more challenging to handle the same subject in front of a Spartan audience. In “The Rhetoric,” Aristotle furthers that a rhetor’s task of the subject not only changes in matters of occasion, but also in changes with matters tied to audience’s position and identity (Rhetoric 1358a36). In Pericles’ “Funeral Oration,” which can be suggested is the inspiration for Plato’s example in the “Phaedrus,” Pericles praises those who died in war in the name of Athens and their heroic characteristics and manner, while praising Athens itself along with the political, social, and cultural values and morals of the society (Hauser 16). The Athenian audience is encouraged through the heartfelt eulogy to challenge themselves to the standards of these courageous men who died in the name of their beloved Athens and her values.

The goal of Pericles through his rhetoric is not for the audience to make a judgment about a specific course of action regarding war, but to instill contemplation or *theoria*. The rhetor's *logos* steers the audience to form ideas about what it means to be Athenian and what these core values are (Hauser 17). This prime example is pivotal as it sets the stage on how this epideictic genre of rhetoric positions the audience, which establishes a strong differentiation point from the other Aristotelian rhetorical genres.

In the political context, the deliberative approach is pragmatic and direct, where a judgment of a course of action is to be established. The rhetor's discourse includes devices of both artistic and inartistic proofs (Rhetoric 1356a2-1356a21) to appeal to the audience to achieve the desired judgment. Similarly, in the judicial context, the role of judgment lies with the audience and is also called forth pragmatically. The goal is to deliver a course of action regarding punishment for wrong doings. This judicial discourse is based upon the action that happened in the past (Rhetoric 1358b20).

Unlike the other genres of rhetoric, epideictic rhetoric is engaged primarily in the present. The political and legal issues are not of concern, and the nature of the rhetoric is not pragmatic. There is no immediate call for a specific course of action through the utilization of inartistic or artistic proofs. The nature of epideictic rhetoric embeds the audience's role to form ideas through observation of pivotal values and morals in a storytelling fashion. Through the art of language and narrative form, the rhetor seeks to influence the audience to establish contemplation – *epideixis* – the significance of those values and morals in that society (Rhetoric 1367b37-1368a10). Similar to the ancient example of Pericles's rhetoric elevating the importance of Athenian values in a eulogy, or a contemporary example of President Ronald Reagan's June 12th, 1987 speech

celebrating the 750th birthday for Berlin, at the Brandenburg Gate in West Berlin, Germany, the epideictic rhetor does not dictate a specific course of action from the audience, but encourages the audience to observe and contemplate, while celebrating certain values and beliefs. Reagan's historic speech regarding East-West relations marked a pivotal point in the historical moment and in the minds of the audience. Reagan stated:

We welcome change and openness; for we believe that freedom and security go together, that the advance of human liberty can only strengthen the cause of world peace. There is one sign the Soviets can make that would be unmistakable, that would advance dramatically the cause of freedom and peace. General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization, come here to this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall! (National Archives)

The sense of the greater good and responsibility and morality of the polis, or community, is of importance. By the audience sharing and integrating these values into their individual lives for the greater whole, there is more of a sense of ownership and commitment to such pursuit. Cicero argues that epideictic discourse ought to serve to counsel virtues that are beneficial not only for an individual, but also for the whole of humanity (Chase, 297). These commended values in an epideictic rhetorical occasion are concerned with the perceived correct ways of living one's life in the right character, according to the polis, and integration of the given historical moment's customs and rituals.

Aristotle also discusses given commonplaces for arguments –*topoi* –for each occasion to have the desirable effect over audience (Rhetoric 1355a22-1355b7). Even

though the commonplaces differ per each rhetorical genre, Aristotle argues that there are similarities between deliberative and epideictic topics due to their common appeal to the common values (Rhetoric 1363a24). The connection exists with the sense of what is good and honorable in the future through deliberative persuasive rhetoric in a particular case also ought to be in agreement with the values and morals celebrated at the heart of the society in the present through epideictic persuasive rhetoric.

By examining this connection, one can see an understanding of epideictic rhetorical as not only a stylistic performance of a rhetor, but also one of moral and ethics through symbolic action. By addressing the audience's *theoria*, a rhetor performs linguistically to persuade the audience to praise what is acclaimed in the given persuasive message (Rhetoric 1359a11-1359a25). "The important distinction here is that the emphasis should be on the values celebrated not on the oral quality or capability of the speaker who performs (Ong 73). In the epideictic rhetorical occasions, the rhetor quite commonly looks to perfect the eloquence of the persuasive message; therefore, the values praised in the speech are blanketed with the beauty of the discourse. Here a rhetor illustrates not only the morally right actions in a speech (Farrell 72-73), but also persuades through the forms of beauty in the language through one's own rhetorical eloquence (Perelman 6). The rhetor becomes one with the celebrated values in the eyes of the audience, at a point where wisdom and style merge.

This unity of wisdom and eloquence can be traced to Aristotle's inartistic *pistis* of *ethos*, when the rhetor must exhibit good morals and ethics through the persuasive message. If the rhetor does not evoke such a moral standards that are presented, the assumption is "that he is speaking to a moral motive, which can also enthymemically

rally an audience to gather around the recommended values” (Perelman 15). Aristotle firmly explains that the moral character alone can be the most persuasive part of a speech.

Contemporary Ideas on IMC as Epideictic Rhetoric

In the philosophy of communication and rhetoric literature, the topic of the relationship between advertising/marketing and rhetoric is a common lure for scholars. For the purpose of this project, I focus on the ancient tradition of Aristotle and touch on some key contemporary thinkers vested in the heart of the topic, Kenneth Burke, Jacques Ellul, and Walter Fisher. The emphasis of the interpretive analysis of this project rests in the communicative path paved by Calvin O. Schrag.

Inspired by a combination of Ciceronian and Aristotelian schools of thought, Burke crafted his idea on seven offices of rhetoric: govern, defend, provide, teach, entertain, cure, and pontificate, which allows for a fertile ground for the relationship between rhetoric and persuasive messaging to begin. In *Rhetoric of Motives*, Burke furthers an analysis of traditional rhetorical genres and principles as applied to modern situations. Burke also voices in *Rhetoric* that epideictic rhetoric in modern times is best illustrated as a form of propaganda. Burke clearly situates advertising itself as different from that of the conventional understanding of deliberative rhetoric (*Rhetoric*, 70)

Ellul, well known for his critical works on technology, communication, and society, establishes an exploration of economical, social and political issues related to communication as a whole and rhetoric in specific. Advertising is particularly addressed in Technological Bluff, where he argues that the persuasiveness of modern advertising resembles social propaganda (Janack 301-303). Ellul places significant conversation of his technological perspective on that of the “image” in society, in which a copy as a

technological reflection of a real thing is more valuable than its original (Humiliation, 112-133). This idea of the “image” reduces all in human experience to an allusion where appearance is dominates with the technological capacities of mass production and reproduction (Humiliation 128).

Fisher and his narrative paradigm offer a pivotal discussion platform in terms of this project and epideictic rhetoric. Fisher’s *Human Communication as Narration* furthers his key notion that perceives human beings as fundamentally storytelling beings. Fisher states, “Theory of symbolic actions, words or deeds that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create or interpret them” (23). Narrative becomes a crucial piece of the integrated process to create shared meaning through a collective brand story that resonates with the stakeholders, internally, as well as externally. The shared meaning in brand narrative is woven through with the Aristotelian appeals of logos, pathos, and ethos, which are strategically crafted in marketing messages today.

In *Marketing 3.0*, Kotler discusses this IMC age is one of participation and collaborative marketing strategies, where there is a shift to address consumers as whole beings. According to Stephen Covey, a whole human has four basic components: a physical body a mind capable of independent thought and analysis, a heart that can feel emotion, and your soul or philosophical center (2004). The alignment of shared meaning all aspects of understanding the humans as whole beings begins with shared values, language, and symbols to create a courtship between brand and consumer that evolves into a long-term relationship is a key objective of IMC platforms.

The epideictic connection to Calvin O. Schrag originates in the very principal figures of discourse and action within the expressive landscape of communicative praxis.

“The display of meanings in discourses and actions unfolds within a holistic space of expression” (Communicative Praxis 32). Through communicative praxis, epideictic rhetoric flourishes between the interplay and performance of discourse and action. Public and personal life come together as an orchestrated shared experience through community involvement and interaction. It is the “bonding of communication and praxis as an intertexture within their common space” (23). These messages are connected to the target audiences through the IMC concept of brand contact points, which are embedded within “the background of the tightly woven fabric of professional and everyday life, with its shared experiences, participative relationships, joint endeavors, and moral concerns” (22). Schrag explains, “Communication, in its variegated postures, is a performance within the topos of human affairs and dealings that comprise our social world.” (22). He argues that positioning these affairs and dealings are engaged not only by questioning, informing, arguing, and persuading, but also by the very performance nature of humanity – by planning, working, playing, gesturing, laughing, and crying.

As communication is a qualification of praxis, praxis is also a qualification of communication, thus determining “communication as a *performing* and an *accomplishing*” (22). Communicative praxis uncovers an epideictic rhetorical nature that addresses and celebrates the values and situations of society through texture. Texture structures and surfaces the meaning within human discourse and action. In Schrag’s words, “the interwovenness of communicative praxis” yields “a holistic space of expressive intentionality” (31). Expressive discourse and action are embedded within a shared system of social meanings. “It is precisely this space of the ‘between’ that identifies the landscape of communicative praxis, on which are located the performatives

of communicative rhetoric” (Resources 129). Messages that are formed through the layers of social, cultural and historical meanings are conveyed through communicative performances or brand contact points to a given target audience, as well as society as a whole.

Understanding Epideictic IMC in the Contemporary Marketplace

In a study by Kitchen, the notion of marketing as rhetoric or reality was explored. The driving question being whether marketing is utilized either as a form of rhetoric or as a realistic device to drive the philosophy deep into an organizational culture resulting in exchanges satisfying all stakeholders, as well as the bottom line through sales, profits, and market share (Kitchen). This study’s results led to support of the practice of integrated and strategically devised communication campaigns, both at home and internationally due to the overall benefits of strategic IMC. The marketing concept, as commonly defined, was found to be utilized as a rhetorical tactic over an eight nation analysis, which led the theorists to call for more analysis and further defining of the marketing concept as a whole.

As the previous chapter explores the origin and evolution of IMC, the current understanding of the IMC stands as “a way of capturing the missed opportunities inherent in the weakness of the traditional view of marketing” (Iacobucci & Calder 12). IMC is thought of as a process that stems from corporate strategy and values with emphasis on long term relationships with the target audience. “It should rise from a corporate strategy that recognizes that operational excellence by itself is no longer a viable strategy . . . the real challenge is to different or even to revolutionize the industry (Iacobucci & Calder 13). Thus for a coffee house chain, it is not a strategy to just serve coffee in a clean,

convenient shop, but to offer an “experience” and a variety of healthy and unique menu items that transform the nature of a coffee house experience. The authors argue that IMC is the means to the ends of corporate strategy and organizational values. This very notion echoes the ideal of epideictic rhetoric connection and celebration of societal values to the audience. There is a greater origin of the ideals and values that the message eloquently carries; these very ideals and values are situated in a greater whole. IMC through the marketing mix strategically conveys an idea, which is a concept that accomplishes the strategy, by making it meaningful and relevant to the target audience. The communicative platform is based on a feedback loop with the target audience, where the ideas are contemplated and formed over a long-term relationship with the brand. Thus, representing another sounding of epideictic rhetoric, as observation and contemplation on the part of the audience play a pivotal role.

IMC also emphasizes the notion of contact points. Contact points with the brand make the experience, observation and connection with the brand more meaningful. It is the idea that defines how the consumer should experience the product through the management of contacts so that these contact points in fact produce an experience that matches the concept (Iacobucci & Calder 14). These contact points further illustrate the idea through experience and connection with the target audience when integrated over time and other strategic dimensions of consumer behavior to achieve the planned outcome by the brand concept. With IMC, these experiences may be customized to further extend the logic of the experience connection with the target audience. To summarize, going forward, IMC must:

- Be more strategic in creating strong brand concepts that make corporate strategy happen.
- Focus on a full range of contacts with consumers as they unfold over time and lead to a total consumer experience that is aligned with a strong brand concept.
- Customize consumer experiences in a way that still allows for marketing to large numbers of consumers. (Iacobucci & Calder 15)

These three tenets of IMC are closely tied to the very basics of epideictic rhetoric, as the celebration of values continues through brand concepts, the contact points allow for further observation and contemplation by the target audience over longer periods of time, and, finally, the notion of customization of a communicative experience that appeals to large numbers of the audience within society. The successful IMC platform realizes that in consumers (the audience) actually create brands and that IMC practitioners (the rhetors) must strategically, ethically, and eloquently craft and manage the vast array of contact points from which consumers derive brand information.

The IMC concept of brand contact points deserves further discussion to better situate within the epideictic rhetorical conversation. To define, according to Iacobucci & Calder in *Kellogg on Integrated Marketing*, the concept is meant to highlight the idea that any time a consumer comes into contact with any dimension of the product's or service's total offering, there is potential for the consumer to notice, and then assess and interpret information about the brand (also called touch points, moments of truth)" (58).

Information about the brand is being conveyed to the consumer every time the consumer encounters a touch point, this may include a visual demonstration of how a product is used at a local fair or expo, a pop-up advertisement on the Internet, an outdoor billboard

on the highway, a customer service representative demeanor and tone as he/she handles a customer's issue with a product on the phone, the eye catching packaging of a product, a trusted praise or complaint of the brand from a trusted friend, and so forth. The importance in understanding this concept is that the brand is what the consumer thinks it is as it gathers knowledge of the brand through the contact points, managed or not managed by the brand. Any element that a consumer experiences or even just notices and connects back to the brand is deemed a brand contact point. These touch points become part of Aristotle's important notion of observation as a role of the audience in the epideictic communicative platform.

Through such observation and contemplation of the brand contact points, the audience's role is increasingly becoming more important in IMC. Schrag's communicative praxis comes to mind in this conversation as it uncovers an epideictic rhetorical nature that seeks and celebrates societal values through the notion of such texture in the brand contact points. In Schrag's perspective's communication is "a *performing* and an *accomplishing*" (22). This rhetorical texture structures and surfaces the marketing message through rhetoric and action tied directly to the target audience. The whole philosophy of IMC focuses on the consumer perspective. The marketing concepts of brand awareness, brand recall, brand recognition and brand equity all depend upon the contemplation of the target audience for effectiveness of the communicative strategy and the overall success of the brand.

Understanding these concepts more clearly brings to light the epideictic rhetorical nature within them. Brand awareness refers to the consumer's memory of brand identities, and it measures how well the consumer identifies the brand in various contexts

(Keller 22). This concept is also crucial in understanding the decision-making process of the consumer, as well as a key indicator of brand equity, brand loyalty, and the overall brand long-term relationship with the consumer. Interbrand annually assesses the top global brands in terms of quantifying brand value. The top three brands of Interbrand's Top Ten Global Brands of 1996 were #1. Apple, 2; #2, Google, #3, CocaCola.

Two distinct types of brand awareness are brand recall and brand recognition. Brand recall is the unaided or spontaneous recall of a brand, while brand recognition is known as the aided recall (Keller 22). Percy and Rossiter argue that these two types of brand awareness operate in fundamentally different manners through the overall consumer-purchasing process (1992). Brand recall relies on memory of the consumer, as the consumer is prompted by a general product category set.

Research suggests that through brand recall the total number of brand names that consumers can recall is affected by both individual factors and product factors including; brand loyalty, awareness set size, situational, usage factors and education level (Reilly and Parkinson). For example, a consumer who is a wine enthusiast may be able to recall a slightly larger set of wine brand names than those who are occasional wine drinkers. Brand recognition, on the other hand, refers signifies the ability of the consumer to correctly differentiate the brand when they engage a brand contact points, such as a television commercial, a point-of-purchase display at the local grocery store, or signature brand packaging, such as the famous Tiffany's blue box and ribbon. Brand awareness, sometimes referred to as evocation, is a necessary condition for choice by consumers and its role in brand equity is significant (Holden, 1992). Brand awareness becomes almost a necessary component for brand choice.

Top-of-mind awareness is one of the top three brands in a consumer's choice consideration set. An ultimate goal of a marketer would be that the brand would have a strong presence in consumers' consideration sets. To further define, top-of-mind awareness is "the first brand that comes to mind when a consumer is asked an unprompted question about a category" (Farris et al). Typically, top-of-mind awareness is present when a consumer makes an impulse purchase of the latest Nicholas Spark novel or when a consumer is considering competing brands in a low involvement purchase, such as chewing gum at the checkout counter. It is pivotal to uncover the epideictic depths of observation and contemplation that IMC places upon the consumer.

In discussion of brand awareness two concepts are key to understand the practical use of the term, evoked set and consideration set, mentioned earlier. Howard and Sheth explain that an evoked set is the set of brands that a consumer can elicit from memory when contemplating a potential purchase, while consideration set is a smaller set of brands that a consumer lends close attention when going through the consumer-decision process (1969). One of the very objectives at the heart of IMC is to increase brand awareness and create a strong brand image that positions the brand inside these sets of consumer contemplation.

As mentioned earlier, brand contact points are pivotal sources of content for the consumer to form ideas about the brand, whether they are positive or negative, or managed or not managed by the brand itself. Consumers begin this process of observation and contemplation through a depth and breath of brand content and rhetoric. The process of moving consumers from the initial stages of brand awareness to a positive attitude towards the brand to the ultimate objective of purchase is known as conversion. Although

conventional advertising is an effective tool of the marketing mix for creating brand awareness and brand attitude, it is not the most effective tool for the conversion to actual sales and profits. IMC's integration of the communicative message to a target audience through various mediums includes the support need for conversion. For example, special promotional offers may just be what is needed to bridge the consumer from interest to an actual purchase.

There are various hierarchy of effects models that are used by marketers as effective tools to measure this contemplation to purchase process. These linear sequential models are built on the premise that consumers move through a series of cognitive and affective stages, all beginning with brand awareness and commencing in a purchasing decision. One of the original hierarchy of effects model was developed by Lavidge in the 1960s and moves the consumer through a sequence of six stages: awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and purchase.

Other more contemporary hierarchy of effects models include AIDA Model (basic and modified), AISDALS Model, AISDALS Love Model, DAGMAR, and Rossiter and Percy's Communications Effects. As consumers move through the stages of any hierarchy of effects model, they look to different sources for information to gather information and learn about the brand. As mentioned, advertising is an effective tool for creating awareness, yet to acquire more detailed, even more complex information, consumers turn to different communicative sources such as word-of-mouth, the Internet, product reviews and so on. The closer to the purchase means that the sources most likely hold more credibility through a personal relationship, or an perceived expert opinion from an influential and well-known blogger or YouTuber.

The hierarchy of effects models offer marketers useful insight about the nature of the target audience and how to strategically and eloquently craft a communicative message and media strategy throughout the life cycle of the product. The epideictic nature of merging the word and wisdom through the appropriate communicative messaging, or branding efforts, is the heart of the IMC emphasis on the target audience and the strategy to reach them.

A solid contemporary example of a successful brand awareness campaign is Coca-Cola's "Share a Coke" Campaign in Australia. Objectives of this campaign included "to strengthen the brand's bond with Australia's youth adult and to inspire happiness in reality and the virtual world" (Coca-Cola). The successes of the IMC strategy led to an international rollout of the "Share a Coke" campaign. The brand extended its awareness across a broader age demographic, while they engaged each consumer on a personal level through the popular names in the distinctive Coca-Cola script on the bottle and can packaging. Social media was used to target opinion leaders and influences through the diffusion of innovation theory, this led to a buzz and encouragement of others to try the brand and product for themselves. "That summer, Coke sold more than 250 million named bottles and cans in a nation of just under 23 million people," according to Coke's creative team.

Through the evolution of marketing over the decades into what we view today as IMC, the rhetorical nature of the theory, process, and practice has become even more epideictic. The heart of marketing through an IMC perspective has turned towards an inward focus on the consumer at the heart of the strategy and communicative platforms. The humanistic approach towards crafting such communicative strategies is the very life-

life of a successful IMC campaign and long-term brand value. The celebratory nature of how the values are embedded and woven into narratives that speak from the core of a brand's culture and identity are rhetorically crafted within the Aristotelian tradition. The marketplace has shifted to the customer focus beyond the traditional means of advertising to a new domain of engagement of the consumer within the brand narrative.

Through epideictic rhetoric, the pivotal aspect of the audience is the emphasis of observation and contemplation of the audience, through IMC, the consumer's observation and contemplation is the very basis of the success or failure of the IMC campaign and the brand. From the first stage of awareness, through the various hierarchy of needs models, to the end goal of purchase, the *theoria* of the audience is the common and key aspect of the process and philosophy of IMC. . In this sense the narratives told through IMC aim to engage (*theoria*) commercial storytelling as a demonstration (*epideixis*) of aesthetics through language (Smudde, Myers).

Now that we have explored the origin and evolution of IMC and IMC's epideictic rhetorical nature in the contemporary marketplace, the next chapter moves to the importance of narrative in IMC. The focus of the next chapter explores Fisher's approach to narrative and establishment of the key aspect of narrative within the IMC framework. Exploring this conversation, will lend better understanding to the practice of IMC as epideictic rhetoric, as brand storytelling is the fruitful grounding where values are celebrated and rhetorically engaged with the audience.

Chapter 4: Narrative and IMC

“Humans are storytelling animals.”

-Walter R. Fisher

Focusing on Fisher’s approach to narrative, this chapter seeks to establish key aspects of narrative within the IMC framework. As Fisher reminds us, “Humans are storytelling animals.” It is by nature that we are drawn to stories in our lives interpersonally, organizationally, and through mass communication channels. Fisher furthers that humans see the world as a set of stories from which people choose. “In theme, if not in every detail, narrative, then, is meaningful for persons in particular and in general, across communities as well as cultures, across time and place” (1989, p. 8). One of the key concepts in Fisher’s narrative paradigm is that human are essentially rational beings. “Humans as human beings are as much valuing as they are reasoning animals” (1984, p. 376). Through this rationality, humans decipher “good reasons” as we choose certain stories over others. These “good reasons” are influenced by such factors as history, culture, and character, according to Fisher.

First to understand Fisher, one must engage Alasdair MacIntyre’s and his influence on Fisher. In referencing, MacIntyre’s *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (1981), Fisher comments, “What impressed me most about the book was the observation that ‘man is in his actions and practice, as well as in his fictions, essentially a story-telling animal’” (1984, p.1). Fisher echoes MacIntyre’s “enacted dramatic narrative” as the ‘basic and essential genre for the characterization of human actions.’ “These ideas are the foundation of the paradigm I am proposing—the narrative paradigm” (1984, p. 2).

The notion of humans as story telling beings is tied not only to stories and persuasive discourse, but also in actions and practice. This creates a grounded connection

to the application and influence of the stories and those very values that are voiced in the stories on individuals and society as a whole.

The connection to IMC through Fisher's narrative paradigm is connected on a mass communication scale. Who are the authors of our stories? Religion, politics, public opinion, social agendas, the marketplace? All the above including brands as strategic creators and communicators of a significant amount of stories in society and the global marketplace today through the communicative platform of IMC. These brand communicative strategies, or in Fisher's words, "stories," are crafted with target audiences in mind. These audiences make decisions regarding "good choices" of preferred products and services in the marketplace.

Consumers are constantly asked to choose among competing brand stories. "Obviously . . . some stories are better than others, more coherent, more 'true,' to the way people and the world are in fact and in value" (1984, p. 10). Fisher explains that in other words, "some stories are better in satisfying the criteria of human logic of good reasons, which is attentive to reason and values" (1984, p. 10). Persons through the human logic of good reasons, choose to participate when they feel that they are co-authors of the story, rather than meaningless spectators.

The logic of good reasoning is important in IMC storytelling as well because it acknowledges and encourages awareness and enhances discourse in the interpreter and the critic. For Fisher, "good reason is warrant for a belief, attitude, or action and the value of value lies in its relevance, consistency, and consequences, and the extent to which it is grounded on the highest possible values" (1989, p. 111) Fisher defends a value as a value when "it makes a pragmatic difference in one's life and in one's community" (1989, p.

111). The notions of involvement is involvement and value is emphasized, Fisher adds, “Although essentially a descriptive system, the questions I have posed indicated norms, and the judgments that the measures call for require that one consider one’s relation with others” (1989, p.110). As Fisher identifies norms and values are social constructs that are socially derived and maintained, he argues that one cannot assess them without, even at the most basic level, the implicit involvement of others. This theory lends the same logic within brand storytelling, as IMC views through the consumer’s perspective to write a co-authored brand narrative with the consumer that relies on relevance, consistency, and value.

Through Fisher’s lens, these good reasons are tied to a value that resonates with the consumer from the brand stories. A major area of concern for Fisher is the manner in which reason appears in any form of communication, “the ways discourse gives listeners / readers / auditors warrants of believing, feeling, or acting, and the ways these warrants can be usefully addressed” (1988, p. 50). If the communication is to taken seriously, the rhetoric is to be considered a story and its advice are to be considered in terms of the good reasons it has to offer, “a configured set of ideas informed by values” (1988, p. 50).

Such values may be rooted in rationality, relevancy and capture life experiences of the target audience. “Persons have found these values relevant to their material lives, consequential in determining their survival and well-being, consistent with statements made by those who subscribe to the myth that humans are masters of their fates and with examples of those who succeeded by following” (1989, p. 88). IMC’s execution of storytelling in branding creates this shared experience platform of values with the

audience through which communicative messages not only create a positive brand image, but also implies the audience in this story.

To better understand narrative's role within IMC framework, exploring the building blocks of Fisher's narrative paradigm is the first step. Fisher admits that the narrative paradigm is not a radical or entirely new construct. Fisher proposes *homo narrans* through five presuppositions:

1) Humans are essentially storytellers; 2) the paradigmatic mode of human decision-making and communication is 'good reasons,' which vary in form among communication situations, genres, and media; 3) the production and practice of good reasons is ruled by matters of history, biography, culture, and character along with the kinds of forces identified in the . . . language action paradigm; 4) rationality is determined by the nature of persons as narrative beings—their inherent awareness of narrative probability, what constitutes a coherent story, and their constant habit of testing narrative fidelity, whether the stories they experience ring true with the stories they know to be true in their lives . . . and 5) the world is a set of stories, which must be chosen among to live the good life in a process of continual recreation. (1984, p. 7-8)

Fisher describes good reasons as “the stuff of stories, the means by which humans realize their nature as reasoning-valuing animals” (1984, p. 8). While the philosophical ground of the narrative paradigm is ontological, the materials of the narrative paradigm are “symbols, signs of consubstantiation, and good reasons, the communicative expression of social reality” (1984, p. 8). The narrative paradigm expresses a philosophical view of human communication. The primary function is to offer a way of interpreting and

assessing human communication that leads to critique of being trustworthy action. The narrative paradigm is of ontological grounds, not epistemological.

It is also important to note that narrative rationality differs from other logics, as reason was restricted to clear-cut argumentative forms of communication. Values are considered more persuasive than the individual form of the argument. These values “may be expressed in a variety of modes, of which argument is only one” (1989, p. 48). From the Aristotelian rational world paradigm perspective, human beings are considered rational animals solving logical puzzles through appropriate analysis and application of argument as communication (1989, p. 59).

Narrative rationality “focuses on all forms of human communication as carriers of good reasons and one a system of evaluation that incorporates the available standards of argumentative assessment but offers additional considerations” (1989, p. 48-49). “No matter how a case is argued-scientifically, philosophically, or legally, it will always be a story, an interpretation of some aspect of the world that is historically and culturally grounded and shaped by human personality” (1989, p. 49). He also suggests that there is no genre, even technical discourse that is not an episode in the story of life that is not constituted by logos and mythos. The presumption is that no form of discourse is privileged over others.

Fisher also defines what the narrative paradigm is, by first defining what it is not. He is quoted, “First, it is not rhetoric. The narrative paradigm is the foundation on which a complete rhetoric needs to be built” (1989b, p. 56). Thus lending a structure that would better provide “a comprehensive explanation of the creation, composition, adaptation, presentation, and reception of symbolic messages” (1989b, p. 56). The paradigm

concerns itself with the interpretation and assessment of rhetorical messages, as well as celebrates humans through “reaffirming their nature as storytellers” (1989b, 56). Fisher further explains, “It affirms that narration as individuated form and as genre—like other individuated forms (such as argument) and genre (such as argumentation)—are expressive of good reasons, if viewed rhetorically” (1989b, p. 56). Fisher views these forms, when experienced, as constitutive of people, community, and the world. Fisher also emphasizes that regardless of genre, discourse will always tell a story and invites an audience to believe it or to act on it. Fisher’s notion of storytelling is one of authors and co-authors.

It is important to understand that the narrative paradigm does not assert that some communication cannot be seen as serving other than rhetorical functions. Fisher provides the example that “some communications can be described aptly as phatic or consummatory, and all human communication is recognized as reflecting unconscious motives and achieving unintended results” (1989b, p. 57). The narrative paradigm only becomes relevant, according to Fisher, when communication is considered seriously in regard to its advice or fostering of belief, attitude, or action: “to ascertain the meaning and merit of the communication as a ground for decision and performance” (1989b, p. 57).

Through the narrative paradigm, Fisher understands that human communication is imbued with mythos (metaphors, values), and mythos holds a cognitive and aesthetic significance. Logos is to be thought of as inclusive through the narrative paradigm perspective, as in ancient times. Narrative is a concept that has the potential to enhance understanding of human communication and action in various contexts and situations.

Fisher relates the narrative paradigm to Schrag's notion of reason and builds understanding of the narrative paradigm through four key features:

First, the paradigm is a ground for resolving the dualism of modernism: fact value, intellect-imagination, reason-emotion, and so on. Second, narratives are moral constructs. . . Third, the narrative paradigm is consonant with the notion of reason proposed by Schrag 'Reason, as the performance of vision and insight, commemoration and foresight, occasions the recognition of a process of meaning-formation that gathers within it the logic of technical reason and the logos of myth And fourth, the narrative paradigm offers ways of resolving the problems of public moral argument" (1989, p. 10).

Fisher also insists that "human communication should be viewed as historical as well as situational, as stories competing with other stories constituted by good reason, as being rational when they satisfy the demands of narrative probability and narrative fidelity, and as inevitably moral inducements" (1989, p. 2).

The notion of rationality from the narrative paradigm involves Fisher's proposed principles of narrative probability and narrative fidelity. As narrative rationality is the logic of the narrative paradigm, narrative probability and narrative fidelity are the components of this logic. Narrative rationality does not demand the rational world paradigm's understanding of rationality in terms of argumentative competence: knowledge of issues, modes of reasoning, appropriate tests, and rules of advocacy in given fields." (1984, p. 8) "The operative principle of narrative rationality is identification rather than deliberation" (1984, p. 9). Narrative rationality is of a

descriptive nature, as it lends an understanding of any instance of human choice (1989, p. 9).

Narrative probability (coherence) is assessed in three ways: argumentative or structural coherence, material coherence, and characterological coherence, which is the key differentiation point between narrative rationality and traditional logics. “Applying this consideration of coherence is an inquiry into motivation. Its importance in deciding whether to accept a message cannot be overestimated. Determining a character’s motives is prerequisite to trust, and trust is the foundation of belief” (1989, p. 47). The principle of probability brings into focus the integrity of a story as a whole.

The concept of coherence has a significant role in furthering an understanding of the narrative paradigm. The “logic of good reasons” is a combination of tests of reasoning and tests of values. Through considerations of coherence, structural (argumentative), material, and characteriological, the construct of narrative rationality is formed (1989, p. 57). Also, the narrative paradigm acknowledges that power, ideology, distortion, or totalitarian forces are or can be influencing features of communicative practices. Yet, according to Fisher, regardless of their presence, “decision and action are inevitable and their appearance is always in the context of ongoing stories” (1989b, p. 57). Comprehensively, the narrative paradigm serves as a philosophical grounding to an approach of interpretation and assessment of human communication when one views that communication fundamentally as stories, “as interpretations of aspects of the world occurring in time and shaped by history, culture, and character” (1989b, p. 57). “The narrative paradigm advances the idea that good communication is good by virtue of its

satisfying the requirements of narrative rationality, namely, that it offers a reliable, trustworthy, and desirable guide to belief and action” (1989, p. 95).

Narrative fidelity justifies the truthfulness of a story by applying “the logic of good reasons.” This is assessed through fact, relevance, consequence, consistency and transcendental issues. Narrative rationality, as described by Fisher, takes an argument to be as good as its coherence and fidelity. With Fisher’s revisions to Perelman’s theories, a privileged audience is no longer required to measure rationality. Rationality is grounded in the narrative of life, and humans have a natural capacity to recognize and understand “coherence and fidelity in the stories they experience and tell one another” (1989, p. 137). The principle of fidelity pertains to the individuated components of the story and whether these components represent assertions about social reality and thereby constitute good reason for belief or action (1989, p. 105).

In *A Motive View of Communication* (1970), Fisher concerns himself with a set of assumptions concerning the nature and functions of rhetorical discourse. First the substance of rhetorical discourse is a principal means of symbolic inducement to attitude and action, thus an influencer of ethical choices. Rhetorical discourse is one of advisory – how one ought to think, feel, and act in a given case when there are choices to be made. Second, rhetorical discourse, creates an “image,” “a value-oriented interpretation.” This “image” also instills a reflection of how one should behave in regard to specific subject matter. Fisher furthers, “Not only does rhetorical communication recommend a way of viewing a subject, it also implies a conception of the audience that attends and the communicator who presents it” (1970, p. 131). Fisher explains that rhetorical discourse has the potential to be persuasive to the extent that the image it creates regarding a relates

to the image already held by the audience members. The degree to which the image it implies of the audience may extend and connect with the self-images held by members of the audience. The degree to which the image related in the message and its presentation and delivery by the communicator becomes engaging to the audience.

It is important to note that Fisher argues that rhetorical fiction relates to reality. This is done through both subject matter and purpose in creating a world of everyday experience. The creators of this rhetorical fiction intend for the story to be treated as true and the correct way of understanding of the matter at hand. If successful, the creators produce rhetorical fiction that audiences live by – or purchase by in terms of brand stories and the marketplace.

An area of important discussion for Fisher falls upon the understanding of motive. Fisher views a communicator as perceiving a rhetorical situation in terms of a motive, and that “an organic relationship exists between his perception and his response to that circumstance” (1970, p. 132). The rhetorical communication is grounded not only in motives, but also in the situation itself. Fisher elevates this conversation to further illustrate the appropriateness and usefulness of characterizing rhetorical situations in terms of motives, which he categorizes into four kinds of rhetorical situations. The first is affirmation, focus on origin or birth of an image; second, reaffirmation, the revitalization of an image; third, purification, concerned with correcting an image; and, lastly, subversion, concerned with undermining or understating an image (1970, p. 132). Fisher also argues that in history there are recurrent rhetorical situations.

Rhetoric of affirmation can be seen throughout history in situations when a communicator seeks to have audience adopt new concepts or ideologies. There are three

types of rhetoric of affirmation: autocratic situation (proclamation from a monarch), democratic situation (the people decide), and academic situation (merit is judge in a philosophical realm with respect to truth). A democratic example referenced by Fisher is Benjamin Franklin's speech to defend the U.S. Constitution in a time of unsettlement and new beginnings (1970, p. 134). Franklin attempted to make his proposal appealing to his audience by connecting the audience and affirming the audience's common beliefs with his own (1970, p. 133). Franklin refers to the Constitution having faults of its own in order to support the new ideology. The people will correct these faults and refine it.

The rhetoric of affirmation is apparent in modern ICM campaigns when particularly introducing new innovations and ways of thinking about products and/or services hold that very notion of motive as a core aspect of the strategically crafted communicative platform and brand story. This can be seen especially in those brands that disrupt industries and challenge consumers' traditional modes of thinking, such as Uber and Apple. Uber, founded in 2009, changed the way consumers traditionally seek public transportation and created possibilities for riders and drivers alike. Apple, since its creation in 1976, has transformed the way society communicates and integrates technology in everyday life, which each year rolling out keynote speeches introducing their latest technologies. An iconic Apple commercial from 1984, tells the story of breaking the traditional mold of how society communicates, thinks, and works, with the arrival of the Macintosh computer. The storyline mimicked George Orwell's classic novel, *1984*. Apple's rhetoric of affirmation launched not only a new product line of computers, but also a new ideology of communication. Stein comments, "Ultimately, in the message of the Macintosh ad is an old one echoing cultural faith in the machine and

in technology-engendered progress. . .The right technology in this case, the Macintosh, will provide salvation. (2002, p. 189). Technology in general is not the Big Brother figure with its control over brainwashed masses, but it is the wrong technology that creates such a state. This new “right” technology of the Macintosh created a reinvented mode of communication and ideology. Apple’s use of narrative in this signature campaign was embedded with rhetoric of affirmation.

Fisher also argues that rhetoric of affirmation may be used to establish an identity, as in Ralph Waldo Emerson’s address on the philosophical presuppositions of the nature of man, men, and society in “The American Scholar” (1970, p. 132). It is also important to distinguish among three sorts of affirmative situations: autocratic, democratic, and academic. Fisher states, “It would appear that affirmative rhetoric, concerned as it is with generating life into an idea or identify, is crucially dependent upon the metaphysical assumption implicit in the sort of situation in which it is presented” (1970, p. 132).

A rhetoric of reaffirmation describes a situation in which a communicator moves to revitalize a faith already held by his audience, as we see commonly in epideictic rhetoric. Fisher’s example of Abraham Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address” rhetorically revitalizes the cause of the war, as well as a sense of faith and values in the war effort. Lincoln compared the nation to an organism composed of many, thus unifying pieces that must be connected to form a whole (1970, p. 134). This rhetoric of reaffirmation carried a story line in terms of a life-renewal theme. The goal is to unify a connection, Lincoln used words such as “us” and “we.” Figuratively and creatively the theme engaged the historical moment of war, the nation, and the citizens as one “life.”

The notion of revitalizing an ideology is a common practice in IMC, through rebranding efforts, as well as continuous branding campaigns. While introducing new technologies, Apple also understands the importance in global branding efforts to unify, connect and support the overall brand essence and brand identity necessary to create a consistent faith and loyalty among its consumers in the brand story.

Apple's "Think Different" campaign debuted in September 1997. The purpose of the campaign was to restore faith in the brand and rebuild the company's reputation after very public management issues led to negative public relations. No products appeared in the advertisements; the creative focus was on historical "thinkers," such as Albert Einstein, Pablo Picasso, John Lennon, Jane Goodall, and Ron Howard.

The campaign made a brand association between Apple and its products and some of the most creative, innovative, and influential minds of the 20th century, who eventually changed the world. The campaign was created around a poem, "the Crazy Ones" written by Craig Tanimoto, copywriter at Chiat/Day, the agency who produced the campaign.

The full version reads:

Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers.

The round pegs in the square holes.

The ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them.

About the only thing you can't do is ignore them. Because they change things.

They invent. They imagine. They heal. They explore. They create. They inspire.

They push the human race forward.

Maybe they have to be crazy.

How else can you stare at an empty canvas and see a work of art? Or sit in silence and hear a song that's never been written? Or gaze at a red planet and see a laboratory on wheels?

We make tools for these kinds of people.

While some see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do. (1984)

The broadcast television commercial voiceover of the poem read by Richard Dreyfuss is accompanied by figures of these iconic innovators, thinkers, and change matters. Subtly, it is suggested that the associated tool to make this kind of difference is an Apple product.

A study by Fitzsimons, Chartrand, and Fitzsimons (2008) focused on the argument for brands as behavioral primes, which included Apple's "Think Different" campaign. The link of of the psychological value consumers obtain from brands is connected to the brands ability to fulfill their personality and identity motivations. Certain characteristics, if viewed by the consumer as positive within the culture, play a motivational goal, thus symbolizing desirable attributes and goals, for both the consumer and brand itself. Results provided support for the notion that under certain conditions, when the brand is goal relevant to the consumer, brand exposure can shape behavior via nonconscious motivated processes (Fitzsimons, *et al.*, 2008). Associations exist between brand identities, the narratives that they communicate, and guided consumer behavior beyond the consumer context.

Another interesting twist to Apple's rhetoric of reaffirmation is that the print advertisements ran in popular and fashion magazines, instead of the typical Mac or

computer industry publications, which was very untraditional for computer companies of that time to run mainstream. Another communicative outlet of the “Think Different” campaign was the public school system. Apple started sending complimentary posters of the “Think Different” creative to public schools across the nation to hang in classrooms. This reaffirmation of the brand was a “pep rally” for Apple. The campaign ran for five years until 2002.

While rhetoric of affirmation is crafted to initiate an ideology, and a rhetoric of reaffirmation is meant to revitalize an ideology, Fisher’s a rhetoric of purification is to refine an ideology. Fisher references Richard Nixon’s “Checker’s Speech” and John F. Kennedy’s “Houston Ministerial Address” as examples of this type of rhetorical communication. Fisher explains, “In both instances, the identity of the man was in question. For Nixon, it was his ethical character; for Kennedy, it was his Catholicism. The strategy of their efforts was definition” (1970, p. 136) Both of political figures sought to correct the public image widely held of them. To do this the figures identified with properties that defined, “for Nixon, a man of integrity, intelligence, and goodwill, and for Kennedy, an American who happened also to be a Catholic.” (1970, p. 136).

While Nixon aimed to cleanse his image by identifying with traditional American values, Kennedy reiterated the theme of “I am American” in numerous ways and stressed his belief in the separation of church and state. Both also sought to communicate a sense of unfairness of the charges against them with purpose and defined strategy (1970, p. 136). The goal was to “correct an image” that may have been understood.

Many crisis communication campaigns follow a rhetoric of purification notion. In A study by Salvador, Ikeda, and Crescitelli (2017) focused on crisis management and its

impact on brand image. The researchers analyzed the effects of recall campaigns on brand image and brand identity. Findings indicated an increasing amount of brand crisis situations in the marketplace. Crisis generated by recall campaigns can lead to deterioration of the established favorable relationships between brands and consumers with both short term and long term financial consequences, and an overall negative reputation to the brand category as a whole. Rhetoric of purification becomes an essential element of a crisis management communicative platform in such marketing situations to redefine an ideology for the brand, or even the industry. In recent years, the rhetoric of purification was apparent in the rebuilding in America's auto industry from the crisis of 2008-2010.

Fisher's rhetoric of subversion occurs when communicators move forward to weaken or destroy an ideology. "Subversive rhetoric is an anti-ethos rhetoric; that is, it invariably is an attempt to undermine the credibility of some person, idea, or institution" (1970, p. 138). Fisher references Ancient Rome for this example of Antony's "Funeral Oration." This example stresses irony to undermine the positions of the conspirators who assassinated Caesar. Antony uses "negative or opposing truths" (1970, p. 138). One message is conveyed, while another is intended—subliminal messages. As the speech evolves, Antony achieves his goal "to communicate one message, while expressing another, to arouse his audience to mutiny and rage" (1970, p. 138). This anti-ethos form of rhetoric worked to undermine a person's credibility – engaged scandal, slander or discredit people or entities (1970, p. 138).

Unfortunately, many historical and contemporary political examples fall into this category of a rhetoric of subversion. Fisher references Senator Joseph R. McCarthy as

one of the most well known communicators of subversive rhetoric. “McCarthyism” and the Senator’s address at the 1952 Republican National Convention are prime examples. He denounced the leadership of the Democratic Party and the evils of communism. His rhetoric linked any act or person who would cooperate with communism as treachery. According to McCarthy’s rhetoric of subversion, President Truman and administration were guilty of treason, while the “loyal Americans were identified with godly features as peace-loving, honesty, patriotism, cleanliness, courage, determination, truth, and intelligence” (1970, p. 138).

Fisher notes that it is important to acknowledge a relationship between affirmative and subversive rhetoric: “to affirm an image is, in effect to subvert an old one; to subvert an old one is, in effect, to affirm a new one” (1970, p. 138). Fisher’s concern lies with the useful purpose of motives in rhetorical discourse and function. Fisher suggests that there are three areas worth attention: 1) An attempt to describe the tactics and methods in various forms of rhetorical discourse; 2) The deep interest in the motive used in the various forms; and 3) Faculty may want to focus on the motive more than the classification in rhetorical setting (1970, p. 139). He also argues that elements of motives may exist in one communication and most commonly exist in a persuasive campaign movement. Fisher’s understanding is that one motive will eventually dominant in a given rhetorical situation.

Narration, for Fisher, is “a theory of symbolic actions—words and/or deeds—that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them. The narrative perspective, therefore, has relevance to real as well as fictive worlds, to stories of living, and to stories of the imagination” (1984 p. 2). Fisher also furthers his understanding of

narration in three forms: narration1, narration2, and narration3. “Narration1 designates an individuated language form, a characterization, a depiction, or anecdote, which may appear in any form of human communication, including epideictic or deliberative” (1988, p. 50). Narration2 simply names a genre of discourse, commonly in contrast to argumentation. One way to understand the difference is in the terms connection to “reality.” Fisher explains that narration “offers “verisimilitude; argumentation provides a truthful representation” (1988, p. 50).

From such a perspective, narration1 is one of both linguistic and non-linguistic forms that equates to good reasons to believe, feel, or act. When understanding through the lens of the narrative paradigm, narrative2 emerges as another rhetorical form tied to and assessed by narrative rationality. Fisher’s narrative3 offers light on the narration1 and narration2, “so the weight of good reasons in any text may be recognized and evaluated.” Narration3 encompasses “a conceptual framework for understanding human decision, discourse, and action” (1988, p. 50) Storytelling encompasses aspects of reality, symbolic forms that are created as good reasons for believing the stories being told.

Fisher discusses the connection to several interrelated assumptions that directly impact rhetorical discourse and communication (1970, p. 131). The substance of rhetorical discourse may be understood through symbolic motivation. Fisher’s defines it as “advisory,” as it tells how one should think, feel, and act when there are gray areas of uncertainty; these influences are ethical choices (1970, p. 131). The rhetorical discourse produces an “image” based on values. Through rhetorical communication, a method of viewing a subject is presented that is influenced by both the communicator and the audience. Fisher views rhetorical composition as producers of “real fiction” or “created

out of words” (1970, p. 132). The relation to reality is in both subject and purpose. Schrag actually cites the narrative paradigm and the concept of narrative rationality as useful in moving hermeneutics to a critical stance.

As discussed, Fisher’s narrative is a key aspect within the IMC framework, especially in a postmodern understanding of IMC. The next chapter moves to understanding the differences between a modern and postmodern understanding of the marketplace and IMC, as well as the difference between a modern and postmodern consumer. IMC becomes a fitting response to the historical moment, as well as to the postmodern audience.

Chapter 5: Postmodern IMC in an International Marketplace

“Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity toward metanarratives.”

-Jean-François Lyotard

In order to engage a contemporary analysis of IMC, one must situate IMC within a postmodern construct of an international marketplace. It was not until the 1990s that the field of marketing acknowledged postmodernism as an important descriptor of the current social condition (Ogilvy, 1990; Brown, 1993a; Firat and Venkatesh, 1993, 1997; Cova, 1996). IMC scholars express that the specific and increasingly complex conditions of postmodernity demand an integrated approach to the management of the evolving field of marketing communications (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002). Postmodernism then facilitates an even greater need for integrated marketing communication solutions. The postmodernist perspective and the increasing complexities in society and the marketplace challenge the assertion that marketing is a rational formal process of analysis, planning, implementation, and overall control.

To better understand the response of postmodernism, it is important to gain better understanding of the modernist perspective of marketing. This perspective focused on marketing as the “organizational decision-making nexus” by relating the constant four Ps of marketing: price, product, promotion, and place by McCarthy (1981) to the needs, wants, and desires of target markets Proctor and Kitchen explain:

In order for rational quasi-scientific decision to be taken marketing information was required, plans had to be developed and implemented, and control exerted to ensure that the organization or a strategic business unit steered an accurate course to achieve profit making and sales objectives. (2002, p. 144)

The underlying premise at that time is was the “customer was always right,” and that the consumers needed to be satisfied in order to secure sales targets and a healthy profit margin. Understanding consumer behavior was considered key to successful marketing, but since this time, marketing has expanded vastly in importance (Kotler, 1997; Cohen, 1991; Evans and Berman 1994).

Proctor and Kitchen (2002) explain that the effectiveness of marketing as a business or exchange philosophy has been explored vastly among the literature. “Marketing and related performance is a robust and on going necessity to business and non-business alike” (p. 144). Such examples include environmental turbulence, government regulation, increasing internalization and globalization, interconnected economics, consumer concerns for health, and use and pollution of the environment and natural resources (Keegan, 1995; Kitchen 1999). The pivotal differences in modern marketing from traditional perspectives include the approach to the “marketing concept.” The marketing concept, as crafted by a number of notable marketing scholars, including Alderson (1965), Bagozzi (1975), Kotler (1972), Kotler and Levy (1969), and Levy and Zaltman (1975), illustrates the essential characteristics of modern marketing – thus, sounding the very views of modernism, thus mirroring the core tenants of modernism.

Many marketing scholars have turned to a postmodern perspective to marketing (Brown, 1993a, b; Firat and Venkatesh, 1993, 1995, 1997; Firate et al., 1993, 1994; Ogilvy, 1990; Sherry, 1991; van Raaij, 1993; Venkatesh, 1989, 1992). Postmodernism is understood as affecting marketing in terms of how marketers need to view markets and the strategies and tactics executed to create and sustain competitive advantage. This era has introduced an echoing new language, which presents interpretation challenges. No

longer unified by a common culture or institutional core, postmodernism reflects a complexity of “cross-cutting discourses” (Dawes and Brown, 2000). This new marketing language is defined through the four C’s of change, complexity, chaos, and contradiction (Addis and Podesta, 2005). P

Proctor and Kitchen (2002) argue that marketing and postmodernism are already woven. The distinguishable postmodern features are alive and well in the field and visible from every facet of marketing from price to communication (Brown, 1999). The typical question of “What can be done to satisfy customer needs and wants? is shrouded with ambiguity (Proctor and Kitchen 2002). It is also important to mention other changes that have affected the field of marketing in addition to postmodernism. Relationship marketing and internal marketing are significant additions, while strategy and competitive positioning in the context of different market and industries at different life stages became a focused area of interested. Also, the shift from the very core of marketing communications, where emphasis on the individualized promotional tool, advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, and public relations, moved to this idea of integrated marketing communications (Kitchen and Schultz, 2000). Lastly, conversations emerged in the idea of brand of an individual product versus the branding of an organization itself (Kitchen and Schultz, 2001). There has been a significant moved away from line branding towards corporate branding in the last decade of the twentieth century (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002).

The postmodern argument regarding marketing communications has met its challengers. Scholars, such as Christensen, Torp, and Firat argue that positioning one single idea of control of meanings is exhibiting a modernist impulse in the case of a

postmodern turn (2005). They argue that postmodernity and the market are far too complex to be responded to with a single denoted system. The counter-argument is based on the notion that IMC scholars and practitioners want to reinstate order and predictability in an increasingly disordered and fragmented world.

The purpose of this chapter is not to insinuate that one such control system exists to enforce order or predictability in a postmodern international marketplace, but to explore the conversation of a possibility of an understanding and approach of ethics through IMC in a disordered and fragmented world. This discussion relies on an approach, not the approach to a discussion on how we as scholars and those who are practitioners may engage the marketplace and IMC. Overall, key objectives include creating competitive advantages; establishing brand loyalty, create strategic communicative platforms, and integration of ethical, value-laden frameworks.

The Postmodern Challenge

Postmodernity developed against the idea of a universal science premised in modernity. As modernity is defined through the metaphors of progress, development and emancipation (Christensen, Torp, and Firat 2005), reason and objective information formed the foundation. From progress and science, observations have been made that are relative and many philosophers began questioning the very foundations of knowledge (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984). Many humanities-oriented disciplines and social practices also voiced such questioning. Such disciplines include art, architecture, literature, literary criticism, history, and social theory (Rosenau, 1992). There the echoes of questioning and the erosion of a universal point of reference has given life to alternative modes of expressions, ideas, and understandings.

One of the social practices that the postmodern condition embeds “most conspicuously” is marketing (Brown, 1993b, Firat and Venkatesh, 1993). In general, marketing theory is still modern in its outlook, yet the modes of analysis and its strategic approach, the nature of the market, and the behavior of consumers have become increasingly complex to be blanketed with a universal point of reference. Eliminating this idea of a universal logo-centric point of reference, the notions of “truth,” “objectivity,” and “authority” are constantly challenged and changing by alternative interpretations and worldviews (Bauman, 1992). The lack of commitment to such universals leads to a distrust of planned and prepackaged images, and general propensity to play around with signs and modes of signification (Cova, 1996). Firat and Venkatesh (1993) relate this postmodern market to the notions of hyperreality, fragmentation, and a tendency for production and consumption to become reversed. As explained by Christenson, Torp, and Firat:

Hyperreality implies that the hype or the simulation is seen as, and becomes, more real than the reality it allegedly represents. With the erosion of a shared foundation for meaning, signifiers become autotomized and only ephemerally linked to their original references. (2005, p. 158)

The intertextual association between and among marketing messages is commonly more pronounced than the link between the message and the product (Christensen, 2001).

Audiences tend to see the image as the primary essence, and the image is also understood to represent nothing but itself (Boorstin 1961). Baudrillard argues that postmodern writers believe that there is nothing hidden behind the images and that appearances are our true reality (1998, 1994). The lack of a universal authority to guide the signification

process leaves the marketplace with a paradoxical coexistence of ideas, terms, and principles that were once considered contradictory. Thus, the observation of such a juxtaposition of opposites is not only advertising, but also art and architecture, where the play with signifiers and the ability to redefine the meaning of terms, ideas, and images are valued most explicitly (Firat and Venkatesh, 1993).

The notion of consumption becomes very important in this postmodern conversation. Consumption is no longer a passive act of unpacking and discovering the meaning intended by the marketer, it is now an active and creative process by which consumers continually produce and reproduce their own identities through the real possibility of resignifying the ideas and messages (Gabriel and Lang, 1995). As consumers construct their identities and lifestyles, they pull from an increasing window of symbols and brand narratives that are constantly reconfigured to fit within specific situations. Cova believes that postmodern consumers interpret and use the products and messages differently from their original purpose to then reshape and adapt them to personalized use (1996).

Christenson, Torp, and Firat, argue that one of the most important implications of postmodernity, from a marketing perspective, is the loss of control, consistency, and predictability (2005). The postmodern consumer is, according to Oglivy, “a semiotic field of mixed messages, conflicting meanings, and inconsistent impulses” (1990, p. 15). As Kotler discusses, modern marketing is premised on the principles of analysis, planning, implementation, and control (2003). IMC practitioners of the postmodern era must acknowledge that their branding efforts and communicative messages are not just

creations of their own, but take on their own identities. The consumers are also not passive targets, but creative partners in the very production of experiences and identities.

The postmodern concept of consumers as active partners is an articulate situation. As Cova (1996) explains, the postmodern consumer prefers to create and maintain relations with other consumers, not primarily with a brand. Christenson, Torp, and Firat further the discussion:

While images and symbols obviously play a central role in the creation of individual identities, it is their ‘linking value’ – their ability to link people with likeminded individuals – which is of interest to the consumer, says Cova, not their reference to a virtual community of consumers designed and managed by corporations. (2005, p. 159)

The common mistake, through Cova’s perspective, among marketing approaches to a postmodern condition is their concept that the deterioration of a universal and shared perspective of meaning be compensated for by the consumption of corporate images and symbols.

Postmodern IMC

As mentioned in the earlier chapters, IMC has become an evolving and powerful idea within the marketing field. Leading marketing scholars such as Schultz (1994) and Schultz and Kitchen (2000) have described IMC as a paradigmatic revolution with extensive implications for contemporary management and communication practice. “The postmodern response argues that perhaps consumers do not really know what they want, only what they do not want” (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002, p. 145). Also marketing

practitioners have increasingly adopted the language of integration when approaching the expanding field of marketing communications (Cornelissen, 2001, 2003).

It is argued by some that a common modernist theme of control exists among the varying definitions of IMC beginning with the definition from the American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA) in 1989 through the postmodern approaches to IMC.

The 4As definition reads that IMC is:

A concept of marketing communication planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines—for example, general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and PR—and combines them to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact from the seamless integration discrete messages.

The Duncan and Caywood (1996) definition highlights the advantages of the combination of using different media, but excludes the idea of the receive end of the communication process. Duncan and Caywood later promote a set of generalized definitions that bring into the IMC conversation the notions of multiple audiences, sources of information, consumer behavior, stakeholder relationships, and brand loyalty.

While Schultz et al. (1994) at Northwestern University's Integrated Marketing Communication program centers on the management of the sources of information to which consumers are exposed, Duncan (1993) focuses on "controlling or influencing all messages which customers and other stakeholders use in forming an image of, and maintaining a relationship with, an organization." Christenson, Torp, and Firat comment:

And while the purpose of such control measures as a varies among issues of sales and brand value over predictability to profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders, the promise of IMC is to provide the overarching perspective and tool for a synchronization and coordination of all corporate messages. (2005, p. 160).

The scholars further their position by arguing that IMC is a marketing-inspired vision on inspection, regulation, and control.

Other scholars, such as Gronstedt (1996), oppose the embedded control notion in postmodern IMC and emphasize that role of IMC to counsel, mediate, support, and add value. Proctor and Kitchen (2002) prioritize the need for sensitivity to the postmodern condition. Proctor and Kitchen (2002) and Schultz et al. (1994) describe the field of IMC as an outside-in approach to the market. The concept of integration, which is at the heart of IMC, serves to adapt communicative platforms to consumer perceptions, and also awareness of a centralized commitment. Schultz comments:

Integration cannot be accomplished by middle managers or from those in the lower level of the organization. It must come from the top, and it can't be just a memo or a directive . . . There must be a commitment from top management to integrate and to remove barriers which prevent integration. (1994, p. 5)

The emphasis is focused on the need for consistency across all media and brand content points. The notion of control, highlighted by the critics of IMC in a postmodern era, may be seen as relative to a specific project, or synonymous with postmodern IMC terms of management, coordination, and strategic planning. IMC is built on commitment to a communicative platform; yet the complex dynamics of the marketing situation call for

coordination, not the control notion of modernity, to better navigate the most effective communicative platform to reach the targeted audiences.

Postmodernity is an era of significant challenges for marketing scholars and practitioners. For marketing managers, the tasks include how they enable their organizations and brands to engage the increasing complexities. For scholars, this ongoing conversation of a IMC as a monolithic perspective situated in modernity causes friction on how best to apply IMC in a postmodern perspective. Postmodern insights highlight that communication is not only a simple means of relaying messages to others, but also a process of constructing and recognizing the self (Christensen, 1997). As the brand and the consumer communicate, not only does the organization begin to understand itself, but also the consumers come to a discovering of themselves (Christensen, Torp, and Firat (2005). The communicative platform is in itself the process of discovery, as it is the transmission of messages and meanings.

Postmodern communication strategies call for a welcoming of negotiated meaning with the consumer. Consumers are beyond the modernist definition of a target market, and must be understood as collaborators or partners in a pool of meanings. Each benchmark definition of IMC, since IMC's conception in the late 1980s, has evolved and grown from its earlier definition. The notion of modernist notion of control does not have a place in postmodern IMC, as IMC is about the negotiation of meaning with the consumers through an integrated relationship of communication and contact points.

The Postmodern Consumer

As mentioned earlier one of the central tenants of postmodernism as applied to marketing relates to the nature of the consumer and consumer behavior (Proctor and

Kitchen, 2002). Many of the consumers and stakeholders, regardless of the educational level, are better informed, more critical, and able to judge the attributes of the products, services produced, marketing communication, and an overall view toward a brand than every before. Proctor and Kitchen explain:

Moreover, in what today are comparatively affluent societies even by standards of 30 years ago, consumer and customer choice has burgeoned and lessened the ability of market suppliers to dictate what customers should buy. However, the widening of consumer choice, and the growth of affluence has created a situation of decision overload as far as the consumer is concerned. (2002, p. 147).

Faced with this increasing number of choices, consumers questioning what they really want or simply reject what they know they do not want, which may be seen as *inter alia*, a postmodernist stance (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002). Persuading consumers to make a choice in the first place is now one of the pre-eminent communication issues of the marketplace.

The notion that marketers have the potential to identify what consumers do not want, also lends to opportunities to decipher what consumers may want instead. According to Firat and Venkatesh (1995), postmodern marketing has five key features, which define and facilitate the process of exchange. They are: hyperreality; fragmentation; reversed production and consumption; decentered subjects; juxtaposition of opposites; and, as a general consequence of the conditions, loss of commitment and brand loyalty. Van Raaij (1993) compliments these conditions by adding the consequence of openness, defined as pluralism. Brown (1993a, b) furthers the conversation of positioning three tendencies of the postmodern consumer: 1) readiness for living a

perpetual present; 2) emphasis on form/style; and 3) greater acceptance of a state of disorder and chaos.

Referring back to Firat and Venkatesh's key features of postmodern marketing, hyperreality, this feature is noted as the most widespread manifestation of postmodernism on the current marketing scene" (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002, p.147). In the move away from modernity, society looked for the "simulated reality" rather than an extant reality (Baudrillard, 1992; Eco, 1986; Postman, 1985). Brown notes that examples of this are the fat-free fat, beefless beef, decaffeinated coffee, alcohol-less alcohol, and sugar-free butter (1999). The creation of consumption sites, pseudo worlds of theme parks and hotels, and the virtual worlds of cyberspace are examples of this hyperreality. This notion "provides the opportunity to present consumers customers with previously un-encountered experiences where the customer can exercise choice and spend money in a creative way." (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002, p. 147).

An additional postmodern marketing phenomenon is the transition of urban centers into more theme parks (Sorkin, 1993). Areas are transformed to reflect or even replicate themes. "Markets are increasingly de(re)constructed by marketers in conjunction with the consumers who seek the simulated experience that enhance and enchant their present encounters in life" (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002, p.147). The postmodern consumer wants to experience a variety of themes, past and present, and avoids choosing a fixed one.

The postmodern consumer is consumed by consumption and asks the question, who am I today? The essential nature of postmodernity as a liberatory force with fragmentation central to the experience is pivotal to the postmodern IMC conversation

(Brown, 1995; Firat and Schultz, 1997; Firat and Venkatesh, 1995; Arias and Acebron, 2001). The notion of fragmentation exists in everyday experiences and the avoidance of commitment to any single way of being results in “bricolage” markets. These markets are composed of consumers who do not present a united, centered self, or a committed set of preferences. They provide a “jigsaw collage of multiple representations of selves and preferences even when approaching the same product category” (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002, p. 146).

Goulding (2003) positions this fragmentation consists of a series of interrelated ideas, which leads to segmentation of smaller segments, thus resulting in the proliferation of a increased number of goods to serve the greater number of segments. Brown (1999) explains that fragmentation of markets into even smaller and smaller segments, each with its own tailored products, is a common practice. This is a reflection of postmodern marketing, as it is “rapid, rabid, frenetic, and volatile” and characterized by shopping at speed. Firat and Schultz (1997) argue that much of the media resemble each other, presenting “collages of fleeting moments that excite the senses, yet rarely connect to a central theme or focus.” This fits in the postmodern consumers lose of commitment to one single style or belief system. Proctor and Kitchen (2002) explain that fragmentation mirrors the consumer’s disconnected postmodern lifestyles, behaviors, and moods, as well as a multiplicity of roles, from soccer mom to DIY fanatic. This creates a fragmented existence among a sea of products and brands.

Reversed production and consumption engages consumer’s loyalty to symbols and images that are produce through consummation. The symbols keep shifting, as brand loyalties are not fixed in a postmodern marketplace. “Customers respond strategically by

making themselves unpredictable” (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002, p. 148). What stands as symbolic and engaging today, may not be what is symbolic and engaging tomorrow.

The notion of customization and producers of self-image through each consumptive movement is another tenant of postmodern consumers (Firat, *et al.*, 1995). This has led to more and more splintering of segments into niche markets. The customization enables and empowers the consumer to produce different version of products that best represent images they wish to create to market themselves. This also leads to an even further partnership between consumers and brands through a interrelationship in the production, creative strategy, and marketing processes.

Proctor and Kitchen (2002) discuss the postmodern consumers through the idea of decentered subjects; consumers look for opportunities to feel empowered, favorable, and valuable in separate moments through finding self-images that make them likeable or desirable in a particular situation or moment. This may be viewed as a sense of liberation from “monotony, boredom, and the necessity to confirm.” By being able to switch images and represent themselves by switching products, consumers create and market multiple self-images. Understanding a decentered subject, challenges traditional segmentation criteria used to define demographically define audiences. The embedded understanding is of the postmodern decentered subject is to see the target as moving, not stagnant, and as a marketer, to look beyond a modernist perspective of segmentation, targeting, and positioning to understand the changing dynamics of target composition.

The notion of juxtaposition of opposites is a strategy to appeal to the most challenging of postmodern consumers. This construct is to “adopt an open, untargeted, ill-defined, imprecise approach, which leaves scope for imaginative consumer

participation.” Thus, tempting consumer curiosity and inviting consumer experience into the message in order to co-produce the insight and meaning. While this strategy creates a luster to the imagination of the consumer, the postmodern marketing approach also needs to engage fresh and up-to-date images to emphasis form and style.

In the postmodern perspective of the marketplace, there is a tendency for consumers to voice their distrust in industry, brands, organizations, and technology. Advances in technology and industry have become associated with benefiting small minorities around the world and creating pollution, misery, loss of responsibility, depletion of the Earth’s resources, extinction of species, and the realities of massive destruction (Baudrillard, 1987; Chomsky, 1989; Kellner, 1990; Postman, 1985). The postmodern consumer welcomes marketing strategies that provide such possibly for empowerment and critical play with chaos and control over the order they want to see in their lives and society (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002).

In this postmodern culture, the consumer is essentially considered decentered, preferring to switch identities and images, while utilizing consumption as a means to devise powerful images that liberate them from monotony and conformity (Brown, 1995, 1997). The avoidance of commitment is a significant characteristic of the postmodern consumer. In marketplace terms, whereas the modern consumer was expected to be a loyalist to a brand or product, the postmodern consumer voices freedom to move where choice or even a whim indicate (Gitlin, 1989; Brown, 1995, 2002). The postmodern marketplace has become a pluralistic matrix, where consumption is now a means to creatively construct self-images that allow consumers to become more desirable and/or likeable in various social contexts (Kacen, 2000; Dawes and Brown, 2000; Goulding,

2003). Meanings of objects are no longer fixed and linked directly to their functions, but have become “free floating” as consumers tie meanings they desire to the objects (Elliott, 1993).

Postmodern consumers engage the idea of reinventing themselves through consumption. Research by Dholakia *et al.* (2004) and Cova and Pace (2006) reveals that the postmodern consumer illustrate new forms of sociality and empowerment, based not upon interaction among peers, but more on a personal self-exhibition in front of other consumers through brand contact points and rituals. The literature sounds recurring contentions that postmodern society has backed away from an extreme form of individualism towards a more soulful searching idea of the self through social bonds –the phenomenon of neo-tribalism (Maffesoli, 1996; Cova, 1997; Kozinets, 2001, 2002; Thompson and Troester, 2002; Dholakia *et al.*, 2004; Johnson and Ambrose, 2006; Cova and Pace, 2006; Cova *et al.*, 2007). Research also reveals that the postmodern consumers desire an experience-based marketing that highlights interactivity, connectivity, and creativity (Cova, 1996; Cova and Pace, 2006; Cova *et al.*, 2007). “The postmodern consumer adores being individual, they adore continually reinventing themselves through their consumption. However, while they love to develop highly individualized identities, through continually fresh and exciting consumption experiences, it appears that they do not want to do it in isolation or in communities with highly dispersed interest sets (Simmons, 2008, pg. 303).

Postmodern Branding

The postmodern constructs effectively apply to the IMC concept of branding and the notions of corporate personality, identity, and image. Hyperreality illustrates the

potential of creating an experience through a brand culture. Through fragmentation, brand image must be communicated to indicate a preparedness and welcome to consumers without a committed set of preferences, but to multiple preferences. Reversed production and consumption strategy would integrate a brand image that stresses that is here today to meet the demands and needs of tomorrow's customers; the brand will always be one step ahead of the consumer.

Decentered subjects recognize the target market of the organization may be continuously changing, therefore, the brand image has to be one that stresses the ability to meet the needs of its changing target. The construct of juxtaposition of opposites eludes that the brand image feature a combination of opposite symbols, themes, and references to tease the consumer's curiosity. This strategy also is to entice the consumer to interpret the brand images and messages within their own experiences and relate them back to their own desires and needs.

These constructs focus on branding, which in itself is a major driver of integration. Looking at a brand, it is the center of a wheel, which all else revolves. The spokes metaphorically represents the various elements of the promotional mix: advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations, and so on. The center holds the organizational heart of the brand, including the values and beliefs that define its mission and corporate culture. The external forces of the market, consumers, and overall stakeholders have become more and more of an influence on the brand. The individual brands and corporate brands are no longer seen as separate entities. Proctor and Kitchen explain:

Consumers may well be moving toward their own postmodernist surrealities. But these include a desire to know the company behind the brand. The loss of market share and share value of Nike Corp had little to do with its marketing abilities; it had a lot to do with corporate ethics. (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002, p.150)

Through the consumer and other stakeholder's eyes, the individual brand and the corporate brand identity are seen as one. Marketing communication and corporate communication must walk together down an integrated path navigating the dynamics of the markets and stakeholders.

The traditional modernist approach to marketing is challenged by a communication and consumer behavior perspective, from a postmodern theoretical perspective, which emphasis knowledge, interpretation through metaphor, constructed truth, semiotics, and symbolic, as opposed to actual, realities (Brown, 1993a, b). "The abandonment of subject and object, and of literalism, in favor of symbolic discourses is particularly significant for consumers given the blurring of boundaries between advertising and cinematic culture" (Proctor and Kitchen, (2002, p. 150). The use of surrealism in marketing messages instead of focus on product attributes is a common strategy. Brown (1994) refers to Baudrillard (1998):

For many, this inexorable fragmentation of modern life, the widespread belief that 'anything goes' and the apparent loss of a fixed point of societal reference cannot be divorced from latter-day advances in telecommunications, informatics, and the mass media . . . this ceaseless parade of visual images has denuded people's ability to discriminate between important and trivial, past and present, global and

local, and fact and fiction, other than in terms of nature and intensity and drama of the images themselves.

From this perspective, postmodern marketers need to address the idea of creating ambiguous, yet decodable messages

Postmodern IMC and Ethics

Integration in terms of IMC is not only regarding the integration of communicative mediums and promotional tool, but also the idea of integration of brand purpose and identity. Many brands are integration communication and marketing strategies with a public purpose marketing or “enlightened capitalism” with their economic marketing strategies (Handelman and Arnold, 1999). These marketing practices are illustrating the increasing importance of corporate social responsibility for economic reasons (Kitchen, 1997; Brown and Dacin, 1997; Robin and Reidenbach, 1987). “Ethical behavior exerts a potentially powerful influence on consumer and stakeholder thoughts and decisions” (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002, p. 151). The increasing marketing literacy of consumers, pressure of public opinion groups, rise of globalization, and technology are bringing to the forefront the embedded ethical issues that exist in society. Consumers are becoming more and more aware of these issues concerning the environment, human rights, and the global marketplace as a whole. Global brands such as Shell, with its environmental policies and treatment of indigenous peoples, and Nike, with its cheap labor policies, have learned that ethics and brand reputation are a serious related matters. This characteristic of a postmodern consumer, where there is deep concern in what brands do and represent beyond the product line. Proctor and Kitchen explain:

The trend towards ethical branding means that consumers tend to ask themselves a different question when considering brand choice. It is not simply the question of whether they can trust the brand to deliver attributes X and Y, but whether the people who bring the brand to the market are the sort of people they can trust to do X and Y. (2002, p. 152)

This lends a true importance to how organizations portray their image, thus stressing the integration of marketing and corporate communication strategies to build this identified image in the eyes of the consumers and stakeholders in general.

Positioning a brand in the minds of consumers and stakeholders is one of the key components of integrated marketing strategy. The organization must preface the consumer in the decision-making process. Proctor and Kitchen (2002) argue that it is no longer enough to assume a passive, loyal “mass,” which decodes inside-out messages. Rather, the messages needs be based on outside-in approaches. The key is to move beyond a modernist positioning strategy, requiring market-focused creative thinking to initiate positioning stances in the minds of the consumers. “The image of the object (whether individual or corporate brand) is likely to be increasingly dependent not just on the functions it (ostensibly) serves, but on its contributions to self-image and its contributions to happiness (feeling good)” (Proctor and Kitchen, 2002, p. 152).

Conclusion

By revealing the limitations of modernism concerning the single perspective of its metanarrative, postmodernism offers alternative visions to both consumers and marketers alike. “Postmodernism has emerged not only as a critique of modernism and its domination over established constructs in consumer culture, but in its own right, it also

has emerged as a new philosophical and cultural movement (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995, p. 239).” A postmodern marketplace is concerned with reversing the modernist conditions of the consumer, the role of symbolism in the consumption processes, the creation of narrative communicative strategies that emphasis a hypperreality, and cultural signification of fragmentation.

Moving from the origin and evolution of IMC to IMC as epideictic rhetoric, while exploring the dialogue between narrative and IMC and understanding of IMC in a postmodern marketplace, the next chapter engages the conversation of instructing IMC in a higher education classroom. The focus explores applications of teaching IMC from an interpretive humanities perspective.

This chapter will outline the importance of "Walking Humanities into the Marketplace" and the praxis orientation of IMC through the redefining of the ethos of branding within a narrative and ethical framework to meet commonplace outcomes of higher education, as well as prepare future practitioners for the postmodern marketplace. The praxis orientation will lend a better understanding of implementation strategies in the higher education classroom to better equip students with the philosophical and theoretical grounding they need to become more strategic, critical and ethical decision makers in this postmodern international marketplace.

Chapter 6: IMC within Ethical Frameworks

“Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”

-Aristotle

This chapter begins with a discussion of the definition of ethics in the marketplace and the types of ethical issues that may occur within IMC. The major ethical frameworks that are common throughout the literature are discussed then moving towards specific issues relating to targeting, the use of persuasive appeals, and the role of culture. The advantage and disadvantages of codes of ethics are also examined.

The definition of ethics is a topic that has been debated throughout various aspects of philosophy, academics, as well as the marketplace. The direction of thought tends to be defined through the perspective of the discipline within the conversation is occurring. A philosophical focus may be on moral choice, where the question of what is right or just is debated from what is simply within the window of the law in a specific situation. Also, philosophy engages the nature of morals themselves. Particular professions or industries, such as medicine or business, evoke questions of ethics pertaining to a more focused definition on the rules or standards governing the conduct of members of their professions.

Everyday life calls for everyday ethical choices. “Ethics is about norms and values of a certain seriousness, about standards and ideas, i.e. ones that people cannot easily neglect without harming others” (Harvey, 1994, p.15). Andreassen (2001) further explains the complexity of challenges within ethical dilemmas. “Typically defined as the study of standards of conduct and moral judgment; It is particularly useful to use when it

helps us to resolve conflicting standards or moral judgments . . . The toughest ethical dilemmas arise when two seemingly right principles are in conflict. (2001, p. 8). Ethical dilemmas are of the most complex nature, as they are not as simple as deciding what is right and what is wrong.

There are continuing debates regarding a formalized definition of ethics in the field of business, although many definitions share common themes. Ferrell and Fraedrich (1994) position business ethics as moral principles that guide behavior in the world of business. Harvey (1994) expands his earlier definition to include ethics as the standards and ideals that cannot be easily neglected without harming others, but also without being “looked at disdainfully by significant others” (p. 15). Ethics holds a greater capacity than that of formal rules and regulations. There is a broad range of codes expanding from general guidance or best practice advice through explicit requirements that, when broken may lead to termination of the right to practice a particular occupation.

Within marketing, marketing communication is commonly “self-regulating” (Boddewyn, 1989) (Le Guay, 2003) in that numerous communication platforms, such as advertising agencies, marketing firms, public relation firms, and the media have co-operated in developing codes of practice. In the United States, the Advertising Federation, American Marketing Association, along with the Public Relations Society of America all enact codes of ethical conduct and standards for their practice and industry. In the United Kingdom, the Committee of Advertising and the Office of Communication (OFCOM), and the Advertising Standards Authority oversee advertising practice, ethical codes, and advisory services.

Even though these organizations provide the ethical code of conduct for particular marketing communications, they do not explicitly state precise ethical principles, thus providing only general guidelines.

Ethical Dilemmas within IMC

Much distrust stems from the traditional view of modern IMC. One of the main ethical criticisms of marketing communication overall includes allegations that it is inherently untruthful, deceptive, unfair, manipulative, and offensive (Calfee & Ringold, 1994). Other areas of concern include the creation and emphasis of stereotypes, causing people to buy things they do not really need, and playing on the audience's fears and insecurities (Shimp, 2003).

A 2007 study by Cho and Salmon explore the unintended effects of health marketing communication campaigns, including the effects of obfuscation, dissonance, boomerang, epidemic of apprehension, desensitization, culpability, opportunity cost, social reproduction, social forming, enabling, and system activation (p. 300). The scholars concluded that given the potential of the negative effects, there is an obvious need for structures to aid in resolving such issues.

The literature is fertile ground for applicable frameworks stemming from the field of philosophy, yet there is not consistency in the literature as to which might apply in particular contexts (Eagle, 2009). Ferrell and Fraedrick (1994) derived an overview of the main provisions of the most commonly cited frameworks. Many focus on either intentions (deontology) or consequences (teleology), with teleology then further categorized into utilitarianism or egoism (Andreason, 2001; Ferrell & Fraedrich, 1994; Hoffman & Schwartz, 2001). The key provisions include the Kantian perspective of

deontology. This means focused perspective holds that there are ethical “absolutes” that are universally applicable with the focus on intentions. This deontological approach also accepts that actions intended to do good, may meet with unintended consequences. The teleological provision is ends focused and concentrates on the outcomes or effects of actions.

The two further understandings of this teleological approach are utilitarianism, which behavior is deemed ethical if it results in the greatest good for the greatest number of people, and egoism, understood as the benefits to the individuation acting are emphasized and the impact on others is deemphasized. Concerns and challenges with the ends-focused perspective surface when comparing different course of communicative action with various levels of impact (Eagle, 2009). An example would be a PSA campaign that provides minor benefits to all, in comparison to one that delivers major benefits to many, but little, or negative impact on others. The third key provision from Ferrell & Fraedrich (1994) discusses relativism as the understanding of no universal set of ethics standards. Each culture, audience, community may hold their own relative ethical frameworks with no universally guiding set of ethical principles. Disadvantages of this perspective ignores the possibility of the group’s principles based on incorrect information and disregards the implications of the relative principles being offensive to other groups.

Lastly, the social contract theory is a common ethical framework discussed in the literature. This theory regards implies that an implicit contract exists between the organization and individuals or groups regarding the rights and responsibilities as a member of society. Challenges to this teleological approach include the implicit nature of

the contract rather than the contract being explicitly conveyed and the lack of a shared meaning of understanding.

An example outlined by Eagle (2009) regarding Ferrell and Fraedrich (1994)'s interpretation of the Department of Health PSA campaign based on fear-based smoke cessation "fishhook" campaign is understood under deontological reasoning, as its intention was to aid smokers in steps to quit smoking (Duke *et al.*, 1993; Hastings *et al.*, 2004). Critics argue that it is unacceptable to intentionally cause anxiety under deontological reasoning. The argument is based on the notion that even though the intention was to help as a specific segment of society, the methods used were prone to cause anxiety for others. Through a teleological perspective, arguments surface that it violates utilitarian principle of yielding the greatest good for the greatest number.

One focused area of ethical concern is in targeting of specific audiences. This is a fundamental aspect of IMC to better understand and connect with the consumer. This basic strategy of selecting target markets that the brand can best affect and satisfy is the building block of the IMC relationship (Kotler *et al.*, 2002). Segmentation strategies stem from targeting of target audiences. Through the segmentation process, some segments of the target population are excluded for various reasons, including they are difficult or costly to reach (Brenkert, 2002). Literacy issues are another area of concern. There is agreement in the literature that some 20% of the population of most developed countries have severe literacy problems and that a further 20% have limited literacy (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005; Office for National Statistics, 2000). Complexities include identifying the specific needs of such groups and taken them into account through the

marketing communication platforms, while acknowledging existing difficulties without utilizing condescending notions in the design and delivery of the IMC platform.

Another area of ethical concern is targeting of children, as additional factors must be addressed, including how data is collected for the younger demographics. In addition to targeting of children, targeting of minorities also lends to additional ethical concerns. Failure to address cultural differences in values, language preferences, and other culturally based preferences may result in failed IMC strategies to reach these particular target audiences. In addition to whom a brand is targeting is another area of ethical thought. Specifically in social marketing campaigns, questions surface regarding if it is ethical to target sectors of the population who are easiest to reach or who are likely to be the easiest to reach. Concerns if it is ethical to target the most receptive to a communicative message, which is termed “low-hanging fruit,” rather than those who might benefit the most from changes in their behavior (Eagle, 2009). This concept of “low hanging fruit” is defined as the identification of the particular target segments that are more apt and able to apply changes to their lives from social marketing campaigns. Eagle (2009) explains that people classified as “low-hanging fruit” may possibly originate from different social, economic, or political groups, but share through a commonplace a predisposition to change. The communicative messages are embedded with prompts and support in promoting the goods or services that make it more easy and beneficial for them to effect a particular change.

The challenge with this concept is that there is a significant correlation between these “low hanging fruit” targets and higher social-economic status, material advantage, and being ready and able to change (Eagle, 2009). Through this deontological perspective

the IMC platforms must include and secure variation of inclusion from different social economic groups in a population. In terms of a teleological approach, the IMC campaign must incorporate a better understanding of what the potential impact of inequality.

In contrast to “low hanging fruit,” the “hard to reach” audiences are those who are difficult to contact, who do not participate in research, not traditionally targeted, disinterested in marketing messages, or unmotivated or less able to change behaviors. They may also be fundamentally not reachable based on methods traditionally used for other sections of a population. Eagle furthers:

Ethical issues are concerned with understanding the barriers to change and devising ways of addressing these. In cases of low motivation, a detailed understanding of why people hold these attitudes will be necessary before attempting to overcome the barriers. In cases where people are less able to change due to environmental or structural issues, such as poverty or lack of access to services due to poor transport links, the ethical issues are deontological. (2009, p. 12)

In cases such as these action needs to be targeted at addressing these structural issues rather than blaming individuals for non-compliance or lack of effectiveness of a marketing communication campaign.

Persuasive Appeals and Ethical Concerns

The use of persuasive appeals in contemporary advertising and marketing is a basic building block of persuasive campaigns. The use of particular appeals, such as fear appeals, humor, and incentives and penalties are the appeals that have caused the most ethical concerns (Murphy and Bloom, 2002). Much of the conversation falls on the need

to caution the use of fear appeals for less-educated or vulnerable audiences and the need for further marketing research into the attitudes, information needs and message framing preferences of these segments (Eagle, 2009).

The use of humor has been used in various global brand campaigns to social marketing campaigns concerning STDs and smoking, such as the highly effective Florida “Truth” campaign. “Humor is, however very culture-specific and what may seem extremely funny to one segment of the population may be seen as utterly offensive by another”(Eagle, 2009). Another aspect about the humor appeal is the distraction from the message content, thus resulting in poor brand recognition and behavior impact (Shimp, 2003).

Culture and Ethical Standards

Socialization largely determines acceptable behavior and norms within a society, culture, or sub-culture. Yet, this significant role of culture in establishing standards is commonly ignored within marketing literature (Lavack et al., 2007). When culture-based perceptions are contrary with dominating perceptions of best practice, ethical complexities surface. The levels of acceptability of various ethical frameworks may also be influenced by culture.

Ethical theory allows for a foundation for ethical solutions to increasingly complex situations and issues within society and the marketplace. From the ancient conversations, philosophers have engaged theoretical approaches to differentiate right from wrong and for providing the polis with guidelines about how to live and act ethically. Various ethical frameworks have been proposed as applicable to the

marketplace, including virtue ethics, utilitarianism, relativism, egoism, Kantianism, contract theory, and care ethics.

The basis of virtue ethics is that character matters above all else with foundation in the virtues of courage, compassion, wisdom, and temperance. Living an ethical life requires development and demonstration of these virtues. Being a socially responsible organization or brand that demonstrates its virtues within communicative strategies to both internal and external stakeholders may demonstrate virtue ethics at the very heart of its narrative and corporate mission. The postmodern consumers are attuned to this and increasingly demand transparent virtue ethics from their brands.

A teleological, outcomes/ends focused approach to ethics in the marketplace may be seen through utilitarianism. This framework is based upon acting rightly involving the good for the greatest number. At times, breaking the moral rules may be needed to achieve such an outcome. Relativism resides in the notion that there are no universal set of ethical principles. Each individual, culture, audience, public, society, and social groups may have their own ethical frameworks. Egoism is another teleological, consequentialism that seeks to benefit the individual undertaking action with less emphasis on the audiences.

Deontological or means focused frameworks include Kantianism. This frameworks emphasis the principles behind actions rather than the actions themselves. The notion of acting “rightly” requires grounding in universal ethical principles. The focus on the means holds that there are ethical “absolutes.”

Contract theory proposes thinking about ethics in terms of contracts or agreements. Ethics is not necessarily about ethos or principles, but more in obligatory

action as dictated by agreements. Lastly, care ethics emphasizes relationships and positions ethics within building, strengthening, and maintaining strong relationships. It is these relationships that are fundamental to ethical perspective.

The project moves to the final chapter where emphasis shifts from IMC practice to understanding of instruction of IMC in a higher education classroom from a humanities perspective. The history of IMC instruction is reviewed, highlighting the evolution and commonalities in IMC teaching practices and varying approaches. The final aspect of the projects engages ancient and contemporary voices of rhetoric and philosophy of communication to further emphasize the importance of theoretical and ethical grounding not only in practicing IMC, but also in its instruction in the higher education classroom.

Chapter 7: Implications for Teaching IMC from a Humanities Perspective

“Be a cause, not just a business. Have a higher mission.”

-Philip Kotler

IMC is not a static field of practice or study. IMC, like it's the marketplace, is dynamic in nature. The increasingly complexities of the marketplace reflect increasing complexities for IMC practitioners and instructors alike. The more we learn, teach, and apply the concepts, the more connections are made between concepts and approaches. The concepts then become more expansive.

Northwestern University has an extensive history in the development of marketing, marketing communication, and advertising scholarship and practice. In 1903, Walter Dill Scott, director of the psychological laboratory, wrote one of the first books in the field of advertising titled *The Theory of Advertising*. In 1922, Fred E. Clark, faculty of what was then the School of Commerce, wrote one of the leading texts on marketing theory and practice, *Principles of Marketing*. The Kellogg Graduate School of Management has a solid reputation as one of the top business schools and marketing programs internationally. The IMC program at the Medill School of Journalism is known as a pioneering force behind the evolution of marketing theory and IMC. Northwestern's Don Schultz positions three questions when considering IMC and higher education:

- 1) Can we teach IMC at the college or university level?
- 2) Assuming IMC should be taught, at what level is it most appropriate? Graduate, undergraduate, or does it matter?
- 3) Can we simply adopt our current advertising or PR mass communication program to add a dash of IMC? (1995, p. 10).

Kellogg and IMC have recognized the new marketplace and the dynamic marketplace changes through a natural evolution of the field. This evolution is noted as “more of a

return to historical roots than a new alliance” (Iacobucci and Calder, 2003, p. viii). In 1991, the Department of Integrated Marketing Communications was formed at Northwestern as the first IMC program offered.

As IMC evolved, the focus on customer-centric data and database-driven communications became more evident. The change also moved the field of communication out of the tactical arena into more of strategic and managerial utilization of marketing communication to propel corporate and stakeholder value in an increasingly networked, interactive, and global marketplace.

In this final chapter, I further the conversation of teaching IMC in a higher education program to support more of a humanities perspective in approach. *Kellogg on Integrated Marketing* is understood as more of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of IMC (Iacobucci and Calder, 2003, p.viii). According to Schultz, Northwestern’s IMC claims a body of knowledge as the grounding to their program—borrowing from theory bases of marketing, accounting, finance, psychology, sociology, economics, and mass and interpersonal communications (1995, p. 10). Schultz also acknowledges the increasing knowledge and skills originating out of the fields of computer science and information technology that is now a part of IMC. IMC is considered a field being built and evolving from many fabrics of theory, skill, and application.

First it is pivotal to understand that IMC cannot be an afterthought or a “dash” thrown into an advertising or public relations course or program. Integration is just that—integration. “Integration is a whole different way of looking at communication—From the outside-in, not the inside-out” (Schultz, 1995, p. 10). IMC is a new way of marketing and communication, as well as the relationship between the brand and

consumer. It is not a summary of previously learned strategies; it is data-driven and interactive. “It is digital, not analog, and that, perhaps, is the greatest difference of all.” (Schultz, 1995, p. 10). IMC can be viewed building an integrated communicative platform from data; whereas, traditional modes of advertising and marketing started with whole with the goal of breaking it down.

One main question that Schultz highlights to practitioners and academics alike is: “How can you teach IMC in the traditional academic model?” (1995, p. 10). Of course, the traditional academic model is to teach courses and subjects. IMC is not a course or a subject; IMC is a process. IMC is a way of thinking and developing marketing and communication strategies. To teach IMC effectively, the process that it is, must be embedded in the course structure. Not only should the IMC concepts and ideas be integrated, but also the approaches and processes in the academic model. The traditional academic model does not fit IMC, nor does IMC fit the traditional academic model. IMC calls for an evolution of the academic model in the classroom to meet the complexities and challenges of the dynamics of IMC in a postmodern marketplace.

A 2016 study in *Teaching Journalism and Mass Communication*, highlights the little scholarly work in the discipline that addresses the teaching of IMC campaigns and implementation of theory and practice of integration in the teaching of those courses. Since the 1990s, generally, scholars and practitioners have recommended these two approaches to incorporate IMC into the classroom. Bentley, White, Weiss, and Shields explain

The majority of the available scholarly work on IMC education has addressed a wide range of curricular and theoretical issues. However, while academics and

professionals are in agreement that a campaign course is an essential component of an IMC curriculum, and despite the increasing number of journals and conferences on teaching IMC or its component parts, surprising little scholarship directly addresses the teaching of IMC campaigns or offers advice to educators on how to apply the principles of integration in their campaign courses. (2016, pgs. 18-19)

Important areas of discussion are the relationship between course objectives and outcomes, the instructor's prior industry experience and their teaching approaches, and then overall understanding of the theory and practice of the communicative platform integration in the IMC classroom.

Most of the scholars published in the IMC scholarship, debate on how best to bridge the divides between the professional practice of IMC and the academic instruction of IMC (Bentley, *et al.* 2016). The agreement falls on the logic of IMC, as summarized by Griffin and Pasadeos:

Conceptually, IMC suggest that advertising and public relations efforts achieve their greatest impact when coupled together and with other marketing elements such as direct marketing and sales promotion to communicate with consumers through multiple channels. In practice, IMC rejects pas mass-media strategies by citing the increasingly segmented audiences of today. (1998, p. 4).

Furthering these very principles, *The Journal of Advertising* published an entire issue to scholarship on "improving the learning and teaching of IMC" in 2005. (Patti, 2005, p. 7).

It was noted that many educators in the field share commonalities in terms of their questions and concerns:

As we prepare students to be IMC practitioners and researchers, how well do our curricula reflect what we believe are the most important dimensions of IMC? Is what we teach truly reflective of the state of IMC's ongoing development as a discipline? Are we teaching industry best practices? (2005, p. 7)

The issue reflected a collective "need for an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to IMC education" (2005, p. 8).

The next step is to define what this integrated, interdisciplinary approach to IMC education exactly looks like. Many scholars reverted back to marketing communication practitioners for guidance. Rose and Miller (1994) emphasized IMC in the marketplace and positioned three questions:

Given that there is perceived need for advertising and public relations functions to become more aligned, what sorts of programs should institutions of higher education offer? Should there be separate curricula or an integrated one? Should IMC programs be degree granting or executive seminars? (p. 53)

Rose and Miller sought industry's thoughts on how they felt IMC should be taught at the university level by mailing surveys to advertising and public relations professions. The research revealed that despite the overall agreement of increased integration, there were significant differences between what advertising professionals and public relation professionals thought should be taught in the IMC classroom. Advertising professionals stressed direct marketing, promotions, and event planning, while PR practitioners looked to more emphasis on strategic planning, communication, and client consulting (Bently *et al.*, 2016).

Many additional studies followed the same protocol calling upon industry practitioners for their opinions on how to effectively teach IMC. A panel of “IMC champions” was organized by Kerr (2009) to reveal their advice on the perfect “receipt” for IMC instruction (Bently *et al.*, 2016, p. 20). The results were conflicting, much like earlier studies, yet her studies revealed an important insight. The findings highlighted that many IMC courses are only superficially applying integration in a traditional advertising or public relations class. One of the key recommendations from Kerr’s expert-panel to truly elevate the course to a level of integration was to include “a capstone or a client project that demands an integrated solution”(2009, p. 131). This generalized recommendation left scholars with a good idea, but with no specific ways to structure this in the classroom. Another study in 2007 by Battle et al. provided generalized recommendations, yet no specific tactics to implement in the higher education classroom.

Beachboard and Weidman (2013) sought the insight from IMC practitioners to describe the skill sets and knowledge they look for in recent hires. Again, broad advice was offered in addition to a couple tactical recommendations: “Don’t limit the capstone campaigns class to preparing and presenting the creative; also address the media and production budgets. Teach teamwork but not to the extent that grading of individuals writing is neglected” (Beachboard & Weidman, 2013, p. 23).

Despite the effort of the various studies focusing on the point of view of IMC practitioners on instruction of IMC in a higher education classroom, “it appears that IMC curricula are inconsistent and woefully deficient in theoretical foundations” (Bently et al. 2016, p. 20). In 2000, Yorgo Pasadeos expressed, “IMC instruction may be easier said than done” (p. 73). Later in 2007, an article in the *Journal of Advertising Education* and

in 2008 an article in the *International Journal of Advertising* further supported Pasadeos's claim. Schultz, Kerr, Kim, and Patti (2007) survey 87 course syllabi from six countries. They concluded that while the scholarly literature commonly identified nine pivotal IMC constructs, including strategic integration, message integration, synergy, brand equity, and relationship building, "none of these constructs were readily apparent in the curricula" of the course they analyzed (p. 11). The follow-up article by Kerr, Schultz, Patti, and Kim (2008) furthered charged of the disarrayed state of IMC instruction:

The evidence from this study suggests that many IMC courses are simply reincarnations of previously existing promotional strategy or advertising management course. In the U.S., it often appears that what is called IMC is simply a restructured advertising management course with a few terminology changes. (p. 537)

These scholars identified significant deficiencies in the current state of IMC curricula. Such deficiencies included the syllabi lacking in the presence of key construct of IMC, key writers, and overall disciplinary research. The content reviewed commonly reflected "promotional strategy or advertising management or marketing communication course or curriculum under the guise of an IMC approach" (Kerr *et al.*, 2008, p. 544). Similar to studies prior, precise tactics to integrate solutions into IMC instruction were not offered. In 2009, Stanaland, Helm, and Kinney suggested that instructors diversify their course content to cover a broader scope of IMC platforms.

Robert Carroll's (2000) study "Preparing Public Relations Students for the IMC Environment," published in *Teaching Public Relations*, discussed a course that he and his

two colleagues co-created and team-taught coming from advertising, marketing and advertising perspectives. Carroll highlighted the IMC philosophy informing the course, noted the course's main focal points (personal selling, advertising, public relations, promotions, special events, direct marketing, etc.), summarized the process of organizing student teams and pairing them with local clients, and detailed the required elements of the campaigns and the accompanying plan books and live presentations that the students were required to develop through the course. In addition, Carroll discussed the challenges that he and his colleagues encountered:

Developing and teaching the IMC class has not been without its problems. The three professors have experienced some difficulties with the integration of their presentations into one smooth-flowing course. Students, in their course evaluations at the end of the semester, have said that often the transition from one instructor's topic to the next was unclear. The faculty team continues to work to improve coordination of their presentations to the class. (2000, p. 5).

There was no discussion of any challenges that the students experienced integrating the advertising, public relations, and other marketing communications forms in their campaigns.

Bently, White, Weiss & Shields (2016) discussed the significance of integration strategies of consistency and complementarity. Also applied to the study were the standards of excellence by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), as learning objectives used by instructors surveyed, which are:

1) Exercise creative and analytical thinking and use conceptualization skills to develop content driven campaigns; 2) Develop professional editing and writing standards in truth, accuracy, fairness, objectivity, and producing to deadlines; 3) Build awareness of the diversity of audiences through content-driven public relations, advertising, promotions, and other marketing communications; 4) Develop an understanding of the importance of research and critical evaluation skills when writing a plan book for a full integrated campaigns; 5) Build awareness of ethical ways of thinking through the study and practice of public relations/advertising production; and 6) Learn to apply image and information theories when developing content for a fully integrated campaign. (2016, p. 26)

Evidence of only three out of six objectives was found in a majority of the IMC plan books. Their study also revealed that the “‘best’ IMC plan books combined visual consistency, message consistency, and channel reinforcement to achieve full integration” (p. 32).

A 2008 study by Christensen, Firat, and Torp highlighted the concept of flexible integration as applied to IMC in the field and the classroom. The study noted that most Western universities and business schools polarize research into research units that are structurally separate from research conducted in IMC, management, and organization. Their findings promoted the integration of active and explicit non-prescriptive in IMC studies and instruction. The focus here turned toward organizational theory as applied to IMC contexts. Examples of this included:

The *reception* of integrated communication projects, including studies of how corporate symbols and messages are interpreted and ‘unpacked’ . . .

Rather than regarding diversity in such interpretations as barriers or obstacles to integration –as prescriptive approaches tend to do –such studies allow us to understanding how centrally defined notions of integration and consistency are able to co-exist with other agendas, practices, and concerns. The variability of integration communications calls for use to identify and articulate the conditions for organizations flexibility within the context of integrated communications projects . . . The organization of integration . . . respects the dual need for integration and differentiation. (Christenson *et al.*, (2008, p. 444).

The research agendas during this time where postmodern consumers expect “customized” products and services as well as even greater involvement in the design and features of what they consume are paramount (Pine *et al.*, 1993). Research is needed to provide insights into how communications may be customized at the ‘nerve endings’ of the organizational network while the essence of the corporate image can be maintained.” (Christensen *et al.*, 2008).

Some scholars argue the need for IMC to be taught in close conjunction with more generalized courses in organizational and management. Christensen, Firat, and Torp explain:

It is ironic that a discipline, which takes its point of departure in a critique of the functional silos of contemporary organizations, most often teaches principles of integration in silo-organized courses where knowledge of the organizational context of integration is at best cursory. It should not come as a surprise to use that students educated in such programs find it difficult, if not impossible, to

implement and manage integrated communication projects once they leave school.
(2008, p. 446)

A recommended solution is to move beyond traditional curricula and provide multi-disciplinary case material that pulls upon active learning and application in communication, management, and organization beyond what is currently in marketing courses today.

While an increasing number of textbooks included a chapter or two on how to implement projects of integration (Schultz and Schultz, 2003), they commonly lack the notion of an organizational perspective. Traditionally, the marketing textbooks, reiterate well-known prescriptions on a “how-to” approach. IMC in its response to the postmodern marketplace and consumer calls for more of an engagement of regarding deeper understanding of principles, logics, and agendas in real-time conversation with the stakeholders, marketplace, and celebrated marketing communication ideals and values.

Philosophical Grounding of IMC

As much of the literature situates IMC through the tenants of integration in the field, the literature of IMC in the classroom has not been as fully developed. There have been inconsistencies on the approaches, the frameworks, and the pedagogies. Where the early conceptions of IMC viewed the coordination of a limited set of communicative platform in order to provide message clarity and message consistency, the later notion of IMC brought more attention through the inclusion of data-driven research and stakeholder focus. IMC provides scholars, educators, and practitioners with an approach to study and engage the creation of meaning with the consumer.

While the concept of IMC is considered an evolution of marketing theory, the basic foundational elements may be viewed as an entrance to the understanding, instruction, and application of IMC as a process. Through a constructive interpretive lens this project calls to ancient rhetorical theory, as well as contemporary rhetorical theory, for a lens into which IMC may be thoughtfully engaged. IMC is not a skill set to be taught in a classroom, nor is it a theory to be closed in a textbook. IMC is a process by which it needs to be understood as such and applied through theory-informed action. This praxis-orientation in the classroom is essential in bringing the theory and application together. The dynamic field of IMC demands an active engagement of the evolving marketing concept. Iacobucci and Calder remind us:

Today, great marketing is all about integrated marketing, a philosophy of management in which the challenge is to drive the target customer perspective through all decisions. Great marketing tomorrow may be something different. Do not forget, great marketing is a journey with a moving destination. (2003, p. 297).

In order to provide more of a depth to IMC instruction, a deeper focus on theory is a beneficial approach. By providing philosophical grounding, the process applied may sit upon foundational bedrock to evolve and be more strategically and effectively applied in an ongoing and evolving conversation in a postmodern international marketplace.

The current marketplace is best examined as paradoxical extremes of mass branding and one-to-one relationship marketing. The concept of integration aims to incorporate these extremes together into a unified strategy. IMC provides a fruitful ground for the combination of these marketing philosophies and a strategic play upon the synergies.

Moving beyond of IMC as either a concept or process, or even both. This project views IMC as an evolving comprehensive philosophy of marketing and a response to the postmodern consumer. IMC calls for and is the change. “The loudest calls for change, for moving away from the traditional view of marketing, have come from what we think of as ‘fill-in-the-blank before the word marketing’ business books and articles” (Iacobucci and Calder, 2003, p. 6). It is important to know where one is coming from in terms of traditional marketing theory, as well as where one is going in terms of this changing philosophy of approaching marketing. Iacobucci and Calder (2003) elaborate on this “going-forward” marketing:

- Must be more strategic in creating strong brand concepts that make corporate strategy happen.
- Must focus on a full range of contacts with consumers as they unfold over time and lead to a total consumer experience that is aligned with strong brand concepts.
- Must customize consumer experiences in a way that still allows for marketing to large numbers of consumers. (p.15)

IMC originates out of corporate strategy, while acknowledging and evoking a point of differentiation or innovation. “With a strategy in place, enter marketing. Marketing is the means to the ends of corporate strategy. Marketing deals with how the firm makes the strategy happen” (Iacobucci and Calder, 2003, p. 13). To further this point, marketing must create an idea that makes sense in the mind of the consumer. The strategy must be meaningful and relevant to the consumer to accomplish the marketing overall goal.

With this understanding of IMC as a philosophy of marketing, the thematic nature of its goals, and the focus on the consumer connection, how do we approach IMC in the higher education classroom beyond a prescribed “how-to?” The proposed response includes a theoretical and philosophical understanding of rhetoric and communication. Situating IMC through a humanities perspective provides an entrance into deeper conversations of the why behind the how. Future practitioners of the field need to be equipped with more than a tactical marketing toolbox.

In order to fully strategically engage the IMC philosophy, the foundation of the building blocks must be studied and applied to the convergence of traditional mass and individualized marketing to reach maximized marketing results. “To deal with this new complicated marketplace, the traditional step-by-step marketing plans and programs dictated by the 4Ps simply do not work.” (Iacobucci and Calder, 2003, p. xvii). IMC puts the marketing concept into practice beginning with the consumer. New processes, systems, and approaches are needed, as well as an understanding on why they are needed.

IMC as epideictic rhetoric within an Aristotelian framework opens the conversation to ancient theory applied to contemporary contexts of a postmodern era. As discussed in an early chapter, advertising and marketing can be viewed as contemporary examples of rhetoric. IMC as epideictic rhetoric is a “showing forth;” something that can advance, the moral consciousness and conduct of the people through meaning.” The process is one of shared meaning and experience and a significant part of the cultural traditions over time with connection through epideictic rhetoric and sensitivity to historical moment.

Bringing to light the functionality and applicability of the ancient art of rhetoric beyond a college philosophy course and into an IMC course lends a critical lens to the understanding of the value, use, and meaning of rhetoric and connection and importance of the audience and values. The philosophical grounding needs to preface the historical evolution of marketing theory and the postmodern application of IMC strategies and tactics.

Examining and engaging IMC through a rhetorical lens connects back to one of the very key notions of IMC –to create meaning. Twitchell looks at branding as a “commercial narrative” and this “commercial narrative, like any kind of storytelling depends as much on the listener as on the storyteller. The audience is always negotiating meaning, affirming, and subverting” (2004, p. 297). Pursuit (2013) discusses the relationship between IMC and branding through rhetorical action, as the process involves interpretation of signs as a shared experience. The challenges of this in a postmodern marketplace is that IMC must be responsive to various audiences simultaneously and in real-time providing not one metanarrative of response, but multiple responses. “This understanding of IMC fits into the rhetorical tradition, which works in response to contingency, particularity, temporality, and locality, based on available knowledge, to determine a sound course of action” (Pursuit, 2013, p. 36-37). Through this interpretive entrance, IMC may be understood as a rhetorical communication and the audiences as rhetorical constructs, thus moving the attention deeper than that of IMC tactics and promotional mix application to the study of rhetoric through an Aristotelian conversation of epideictic rhetoric with focus on co-creating of meaning, which is essential to effective IMC strategy.

As discussed in Chapter 3, Lauer (2015) reflects on the ancient art and the understanding of the purpose, role, and nature of epideictic rhetoric with origin in Aristotle's *The Rhetoric*, establishing the classic example of a funeral oration as epideictic where the democracy was connected with the virtues of the polis. From these ancient beginnings, Lauer moves to the Roman historical moment, where rhetoric expanded to a more flexible form. "Rhetoric in antiquity allowed for the study of epideictic as it connects to the preservation and promulgation of culture." (Persuit, 2016, p. 73). Rhetoric became tied to culture, and it is these core aspects of epideictic that continue to be embedded in contemporary IMC scholarship and practice.

To provide students with the rhetorical grounding when approaching IMC provides the foundation to better understand the role of IMC in the marketplace, as a significant storyteller of contemporary societal values, and the overall relationship between the brand or organization and the audience. Moving through the Aristotelian perspective of rhetoric with emphasis on epideictic rhetoric engages a more critical level of understanding to IMC as a process. Botan and Soto (1998) reflect on the theories of Charles Sanders Peirce and Umberto Eco to illustrate the key aspect of the construction of publics in a semiotic conception of rhetoric – "an endless processes by which signs give birth to other signs" (22). Botan and Soto understand the purpose of an organization or a public is to keep producing signs. The public is an "ongoing process of agreement upon interpretation" (1998, p. 38). The IMC process is a rhetorical process; interpretation of meaning is a rhetorical process.

Contemporary Voices in the IMC Classroom

This project focuses on Schrag's interpretive entrance to IMC and also looks to Fisher's narrative interpretative approach and Schrag's communicative praxis to further assist in framing IMC in the higher education classroom. As discussed earlier, through the redefining of the branding metaphor within an ethical, grounded and narrative framework, the focus on ethos and connection to the audience through Schrag's "fitting response" may combat the previous challenges of narrative and marketing and its deconstructive effects, which begin in the classroom. IMC as communicative praxis engages branding discourse in action with texture as the bonding agent between the brand and audience, thereby, opening a dialogue to not only conduct IMC within an ethical framework in a dynamic global marketplace, but also to instruct IMC in a higher education dynamic.

Through Schrag's interpretive lens, IMC engages discourse and action through *about, by* and *for* through an integrated marketing philosophy that originates with a corporate or brand narrative. This understanding of IMC, as a type of evocation, reveals a "showing forth" (*epideixis*), which situates the very pivotal figures of discourse and action within the expressive landscape of communicative praxis and texture. Positioning this perspective through the instruction of IMC, allows students to better understanding epideictic rhetoric as an engagement of the audience between the interplay and performance of discourse and action. This is a fertile perspective for the grounding of IMC.

The conversation of narrative also allows for a more engaged understanding of rhetoric that provides grounding for the practice of IMC. As IMC is tied to branding,

branding is tied to narrative. Providing more philosophical depth to this notion allows for more engaged understanding, application, and analysis of this process. Fisher's work provides a theoretical framework of narrative to branding. IMC and narrative walk hand-in-hand. A brand's IMC strategy must fit within the given corporate narrative. At the heart of the narrative is the mission; an ethical IMC campaign must be guided by the mission of the narrative it is representing. The difference between grounded and groundless IMC is the lack of understanding of narrative and mission. IMC that extends the mission of an organization, while telling its story in the marketplace is effective, ethical, grounded IMC.

IMC can be created and executed ethically and well through this understanding and appreciation of narrative and mission. Grounded IMC must also answer to the call of responsibility and duty. Thus following Schrag's notion of "fitting response." Schrag's application provides understanding of how the agent (brand) is situated within a given story. Schrag helps frame the dilemma that IMC finds itself in a postmodern marketplace.

Schrag's communicative praxis can function as a framework to conduct ethical and grounded IMC in a postmodern marketplace. Communicative praxis is engaged through Schrag's "about," "by," and "for" by an IMC that originates with an organization's narrative and mission. Communicative praxis illustrates the importance of discourse in action with texture as a bonding agent. Introducing students in IMC classroom to Schrag's perspective lends an avenue to create future practitioners who will be responsible for grounded, not groundless IMC campaigns, and know why.

Liberal Arts Foundation to IMC

Adding to the conversation of IMC within ethical frameworks, the liberal arts tradition lends grounding to praxis-oriented application of ethics in the marketplace. The calling for liberal arts graduates in the various fields of the marketplace is a prominent theme in the ongoing conversation. In a 2012 speech given to the Council of Independent Colleges Presidential Institute, former Duke University president, Nannerl O. Keohanel argued that “the liberal arts (and are the best possible preparation for success in the learned professions—law, medicine, teaching—as well as in the less traditionally learned but increasingly arcane professions of business, finance, and high-tech innovation.” An additional argument includes that liberal arts education teaches one how to learn with focus on the mind, critical thinking, and ability to clearly express oneself in written and oral forms. These skill sets apply across professions and allow for deeper understanding and expression of oneself and the discipline or profession.

Schwab (2003) is concerned that most people in society today lack trust in the market-driven system feeling that organizations and their leaders have become detached from society’s needs. “In today’s trust-starved climate, our market-driven system is under attack...large parts of the population feel that business has become detached from society, that businesses interests are no longer aligned with societal interests” (p. E10). One main concern position by Sullivan (2011) is that business education simply fails to prepare students for their responsibility to society, including their ethical responsibility to the businesses. According to research by Austin (1999) liberal arts education has greater student outcomes including: student satisfaction with faculty, completion rate of a

bachelor's degree, students enrolling in graduate studies, students winning graduate fellowships, writing skills, cultural awareness and students being part of social change

Ewest and Kliegl (2012) outline four approaches that can be used as a means for reconciling business education to the liberal arts. The first focuses on liberal arts education as a basis of leadership education. The second lays foundation to enhance integrative and critical thinking in business education. The third perspective is to focus ethics as an ethical formation of the student, and, lastly to more closely integrate business and liberal arts curricula.

The first goal of a liberal arts education was to train those individuals who were to hold a place of leadership within the community or civic life (Stull, 1962; Blaich, Bost, Chan, & Lynch, 2004). Durdan (2003) argues that all liberal arts colleges are rooted in a history of training individuals for leadership in organizations: public, civic, and political. Ewest and Kliegl state, "The American liberal arts tradition was designed early on by men like: John Dickinson, Benjamin Rush and Thomas Jefferson to architect leadership skills in the nation's future generations." (2012, p. 79). Durden further argues that to not include leadership in the training of business professionals denies the role for which the liberal arts education was founded. He explains:

It is time for education leaders to affirm publicly that a liberal-arts education is not a mere luxury without practical consequence, but rather encompasses a distinctive preparing of students for positions of corporate leadership. It is time for administrators and faculty members to embrace with pride their graduates who pursue careers in business and finance and to incorporate, both philosophically

and structurally, business into the core of the liberal arts curriculum (Durden, 2003, p. 23).

Durden's thoughts on leadership education are furthered by Daloz Parks (2005), who suggests that leadership today requires the ability to see the complex and interdependent relationship among multiple systems. She points out the discrepancy between teaching knowledge and preparing people to exercise judgment and skills to bring the knowledge to bear on these intricate systems. Lambert (2006) and Bennis (2007) perspectives are voiced in this approach to integrative learning.

Blaich, et. al., (2004) voices the second approach, adding that the liberal arts is also "... an institutional ethos and tradition which places a greater value on developing a set of intellectual arts, than professional or vocational skills" (p. 12); this viewpoint is supported by Snow (1966), Stull (1962) and Brown (1994). Rothblatt (2003) suggests that, "Liberal education offers the intellectual and emotional basis on which is constructed a capacity to make decisions. It is the means by which men and women have sought to interpret the world or take a comprehensive view of it" (p. 15).

The ability for professionals to think both creatively and critically is essential in business (Pamp, 1955). As a practitioner in the marketplace, the pivotal skill set is to know your internal and external environments and audiences to pinpoint and analyze trends and potential courses of action Ewest and Kliegl explain, "One needs to be a keen observer and an intelligent thinker to put the pieces together in an effective manner" (2012, p. 80). Drucker (2001) proposes that this type of holistic thinking is the next important prerequisite for future business leaders. Drucker states, "But what we do need – and what will define the educated person in the knowledge society – is the ability to

understand the various knowledges” (p. 294). Drucker strongly believes business education has failed because it has not taken a holistic approach to life and its graduates “feel let down” (p. 293).

Smith-Fichter (2002) examine Drucker’s holistic approach to and propose that liberal arts education develops analytical and creative thinking, but more importantly students become continuous life-learners. The liberal arts environment is a fertile ground in developing a continuous learner. Through the connection to community, liberal arts education also fosters thinking within the students that is more holistic, critical, and ethical.

Colson (2005) lends an understanding through the third perspective to cultivate knowledge and ethical character, as it is one of the historic goals of liberal arts education. Aristotle considered all persuasion to originate from the rhetorical appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos. “Meaning that an effective argument is assessed on the credibility or ethical foundation of the person, the sound reasoning of the person, and the use of emotion to stir empathy” (Ewest and Kliegl, 2012, p. 81). Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, “The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of a true education” (King, 1947).

Ewest and Kliegl comment that “Business leaders need to be keen observers of their internal and external environments to make good decisions, and these decisions must be made in the context of the competing needs of multiple stakeholders.” (2012, p. 81). It is through this knowledge of ethical philosophy and the ability to view issues from multiple perspectives that becomes a pivotal commonplace for society and the marketplace.

The final framework for understanding liberal arts education is the person as a whole is addressed, not just a specialty or a skill set. According to Brown (1994); Stull (1962); and Blaich, et al., (2004), the initial means to do this is through integration of educational instruction both in curriculum and pedagogy. The overall goal is to seek integration of disciplines to provide a well-rounded learning experience for the students; therefore, for the student to graduate with a well-rounded world perspective.

The importance of a liberal arts education and the praxis orientation of IMC through the redefining of the ethos of branding within a narrative and ethical framework to meet commonplace outcomes of higher education are key elements to the evolution of IMC and its connection to audiences and society as a whole. To be ethical, IMC must be grounded. To be grounded, the current students and future practitioners of IMC need to be engaged in the philosophical and theoretical discussion of rhetoric and communication and apply fitting response to the postmodern marketplace and consumer.

By engaging a constructive hermeneutic through the metaphors of rhetoric and IMC, not only the practice, but also the teaching of IMC becomes grounded and fertile to apply ethical frameworks. Through the evolution of advertising to where IMC stands in contemporary society, this rhetorical genre of epideictic rhetoric is echoed through the practice of IMC. The Aristotelian appeals of ethos, logos, and pathos are commonplaces that evoke meaning within the audience. A calling forth through discourse and action that utilizes the bonding agent of texture to communicate meaning is the very core of IMC. The bonding of rhetoric, narrative, and ethics provides an expressive landscape of communicative praxis in the marketplace, as well as the classroom.

Through engagement of Aristotle, Fisher, and Schrag within the particular areas of discussion brought forth in this project, IMC instructors may provide the grounding to move further IMC beyond a revised version of modern marketing concept or understanding as a process to a grounded philosophy of integrated marketing in a postmodern marketplace that provides ethical approaches to branding and meaning creation with the consumer. The praxis orientation lends a better understanding of implementation strategies in the higher education classroom to better equip students with the philosophical and theoretical grounding they need to become more strategic, critical and ethical decision makers in this postmodern international marketplace.

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