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STATE OF THE ANTI-UNION ADDRESS:
A RHETORICAL CRITIQUE OF SELECT SERVICE WORKER TRAINING METHODS

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies
in the College of Graduate Studies
at the University of Central Florida
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Major Professor: Paul Dombrowski

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ABSTRACT

This is an interdisciplinary master's level thesis that explores links among technical writing, training manuals, surveillance, and anti-union rhetoric used with service workers in select American chains and franchises. Brief histories are provided, including those of technical writing, the rise of unions in America, and how technical writing became inextricably linked with labor. A major shift occurred in the 20th century when workers began interacting less with products and more with the public. The research focuses on training manuals, techniques, and rehearsed dialogues of McDonald's, Wal-Mart, Starbucks, Whole Foods, Panera, and Publix, though similar organizations are referenced. Service worker language, uniforms, and store decorum are sometimes analyzed for their rhetorical content. The idea of a single, technically written training manual in the service sector is a misnomer; training is delivered through a pastiche of manuals, videos, computers, apps, flipcharts, and on the job training. Unions are avoided through franchising (and therefore eat outlet not possessing enough workers to organize), creating conditions of high turnover rates, rhetoric, and use of euphemism. Global corporations are likened to "superfiefdoms," with service workers equated to modern serfs. If the world has evolved into supercorporations, it is argued then that the Publix employee-owned model may be the best approach and the most dignified of all. The technical writing and instruction in state-sponsored and federalized school pedagogies, which emphasize drills and compliance, may be culturally linked to the training found in these entry-level service jobs, and more academic study exploring these links is called for.

For Professor Dwight Kiel – social scientist, Renaissance man, wit, and champion of interdisciplinary studies – who has gone fishing and could not see this work come to fruition.

And for all those who toil at menial service-sector jobs.

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I want to especially thank Professor Paul Dombrowski for his guidance, warmth and humor in agreeing to Chair this thesis, and Professors Dan Jones and Atsusi Hirumi for agreeing to serve as additional readers; all three outstanding scholars and gentlemen were my principle professors in graduate school and provided excellent advice on the final draft. I also want to thank Professor Michael Hampton for agreeing to help me assemble the Power Point presentation and his special guidance and friendship; Peter Wallace for all of his work in getting me through my M.A. program; Professor Saul Axelrod of Temple University for his editing assistance and lifetime of guidance; Professor of Sociology Robin Leidner from the University of Pennsylvania for granting me a personal interview; Professor of Rhetoric Jeffery Van Clive from the University of Kentucky for sending me his dissertation; Professor of English Mark Kamrath for all he taught me about modern academic research; and lastly the University of Central Florida's incomparable, helpful library staff.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	viii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS USED	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. Statement of Purpose	1
1.1 Background for the Study.....	1
1.2 A Brief History of Consumerism.....	4
1.3 Technical Communications	12
1.4 Training Manuals and Employee Handbooks	18
1.5 Instructional Design, Training Techniques, and Service Workers	21
1.6 Labor and Technical Writing.....	32
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	38
2. Introduction to Literature Review.....	38
2.1 Novels and Popular Literature	39
2.2 Rhetorical Analyses.....	43
2.3 Interdisciplinary Interest.....	49
CHAPTER THREE: THE DOCILE SERVICE WORK	51
3. Introduction to the DSW and the ASW	51
3.1 Methodology of Research.....	55
3.2 McDonald's.....	57
3.3 Wal-Mart	64
CHAPTER FOUR: THE ANIMATED SERVICE WORKER	70
4. Alive and Kickin': The ASW	70
4.1 Starbucks	71
4.2 Whole Foods.....	77
4.3 Panera	79
4.4 Lessons from Publix	86
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND FURTHER STUDY	89
5. Analysis and Discussion	89
5.1 The Difficulty of Unionizing Service Workers	90
5.2 Euphemism as a Labor Tactic	91

5.3 Exploring Links between Public Education and Corporate Training.....	92
5.4 Closing Remarks.....	94
REFERENCES	97

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Wal-Mart logo	67
Figure 2: Starbucks and Panera logos juxtaposed.....	81
Figure 3: Political cartoon of child mourning NCLB	93

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Bloom's original taxonomy of educational objectives.....	28
Table 2: Definitions of the Categories of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy.....	29
Table 3: Gagné and Driscoll's learning objectives	30
Table 4: Union membership, 2003-2008	37
Table 5: Keller's ARCS model.....	54
Table 6: Employment figures for select companies, 2011	56
Table 7: Starbucks lingo and buzzwords	76
Table 8: Analysis of sample Whole Food's rhetoric	78
Table 9: Corporate euphemisms	91

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS USED

ADDIE	Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation
ARCS	Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction
ASW	Animated Service Worker
BLS	Bureau of Labor and Statistics
CAI	Computer-Assisted Instruction
CCT	Cross-Cultural Training
DSW	Docile Service Worker
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
FIST	Foodservice Instruction Simulation Technique
FMLA	Family Medical Leave Act
HIPE	High Involvement Peer-Based Education
H.U.	Hamburger University (McDonald's)
IDS	Instructional Design System
LSI	Learning Style Inventory
MBT	Manual-Based Training
NCTE	National Council of Teachers of English
NLRB	National Labor Relations Board
OJT	On the Job Training
OWS	Occupy Wall Street
ROI	Return on Investment
SEIU	Service Employees International Union
SKA	Skills, Knowledge and Ability
SME	Subject Matter Expert
STC	Society for Technical Communication
SWTM	Service Worker Training Manuals
T & D	Training and Development
TGA	The Green Apron (Starbucks training manual)
UCF	The University of Central Florida
UFCW	United Food and Commercial Workers
VR	Virtual Reality
WF	Whole Foods

Personal Note

Entry-level service workers have been one of the foci of my studies at The University of Central Florida for two years, but in many ways have been a lifelong concern as I saw my grandfather's clothing store in Columbia City, Indiana, Strouse's Menswear, established in the 19th century, eventually unable to compete with Wal-Mart. My great-grandfather, grandfather, and uncles, German-Jewish tailors, sold overalls and "Sunday best" to Christian farmers – with no videotape. Strouse's was a humble, non-pretentious, slow-paced shop of verbal credit, town gossip, and erosion of anti-Semitic fears. It had character, warmth, ethnicity, history, camaraderie, and soul – everything that postmodernist, dehumanized, scripted consumerism lacks.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Statement of Purpose

This is an interdisciplinary master's level thesis, weaving together elements of technical writing, rhetoric, instructional design, labor studies, and social criticism. My chief concern is the rhetoric involved in the welfare of millions of American service-workers earning minimum wage and prevented by large corporations from unionizing. I wish to explore how technically drafted service worker training manuals (SWTMs) and the accompanying training methodologies of select global organizations have come to dominate much of American daily life; discuss why this training is inherently anti-union in tone; and proffer why this phenomenon should be of vital importance to technical writers, trainers, sociologists, economists, industrial psychologists, and culture critics. For "to question the ordinary, the routine, the everyday is a necessary project for a truly critical social science" (Dunk, 1991, p. 16). I lastly suggest that Florida's Publix groceries provides an excellent modern model of both consumerism and stewardship toward employment. I do not present my work as an experiment of social science or of hard statistical data with "numbers crunched," but rather one of rhetorical, anecdotal, and lengthy personal observation that I believe many service-workers and shoppers alike have come to slowly and equally conclude about American consumerism and unionization today.

1.1 Background for the Study

Usually, corporate training manuals are proprietary materials and unavailable to the public. Generally, one must be an employee to actually *read* the manuals: both McDonald's and Wal-Mart turned down my requests to share their employee handbooks for research purposes; the manifestations of their dictums and language norms are nonetheless quite observable.

Furthermore, the term "manual" is somewhat misleading; national franchises use mixed-mode delivery of training instruction. In these instances I listened for the *manifestations* of the training, or what service workers were taught to automatically say to the public: I believe this aspect of service workers' lives ties in deeply to their subjugation and lack of unionization. When entire populations are dressed exactly the same and are speaking exactly the same coast to coast, I suggest, as some sociologists do, that it militarizes them, rendering it easier for supercorporations to establish a power relationships and foster greater compliance. In general, it is not necessarily the written instructional manuals that engender obedience, because they are often not formally read; it is a combination of training, management techniques, and corporate cultures that create the atmosphere of subjugation and anti-union sentiment I wish to address.

There are compelling reasons to do so. In May of this year, fast-food workers in London and in 80 other cities across 30 countries staged a day of protest against McDonald's, insisting on at least \$15 an hour for their menial jobs (Tasch, *Time.com*, 2014, May 16). Later that month over 100 protesters were arrested near McDonald's headquarters outside of Chicago, including the president of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) (NYDailynews.com, 2014, May 21). On average, one out of four Americans visit a fast-food restaurant each day. (Schlosser, 2002). The restaurant industry employs over 11,000,000 people at over 900,000 locations, making it, collectively, the largest private-sector employer in the United States (Singh, Kim, & Feinstein, 2011). Yet most of these entry-level workers toil at minimum wage, with a few, like Starbucks' baristas, also splitting customer tips. "The fast food industry pays the minimum wage to a higher percentage of its workers than any other American industry" (Schlosser, 2002, p. 73). The issue of minimum wage at fast-food places has become so important that at his 2014 State of the Union Address, President Obama included some pizza workers as spotlight guests (seated

next to the First Lady) to highlight his push for \$10.10 hour federal minimum wage (*Washington Post*, 2014, Jan 29).

The *kulturkampf* in the United States between the haves and the have-nots led to Occupy Wall Street (OWS). Economic disparity in the United States was a chief concern of Pope Francis's in statements to President Obama during their meeting at the Vatican earlier this year. In looking OWS, and noting that *Time's* Person of the Year in 2011 it was "the Protestor" (which included OWS but also the peoples of areas of global unrest such as Egypt, Libya and Tunisia), issues of corruption, exploitation, and economic disparity – all intertwined with globalization – are topics that simply cannot be ignored by the technical writing and training communities, who may themselves be exploited for their talents and language skills in order to subjugate entry-level workers, wittingly or not. As America exports its franchises around the globe – what many have popularly dubbed "Coca-colonialism" – it is important to stop and examine the totality of our actions.

It is not lines of Shakespeare that the American service worker reads and recites daily. Rather, it is the canned language of SWTMs scripted by supercorporations. As I wrote in my annotated bibliography in 2012:

Multinational brand name companies have succeeded in training legions of workers, put them in uniforms that may be described as militarized, prevented them from establishing unions, coached them to interact with the public in prescribed ways, and to operate under constant video surveillance...creating issues of mass subjugation. (Ries, p. 1)

The world has changed – and technical communications keep much of our postmodern and predictable world in check. One could argue that due to a combination of advances in science and technology, the Industrial Revolution, rises in literacy rates, and changes in traditional social

and religious norms, more fundamental transformations have taken place in the last 150 years or so than in the last 1,000 or perhaps even 10,000.

1.2 A Brief History of Consumerism

There is no shortage of red letter moments that have contributed to the onset of modernism and now postmodernism: the discoveries or publications of Darwin, Freud, Edison, the Wright Brothers, Crick and Watson, and Einstein; current investigations into neuroscience; recapitulations of the very meaning of "art;" the moon landing and space exploration; changes in roles for women; the seemingly endless advancing and intertwining of technologies; and the legalization of gay marriage. All of these literary, scientific, and social achievements are revolutions that have occurred only since the time of the American Civil War – and constitute giant leaps for mankind. I wish to contend, however, that an equally profound but more subtle step has transpired that shapes our daily lives more directly: how we dine and shop.

To Luedicke, Thompson and Giesler (2012), sociologists who penned an incisive study about consumerism, the purchasing choices and brand loyalties we create today often tie in deeply to our personal identities and senses of ethos, and are sometimes our only forms of political expression away from the voting booth. Consumers "dramatically enact their ideological beliefs in ways that confer a particular form of identity value to marketplace resources" (p. 1017). Postmodern consumerism is a confluence of technical writing, training, surveillance, politics, identity, and values – or lack thereof. Luedicke, Thompson and Giesler see consumerism today as nothing short of a morality play: Prius owners often feel morally superior to Hummer drivers; some Target shoppers would never dare step foot inside a Wal-Mart. (One of the fundamental political differences between the two superstores is that Wal-Mart is the largest

retailer of guns and ammunition in the United States; Target, despite the irony of its logo, won't sell firearms or ammunition, nor does it want its customers to "open carry.")

Since the dawn of antiquity, commerce meant familiarity. Clamorous market squares characterized ancient cities like Alexandria and Jericho; the Agora in Athens became an icon of Western civilization. For centuries, "buying, selling, negotiating price, and assessing quality were all predicated on trust" (Ferraro, 2006, p. 918). Throughout both Asia and Europe, farmers, greengrocers, fishmongers, artisans, smiths and similar vendors hawked their wares and services to people whom they usually knew. Trips to open-air markets and village vendors were events that reinforced one's identity and sense of belonging. Welch (2005), writing on the act of shopping during the Italian High Renaissance, notes that Renaissance markets, fairs and auctions bound "different levels of society together in mutual interdependencies" (p. 235). These European senses of consumer communities – an intermingling of society, use of barter, verbal credit and an aura of trust – has become transformed into a world of uniformed service workers, scripted dialogues, and exact credit card payments. The trust that once was is the videotape that now is. Especially at cafés like Starbucks or Panera, we find less senses of "community" or "intermingling" and more commonly witness individuals alone with their computer devices, the alienation charted in Sherry Turkle's *Alone Together* (2011), in which the professor of linguistics analyzes the new normal and concludes that digital intimacy is no panacea for human warmth.

Not to be forgotten about how consumerism has dramatically changed is that one human element of shopping at the market – haggling over a price – an art form unto itself that involves logic, rhetorical devices such as antithesis, *aporia* (expressions of doubt), hyperbole, and wit – has been eliminated in the U.S. in many hemispheres of consumer life. Bidding, for most people, is something confined to eBay. Haggling was a vitally important element of the Agora

(Johnstone, 2011) and still plays vital roles in the markets around the world. In postmodern automatized America, one does not haggle over price with a self-service check-out station at Home Depot or a Wal-Mart clerk who functions *as* a computer.

As consumer norms migrated to the New World, many commercial institutions became the stuff of American folklore: the general store with its penny candy; the traveling or door-to-door salesman; the town pharmacist with its soda jerk; the corner pub and bakery; a tailor often of ethnic descent (Asian, Greek, Armenian, Italian, Jewish, etc.); the milkman; the town barber. Before the rise of 7-11, convenient stores were ma and pa shops, often owned by immigrants, and affectionately called "five and tens," because many items cost either a nickel or a dime. The concept of the five and ten survives in the several corporate "dollar stores" that sell goods on the cheap at the expense of labor; usually the stores are staffed by one or two non-union clerks making minimum wage (MMR, 2014). American restaurants, pubs and stores – in many ways until Ray Kroc purchased the first McDonald's franchise in 1954 – exhibited individuality, humanity, and Old World sensibilities for nearly three centuries.

Canadian social critic, consumer advocate and journalist Naomi Klein (2003) posits in *No Logo* that the real transition to modern consumerism began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as Americans left farms in droves for city life and to procure industrial or bureaucratic jobs. Previously, food was either grown at home or purchased from someone personally known. As corporations like Nabisco (1898), Quaker Oats (1901), Green Giant (1903), and Kellogg's (1906) emerged – and brought dried or frozen foods from far away, by train – the companies needed to replace *actual* vendors with *surrogate* vendors, ergo the birth of "warm and fuzzy" fictional logo spokes figures such as the Quaker Oats Man, Aunt Jemima, Betty Crocker, the Jolly Green Giant and Uncle Ben. To Klein, these early surrogates and the long litany of

breakfast characters for children are the modernist primogenitors of our sacred trinity of American postmodernism: Ronald McDonald, Mickey Mouse, and the Starbucks mermaid or siren – the latter and newest so ubiquitous, so deeply embedded into our collective unconscious through the tens of millions of paper and plastic cups she is served on by technically trained baristas that she needs no name. For in the end, there really is no name for the impalpable, Kafkaesque intertwining of technical writing, globalization, the triumph of the mall, branding, alienation, and the magnetic pull of the worker and consumer alike. A subliminally erotic mermaid suffices to symbolize the transition from the boisterous markets of memory to our malls of monotony.

We still experience remnants of the vanishing world: independent cafes and restaurants; farmers' markets and flea markets; antique and boutique shops; makeshift roadside truck sales of fresh produce. There are still important vestiges of the Old World, such as Seattle's celebrated fish markets or Philadelphia's Reading Terminal Market, where Amish vendors (among others) come to peddle their pastries and poultry. But these are anomalies in America. Most senses of humanity and trust have been usurped by mallification. And services that once were, like milk delivery, have disappeared. Most of us are conditioned to bus our own tables in fast-food establishments, pump our own gas, and print our own boarding passes, for "we live in a self-service world" (Cleary & Flammia, 2012, p. 306). Virtually every aspect of American life has been franchised and McDonaldized (Ritzer, 2008; Schlosser, 2002). This includes our education system (standardized curriculums; canned tests from publishers; data-driven college admissions; hyper-evaluations of professors) and our sexuality (the multibillion dollar porn trade promotes digital "quick fixes" rather than human intimacy; "sexting" is a social problem among young people and ties into the efficiency and dehumanization of McDonaldization; Ritzer, 2008).

In postmodernity, because of the seemingly endless supply of websites, apps, and television stations, it can sometimes seem like we have *more* choices. Nothing could be more illusory: despite innovative startups and websites, fewer organizations own more media outlets (Abbot, 2012). The "big four" in music labels control 80% of the world market in sales (Fox, 2005). At the moment of this writing, titans AT&T and DirecTV are meeting to merge (Gryta, *WallStreetJournal.com*, 2014, May 18).

This dwindling of choices is reflected in the entry-level job options and consumer climate I wish to address. For instance, today, outside of hospital pharmacies, using commercial pharmacies or getting jobs at them usually means opting between CVS or Walgreen's, with a few other choices at supermarkets or superstores; the independent corner apothecary is almost extinct. Working or shopping at superstores themselves often boils down to Target or Wal-Mart, with a few bulk purchase stores like Costco thrown in for good measure. In office supplies, Office Depot and Staples seem indistinguishable from one another – yet are often the only games in town. Convenient store jobs and are almost exclusively the domain of 7-11, with Wawa gallantly attempting to overthrow it in the Eastern United States; it is probably just a matter of time until less successful chains like Circle K are absorbed by one of the two; 7-11 already made a \$2 billion bid to absorb Circle K in 2010 (Michael, *The New York Times*, 2010, Sep 9). Home repair stores – for both jobs and patronage – are invariably a coin toss between Home Depot and Lowe's. A package delivery not using the post office means choosing either UPS or FedEx. One personal activity – getting a haircut or style – is increasingly subsumed by Supercuts, the Hair Cuttery and similar chains. Familiar regional clothing stores like Kaufmann's, Lazarus, Filene's Basement, and Marshall Field's all now go under the banner Macy's (O'Connell, 2006).

Theodore Roosevelt was known as "the trust buster," and was morally opposed to the concept of a monopoly (Yarbrough, 2012). Yet the direction I believe American culture has gone in the late 20th and early 21st centuries has been to slowly accept "duopolies" or "triopolies" of important hemispheres of life as "normal." The natural resources, means of production, means of distribution, means of consumption, and control of labor are in the hands of a few. These duopolies and triopolies contribute significantly to why we now talk about "the 99%" and the "1%." And these supercorporations employ technical writing, rhetoric, training procedures, and labor practices to prevent their workers from unionizing.

The dwindling consumer choices exists most starkly with the foods and beverages we consume – and therefore many of the entry-level jobs available. A coffee on the run in America usually means a stop at a Starbucks, Dunkin' Donuts ("America runs on Dunkin"), 7-11, Wawa, or McDonald's. The denizens of hookah bars and independent cafes – often counterculture types or part of the "liberal latté" set – are deliberately making a political choice in doing so as part of a "jeremiad against consumerism" (Luedicke, Thompson, & Giesler, 2012, p. 1017). Corporate America frequently takes *actual* ethnicity, cleanses and transforms it, and repackages it for the masses: Mexican food becomes Taco Bell or Tijuana Flats; Italian food translates into the Olive Garden or Carrabba's; Australia is peddled as Outback; Switzerland is framed as The Melting Pot; the traditional New England feast turns into Red Lobster; Louisiana fare is peddled as Popeye's; Chinese food becomes either Panda Express, Pei Wei or P.F. Chang's; the corner diner is transformed into Denny's ("America's diner"), IHOP or Applebee's; the corner bakery is now "Panera." In Florida and a few other Southern states, the historic Havana or Miami Cuban café (long places of authentic culture featuring domino games, cigars on the patio, and Cuban

delicacies) is fast becoming the clean and corporate Pollo Tropical. Sexuality is blatantly exploited in franchises like Hooters, the Wing Zone, and the Tilted Kilt (Ries, 2012).

Our restaurant "choices" are often which national corporations to patronize, and frequently the sense of choice itself is illusory as conglomerates like Darden own Olive Garden, Red Lobster, Longhorn Steakhouse and other restaurant brands; its rival, Bloomin' Brands, owns Outback, Flemings, Carrabba's, Bonefish Grill and similar brands. To enter into these corporate restaurants is "to be somewhere and anywhere simultaneously" (Ries, 2012). At best, the supercorporations will decorate a restaurant with some local sports memorabilia, or feature a local beer; this type of faux neighborhood affiliation is a marketing technique known as *glocalization*. (Mantras such as "think globally and act locally" have been adopted by many "progressive" corporations such as Starbucks and Whole Foods; see Aguinis, Joo, & Gottfredson, 2012). The "meaning" that many themed environments falsely convey is linked to other cultures or the past "because as the world becomes more confusing, an idealized nostalgic space is comforting to many consumers" (Robinson, 2011, p. 546). After genuine neighborhoods are destroyed by malls, an attempt is made to return a sense of location to the bewildered populace, whose "ma and pa" shops can rarely compete with the marketing and purchasing prowess of the large chains (Klein, 2003). The most human of activities, breaking bread, the eternal poetry of "a loaf of bread, a jug of wine, and thou" has been appropriated by large corporations while customer interactions are scripted by the SWTMs; monitored by videotape.

At the heart of all of this franchising and dwindling of choices is, in my view, a cheapening of human value, a 24/7 determination to place profit above all other values, a connection to human rights abuses abroad, and an annexation of rhetoric and technical writing that contribute significantly to alienation and exploitation. In the best-seller *The*

McDonaldization of Society (first published in 1983; the 5th edition (2008) concludes with the "Starbuckization" of society) by sociologist George Ritzer, the critic argues that impersonal forces are based on four principles set forth by Henry Ford and Ray Kroc: efficiency, replication, predictability, and calculability. The success of all of these franchises mentioned – and hundreds more – is only partially due to the products themselves. Much has to do with advertising and brand awareness; a lot has to do with keeping labor costs to a minimum. The supercorporations I discuss differ by the amount of effort they put into their service training; they concur in preventing their workers from unionizing.

Supercorporations by all means have a right to exist and earn a profit for themselves and their shareholders. This is the basis of our democracy and our way of life, and is protected by the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution. I do not think the document's drafters, however, could have possibly envisioned the scope and power that supercorporations would come to play in national life. I question where the line should be drawn between human greed and human dignity – a question as historic as the Constitution itself or the Industrial Revolution. It is true that consumers have choices of where to shop – but this is less so in rural America, where a sole Wal-Mart often creates a near-monopoly of not only shopping but employment choices.

Before delving into the core research and arguments of this thesis, I wish to first define some terms and sketch some basic history on a few topics in order to: (a) explain what is meant by "technical writing" or "technical communication" (terms which will be used interchangeably throughout this thesis); (b) define what "training manuals" mean in the service worker sector today in order to (c) broadly discuss their state-of-the-art techniques; and finally (d) provide a brief overview of the history of labor, emphasizing how labor grew inextricably intertwined with technical writing. No attempt at thorough scholarship is offered in this introductory chapter for

any of these topics, but as an interdisciplinary piece with a diverse academic audience, I wish to include some basic "101" at the outset. Although Chapter 2 is labeled a literature review, there are indeed obvious elements of such a review in the following subchapters.

1.3 Technical Communications

Gresham and Kaltenbach posed the obvious question in 1975: "What is technical writing?" (p. 4). In all likelihood the best and most current working definition of technical writing can be garnered from the STC, the primary professional and academic organization of the discipline, headquartered in Fairfax, Virginia with branches worldwide. In explaining technical communication, the website states: "Technical communication is a broad field and includes any form of communication that exhibits one or more of the following characteristics:

- Communicating about technical or specialized topics, such as computer applications, medical procedures, or environmental regulations;
- Communicating by *using technology*, such as web pages, help files, or social media;
- Providing instruction about *how to do something*, regardless of how technical the task is or even if technology is used to create or distribute the communication." (STC.org).

The website furthermore declares that "The value that technical communicators deliver is twofold: they make information more useable and accessible to those who need that information, and in doing so, they advance the goals of the companies or organizations that employ them."

The STC provides several examples of technical writing, including:

- Medical instructions help patients and care-providers manage a patient's treatment;
- Well-designed websites make it easier for users to find information, increasing user traffic to and satisfaction with those websites;

- Usability studies uncover problems with how products present themselves to users, helping those products become more user-friendly; and
- Training programs provide people with new or improved skills, making them more employable and their organizations and products more efficient and safe.

This last example demonstrates that training manuals fall under the realm of technical writing, though in practice manuals are a hybrid between technical writing and instructional design, and usually involve video and other learning methods. It can be argued that technical writing is *used* by the training community to further its objectives. Much of the literature on technical writing and training concerns engineering, gaming, and simulation. Far less attention, however, has been paid to the relationship between technical writing and the entry-level retail and foodservice workers who engulf us.

Technical writing is "a discipline with a long and rich tradition" (Jones, 1985, citing Gresham (1975), p. 115). On the very broadest level – think of John Cage’s famous avant-garde definition of music as “any sound within two points in time” – then *any* telegraph, Tweet, text, fax, IM, email, Facebook update or blog post might classify as a “technical communication.” However, such an “anything goes” view dilutes (if not defeats) the academic consensus about the limited scope of serious scientific and technical writing and the discourse it involves. Writing about an academic discipline carries with it an ethical responsibility, and "sometimes 'relative' in ethics can be carried to an extreme" (Dombrowski, 2000, p. 11). Thus this thesis assumes a traditional view of what constitutes "technical writing." For the general public (as opposed to SMEs who might study complex instruments of technical writing such as instructions for a new oil rig) typical encounters with technical writing might include drug prescription inserts; clarifications of a utility bill; help files for computer programs like Microsoft Word; or new

automobile user manuals. My argument is that just as rhetorical analysis is not limited to the oral arts, technical writing analysis sometimes applies to verbal discourse – particularly when it is controlled by technically drafted documents. We live in a mixed-mode universe, and must analyze a mixed-mode universe.

Technical communications should not be confused with computer languages or computer coding (as it frequently is). Nor should technical writing be equated with scientific writing (Todd, 2003). Technical writing should be regarded as formal, written, plain language, non-fiction communications which play vital roles in realms such as commerce, technology, science, medicine, engineering, and the military. Tebeaux and Dragga (2012) declare simply that “technical or business writing describes writing that occurs in a business or work setting” (p. 3). Technical writing is "clear, concise, and always aware of its audience" (Jones, 1985, citing Gresham (1975), p. 115); Longo (2000) states as the opening sentence of *Spurious Coin* that "good technical writing is so clear that it is invisible." Technical writing explains things.

Before it is assumed that technical writing is "dry writing," however, Jones (1985), quoting Miller (1961), reminds us that scientific and technical writing can still certainly be "energetic, rhythmic, and metaphoric" (p. 115). The standard advice in technical communication textbooks is to "choose clear and precise terminology and then to use it consistently" (Dombrowski, 2000, p. 126). Usually, a technical writer or editor takes knowledge from a SME (such as a scientist or software engineer) and edits and tailors it for specific users of such knowledge or the public at large. If technical writing clarifies science but is not science (Longo, 2000), we might find a parallel concept in asserting that a technically drafted SWTM is not a corporation – but plays an indispensable role in its branding and success.

There is no famous year like 1492 to mark the beginning of technical communications; no textbook moment exists like the firing on Fort Sumter. Certainly in a broad sense, any written instructions for constructing, say, the pyramids in Egypt or the hanging gardens in Babylon on papyrus would have constituted technical communications for a select few. The elaborate detail the Old Testament goes into for the construction of Noah's Ark (Genesis 6:11) and then later the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus: 37) indicates that the scribes (if not God) were keenly preoccupied with precision, instruction, and measurements. The 16th century Saxon scientist Agricola is sometimes considered the father of geology, and wrote extensively about mining practices, including mine administration and occupational hazards. It is important to understand that as long as there has been writing, some of it has been technical in nature, and therefore we should not limit the history of technical writing to electronic transmissions: "technical writing is not the exclusive province of the twentieth century" (Gresham & Kaltenbach, 1975, p. 5).

As far as electronic transmissions go, however, God still stars in technical communication's modern history because in 1844, in the pioneer message transmitted by Morse code from the steps of the Supreme Court to a train stop in Maryland, the inventor's four words were "what has God wrought." This famous first dispatch "essentially paved the way for an industry of massive proportions in electronic communications" (Brown, 2005, p. 17). This "simple coded message that started an industry is now the more complex coded messages – in the forms of digital data – that are driving communications technologies worldwide" (Brown, 2005, p. 17). Instructions for Noah's Ark were written in the Bronze Age; instructions from Microsoft are composed in the Information Age. They are still instructions.

Modern American technical communications "has its roots in ancient rhetoric, Middle Ages *dictamen*, Renaissance books and Restoration science" (Todd, 2003, p. 65). The seeds of

technical communication in America were planted in Colonial America. In 1744, exactly one century before Morse's first coded transmission, Benjamin Franklin distributed a pamphlet entitled *An Account of the New-Invented Pennsylvanian Fireplaces*. The pamphlet included instructions about building fireplaces; offered pros and cons about the different construction types; and included visuals to help the citizen (Todd, 2003). Franklin sold no fireplaces; he simply gave away *instructions* to help the common weal. In 1910, Thomas Arthur Rickard, a writer and engineer who later authored *A History of American Mining* (1932), addressed the Institute of Mining and Metallurgy in London and called for clear standards in English language technical writing. One year prior to this important moment in the history of technical writing, Herbert Hoover, then a mining engineer himself, had penned *Principles of Mining* (1909). In it, Hoover "unites the need for efficiency for the workforce, efficiency in management, and the duties of the engineer" (Todd, 2003, p. 77). In the report, Hoover labels workers "human units," verifying Marx's warnings about the alienation of the worker, and almost hauntingly predictive of the first assembly line (and later McJobs) to come. This early 20th century technical paper by a future president, with its stress on efficiency, may very well have influenced Henry Ford's assembly line, which was erected a mere four years later.

It is the fusion of technical communication with training service workers and the cultural aftermath of this collision that concerns me. To Longo (1998), technical writing must be viewed "as a discourse within larger systems of cultural relations which do not necessary appear directly wherever the practice takes place" (p. 53) and that "we assume many of them [interactions] to be the natural state of affair" (p. 62). When we wander into our local Starbucks, McDonald's, or Panera, when we shop at Target or Wal-Mart, when we run into 7-11 for something we forgot, when we need to speak briefly to our UPS driver, and when we dine in restaurant chains like

Applebee's or Outback, we take a quick dip in Lethe and often forget that natural dialogues have been usurped by the social and intimacy parameters dictated by corporate training manuals.

If we take a moment to consider the psychological effects of the repetitive dialogues of the superstore clerks who rings up our goods, or the McDonald's worker who hands us a Quarter Pounder and fries, or the Starbucks barista who serves up a grande cappuccino – none of them in unions –we need to ask ourselves questions: whose values guide the canned language that these people utter all day long? What are the overarching and mass ramifications of these technically scripted sentences? What are the long-term effects of these rehearsed sentences and monotonous dialogues on the individuals and society as a whole? Could a life of subservience at work lead to an increased propensity toward acceptance of domestic violence? Ethical responsibilities of technical communicators involve "the uses to which our information will likely be put, the range of possible readings of our documents, and the consequences of our communications at all levels of society beyond the immediate audience" (Dombrowski, 2000, p. 3). If this is the case, then what are the sociological consequences of training millions of Americans to dress the same, use the same scripted language, engage in the same work behaviors, be assessed by the same methods, and – perhaps over time– ultimately act and think the same?

Rugged American individuality is rooted in our founding documents. It is the quintessence of our heritage and captured most eloquently in Walt Whitman's lyric "I celebrate myself, and sing myself." I believe that nothing suppresses this individual spirit quite like the nationalization and homogenization of service workers. We fought the uniforms of hegemony and fascism in wars abroad – only to then create fast-food and retail uniforms which wield control over our cultural life at home.

1.4 Training Manuals and Employee Handbooks

A training manual is a written instrument, often reinforced by other modes of communication (such as flipcharts, classroom instruction, film, simulation labs, or online instruction) which guides an individual's work. Once an employee is issued a training manual and other written documents, he or she has begun a work socialization process from neophyte into a metamorphosis stage of familiarity and acceptance (Gallagher, 2007). No matter how much information is written down in manuals, however, most people likely rely on verbal instructions from co-workers and managers to understand their new jobs and the work culture they have entered (Gallagher, 2007). Individuals who are gainfully employed – whether informally in a two-person shop or very formally in a multinational corporation – have three instruments that monitor their work: an employment contract (including a verbal agreement), a code of conduct (usually embodied in an employee handbook), and a training manual. The latter two are frequently intertwined, and subject to evaluation. Mission statements of a corporation or institution are usually found in both manuals and handbooks; many today are online as well.

Training manuals and methods abound throughout the workforce: they exist for employees of any household name companies such as PepsiCo or Microsoft; state and federal government employees including municipal personnel, postal workers, police officers, Peace Corps volunteers, and the large number of workers in federal agencies in the District of Columbia and elsewhere; public school teachers, nurses and the military; and most of the salesforce (including telephone fundraising, a massive industry within its own right, encompassing political parties and action committees, nonprofit and religious organizations, schools, and other institutions). Blue collar workers – truckers, miners, repairmen, etc. – all read manuals. Yet these occupations are seldom the source of curiosity and perturbation in both the

academy and the public as the entry-level service workers in the cafes, restaurants, stores, and phone banks with whom we interact in daily, scripted ways. We go to see films like *Outsourced* (2006) about our frustrations of calling American companies and getting overseas voices, or *Supersize Me* (2004) about limiting one's diet to McDonald's food. Most of us interact with food or retail service workers on a daily basis; not miners or manufacturers.

A service worker employee handbook (as opposed to the training manual or materials) will typically open with an introduction and welcome statement; a declaration of a probation period (usually 90 days); and an EEO statement with information as to how to contact the EEOC. There will be information on federal W-2 forms, language defining employment as "at will" (anyone can be fired at any time, "with or without notice" and not even necessarily for just cause), and what constitutes an acceptable leave of absence beyond legitimate illness (usually voting, military leave, anything covered by FMLA, jury duty, and bereavement time). This type of technical writing is dry, legal, and fairly consistent throughout the country. And it can be illegible: the written Panera handbook is in font 8 (Panera Handbook, 2014). The small font of at least this franchise is the literal "fine print" whose gestalt speaks for itself: the employee has no real rights or say in his or her work; nor does the employer truly value the service worker or believe that the fine print will actually be read. It is a legal formality. A service worker ignores the issued fine print and primarily learns routinization and obedience on the job (Leidner, 1993). Such are the crucial ingredients of a McJob.

An employee handbook usually also contains the corporation's philosophy or mission statement and ethical code: "An organization's code of ethics is a written expression of its ethical norms and values" (Valentine & Barnett, 2004, p. 359). A service handbook will then produce policy statements on a staggering array of prescribed (and proscribed) behaviors including: work

uniform dress codes; professional appearance and personal hygiene (visible tattoos and piercings are typically not allowed in supercorporations except at very liberal places like Whole Foods or Trader Joe's; they have become the subject of fierce workplace debates and litigation, and scholars have questioned whether the bans and biases raise issues of racism or discrimination against protected classes; see Elweig and Peeples, 2011). Service handbooks will often carefully dictate issues of hair styles and colors, jewelry, perfume, cologne, and nail polish. They may then proceed to topics such as punctuality; non-usage of cell phones in front of customers (just brining a cell phone to a service workplace can mean getting fired, which can prevent some caretakers of children or the elderly from pursuing such jobs); personal relationships at work; smoking, alcohol, drug, and firearm bans; meal discount policies (usually half price while on duty); bans on loitering on premises after hours; the right of the company to randomly search personal bags at any time (the Fourth Amendment's prohibition against unreasonable search and seizure applies to one's domestic locale, but is relinquished at work); and, more recently, do's and don'ts about posting information or personal views about the company on social media, blogs or personal websites. As Leidner wrote in 1993: "Employers who routinize interactive service work seek to legitimate intervention into areas of workers' lives usually considered to be the prerogative of individual decision-making or to compromise aspects of individual character and personality" (p. 8). A list of prohibited conduct (e.g. chewing gum, swearing at a customer, or arguing with a customer or co-worker in front of customers) normally *starts with insubordination toward management* and will ends with legal language that says, in one form or another, "this list is not meant to be exhaustive; other conduct or situations may arise which, at a manager's discretion, may result in a reprimand including dismissal" (Panera Handbook, 2014).

Training manuals, employee handbooks, and instructional methods for the service sector are technical media drafted by a select few (in the service sector, primarily lawyers, MBAs, and corporate trainers) but affect hundreds of millions of individuals: they have flooded a tsunami on the American psyche. McDonaldization surrounds us. A fair amount of research – by web designers and instructional designers, business professionals and neuroscientists, consumer scientists and lawyers, industrial psychologists and technical writers – has entered into the creation and calculation of many important training manuals (for example, flight simulations for pilots). This has not always been the case in the service sector, however, due to a combination of the low status of the employee and the lack of management interest in the welfare of the worker. The sheer ubiquity of franchises and their dialogues demands analysis: "technical communication, more so than other fields, serves as the practical meeting ground of language use and empiricism" (Dombrowski, 2002, p.16).

1.5 Instructional Design, Training Techniques, and Service Workers

Hospitality and tourism training is nothing new. The famous Cornell University School of Hotel Administration was founded in 1922 and spawned an array of such programs that exist today; UCF's Rosen College of Hospitality Management was created in 1983 and is a principle gene pool for Orlando's thriving theme park, hospitality, and tourism industries. But these degree programs are for rookie and veteran managers seeking long-term careers inevitably managing service workers – they are not for service workers themselves. Perhaps nothing symbolizes the gravity and grandeur of fast-food management training more than McDonald's own Hamburger University in Oak Park, Illinois (Meister, 2011). "HU" trains franchise owners, senior and mid-level managers who then go on to indoctrinate hundreds of thousands of McDonald's workers on how to dress, speak, and behave at work. It sets standards for McDonald's franchises worldwide.

Other restaurant giants, like Darden, have similar training facilities; Starbucks has classes for district managers in Seattle. Careers in hospitality and food management can be lucrative.

For entry-level workers, however, most of whom experience monotonous tasks, low status and low wages, life can be a salad of "resentment, job dissatisfaction, alienation, absenteeism, and turnover" (Ritzer, 2008, p. 153). Service employee turnover rates reached a peak of 300% as recently as 2004 (Jakobson, 2004). In other words, the same job title and shift would require the training of three or more separate individuals in a given year. People Report, a Dallas-based consulting firm which tracks data for the restaurant industry, still found that turnover rates were well over 100% the next year in 2005 (Berta, 2006). 2004 is a pivotal year in hospitality studies; Jakobson's and others' similar findings created a "let's get serious" mood in top tier management who, at various conventions, decided to begin turning to academe for ideas about training and retention. Wildes and Parks (2005) point out that 2004 is the year that Restaurant Industry Forecast *and* the National Restaurant Association simultaneously issued statements that training, turnover rates, and employee retention must be adopted as the industry's single most pressing issue (p. 2). In turning to human resources professors, instructional designers, and industrial psychologists for answers, an obvious but important premise was discovered: "if management wants its employees to do a great job in the way that they interact with customers, then it must be prepared to do a great job` in the way that they interact with employees" (Wildes & Parks, p. 4). The fault, dear managers, lies not in your employees, but in yourselves. After this turning point year, key language terms that became stressed during training became "teamwork," "professionalism," and "customer service" (Gallagher, 2007, abstract).

Over twenty years ago, hospitality expert Haywood (1992) declared that "training has become a circus" (p. 43). His finite study (limited to observing workers and management at two

Canadian resorts) linked good service performance with better recruitment techniques, management modeling, leadership skills, and clearer performance expectations for workers. He found that for training to be successful, it needs to be "planned, systematic, comprehensive, and measureable" (p. 46), which is germane to Dick, Carey, and Carey's ideas of training being systematic (2007) and Hirumi's insistence that training be grounded in established theory (2013). Haywood called for T & D to establish clear training specifications and establish evaluation and reward systems that would motivate employees (p. 52). In the same year, another industry paper published called for stricter standards in restaurant hiring, asserted that basic literacy skills, computer literacy, and an understanding of basic mathematics are required for high-quality customer service and employee interaction (Reid & Sandler, 1992). My observations were that this varies greatly by corporation: it takes very little to work at McDonald's; one needs certain social skills to accept the emotional training of Starbucks.

Further important insights about foodservice and hospitality training derive from a 2000 study by Harris and Bonn conducted at Florida State University. The researchers noted that foodservice organizations were acutely aware of the need for training, and several had taken steps to improve the effectiveness of their training programs. Profit, it was recognized, is directly correlated to improving SKAs (Harris & Bonn, 2000). It is the "continued use of antiquated training methods and tools, combined with overall mismanagement of the training function that contributes to turnover, dissatisfied employees and customers, and ultimately the loss of millions of training dollars" (p. 322).

Harris and Bonn posed four questions that are valid today:

1. What current methods of training are used in the foodservice industry?
2. What current training tools are used and what are their levels of efficacy?

3. What areas of training are adequate, what areas are inadequate?
4. Do options of training vary by region or management?

Among their findings of training *materials*, 99% of companies used textbooks and SWTMs; 89% supplemented them with flip charts; 20% used online training courses or other computer methods; and lesser used methods included audio-video tapes and teleconferencing. Training *techniques* included lectures (similar to those found in high schools and technical schools), simulations, and on-the-job training. Skill areas that companies focus on included service skills, customer relations, corporate theory and philosophy, production, sanitation, computer skills, and language skills – including literacy, enunciation and communication styles (p. 326). One of the study's most important conclusions was that the most traditional training tools of textbooks, manuals, transparencies, and flip charts are considered the *least* effective in the areas of employee competency and retention (p. 330). What's the key to good service and preventing turnover, and would unionization help or hinder the massive turnover issue?

As for my investigations into the four questions, in discussions with managers at all of the corporations I studied, there was no such thing as "regional" training: working at one is working at any. I also found that most low-level training consists of videos and no more than three days of OJT; most entry-level service work requires little literacy, though Publix has its own history book as required reading. Starbucks relies a great deal on flipcharts to explain its fancy drinks; Panera and many places have practice registers, but nearly all employees I spoke with said it was nothing like the real thing, especially during lunch rushes. Most employees I interviewed said they were given apps to study; "app" did not have widespread, public usage in 2000. Service training in 2014 is simply more tablet and Web-based than it was in 2000. Fourteen years in the Information Age is fourteen centuries in the Iron Age.

Andrew Hale Feinstein, formerly of the University of Nevada in Las Vegas, a city synonymous with tourism and service workers (he now teaches at California State Polytechnic but continues to do most of his research in Las Vegas) has written extensively on foodservice training and is a national authority on the topic. In 1998, with Mann, the scholars proposed the concept of a Foodservice Instructional Simulation Technique (FIST). The computer application "involves the immersion of students into a simulated foodservice operation model" (p. 19). They noted that by the late 1990s, though simulation was widely used in the sciences, the military, technology, engineering and manufacturing, it had not yet been widely used in foodservice operations. The article is one of the first to link the term ADDIE (analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation) with food service workers. Though the study focused on a cafeteria rather than a restaurant chain, it is a crucial and pioneering article. In 2005, with Raab and Stefanelli, the researchers provide a literature review of T & D practices as it evolved over the past half century for the service sector. The trio cite Gagne in describing instruction as "a personal undertaking to help people learn; events that directly affect human learning" and that it is commonly accepted that Glaser (1962) is the first to utilize the term "instructional system" (p. 32). They discuss a 1988 study by Sneed and Carruth that points out that Bloom's *Taxonomy of Education Objectives* (1956) (since revised by academics; see Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001) have been used "in the development of competency-based testing approaches in hospitality education" (p. 38). Acronyms common to the service training industry include OJT (on the job training); manual-based training (MBT); instructor-based training (IBT); programmed self-instruction (PSI); learning style inventory (LSI), and high involvement peer-based education (HIPE), a technique that places new employees in teaching roles ("we learn better when we teach" is a universal maxim in both education and training). The researchers conclude that the

common element of the research findings to date was that experiential learning was by far the most effective (p. 43). Thus the efficacy of virtual training for low-level workers, where neither management nor the worker is deeply invested in the venture, is questionable.

More recently, in 2011, Singh and Kim (both at UNLV), in conjunction with Feinstein, scrutinized high employee turnover rates in the restaurant industry. Citing Dedhia (1995), they concur that "political, social, economic, cultural, and business environments are changing rapidly, and business challenges arise from these changes" (p. 123). Citing Hauenstein (1998), they agree that three neurological domains – cognitive, affective, and psychomotor – are essential for training and that behaviors stem from learning in all three domains (p. 125). They believe that virtual reality (VR) is the wave of new employee training, as well as computer-assisted instruction (CAI) (p. 126). The reason? Younger workers – the ones who fill most fast-food service jobs – are "digital natives" while individuals over 35 or 40 are "digital immigrants," still adapting to technology (p. 129).

Among Singh, Kim and Feinstein's findings were that Burger King has created a "Virtual Whopper Board" for teaching thousands of new employees simultaneously, in six languages around the world, and that Dunkin' Donuts has moved its initial training online "after finding that existing instructor-led methods could not keep up with the size and speed of its training needs" (p. 132). This strikes me as yet another step in the alienation of food consumption in America: Ray Kroc made it quick; Burger King has now made it imaginary. It should be pointed out that this is a classic one-way vehicle for training; there is no interaction with the trainers or other peers. Lacking "chances to interact with the instructor or with others limit students' ability to explore alternative learning methods, or to construct meaning within a social context based on individual's prior knowledge or interests (Bermúdez & Hirumi, 2000, citing Garrison (1993) p.

281). This one-way mode of training, "one size fits all" reflects the sameness of product these restaurants produce, the sameness of service they hope to achieve, and the little value they place on the worker. Hirumi (2013) calls for elearning to establish alignment between grounded learning theories, instructional strategies, and planned interactions (p. 3). It is quite dubious, however, that such mechanisms as a Virtual Whopper Board create a "learning environment" and a "learning community" or is anything but a Skinneresque operant conditioning maneuver on a mass scale that furthers the ideals of Ford, Hoover, and Kroc in viewing workers as "human units" – which can hardly be called "education." The theory is only grounded in terms of how to maximize efficiency and profit; the strategy is to spend as little time on individual instruction as possible; and the planned interactions are non-existent. The training and technical writing behind the Whopper and the Big Mac sounds a bit like Big Brother.

In the critical restaurant year of 2004, Mary Jo Dolasinski penned one of the playful but classic modern texts on service-worker training, *Training the Trainer: Performance-Based Training for Today's Workforce*, aimed at trainers and managers. It de-emphasizes texts and lectures and strongly endorses roleplay as the most effective form of service worker training. Dolasinski, a former national trainer for Marriott, has extensive experience in food service, hospitality and tourism. She views training – as all corporations now do – as an aspect of ROI. "Training is a strategic investment in a company, its people, and its future" (p. 2). She calls on managers to first always conducting a "needs analysis report" (identical to Dick, Carey, and Carey) to compare the existing training techniques with the idealized ones and company goals (p. 16). Consonant with the ideas of Hoover and Ford, Dolasinski also stresses using technology to enhance efficiency. Among the advantages technology affords today, it allows corporations to "train more people in less time; track employee performance in training; save money on training

expenses; reuse existing training materials; and deliver content in innovative and interactive ways" (p. 3). Most importantly, Dolasinski fully adopts theater as the guiding metaphor for corporate training of service workers. A service worker is "an actor;" a trainer is an "acting coach" or "director;" a training manual is "a script." The "playwright" is the technical communicator or storyboard creator and the customer is "the audience." (p. 6-7). Employee evaluations are to be regarded as "reviews" (as of a performance) that assess elements such as SKAs, and includes smile measurement sheets (p. 180). Managers are to look for and create "aces in places" (p. 91); in other words, match the best people to the best jobs and work stations. The "theater metaphor" has been very much adopted by Starbucks, and is often employed in fine dining or theme places like Dave & Buster's or Margaritaville. It is likely a class issue; I have never seen much "theatrics" in more mundane places like Wal-Mart, KFC, Dunkin' Donuts, or 7-11. In giving advice to "scriptwriters" Dolasinski calls on "producers" to use Bloom's 1956 Taxonomy of Educational Objectives in order to train and test workers, seen below in Table 1:

Table 1: Bloom's original taxonomy of educational objectives

Measureable Language	
When Measuring....	Use statements beginning with:
Knowledge	define, describe, identify, name, outline, recognize, reproduce, state
Comprehension	convert, defend, estimate, explain, interpret, paraphrase, predict, summarize
Application	apply, compute, construct, demonstrate, modify, prepare, produce, solve
Analysis	analyze, break down, compare, contrast identify, illustrate, separate
Synthesis	categorize, combine, devise, design, differentiate, identify, illustrate, separate
Evaluation (Judgment)	appraise, compare, conclude, contrast, create, evaluate, explain, interpret

Source: Dolasinski (2004), p. 70 (Citing Bloom, 1956)

It should be noted, as seen in Table 2 below, that scholars have given Bloom a “facelift” in recent years:

Table 2: Definitions of the Categories of Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy

<p>Remembering: <i>Recognizing</i> involves retrieving relevant information from long-term memory in order to compare it with presented information. <i>Recalling</i> or retrieving involves retrieving relevant information from long-term memory when a prompt is given. The prompt often is a question.</p>
<p>Understanding: <i>Interpreting</i> occurs when a student is able to convert information from one representation to another representation. Also translating or paraphrasing. <i>Exemplifying</i> occurs when a student gives a specific example or instance of a general concept or principle. <i>Classifying</i> occurs when a student recognizes that something belongs to a certain category. <i>Summarizing</i> occurs when a student suggest a single statement that represents presented information or abstracts a general theme. <i>Inferring</i> involves finding a pattern within a series of examples or instances. The student abstracts a concept or a principle that accounts for a set of instances. <i>Comparing</i> involves detecting similarities and differences between two or more objects, events, ideas or situations. Also contrasting, matching. <i>Explaining</i> occurs when a student is able to construct and use a cause-effect model of a system.</p>
<p>Application: <i>Executing</i> occurs when a student routinely carries out a procedure when confronted with a familiar task. <i>Implementing</i> occurs when a student selects and uses a procedure to perform an unfamiliar task. It is carried out in conjunction with understanding.</p>
<p>Analysis: <i>Differentiating</i> occurs when there is a determination of the relevant or important pieces of a message in relation to the whole structure. <i>Organizing</i> occurs relative to the way the pieces of a message are organized into a coherent structure. <i>Attributing</i> occurs when the underlying purpose or point of view of the message is related to the entire communication.</p>
<p>Evaluation: <i>Checking</i> involves testing for internal consistencies or fallacies in an operation, product, or communication to see whether data support or disconfirm hypothesis or conclusions as well as the accuracy of facts. <i>Critiquing</i> involves judging a product, operation or communication against externally imposed criteria and standard.</p>
<p>Creation: <i>Generating</i> occurs when a problem is represented and alternatives and hypothesis that meet certain criteria are produced. <i>Planning</i> occurs when a solution method is devised that meets a problem’s criteria for developing a plan for solving the problem. <i>Producing</i> occurs when a plan is carried out for solving a given problem that meets certain specifications.</p>

Source: Based on an APA adaptation of Anderson, L.W. & Krathwohl, D.R. (eds.) (2001). Found in Dagostino, L., et al, 2014.

Now, In Table 3 below, Gagné and Driscoll (1988) in *Essentials of Learning for Instruction*, list five major categories of learning that students and trainees from all walks of life take on:

Table 3: Gagné and Driscoll’s learning objectives

Intellectual Skills – using symbols such as numbers or language to interact with the environment, including concepts, rules, and problem solving
Verbal Information – declarative knowledge, such as names, facts, or generalized concepts
Cognitive Strategies – processes that guide a learner’s activities such as learning, remembering, and organizing information
Motor Skills – precise and accurate kinesthetic movements and use of muscles, such as using a cash register properly, driving a vehicle, or lifting a package
Attitudes – the internal states of being that influence a person’s choices, actions, and overall demeanor

Source: *The Essentials of Learning for Instruction, 1988, pp. 44-55.*

In my interviews with and observations of fast-food service workers, superstore employees, and other clerks (see Chapters 3 and 4) docile entry-level workers invariably only had *knowledge* of their products and franchise policies. In looking at the cognitive levels of some of our most important theorists, most service-workers primarily possess verbal information (possibly more than anything else), apply low-level intellectual skills, and use motor skills largely by rote. They *remember* what to do, but often lack a deeper *understanding* of their work, as tasks are simplified and an entry-level service worker is not expected to understand the “bigger picture” of the supercorporation he or she represents – unless we are talking about those companies that promote themselves or are perceived by the public as liberal or ecologically-minded. An attitudinal discussion about globalization, resources overseas, unionization and the like is often only possible with an animated Starbucks barista or Whole Foods Team Member. The differences can be stark.

In some ways, the dissimilarity between the recruits of a Whole Foods store and the recruits of a McDonald’s turns on the degree that each supercorporation addresses the \$64,000

question: *when does education end, and when does training or indoctrination begin?* We associate "education" with the great thinkers: the ideals and principles of Aristotle, Erasmus, Bacon, Jefferson, Dewey, Gagne and others. Despite our differences in theories, we see in education a collective effort to create a "whole" human being leading a full and productive life, living to one's potential, cultured and grounded in the humanities, arts and sciences, and making contributions to a democratic society. Part of a true education then would stimulate "creativity and innovative thinking" (Hirumi, 2013, citing Florida (2002), p. 3) – the exact opposite of life inside a McJob. Whole Foods, in particular, *uses* education (its online magazine, *Dark Rye*, issue 19, references Tolstoy, Nietzsche, and James; some fairly heavy lifting, even for the strongest stock shelfer) to accomplish the same cognitive goals as McDonald's or Wal-Mart.

“McJobs” require only lower-order thinking skills, usually memorization, which contributes greatly to their high turnover; and has, to some, created a generation of "human robots" (Ritzer, 2008). A McJob lacks metacognition; thus there is often little chance or reason to devote oneself to becoming a mindful worker (Miles, 1994). Elder and Paul (2010), experts in educational psychology, identify some of the crucial elements of analytical and critical thinking skills:

- The ability to raise vital questions and problems;
- The capacity to gather and assess relevant information (using abstract ideas to interpret effectively);
- The ability to think open-mindedly and within alternative systems of thought; and
- Communicating effectively with others in figuring solutions to complex problems (p. 38).

None of these higher-level cognitive skills are involved in a McJob, leading to turnover and dissatisfaction. To Elder and Paul, education helps individuals "become effective citizens" and

note that "education persons function differently from uneducated persons" (p. 39). They are being generous; a famous quote of Aristotle's is that "the difference between the educated and the uneducated is the same as the difference between the living and the dead."

A supercorporation would not likely want "too" educated of an individual, if that would lead to higher wages and unionization. As we shall see in Chapter 3, the success of Starbucks and Whole Foods is that they use much philosophy, propaganda, idealism, and indoctrination to appeal to certain types of individuals – and get them to perform more or less the same tasks as they would at a McDonald's or Wal-Mart.

1.6 Labor and Technical Writing

In order to understand our present-day condition – where millions of American service workers (and many more worldwide) are trained on a dwindling number of training manuals and videos – we need to briefly glance at the history of labor, and then see how it grew to become so intertwined with technical writing and technology. The history of labor in the U.S. is inextricably linked to the Industrial Revolution, changes in literacy rates, and social concerns about exploitation, particularly of children. The overarching difference between the American worker of yesterday and the worker of today is that before, the assembly line worker, garment district worker, coal miner, steel worker, fisherman, or logger interacted with *products*. Typically a worker's human interactions were limited to nearby co-workers and supervisors. Most of those jobs have been shipped overseas, "outsourced" in a global bidding war often to find the cheapest labor among impoverished Asians and Indians (Gochfield 2005; Klein, 2003). The service worker of today interacts with *the public* – and must learn to adopt a corporate persona. "Successful service work on a mass scale depends on people skills" (Moreton, 2009, p. 75). When do actual "people skills" end, and alienated "human units" begin?

For thousands of years, labor was nearly always entirely a verbal construct. Hunters and gatherers divided tasks orally. A king, czar, nobleman, or wealthy landowner could issue verbal orders to illiterate serfs, indentured servants or slaves. A farmer, woodsman, sailor, fisherman, or smith of any stripe could simply tell his subordinates or apprentices what to do. (Ries, 2012). Since the printing press did not appear in Europe until Gutenberg's famous invention around 1450 (woodblock printing had been employed by the Chinese and Egyptians for many centuries before), illiteracy was widespread on the continent both before and after this date of demarcation. Printing did not reach England until about 15 years later, and thus we do not even have printed books in English until the late 15th century – let alone technical documentation about the nature of work. Public, widespread literacy in Europe did not occur overnight, and one of the principle objectives of the endeavor was to enable people to read the Bible.

Late medieval Europe witnessed the rise of artisans, craftsmen, and guilds – and it is here in the guilds that we first see a genuine relationship arise between labor and written technical training. These guilds all had systems of apprenticeships, and, as with many important human institutions and constructs (such as laws or religious texts) oral traditions slowly evolved into written texts. By the 19th and early 20th centuries, we learn that “it is now generally admitted that technical education and training must be put absolutely under the control of the guilds; in these technical schools young guildsmen will begin their contact with industrial reality” (Hobson, 1919, p. 46). In the United States, labor and technical communication must be viewed as a child that sprang from a marriage between the Industrial Revolution and rises in literacy rates. In general, drops in literacy rates are associated with political and social disorder; rises in literacy rates are linked to political stability and demographic and economic growth (Gallman, 1988).

About a century after Columbus and his crew first stepped foot on land in the Caribbean, we find the first seeds of formal documentation about labor. The concept of a minimum wage – something we hear discussed on the nightly cable news stations – was also debated in Maryland town halls as early as the 1620s (Wright, 2003). According to Wright, "labor" in America begins about 1600, with the importation of indentured servants, slaves, and the establishment of guilds similar to those in Europe, such as the Freemasons. America was largely an agrarian society when the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, and much of the South relied on illiterate slaves for labor. The few professions who were organized in any sense were guilds who formed "so they could restrict competition among tradesmen and enforce work standards" (Chaison, 2006, p. 1). If someone owned a general store or pub, it is not as if his or her single or handful of employees were issued training manuals and company policy procedures. Yet shoemakers (1782), cabinet makers (1796), printers (1799) and similar professions began organizing early in the nation's history (Chaison, 2006). By the late 19th century, such skilled craftsmen grew to look with deep disdain at the gathering cloud of unskilled workers; to them they were little more than "foreigners, women, barbarians, or scabs" who were being brought into the workplace to "cut wages, break strikes, or steal jobs" (Cowan, 1997, p. 191). Because America is a nation with competing values – capitalism and equality; communal religion and individual liberty – unions can evoke deep-seated emotions in many. For some the word can mean "brotherhood," "unity," and a stance against exploitation. For others it can mean corruption, an excuse for laziness, a loss of jobs shipped overseas, or simply something downright sinister, Marxist or "un-American."

Work in the sense of organized labor "did not become a reality in the United States until a ruling by the Massachusetts Supreme Court in 1842 [that] essentially made it legal to form

unions” (Wright, p. 17). A union may be defined as "a continuous association of wage earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the conditions of their working lives" (Reynolds, Masters & Moser, 1991, p. 325). The rise and fall of unions in America is fairly well known and its highlights need only a basic refresher here: the Knights of Labor was established in Philadelphia in 1869; an 1886 rally in Chicago for the eight-hour work day known as the Haymarket Riot led to violence and the deaths of several police officers. That same year, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) was established, and our most famous American labor figure, cigar maker and smoker Samuel Gompers, was appointed its leader and stayed at its helm until 1924. There was generally a favorable government attitude toward unions prior to WW. II, and FDR's "New Deal" essentially created federalized unions such as the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). Even today, the largest unions tend to be federal employees, for they face no competition (Greenhouse, 2012, Jan 29). Fewer than 8% of private workers are in unions, compared to nearly 37% of government workers (Chaison, 2006).

Though unions were often derided as communist, unconstitutional, and its members dubbed "reds," in 1935, the Supreme Court upheld the National Labor Relations Act, also known as the Wagner Act, which established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Terms such as "collective bargaining," "lockout," "strike," "unfair labor practice," and "scab" become part of the American lexicon. Also in the 1930's, a number of organizations dissatisfied with the AFL broke off and formed the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO); the two groups rejoined in 1955 as the AFL-CIO. The heyday of union popularity occurred around World War II; the total percent of the workforce that was unionized reached its peak in the early 1940s, with about 36% of workers in unions (Wright, 2003). Union lobbying and political financial contributions could make significant impacts on local and national elections for several decades. However, issues

such as corruption, infiltration by organized crime, and the inevitable outsourcing of work overseas led to a slow decline in both membership and national popularity. The American decline and distaste for unions *does* have a red-letter date: August 5, 1981. (Wright, 2003). For this is the day when Ronald Reagan fired air traffic controllers – fatigued, few in numbers, overworked and underpaid – in exercising his executive powers. Later, NAFTA led to further decline in union popularity. Today, only about 11% of the American workforce is unionized. (BLS.gov; Frumkin, 2013). They are no longer, to Chaison, a "hallmark of our economy" (p. 49).

Famous 20th century unions have included the "Wobblies" (International Workers of the World); the Teamsters; the International Ladies Garment Workers Union; the American Federation of Teachers; the United States Postal Workers Union; the United Mine Workers; the United Steel Workers; the United Auto Workers; the Screen Actors Guild; the Screenwriter's Guild; and unions for dozens of professions including railroad workers, bricklayers, pipefitters, sheet metal workers, plasterers, cement mixers, truckers, nurses, safety officers, firefighters, pilots, and others. All major sports leagues are unionized as are their umpires or referees. Yet the people we are most likely to come into contact on a daily basis – food service and superstore employees – are nonunionized.

Table 4, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, demonstrates how low union membership was for restaurant and food service workers between 2003 and 2008 compared to many other sectors of the economy:

Table 4: Union membership, 2003-2008

Changes in union membership for the 10 industries with the greatest increase in employment, 2003-2008:		
Industry/trade	Added Jobs	Percent of jobs unionized
school teachers	940,849	39%
restaurant and food service	709,133	6%
healthcare services	662,301	9%
hospitals	579,454	27%
computers	367,029	1%
family services	348,888	--
police, public safety	347,914	44%
architects and engineers	326,352	2%
mining support	253,997	2%
university staff	238,246	41%
TOTAL	4,774,163	19%

Source: Union membership and coverage database, BLS.gov (2014) [data file].

The table demonstrates that while unionization is growing in a number of hemispheres, few food service workers unionize. They are perhaps the most visible people in society – and have the lowest status. The Teamsters, the AFL-CIO, and the SEIU have all made repeated efforts to unionize Wal-Mart, McDonald's, and other supercorporations. The reality is that "no matter how much the unions spend, they will be outspent by companies" (Chaison, 2006, p. 149).

Supercorporations exercise great control over individuals, over the landscapes and architecture of our neighborhoods, and over American culture. They have much to do with our collective destiny. And they despise unions.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction to Literature Review

Concern about the welfare of workers predates Marx. Concepts of "occupational medicine" or "occupational diseases" (such as black lung disease for coal miners) have ancient roots. Gochfield (2005) points out that discussions of work and health were written on papyrus as early as 1700 BC; that Pliny suggested veils to cover the face in working with bronze in the first century; that a correlation between mining and health was observed between the 9th to the 15th century by various thinkers such as Paracelsus. As discussed earlier, Agricola noted health hazards associated with 16th century mining practices. By the 19th century public health movements in London and several American cities focused on the dilapidated, inhumane conditions of factories and mines, and the lives of the working class who faced high stress, poor nutrition, poverty, low wages, and ill health. Many of these issues have been tackled in America, though the battle is far from complete: a recent Sunday *New York Times* editorial, inspired by the Human Rights Watch, was entitled "Children Don't Belong in Tobacco Fields" (2014, May 18); migrant worker exploitation remains a serious social issue years after Caesar Chavez. To Gochfield, "we are now in a second industrial revolution led by multinational corporations and information technology, shifting production facilities, and jobs moving around the world in search of cheap labor with the fastest growing populations and the greatest poverty" (2005, abstract). The most unskilled manufacturing jobs are often outsourced overseas, typically to Asia, where docile if not silenced workers (frequently young and female; see Klein, 2003) create consumer goods for the West; the ones who can speak English well enough field many of our toll-free calls.

Marx and Engel's famous 1848 opening line of *The Communist Manifesto*, "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (p. 7) lives on as an Occam's razor of sorts, dispensing with philosophical, theological, and epistemological speculations in order to zero in on the fractured lives of working individuals. The *Manifesto* cuts across academic borders, and remains of interest to philosophers, historians, economists, labor analysts, industrial psychologists, and sociologists alike. Concern about the impact of technical writing on the welfare of the working class has not escaped the technical writing community: "The histories of technical and business communication explore three other changes that had great impact: corporations, standardized communications, and the professional engineer. Combined, these three contributed to a workplace that achieved efficiency at the expense of the human, a condition that continues today" (Todd, 2003, p. 75). Longo (1998) stipulates that "technical writing researchers can address relationships between our power/knowledge system and multiculturalism, postmodernism, gender, conflict, and ethics within professional communication" (p. 53). Dombrowski (2000) posits that "the objectivity, impersonalness, and emotional distance we often find in technical and scientific investigations can at times be carried to extremes" (p. 115). The supercorporations have, in my view, carried the militarization of the service workforce to an objective, impersonal extreme.

2.1 Novels and Popular Literature

Marx's economic-determinist viewpoint greatly influenced the 19th and 20th century. Around the turn of the century, Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, (1904) and the disturbing photos of Jacob Riis in *How the Other Class Lives* (1890) spawned conversations, social movements, and academic departments on the sociology of work and poverty. Deep concerns about exploitation of the

working class and the totality of its moral effects on society can also be traced to the novel of social protest: Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854) and other important works; Hugo's *Les Misérables* (1862); Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852); Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906) and Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) – to name a few indispensable texts.

To witness the militarized donning of Home Depot orange, Target red, Wal-Mart blue, or Starbucks green – and the development of the emotionally trained service personality that accompanies such work – is to enter, to some degree, worlds not described by social protest novelists, but foreseen by arguably the most important trio of British science fiction dystopias. In *The Time Machine* (1895), H.G. Wells prophesized an ignorant leisure class of Eloi ranches by the dominant Morlocks. In *Brave New World* (1932), Huxley prophesized swarms of identical Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons performing menial work for the Alphas; the triumph of capitalism over the homogenized worker is so central to the text that time begins with the birth of Henry Ford (“the Year of Our Ford” replaces “AD”). And in *1984* (1948), Orwell’s *proles* live controlled, miserable lives of strict surveillance, rations, paranoia, and dwindling language choices. (Ries, 2012). Are these harrowing fictions realities enshrined in the corporate training and hiring practices of today?

Today's era of automation, quick-fixes, homogeneity, and hyper-consumerism is critiqued in academic works such as Frederic Jameson’s famous *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991) and Jean Baudrillard’s *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981), as well as in more popular books like Eric Schlosser’s *Fast Food Nation* (2002), George Ritzer’s *The McDonaldization of Society* (2008) and Morgan Spurlock's documentary *Supersize Me* (2004). To Jameson, we have taken "an unparalleled quantum leap in the alienation of daily life" (p. 33). The famous Duke literary critic and political theorist holds little back on postmodern life,

lambasting it as "flat," "debased," "contaminated," and "depthless" (p. 9). In defining "late capitalism," Jameson discusses the rise of international, global giants and their new divisions of labor. Eagleton, also writing on postmodernism (*The Illusions of Postmodernism*, 1996) argues that "the liberal state will engender precisely the kind of inequality and exploitation which will subvert the pursuit of the good life it was meant to promote" (p. 81).

Perhaps the most important thinker to a critique of this nature is French social critic and philosopher Michel Foucault, whose consistent themes in works such as *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (translated into English in 1977) and *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings* (translated into English in 1980) include power, oppression, and surveillance in contemporary society. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault explores disciplinary techniques to control bodies, and writes of docile citizens coping with emerging surveillance technologies. Modern power, to Foucault, rests "less on direct control of the body and more on techniques designed to elicit self-regulation as people began to act as if they were being observed" (McKinlay and Starkey, p. 68). Foucault was drawn to Jeremy Bentham's concept of an ideal prison called the "Panopticon," one that needed no shackles but only the gaze of guards and peers to keep prisoner behavior in check. Foucault, with prescience, understood that surveillance would be involved with power, authority, and processes of normalization and socialization (Walby, 2005).

Taking an entry-level service job at a national corporation means being on videotape during the entire tenure of one's employment; it is a corporate Panopticon. Supercorporations put workers in uniforms (sociologists Erickson and Pierce (2012) regard the uniforms as "militarizing"); have them take turns engaging in low status tasks such as cleaning public bathrooms; and keep them on constant surveillance. Uniforms can certainly have positive

benefits, such as identifying a worker from a consumer; in schools, many studies suggest that uniforms reduce attendance problems, preoccupations with fashion and gang references, and increase positive behaviors (University of Houston, April 5, 2010). My contention is that the uniform policies perhaps not be “head to toe,” or, as Whole Foods does, allow for expressions of greater individuality.

Corporations, one may argue, not only succeed in oppressing entry-level workers through uniforms, but have a built-in technology to prevent or discourage them from chatting up unionization on the clock. This strict level of surveillance that service workers experience, many professionals in America (executives, lawyers, doctors, psychiatrists, architects) do not endure. While videotape certainly has certain obvious benefits – deterrence of cash register embezzlement, the ability to potential analyze customer accidents, a source of evidence in the event of a store robbery – it may also create an Orwellian chilling effect on the service workers. As early as 1990, writing in the *Harvard Business Review*, and echoing Foucault, Gary Marx pointed out that:

The knowledge that one's every move is being watched, without an ability to watch the watcher, can create feelings that one's privacy is being invaded, and that one is an object under close scrutiny. Being subject to close scrutiny without an ability to confront the observer may mean the loss of a feeling of autonomy; the employee may feel powerless and exposed under the gaze of constant monitoring. (p. 29)

This "powerlessness" may be viewed as perhaps the ultimate management tool of oppression. Management will always insist that surveillance exists to protect against theft; employees know their every move can be monitored, so work does become a Panopticon. What is sometimes stolen is autonomy and dignity.

2.2 Rhetorical Analyses

Rhetoric is a word with a reputation; it is more likely than not to be found languishing in the phrase “it’s just rhetoric.” Yet its earliest exponents, the Sophists, viewed rhetoric as "central for civilized and democratic social life, and as the center of education" (Cachón, Barahona, & Ayala, 2008, p. 318). Although rhetoric became a cornerstone of Western education for many centuries – one of the Seven Liberal Arts, part of the *Trivium* that included grammar and logic – it is more likely to be trivialized than taught in any Trivium. Herrick (1997) bluntly states that for some, the term is often tantamount to “empty talk” if not “deception” (p. 2).

Plato's disdain for rhetoric is legendary. The Gorgias Dialogue denounces the Sophists, whose eloquent speaking sometimes brought its members wealth, fame or both. The tradition of suspicion toward orators, even gifted orators, has been passed down to modern times as we know from politics. Aristotle, however, very much accepted rhetoric as a legitimate art form and pursuit; his *Rhetoric* is divided into three books and its influence on Western civilization is incalculable. The first book defines rhetoric and establishes three types of oratory; the second is devoted to rhetorical proofs; and the third concerns itself with style, emotions, and arrangement (Herrick, 1997). Aristotle identifies three means of persuasion: *ethos*, the character of the writer or rhetor, his or her integrity and credibility; *logos*, the nature of the message or the quality of the data; and *pathos*, appeals to the emotions of the audience (Jones, 1998, p. 73). Classical Aristotelian principles of rhetoric may readily be applied to the technically drafted daily dialogues of modern supercorporations – no matter how seemingly brief or banal.

Some have trouble accepting that "there are rhetorics of technology just as there are rhetorics of English studies, that the relations of science and literature – the science in literature, the literature in science, and the relationships between literature and science – have long been

important research areas in English studies" (Jones, 1995, p. 567). Kennedy (1991), defines the discipline as "the energy inherent in emotion and thought, transmitted through a system of signs, including language, to influence others' decisions or actions" (p. 7).

Many modern scholars have "turned away from the singular rhetorical performances of highly skilled communicators and moved toward the collective meaning-making and communicative activities of cultures, disciplines, *formal organizations*, and other more or less well-defined groups" (Henze, 2004, p. 394, italics mine). Jarrett, penning the "Rhetoric" chapter of MLA's *Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literature* (2007, 3rd ed.) argues that commencing with the publication of *The Origin of Species*, rhetoric reveals "dramatic reconceptualizations of nature, economics, psychology, and language redirect[ing] the course of European intellectual history, disrupting well-established relations among knowledge, language, social order, and human understanding" (p. 80). Rhetoric is important for any social movement.

The teaching of rhetoric in the United States has a long and controversial history (Berlin, 1987). Rhetoric has seen a resurgence on college campuses as part of a persuasive writing curriculum, but in its purest oral tradition form, it lives on primarily in high school speech and debate electives, Toastmaster clubs, and trial advocacy courses taught in law schools. In America, rhetoric "emerged as part of a larger reaction to the scientific and professional concept of literacy encouraged at Harvard and at most large state universities" (Berlin, 1987, p. 44). Within these roots, there is a strong link between rhetoric studies and the plight of the working class. During the colonial period of American history, four full years of rhetoric was required of college students; the idealism of a participatory democracy demanded much of the educated individual (Adams, 1999). After the Civil War, the four year requirement lapsed, and by the height of the Industrial Revolution the four years became shorted to one:

It came to be widely accepted that in a larger, industrialized society fewer people would participate in the arenas of power, and not coincidentally, the rhetoric curriculum no longer offered them the means for such participation. The necessary precursor, then, to the Progressive Era and to writing's role in it was the constriction of rhetorical power to a few as colleges trained workers not to talk back. (Adams, 1999, p. 1)

Training workers "not to talk back" seems to be the core philosophy of service work today. Indeed, Berlin (1987) had remarked that "the rhetoric of liberal culture was aristocratic and openly distrustful of democracy" (p. 45). Yet there are certainly contemporary schools of thought that urge a greater and democratic awareness of rhetoric for the cyber age:

The contemporary public's relation to science and technology calls for new rhetorical strategies amounting to a new rhetorical literacy. He [Bazerman] urges that we can support the development of people as citizens and politicians participating through the current genres and becoming adept at the current forms of political life. (Dombrowski, 2011, citing Bazerman (2001), p. 257)

It is a noble, beautiful, and lofty goal. When I questioned adult McDonald's cashiers if they were in a union, however, and discovered that most did not know what a union was, nor knew of protest arrests in Oak Park, I felt that we as a society have fallen short of Bazerman's ideals.

The meaning-making of the social impact of corporate rhetoric – including how service workers are trained to interact with the public – is the cross-domain of sociologists, rhetoricians, and technical communicators alike; the manuals and training materials should be regarded as a *genre* that promotes subordination. Genre may be defined as "the dynamic product of communal discourse contexts and coordinated purposes" that has become "an important concept in the rhetoric of scientific and technical discourse" (Henze, 2004, p. 395). Though addressing young

scientific disciplines, Henze's questions concerning technical communications and rhetorical analysis are nonetheless germane to this inquiry: from what sources do the genres arise? How have they become influential? How do they change and in response to what forces? (p. 396).

Technical communicators debate what constitutes an ethical business community based on rhetoric. "In technical communication, community has typically been advanced as the source of civic virtue; an ethical reference point between, on the one hand, the potentially undemocratic, impersonal and bureaucratic state, and, on the other hand, the equally impersonal technical/economic rationality of industry and the market" (Ornatowski, C.M. and Bekins, L.K., 2004, p. 253). These words directly correlate to the analysis of supercorporations in this thesis.

There is robust academic precedent for the rhetorical analysis of corporate writings and workplace settings. As early as 1993 Brasseur wrote: "the social construction of the workplace promotes an examination of the ways in which traditional forms of oral discourse...and the use of texts in promoting organizational practices all contribute to defining particular workplace cultures" (p. 117). Myers (1996) analyzed annual reports of corporations for their stylistic, syntactic and rhetorical features and used computers to analyze sentence lengths and business diction. Jones (1998) provides comprehensive and meticulous detail about technical writing in arenas such as corporations, the media, and governmental settings, addressing linguistic devices like metaphor, ambiguity, jargon, buzzwords, and slang – all of which surface in the service sector. Artemeva (1998) examined periodic engineering reports from both English and Russian sources for their themes, paragraph and sentence lengths, and levels of audience awareness. Giltrow (1998) looked at business technical writing, including the politeness and grammar of managers; employee turnover linked to technical communications was addressed in that study. She parsed phrases such as "voluntary employee turnover" (p. 269) as an example of exculpatory

language, a euphemism that shifts poor working conditions and bad management techniques to employee actions. Brockmann (1999) scrutinized the early 20th century automotive and aviation manuals of Victor Page in order to better understand the rhetorical techniques used in technical writings today. Lord (2002) rhetorically analyzed annual corporate reports in the wake of the Enron collapse, maintaining that doing so was important to business, marketing, accounting, public relations, and technical communication classrooms. Similarly, Yeung (2007) sifted through corporate business reports and deduced that they must be regarded as a specific genre. Esposito (2007), was interested in not service workers but rather the lost memory of steel workers, and rhetorically critiqued the Youngstown Historical Center of Industry and Labor. Nicolae (2010), used a cognitive linguistics analysis to reveal the rhetorical nature of metaphor in annual reports. Arduser (2011) peered into the rhetoric of blogs, chat rooms, and social media writings of diabetics searching for answers on the Internet and found that "a vision pulls together the threads of stories to make a cohesive worldview for a community" (p. 17): it is a cohesive worldview that corporations must instill in their service workers in order for their brands to succeed. Weber (2013) recently explored the social media policies of 31 national corporations; technical documents that delve into issues of personal liberty, agency, and authority.

Analyzing corporate service worker training manuals (and employee dialogues) for their rhetorical and social value is part and parcel of that "rich tradition of technical writing" that Gresham (1975) describes. Most of the service sector in America is comprised of young people, and "texts in the youth workplace are ubiquitous; they are encountered and acted upon by young people as sites of control, power, negotiation, and resistance" (Tannock, 2001, p. 141).

Lastly, one contemporary theory of rhetoric is the concept of *Punctuated Equilibria*. Eldredge and Gould developed three steps in 1972, that, sequentially integrated, would make an argument compelling:

- (1) Priming the audience to reject the current interpretive frame by arguing that a specific "picture" constrains our understanding without being conscious of it;
- (2) Discrediting the competitor theory ("*phyletic gradualism*"); and
- (3) Convincing the audience that then theory ("*punctuated equilibria*") had greater explanatory power than the competitor theory ("*phyletic gradualism*") and that it could effectively explain phenomenon that had not yet been satisfactorily explained. (Cachón, Barahona, & Ayala, 2008, p. 319)

While the theory was applied to sciences such as paleontology and evolution, it most certainly has relevance to the consumerism that engulfs us. The so-called liberal supercorporations (Whole Foods, Starbucks, Trader Joe's) are indeed priming the consumer and making arguments – about sustainability, health, recycling, energy usage, and ultimately the moral superiority of their business practices and marketing philosophies. Target is certainly making a statement by not selling guns. And McDonald's made a rhetorical statement – that soda may be drunk in unlimited amounts while in the store – that became quickly adopted by most other fast-food restaurants and is a policy of many universities around the nation. Certainly, it is a policy position that the American Diabetes Association must be at great odds with. So rhetorical analysis must apply to corporate language as well as policies that service workers must espouse, regardless of their personal beliefs.

2.3 Interdisciplinary Interest

Most of the rhetorical analyses listed in the previous section derive from the technical writing journals; however, the criticism of the rhetoric of global corporations takes an academic village. Issues of service workers, technical writing, and consumerism surface in English, history, business, law, economics, industrial psychology, educational design, tourism and hospitality, and sociology classrooms. Erickson and Pierce (2005) are sociologists who looked at service workers from a feminist perspective, finding a triangulation between corporate loyalty, personal identity, and the non-ability of workers to engage in intimate conversations with customers. Bryant Simon is a University of Pennsylvania professor of history who has written extensively about Starbucks and is considered a national authority on the company; he systematically analyzed over 400 barista conversations with a stopwatch at Starbucks outlets across the United States. Also at the University Pennsylvania, Robin Leidner is a sociologist who wrote a book in 1993 on the effects of monotonous routines of service workers, concentrating on McDonald's; I interviewed her for this thesis. Kim Fellner (2008) is not an academic at all but rather an AFL-CIO union organizer who analyzed Starbucks' non-union stance and use of the term "fair trade." Joseph Michelli (2007) is an industrial psychologist who found links between Buddhism's "Five Ways of Being" and the Starbucks. Joanne Hong is an Australian linguist who analyzed the language of McDonald's policy statements for subtext. Mark Harris is a writer and frequent contributor to *The Utne Reader*; he has a special interest in service workers and has written on Whole Foods and Wal-Mart. Steve Greenhouse of *The New York Times* essentially has "the McDonald's beat" and has written repeatedly about fast-food service workers and unionization. Constance Ruzich is a professor of English who penned a linguistic analysis of Starbucks. George Teeple is a Canadian political scientist who argues that globalization

represents "the close of national history of capital and the beginning of the history of the expansion of capital *sans* nationality" (2000, p. 9). These academics and writers are but a small sampling of how interest in supercorporations and their low-paid workers cuts across the curriculum. Supercorporations are frequent topics of many academic disciplines and are punchlines of late-night comedians. They have tended to not surface as much in the technical writing literature. I felt the time had come for technical communicators to more closely examine our roles in this *Fast Food Nation*.

CHAPTER THREE: THE DOCILE SERVICE WORK

3. Introduction to the DSW and the ASW

In the next two chapters, I distinguish between what I call "the docile service worker" (DSW) and the "animated service worker" (ASW). The DSW normally "speaks when spoken to," or, in a rehearsed and routine way, repeats canned phrases the corporation or franchise has sanctioned. The DSWs are the anonymous clerks and cashiers we associate with places like Wal-Mart, K-Mart, 7-11, The Dollar Store, KFC, Arby's, and similar places of shopping and dining monotony. Note that at Wal-Mart and Target, it is rare for anyone on the floor to approach customers with a friendly "May I help you?" or "Have you found everything you're looking for?" Shoppers usually need to seek out a sales clerk; in these mammoth monuments to consumerism consumers are on their own. (The business practice is likely quite deliberate; the more time consumers spend wandering aimlessly around these clockless, windowless stores, akin to casinos, the more goods they probably think they need and will purchase; the MBAs have it down to a science.) Our interactions with DSWs are usually brief and our conversations minimal; their docility renders them symbolically invisible. In Martin Buber's *I and Thou* (1923), the philosopher argues that spirituality is achieved through meaningful human interactions and dialogues that mutually elevate the dignity and humanity of the speakers, the DSWs would not amount to a "thou." Clad in uniforms head to toe, quiet, tamed, taught submissiveness, dehumanized first by the supercorporations and then by we the consumers, our symbolic interaction with them, in Buber's terms, is I→ it.

The ASWs are the ones we associate with corporations perceived to be cool, upscale, politically correct, and eco-friendly – namely Starbucks, Trader Joe's, and Whole Foods. The training in such companies is not nearly as important as the recruiting: managers are usually

looking for gregarious, personaltied individuals who are educated and likely have a politically liberal bent. Often, the ASW has already bought into the corporate mythos prior to the moment of hiring. On some level, the Right prevents the DSW from unionizing; the Left prevents the ASW from doing do. Non-unionization is a bipartisan effort.

To understand the differences between the DSWs and the ASWs we need to return for a moment to modern instructional design theory. An effective framework for understanding the training outcome differences between DSWs and ASWs can be found in *The Systematic Design of Instruction* by Dick, Carey, and Carey (2009), whose theories and methodologies about instructional design and learning have been widely recognized as an industry standard throughout training, development, and distance-learning circles for nearly two decades; an earlier edition of the textbook was deemed one of the two most important textbooks in the year 2000 ITFORUM poll (Chang, 2006). *The Systematic Design of Instruction* (the 8th edition was recently released on Kindle) has remained popular and relevant because of its combination of pragmatism and eclecticism: it never fully adopts nor rejects a major theory of education, but rather deftly combines elements of behaviorism, cognition, and constructivism (Piaget's theory of epistemology that humans generate knowledge and meaning from their experiences as well as their own ideas) in essentially an "as needed" basis. Dick, Carey and Carey logically map what teachers instinctively know and do already: identify instructional goals; conduct instructional analyses and strategies; analyze learners and contexts; write performance objectives; develop assessment instruments; develop and select instructional materials; and revise steps as needed.

Dick, Carey, and Carey isolate four main categories of instructional goals, based on Gagné and Driscoll's research:

- 1) Verbal information, such as memorizing a list; usually there is only one answer in a verbal goal (e.g. the capital of Canada is Ottawa; the cost of soda is a dollar);
- 2) Intellectual skills, which involves forming concepts, applying rules, and solving problems;
- 3) Psychomotor skills. In restaurants and stores, they might be combined with intellectual skills to run a modern cash register; or involve operating restaurant equipment; or re-stocking items on a shelf properly; and
- 4) Attitudes. (Dick, Carey, and Carey, Chapter 3, 2009). (See also Table 2, above).

Entry-level service work for the supercorporation DSW, as far as I can tell, is primarily a combination of absorbing verbal information and exercising some simple psychomotor skills. Particularly at the cash register, where I spent the most time observing workers, a McDonald's cashier solves very few problems beyond suggesting that a sandwich order be turned into a "value meal" (I deliberately sometimes ordered strange sandwich requests at McDonald's, such as bacon on a fish sandwich, which normally elicited management help or supervision). Wal-Mart cashiers appear to only understand how to ring up the products properly; transactions are almost conversation-free. If anything unusual arises (for example, a coupon doesn't scan properly), a manager is usually called for, as a child turns to a parent. While basic pleasantries toward the public are expected of a DSW, by no means does the DSW usually embrace the work with the knowledge, enthusiasm, and attitudes of a devoted ASW. Employers of DSWs "routinize work both to assure a uniform outcome and to make the organization less dependent on the skills of individual workers" (Leidner, 1993, p. 24). The McJobs of today are the assembly-line jobs of Ford's era. They are entirely interchangeable.

"Attitudes" are by far the most difficult to teach and measure, in education and in training. Workers can be taught to handle a cash register or make a sale; how do managers instill in clerks the belief that what they are doing is good for society or personally rewarding or somehow intrinsically moral? Coaches can measure how efficiently someone is hitting a baseball by using a stopwatch. How does the coach know if the hitter really even likes baseball? Attitudes, in the end, are perhaps best gleaned from lengthy personal observations over time, and in-depth discussions.

Keller's approach to training must also be taken into account when assessing training outcomes. The attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (ARCS) training model was first introduced in 1984 (Keller, 2010). It can be simplified in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Keller's ARCS model

Major Categories and Definitions		Process Questions
Attention	Capturing the interest of learners; stimulating curiosity	How can I make this learning experience stimulating and interesting?
Relevance	Meeting the person needs/goals of the learner to effect a positive attitude	In what ways will this learning experience be valuable for the students?
Confidence	Helping the learners believe/feel that they will succeed and control their success	How can I, via instruction, help the students succeed and allow them to control their success?
Satisfaction	Reinforcing accomplishment with rewards (internal/external)	What can I do to help the students feel good about their experience and desire to continue learning?

Source: Keller, chapter 3 (2010)

Note that if we are applying the ARCS model to service workers, very little of it applies to DSWs, which explains the high turnover rates of places like McDonald's; fast-food work is seldom meaningful for the individual. On the other hand, supercorporations like Starbucks, Trader Joe's, and Whole Foods are constantly striving to make the work (however menial in actuality) relevant and meaningful, possibly even spiritual to the ASW. Thus supercorporation

service training often does not differ by *methodology*: they all tend to use videos, Web-based instruction, apps, flipcharts, OJT, and the like. The difference, I believe, is in the recruiting and amount of *ideology* that the entry-level worker is exposed to. A McDonald's cashier is generally weak on ideology about work; a Whole Foods Team Member soaks up endless streams of it.

3.1 Methodology of Research

Some of this thesis derives from and is an extension of my annotated bibliography at UCF, "The social criticism brewing from the Starbucks training manual" (2012). In addition to conducting graduate level library research, I anonymously and spontaneously interviewed or chatted with employees and managers at Wal-Mart, Target, Publix, Panera, McDonald's, Starbucks, Whole Foods, Chick-fil-A, Dunkin' Donuts and a few similar franchises and chains. I find the sociological term "ethnomethodology" overly fancy and obtuse; I really just listened to employees and managers' stories and insights and took notes more along the lines of NPR's "Story Corps" which delves into the daily life and stories of Americans. I then applied either principles of rhetoric or of instructional design to what I observed and experienced. On several occasions, I met with service workers off premises (usually at a Starbucks if chatting with a non-Starbucks employee) to get them to open up to me about life at various establishments. I also spent ample time listening (if not eavesdropping) to rehearsed lines of employees on dozens of occasions. I did not patronize outlets directly near the theme parks or tourist sections of Orlando; I sensed early on that employees near the theme parks might meet more stringent hiring standards to deal with national and world tourists; I wanted to explore mainstream America, not Disney's or Universal Studio's. As I stressed in Chapter 1, my work is anecdotal, not scientific, but in the hundreds of hours I spent observing workers, consumers, and purchasing behaviors, I believe

there are nonetheless human truths to extract from my findings. "Rhetoric isn't the opposite of truthful; it's the very essence of truthful inquiry" (Jones, 1998, p. 8).

For my tables on labor euphemisms used in Chapter 5, I questioned employees and also called a minimum of three outlets from different states. I analyzed corporate materials readily available on the Web, and, at times, was simply given materials. I also interviewed experts in various fields such as sociology; some communication was by email. What follows are *sketches* of supercorporations, how they treat their service workers, and the technical writing and training that likely enters those formulas. My aim is to stimulate a dialogue and create a bridge among students and teachers of training, technical writing, and sociology. For a brief moment in time, I am stopping in the Postmodern Agora and asking questions.

Before we discuss any of these companies, let's take a look at Table 6, which shows how big a few of them really are, including a few not addressed for comparison's sake:

Table 6: Employment figures for select companies, 2011

Company	Number of Employees
Wal-Mart	2.2 million (1.3. in US)
McDonald's	1.8 million (440,000 in US)
UPS	399,000 (varies at Christmas)
Target	365,000
Aramark	203,000
Walt Disney	156,000
Starbucks	149,000

Source: *Fortune 500 Magazine*, May 21, 2012

The BLS reports that in 2012, there were fewer than 60,000 structural iron and steel workers in the United States (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2014). That we have transitioned from a workforce of *products* to a workforce of *service* is very real. Let's explore why this large sector remains non-unionized; what the anti-union rhetoric is in each establishment; and what the in-store rhetoric and dialogues of some supercorporations are today.

3.2 McDonald's

McDonald's is an immeasurable cultural icon, sometimes synonymous with America itself. Over 20 books have been written on it, and literally tens of thousands of academic and journalistic articles have been penned on the Golden Arches; Ritzer's *McDonaldization* book alone generated a sizeable corpus of academic responsa since its first release. Schlosser, in *Fast Food Nation* (2002) proffers fascinating and perhaps disturbing statistics about the supercorporation: *one out of eight Americans* has worked at a McDonald's; 96% of American schoolchildren can identify Ronald McDonald; McDonald's is the single largest purchaser of beef, pork, and potatoes in the United States (exercising enormous influence on farmers if not calling the shots); McDonald's owns the most retail property *in the world*; over 95% of Americans have been to a McDonald's; and over half of all Americans live within three miles of a McDonald's. (p. 4). McDonald's is mentioned in TV commercials shows, films, jokes, comedy sketches, and played a role in the O.J. Simpson trial (it is what O.J. and Kato Kaelin ate the eve of Nicole Brown Simpson's murder). There are over 34,000 McDonald restaurants in over 110 nations worldwide: it is found on streets and highways, in food court malls, on college campuses, on military bases, and inside of airports, Wal-Marts, and the Pentagon (Ritzer, 2008, p. 9). McDonald's serves kosher food in Israel, the McAloo Tikki in India, and McRice in Singapore (*Chicago Tribune*, 2013, Nov 18). It formerly owned the largest number of indoor playgrounds in America (it has dismantled many as it meant families lingered longer without necessarily purchasing more items, something McDonald's *doesn't* want), but it still gives away a staggering number of toys in Happy Meals to court new generations of consumers.

In response to a growing chorus of criticism about its food and practices, McDonald's today offers an array of salads; apple slices for children (as an alternative to french fries); and

oatmeal at breakfast. The seeming fast-food monopoly that McDonald's once held in America does not exist: many fast-food breakfast shares go to Dunkin' Donuts or Starbucks, and, according to the Food Institute, there have been more Subway outlets in America than McDonald's since about 2009 (Report no. 39). Jared, the real-life Subway success story spokesman, has an appeal to an overweight America hooked on shows like "The Biggest Loser" that apparently Ronald McDonald lacks. Despite McDonald's extraordinary wealth, the average American McDonald's employee made \$7.77 per hour in 2013; by contrast, CEO Donald Thompson made a total of \$9.5 million in salary and bonuses (Hess and Frohlich, *24/7 Wall Street.com*, 2014, May 30). What is the technical writing that governs 34,000 stores, keeps wages so low, and prevents McDonald's workers from unionizing?

In 1958, a McDonald's executive named Fred Turner wrote a 75-page long training manual that became known as "the Bible" within McDonald's circles. (Schlosser, 2002, p. 69). "The Bible," now topping 750 pages, provides detail on every aspect of operating a McDonald's, A to Z: purchasing, products, lighting, drivethroughs, sales, uniforms, sanitation, cooking times, utensils, machinery, methodology, marketing, and above all else "the metric:" hourly food sales vs. hourly labor costs. The detailed guidebook "provided information on everything from how to construct a Big Mac to how to remove snow from a roof" (Tascarella, *Pittsburgh Business Times*, 1999, Nov 19). It is for franchise owners; not cashiers. I had no access to it – but neither do employees. Having a McJob does not require reading a tome of technical writing. There is no such thing as skills, talents, personality, or decision-making needed for most McDonald's entry-level or even shift supervisor work. It involves rote physical and linguistic tasks. I regard it is a modern plantation where humans interact with machines and the public rather than cotton plants.

The man most responsible for keeping McDonald's a non-union shop was its labor relations chief of nearly thirty years, John Cooke. Cooke essentially served as an attack dog for Ray Kroc. "Unions are inimical to what we stand for and how we operate" was his cherished belief (Love, 1995, p. 394). According to Love, over 400 attempts were made to unionize McDonald's workers in the 1970s and 80s – and all failed. Cooke devoting his life to training McDonald's managers to ward off union organizers. He believed that "unions don't allow the workforce to get excited about what they do" (Love, 1995, p. 394). If there are employees thrilled to be working at McDonald's, I did not encounter too many in this study nor do I recall a sense of "glee" to be working at McDonald's in prior trips throughout my life. There is a cultural shame associated with working at McDonald's, to have a "McJob," and it does not take a trained sociologist to often see it in its staff.

In Ritzer's *McDonaldization: Thesis* (1998), which clarified, expanded, and expounded upon his original work, the sociologist characterizes "McJobs" as that type of work which has absolutely no autonomy or creativity attached to it (p. 55). "McJobs" is defined as "an unstimulating, low paid job with few prospects, *especially* one created by the expansion of the service sector" (OED.com). Though the term originated with McDonald's, the prefix "Mc" has universal application (for example, we occasionally hear its use in other venues, as in "McMansions" as overly large, vacuous, postmodern homes of sameness without character).

Tasks at McDonald's are so simplified and streamlined that they provide little meaning to the worker, and the worker interacts with so many computers and machines set to timers that he or she is essentially a human robot (Ritzer, 1998, p. 60). The scripted, monotonous conversations are, to Ritzer, a major factor in the high turnover rate in the industry. One of the great tragedies of McDonaldization is that "the demeanor and behavior of the employee is highly predictable"

(Ritzer, 1998, p. 107). Schlosser (2002) points out that by hiring more workers than they need, sending them home early if it is slow, not allowing them to work enough hours to gain either overtime hours or healthcare benefits, McDonald's succeeds by "keeping labor costs to a minimum" (p. 74). Sociologist Leidner verified this to me in our personal conversation (May 30, 2014). This entry-level service section of the workforce is often regarded as little more than chattel, and the use and subjugation of technical writing to achieve this current state of affairs must become a greater ethical concern of many technical communicators and trainers.

Leidner informed me that "training at McDonald's is nearly 100% watching videos, being reminded to smile a lot, and a few days of OJT." She cites several practices that McDonald's engages in to keep wages low and eschew unionization:

- Most McDonald's are franchises, not corporately owned, making them technically independent businesses, rendering it difficult for unions to organize, as outlets need a minimum number of employees to constitute a union;
- All McDonald's franchises use a food sales to labor costs metric; the only way a franchise owner can maintain and expand his or her number of franchises is to demonstrate to corporate headquarters that their labor costs were kept to a minimum; within the metric, few employees reach full time hour status, let alone overtime;
- The sales to labor metric is measured hourly; with the controlling algorithm, employees are frequently sent home early; so if someone anticipated making five or eight hours of wages on a given day, he or she may end up with only one or two;
- Rather than having a "set schedule," employees must learn of their schedule each week, rendering it difficult for someone, say, with a child in day care to rely on the schedule, therefore many McDonald's employees are young and single;

- McDonald's anticipates high turnover rates, so it does not invest much time into its entry-level workers. (Leidner, personal conversation, May 30, 2014).

In the Wayzt and Mason study "Your brain at work" (2013), the researchers point out that common human rewards that can be neurologically identified include status, love, approval, and money (p. 105). What are the rewards for the low pay, lack of dependable hours, and low social status for working at McDonald's?

Rhetorical Analysis: McLanguage

In 2012, Joanne Hong, an Australian linguist, analyzed McDonald's reaction to the worldwide use of the term McJob (the paper addresses other issues not germane to this inquiry). McDonald's had challenged dictionaries, including the OED, on the negative connotations of the term "McJob" (p. 150); began a slogan entitled "McProspects" in 2007 (p. 153); (a term I have never heard prior to or during this research) and issued policy statements that deflect the focus of McJobs on McDonald's itself: "high turnover rates are a challenge for any company in the food service industry" (p. 155). Hong observes that in some McDonald's media policy statements (in response to labor rights' groups and op-ed criticisms) the worker is entirely excluded: One statement reads: "When we think about the term 'benefits,' at McDonald's, we think very broadly." Another reads: "We believe progress on these fronts has improved – and will continue to improve – customer satisfaction and will positively impact our business results" (p. 157).

Note that the first statement is vague; the second statement omits directly addressing low wages and replaces it with "these fronts." The technique can be said to be attempts at *phyletic gradualism*, discrediting an opponent's theory or criticism. To Hong, "meanings of employees are transformed" (p. 159). This is similar to Lysenko's inversion of the very meaning of the word "science" in Soviet era agriculture (Dombrowski, 2001). A common and easy rhetorical device is

to create "an equivalency campaign" and "assume that there are two sides to the topic at hand" (Dombrowski, 2001, p. 311). We see this in issues such as global warming or "gay conversion" therapy. McDonald's deflects criticism of detractors "who describe employees as exploited and disadvantaged" as simply jaundiced against it (Hong, 2012, p. 159).

In speaking with McDonald's employees, I found there is no euphemism (like at Starbucks) for workers: employees are employees, though "crew member" is beginning to emerge at some McDonald's franchises. If Starbucks and Whole Foods deliberately seek out educated young people to indoctrinate into their philosophies of life and business, McDonald's, it seems, will accept just about anybody who can fill out an application (and doesn't have a visible tattoo). One often find college students or recent graduates at liberal supercorporations; they are less noticeable at McDonald's.

Conversations between customers and cashiers are kept to a minimum at Mickey D's. There is no zesty "Welcome to McDonald's!" Cashier and client alike both know why they are there: the experience usually has all the mystique, allure, and charm of getting gas for the car. The diner walks up to the cash register, and the cashier simply says "what would you like?" or "what are you having today?" After Spurlock's *Supersize Me* (2004), under great national scrutiny, and fears of class action lawsuits that the cigarette industry endured, the term "supersize" was quietly dropped from the lingo. It lives on through euphemism; I had more or less the following conversation about a dozen times:

"What would you like/what can I get you?"

"I'll have a Fillet 'O Fish."

"Would you like that to be a value meal?"

"Sure, why not."

"Would you like to make that a large?"

"Okay/"No thanks."

"Anything else?"

"No thanks."

"That'll be \$6.09."

Here, Cicero's concept of *dispositio*, arrangement, can be mapped out as postmodernist, alienating minimalism. (McDonald's languishes in a four-question mode; Starbucks has perfected everything to a single question, and has trained not its baristas, but rather its devoted public, to order with exhibitionism and gusto.) Now, most nutritionists would probably agree that adding fries and soda to a snack does not give something "value." The rhetorical value is one of efficiency, minimalism, euphemism, and sales. The worker is trained only to reflexively try to get more money from the customer, and has these four simple questions as his or her only arsenal. Getting into actual conversations is discouraged, and, if there are lines, simply not allowed by anxious managers. (Wawa doesn't even bother allowing these pesky human dialogues to waste precious time: customers punch in sandwich order on a screen; its processes indicates another step in efficiency and human alienation that Ray Kroc would be intrigued by.)

Seats were only introduced to McDonald's in 1962 (Schlosser, 2002) and Kroc was adamantly opposed to anything that might allow for loitering: juke boxes, cigarette machines, pay phones. To this day, "no loitering" signs appear at most McDonald's; something anathema to Starbucks, where Web surfers can "laptop it" all the livelong day. (McDonald's did begin free Wi-Fi in about 2008, to keep up with trends in society, but in my investigations, it has actually gotten rid of most plugs for computers and put metal plates over them; anything that gainsays that basic premise of "a quickie" is discouraged in the metrics of McDonald's.)

Whenever I asked managers about unionization, I received what appears to be a stock answer, likely picked up at Hamburger University: "we take care of our employees." It's a simple six-word sentence, but it affects millions of workers. The sentence, if parsed, reveals something about McDonald's attitude towards its workers. Both pronouns use (*we, our*) are owned by management; employees have no pronouns (or verbs). Management stars at the front of the sentence; the employees sit at the rear of the sentence's bus. The employees become objectified and silenced in the aphorism – as I believe they are in life. The phrase also seems far too similar to a 2012 Bruce Springsteen hit single, "We Take Care of Our Own," to be coincidental. It is a very eerie, anti-union rhetorical twist on what it means to be "The Boss."

3.3 Wal-Mart

In 1992, President George W. Bush presented the coveted Medal of Freedom to Sam Walton, founder of Wal-Mart, who died later that year. Yet many union organizers would say that "freedom" is not a word to at all be associated with millions of Wal-Mart "associates."

Wal-Mart, a.k.a. "the bully of Bentonville" or "the behemoth of Bentonville," with over two million employees, is the single largest private employer *in human history* – and is probably also the most hated corporation in America. (Bianco, et al. 2003). Thirty years before Bush honored Walton, John F. Kennedy was president, and 1962 was a "watershed year" in terms of discount stores, because K-Mart, Target and Wal-Mart were all launched then (Vance & Scott, 1994, p. 45). Wal-Mart's global clout today is difficult to overstate as it "relentlessly wrings tens of billions of dollars in cost efficiencies out of the supply chain" (Bianco, et al., 2003). *One out of five American consumer transactions* take place at a Wal-Mart (Collins, 2011, italics mine). Wal-Mart is big. It is so deeply intertwined with jobs, consumerism, taxation, and real estate that it is often simply considered "too big to fail." Only the federal government employs more people.

Wal-Mart sits in the middle of much of the nation's *kulturkampf*, not willing to sell any CD's with lyrical references to Wal-Mart will not carry CDs with cover art or lyrics that it deems to be overtly sexual or that deal with abortion, homosexuality, or Satanism (Fox, 2005; PBS, 2001). Wal-Mart is often the censor and arbiter of cultural life in America, determining what constitutes a fair wage, what may be read, what may be listened to, and what constitutes "family-friendly" values (Fox, 2005, p. 514). To Fox, because several right-wing political action groups use the term "family" as subtext for anti-gay causes (Focus on the Family, the Family Council) Wal-Mart is often praised by such institutions.

And the gargantuan enterprise is fiercely anti-union, repeatedly arguing that it is "unfairly singled out as a nonunion mass-market retailer" (Massey, 2011). An attempt to unionize Wal-Mart stores around Las Vegas in 2002 resulted in the installation of *more* surveillance cameras, the firing of pro-union employees, and the filings of dozens of unfair labor practice complaints *against* employees with the NLRB in an attempt to stall union election results. (Zellner, *Businessweek*, 2002, Oct 28). This is but one story among dozens where Wal-Mart does whatever it takes to prevent unionization. Many labor rights groups, activists, and human rights groups keep an eye on Wal-Mart's labor practices at home and abroad. According to Eric Bull of the watchdog group Wal-Mart Watch, Wal-Mart has closed down every single North American store that has attempted to unionize. (Wedekind, 2009, p. 4). Wal-Mart plays hardball.

Wal-Mart preys on those on the margins of society. "Most of its workers and customers are overwhelmingly female, and struggling to make ends meet" (Featherstone, *The Nation*, 2005, Jan 3). In the early years of Wal-Mart's existence, the 1960s and 1970s, "all employees were invited to make suggestions or other comments on company policy and practices" (Vance & Scott, 1994, p. 73). That was then. By 2005, workers in over 30 states had filed class-action

lawsuits against the retailer for violating of overtime laws (Featherstone, 2005). In 2012, busloads of workers tried to get a meeting in Arkansas with Wal-Mart's CEO in Bentonville, Arkansas, asking for better wages and treatment, and were met with a barricade. (Woodman, 2012, *The Nation*, Jan 23). To Woodman, "Wal-Mart, more than any other company on earth, sets labor standards across industries that feeds its vast global supply chain" (p. 20). And the standard it sets is sweat shops in Asia; non-union shops in North America. That is why it can boast "everyday low, low prices." Yet: "through its efforts to keep down pay and benefits and to erode worker rights, Wal-Mart has undermined the capacity of low-wage workers...to act effectively as consumers" (Collins, 2011, p. 108). Wal-Mart has been known to encourage its employees to supplement their incomes by applying for food stamps and taking advantage of Medicaid and other federal programs; a 2004 government report indicates that "Wal-Mart employees [this] year possibly cost the federal government \$2.5 billion in social services including Medicaid, food stamps, housing subsidies, and free school lunches" (Chapman, 2010, p. 589).

Rhetorical Analysis: Wal-Silence

For anyone studying low-wage work, "Wal-Mart is in one sense a metonym—a part of the consumer economy that can stand in for the US economy as a whole" (Collins, 2011, p. 110). Wal-Mart associates wear mostly blue, I believe to identify with blue-collar workers. There is a color-irony to the superstore war between Target and Wal-Mart, because Target's color is red, the color associated with the GOP on political maps, and the gun-selling Wal-Mart espouses blue, the color politicians and pundits associate with liberalism. The red state/blue state maps we frequently see on cable news is inverted in the consumer war.

At this writing, one of Wal-Mart's television advertising campaigns sells no products but is rather a public relations offensive, "that's the *real* Wal-Mart." The female voiceover (I believe a clear effort to gain trust and soften its image) attempts to convince America that Wal-Mart is a benevolent company that employs many, gives back to communities, provides scholarships and healthcare, and is basically a "solid neighbor" doing good things. The campaign exists because Wal-Mart is much maligned as exploitative of workers at home and abroad. The key rhetorical term to this public relations onslaught is the word "real." Yet I found it extremely difficult to engage Wal-Mart employees in "real" conversations. Taciturn and circumspect, Wal-Mart "associates" seem to not want to be caught by management on videotape engaging in in-depth conversations about its labor practices. One gets the sense that management has instilled in Wal-Mart workers a parental "don't talk to strangers" outlook. Self-service checkout stations are becoming more ubiquitous at Wal-Mart, reducing the amount of dialogue or human interactions that may transpire. Workers, I found, were usually alone, re-stocking shelves, rather than approaching customers with a simple "May I help you?" In fact, it is rare to find two Wal-Mart employees at a register: the cashier who rings up a consumer is the same person who bags the items. (This is both an attempt at efficiency and possibly a labor tactic to eliminate employee conversations.) Other than the television commercials of "always low, low prices," one finds few phrases, jingles, buzzwords, or lingo inside of a Wal-Mart.

We know the familiar Wal-Mart smiley face seen in Figure 1, below:



Figure 1: Wal-Mart logo

Source: Google Images (2014)

This smile is not something I grew to readily link with the often haggard appearance of Wal-Mart employees, who are paid low, low wages, not permitted to unionize, and are on their feet all day. Wal-Mart lacks the theater and "phraseology" that one finds at a Starbucks; it is about the commodification of space and profit. "Super" Wal-Mart feature "stores within stores" – hair salons, eye-care, pharmacies – and there may be slightly more dialogue within these satellites. I did not focus on them in this study.

Moreton (2009) wrote a compelling book linking Wal-Mart with Christianity and asserts that Wal-Mart has succeeding in subjugating its workers in no small part due to "the company's gradual identification with its Christian constituency" (p. 101). Wal-Mart wants its large employment pool to "revalue shopping as selfless service to the family, and service in turn as a sacred calling. In this context, the salient identity becomes not citizen-consumer nor worker of the world, but Christian servant" (p. 101). In some ways, Wal-Mart is a living example of Marx's aphorism that "religion is the opiate of the masses," except that religion is intertwined with consumerism. According to Moreton, Wal-Mart also appropriates the American ideal of "rugged individualism" in communications to its workforce; these are "textbook tactics of employer anti-unionism" (p. 103). Some Texas Wal-Mart's, for example, will provide balloons and cakes at a cashier's register's birthday, eliciting feelings of belonging to the worker. Moreton maintains that the concept of "we're a family" is a dominant theme of Wal-Mart's, and that the moniker "associate" arose only in response to union challenges in the 1970s.

Moreton is not alone in finding a theological problem between Wal-Mart, its consumers, and its ethos. C.M. Newton (2011), in her seminary school dissertation comparing Wal-Mart to theology writes: "By disconnecting producer, consumer, and product, abstraction disassociates the human and environmental costs of a product from its retail price, and it ultimately prevents

consumers the theological, social, cultural, environmental, and economic consequences of their consumer decisions" (p. 3). Newton ponders whether "economic theory and consumerism currently function as the primary theology of the world" which "prods people to put their faith in neoliberalism and to define themselves according to its inhumane values" (p. 6). This sentiment echoes Luedicke, Thompson and Giesler's worldview of consumerism as a morality play. I stress that there is nothing inherently "bad" about a store promoting Christian values, particularly if it is a closely-held Christian corporation as we have seen in the recent Supreme Court decision regarding Hobby Lobby. The moral issue, to me, is whether Christianity is *used* as a management tactic to keep wages low or prevent unionization.

McDonald's and Wal-Mart represent only the largest and two most popular supercorporations that employ non-unionized DSWs. If we add in the countless other household names that dot our malls and highways that feature uniforms, surveillance, and non-unionization policies, then we are truly talking about millions of lives which are potentially exploited, homogenized, and subjugated in the "economic-theological" thirst to place dollars above dignity. Wal-Mart at least suggests that it promotes its workers as citizen-consumers; McDonald's promotes its entry-level workers as human units. Technical writing, instructional design and training play salient roles in keeping these militarized worlds working like Swiss watches.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE ANIMATED SERVICE WORKER

4. Alive and Kickin': The ASW

Whereas older corporations like McDonald's or Wal-Mart train their staffs to be practically invisible, newer corporations, it seems, deliberately recruit individuals that the public might perceive to be gregarious, educated, or "cool;" the hiring in these instances, I argue, has more to do with recruiting, indoctrination, and conformity than instructional design or technical writing. In the supercorporations that promote themselves as liberal, politically correct, environmentally conscious, "green" and hip – Starbucks, Whole Foods, Trader Joe's and related companies – the dialogue scripting involved gives "poetic license" to the converted. However, this "license" is akin to state-sponsored art or Soviet Realism: one does not have freedom of speech; one has the freedom to conform. Returning to Luedicke, Thompson and Giesler's work (2012) on consumerism as a morality play: "the moral protagonist myth also provides consumers with a rhetorical means to link their consumption practices and personal identities to a consequential, collectively shared moral project" (p. 1029). Starbucks and Whole Foods are collectively shared moral projects; their employees and patrons identify strongly with them. In these supercorporations, employees are led to believe that by remaining non-union shops, they are doing their parts to better the world. Both employees and consumers view themselves as good "glocal" citizens, directly linked to local farmers or struggling independent coffee growers in exotic locales. They have an "us versus them," David versus Goliath view of the world instilled in them. The employees I interviewed typically argued *against* large corporations, and many, I conclude, live in denial that they themselves are very much exploited by the very supercorporations they can defend with far greater eloquence than any 7-11, Dollar General or McDonald's cashier ever will.

4.1 Starbucks

I wish to strongly emphasize at the outset that Starbucks does a lot of good things for its employees in comparison to most national supercorporations. At only 20 hours a week, baristas can purchase some fairly low-cost healthcare – one of the major reasons some people opt to don the green apron. No barista I spoke to said that if they were scheduled, they were sent home early (a labor tactic of McDonald's). Baristas get a free pound of coffee a week, but more importantly can, after six months, start getting stock options. And in many cases Starbucks will reimburse workers for tuition, even some programs that are not related to hospitality, such as nursing degrees (Emma, barista, personal conversation, May 3, 2014). Like other phenomena in the United States, Starbucks has simultaneously driven many neighborhood coffee shop owners out of business while creating coffee careers for others.

Howard Shultz, famed CEO of Starbucks, likes to dub Starbucks "the third place," after home and work. As long we are on the number three, let us clarify a myth: coffee clocks in a distant third as to what Starbucks actually sells. Theater comes in first, followed by sugar. "Only about 1 in 6 or 7 customers stop in for black coffee; nearly all either put milk and sugar in it, get a specialized sugary drink, or get a baked good with their beverage" (Meryam, Starbucks manager, personal conversation, June 6, 2014). Coffee beans should by no means be undervalued: after oil, they are the second most traded legal commodity in the world (Wild, 2004, p. 3). Yet history suggests that "those who have controlled coffee production and distribution have improved their own lives often at the expense of those who actually grow the beans" (Ruzich, 2008, p. 429). Starbucks cashes in not only on growers abroad (despite its repeated rhetoric of engaging in "fair trade;" see Fellner, 2008), but perhaps on young people who would feel too embarrassed to work at McDonald's or similar franchises.

According to *24/7 Wall Street.com*, Starbucks earned close to \$15 billion in 2013, and the average barista made less than \$9 an hour (2014, Hess & Frohlich, May 30). Schultz, who probably sees himself as a "liberal benevolent ruler" (Fellner, personal conversation, 2012) is nonetheless fiercely anti-union, and believes that "unionization means that the world is out of harmony" (Fellner, 2008, p. 144).

No corporation in human history has succeeded in creating ASWs quite like Starbucks has. McDonald's relies on heavy television advertising, strong purchasing power (for example, of potato farmers or cattle ranchers), and low prices to succeed: Starbucks relies more on its baristas who become its enthusiastic votives as a seminal part of its branding. In contrast to McDonald's, which keeps prices low, Starbucks appears to deliberately inflate prices to accentuate the allure of entering a world of privilege and prestige. Starbucks sells "theater and fantasies of connoisseurship" (Ries, 2012, p. 2). Starbucks rarely advertises. At best, television viewers find an occasional "season's greetings" reminder at Christmas to get a Peppermint Mocha, or there might be a stray full page ad in the *New York Times*, but unlike McDonald's, Coca-Cola, UPS, and everyone else, it has eschewed jingles, humor, themes, or fictional spokespeople like the erstwhile GEICO cavemen or Progressive Insurance's "Flo." "In stunning contrast to most Fortune 500 companies, Starbucks spends more on training than it does on advertising" (Michelli, 2007, p. 8). My discussions with baristas and managers, however, shows that it is not the *training* that Starbucks invests in as much as the screening, lengthy interviewing, and testing of the candidates (on beverages and customer satisfaction). Starbucks *does* have less turnover than other corporations, but it vigorously weeds out any signs of apathy or dissent in the first place (Moore, 2006). Thus hiring at Starbucks has roots and parallels in fraternity and secret society initiation rites, as well as religious rites of passes such as an adult baptism or a bar/bat

mitzvah. Indeed, many Starbucks in-store signs and posters commence with the phrase "Our mission," reinforcing the connotation of religion. A good McDonald's employee is efficient; a good barista is evangelical – about Starbucks.

Rhetorical Analysis: Linguistic Latté

Since in Starbucks' employment culture each person – barista, manager, coffeeroaster, or district manager – is referred to as a "partner," the idea that these nearly 100,000 baristas in green aprons are "partners" with multibillionaire Shultz has an absurdity to it. In the retail world, it is the euphemism of euphemisms. Lutz (1989) would undoubtedly identify this sobriquet as Orwellian doublespeak. It is a "deliberate inversion of meaning" (Dombrowski, 2001, p. 295); a rhetorical device used to manipulate employees into senses of belonging and empowerment that they don't truly possess.

The Green Apron (TGA) is not really Starbucks' training manual as much as an equivalent of Mao's little red book. Baristas used to have it on them at all times; now, according to five separate Starbucks shops that I visited, usually only managers get a copy. Training is primarily verbal orientation, video, flipcharts, and on the job training (OJT). TGA contains Starbucks' effusive maxims like:

- Brands are made possible by people;
- Be knowledgeable: love what you do, share it with others;
- Be involved: in the store, in the company, in the community;
- Our values: passion for everything we do; integrity; entrepreneurial spirit and drive; pride and success; respect for our partners;
- Our purpose: to provide an uplifting experience that enriches people's daily lives;

- Be welcoming: Greet customers as they walk through the door; start a conversation; get to know customers drinks and names.
- Ensure that the customer is the number one priority. (*The Green Apron*, 2014).

At least one phrase here, "entrepreneurial spirit," would not pass what Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz repeatedly calls "the giggle test."

On its recruitment website, Starbucks does not tell candidates that they will make about \$9 an hour, some of it from the generosity of leftover tips, wear a headset on so that management can speak at any time, and that all conversations and actions will be recorded. Nor does it mention cleaning public toilets as part of the daily repertoire. Recruitment store window posters often say "Bring us your creativity and passions," but I have yet to see much creativity involved in pressing buttons to make beverages. Starbucks' work is just as automated and exacting as McDonald's; Ritzer (2008) asserts that the coffee bar is higher than the register to hide how easy it is to make the drinks and create an aura or mystique to the process. Starbucks' recruitment plays up to ambition, individuality, and participation in globalization. And it plays it big:

Being a Starbucks partner means having the opportunity to be something more than an employee. Gigantic possibilities lie ahead—to grow as a person, in your career and in your community. To live the Starbucks mission and to be a leader. It's the opportunity to become your personal best. To be connected to something bigger. To be meaningful to the world. And to be recognized for all of it. It's all here for you. (Starbucks.com, 2014)

In a word, wow. The language makes it seem like the candidate might be selected for the first human trip to Mars or gain a full scholarship to Yale. It is an example of what Lutz (1989) refers to as a form of "doublespeak" in which "inflated language is designed to make the ordinary seem extraordinary" (p. 6). "More than an employee" is obvious code for "non-union shop."

In recent years, Starbucks has faced a persistent public relations problem that it is anti-military (Examiner.com, 2012). A similar Starbucks' website page reads: "Our commitment is to hire at least 10,000 veterans and active duty military spouses over the next 5 years. Military veterans and spouses bring a unique set of skills that allow us to better serve our fellow partners and communities" (Starbucks-veterans.jobs.com, 2014). While I do not think any of us want to see our returned veterans out of work (or homeless, addicted, or living with PTSD), I am also not sure that after learning to handle highly sophisticated weaponry, and engaging in meaningful missions in Iraq and Afghanistan that watching these brave young men and women now serve us our cappuccinos, extra whip, is what we envision for their post-military lives. I suspect the key here is "military spouses." While the term is neutral, it is not: Starbucks means "women," as most service workers, nationally, are female as we have seen and that is how most people would naturally read the sentence. There are not 10,000 corporate Starbucks jobs to add at headquarters in Seattle or even district management positions around the country. The statement is public relations motivated and patriarchal, if not patronizing.

Starbucks taps into one's insecurities in life; one becomes a "Starbucks insider" by learning how to order from the menu using the Italian lingo and company jargon. No longer do we hear "I'll have a cup of coffee." Such simplicity belongs to Denny's or to the past. There is no "regular" either. In seemingly Lewis Carroll fashion, the "small" has become the "tall." This is an example of doublespeak designed to "deceive the reader or listener in one way or another" (Jones, 1998, p. 131). The medium is the pretentious "grande," the large is "vente," Italian for twenty (ounces).

Individuality is celebrated (exploited) at Starbucks by making it seem as if "your" drink (as opposed to a McDonald's cheeseburger) is a peak moment in daily, postmodern, narcissistic

life. A specialized drink order is repeated up to four times, and as a secularized religious experience, borrows from worshipful "call and response" methods often used in churches:

Experienced customer: "I'll have a grande soy vanilla latte, extra whip."

Cashier barista #1: "Grande soy vanilla latte, extra whip!"

Coffeebar barista #2: "Grande soy vanilla latte, extra whip!"

(minutes later) Barista #2: "I have a grande soy latte, extra whip, for Diane at the bar!"

Just to hear one's name associated with one's drink celebrates individuality in a superficial way, and since a large percent of Starbucks' clientele like to pay with a Starbucks app on their iPhone (the "i" having a double-meaning of Internet and the "I" of egoism), narcissism is reinforced on multiple levels. Schultz is constantly talking up Starbucks as "place to linger," but between the quick-payment apps and drivethroughs, Starbucks can out-McDonald's McDonald's in efficiency.

In *Doublespeak* (1989) Lutz directly addresses the language of foods and restaurants.

"Use the right words, and people will pay more for the product" (p. 25). As Table 7 illustrates, Starbucks understands this philosophy all too well. Simple drinks can easily run to \$5 or \$6, and are long on lingo:

Table 7: Starbucks lingo and buzzwords

Term	Connotations
Arabica	exoticism; mysticism
barista	Italy; globalization
blond (name for their light roast)	sensuality/female sexuality
"citrus and cedar notes" (typical adjectives)	equating coffee tasting with wine tasting lingo
Ethos water (bottled water brand)	charity; participating in global goodness; ethics
grande	largeness; egoism; grandiosity
indulge your senses	sensuality/sexuality
instant summer sensations	sensuality/sexuality
latte, vente, cappuccino, etc.	Italy; globalization
Oprah chai tea (new drink in 2014)	fame; women's marketing; feel-good politics
steep your soul	indulgence; religion; individualism

The point is that Starbucks' stressing of exoticism and individuality in its lingo adds to the aura and rhetoric that its workers must be individualistic as well – too individualistic to unionize.

4.2 Whole Foods

Whole Foods is synonymous with "political correctness." Some regard it as virtually an orthodoxy of political correctness. Established by John Mackay in the ultimate cool college town of Austin, Texas in 1980, the organic food mogul views himself as a "corporate hippie" or "anarchist" (Harris, 2006, p. 61). Whole Foods remains a non-union shop: "Socially committed companies such as Ben & Jerry's...and Whole Foods have all vigorously fought union organizing efforts. It is as if the concept of union representation has vanished as a democratic right and been erased from the liberal agenda" (Fellner, 2008, p. 144, paraphrasing Featherstone (1999)). In a store, the mostly young employees convey a hip aura that says "you'll never catch me working at Wal-Mart" (Harris, 2006, p. 61). Gallagher (2007), states that "employees who perceive a high degree of ethical values within the organization develop a role identity that closely matches that of the organization's" (p. 9). Whole Foods deliberately seeks out such individuals. Team Members on the floor are in an identifiable black apron but can dress as they please, and essentially brand Whole Foods as a place of tolerance and inclusion – if not counterculture. It is not hard to find employees with beards, tattoos, piercings, and avant-garde hairstyles, including Mohawks and unusual dye colors. They all vote on new Team Members hiring (I believe a tactic to empower workers yet still not pay them much) and may wear buttons of things like favorite rock groups or causes. One gets the sense that a whole generation of slackers and corporate dropouts have at least figured out a way to get a respectable paycheck. Yet despite the leniency on dress codes, Harris believes that WF's business and labor practices are not dissimilar to those of McDonald's or Wal-Mart's (p. 62). When a Whole Foods comes to

town, it often puts small greengrocers out of business and dictates agricultural policies to local farmers, who may have little choice but to then sell to Whole Foods. Neoliberalism is cutthroat business.

Rhetorical Analysis: Whole Language

Whole Foods employees and shoppers are surrounded by a cornucopia of "green" phrases: "organic;" "locally grown;" "eco-friendly;" "sustainability;" "social responsibility," "fair trade." There is an abundance of WF literature available at its stores and on its website; an entire thesis could easily analyze what it says for what Stephen Colbert used to call "truthiness." A few examples of argument and counterargument are in Table 8 below, from "Taste what we're all about" (2014):

Table 8: Analysis of sample Whole Food's rhetoric

<i>We provide food and nutritional products that support health and well-being.</i> It is true that WF has no transfats, food dyes, or complex preservatives. But shoppers can fill up on as much chips, pastries, bacon, beer, wings, and sweets at WF as anywhere else.
<i>Creating wealth through profits and growth.</i> Wealth for whom? Why may not the Team Members form a union and earn higher wages?
<i>Creating ongoing win-win partnerships with our suppliers.</i> McDonald's calls the shots to non-organic farmers; Whole Foods does the same to organic farmers. This is why Harris sees parallels between the two. The "partnership" is often a purchasing hegemony.
<i>Often you have to choose between what's best for your health and what's best for your wallet.</i> The main epithet for WF is "Whole Paycheck." Its stores – which it loves to call "local" or "regional" but are all virtually as identical as a McDonald's – are replete with narrow aisles and temptations like seafood bars, salad bars, olive bars, chocolates, pastry, cheeses, and cold beers. WF's carefully planned zoning makes it very, very difficult for consumers to leave without opening their wallets wider than they originally anticipated.

Without a doubt, WF's attitudes toward planet stewardship are admirable, and if we are going to adopt anyone's values, I vote for WF's. It is not, however, above criticism or exploitation. It has succeeded in convincing tens of thousands of mostly young people to do essentially the same tasks and chores as at McDonald's or Wal-Mart – just all out of a sense of mission and idealism.

4.3 Panera

Note: I have more pages and more to say about Panera because so little has been academically penned about it. McDonald's, Wal-Mart, and Starbucks are the all the subjects of many studies in sociology, labor analysis, economics, business, marketing, ecological impact, and rhetoric; combined books of the three could fill a library shelf. Boolean terms of "Panera" plus "rhetoric," "technical writing," or "union/unionization" (at this date) receive zero hits in important databases such as Social Science Full Text, MLA, ERIC, Sociological Abstracts, and Academic Search Premier. I have the most to contribute to the academy here.

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Bakeries used to mean neighborhood spots of local chatter, trading recipes, and ethnic desserts like flan, rugelach, baklava, tortes, and blini. Panera, increasingly, has become America's corner bakery selling Americanized fare set to European classical music. Panera's rhetoric plays meticulously up to white, upwardly mobile patrons while profiting much from pastries that contribute to the diabetes epidemic in the U.S. Just as Starbucks masquerades as a coffee vendor (but is really a sugar fix), Panera touts itself as a "healthy soup and salad" place – but profits greatly from caloric, sugary bakery items. Panera, symbolically headquartered in the heartland of Ohio, is a d/b/a for Take Home the Bread, LLC, whose stated mission is to "put a loaf of delicious, freshly baked bread in every arm across America" (2005, *Hudson Valley Business Journal*, April 4). It is a non-union shop promoting, I conclude, a theme of "white Christian virtue" to consumers and employees. Prices are high; entry-level wages are low. After spending over 50 hours in ten different Panera outlets for this study, I found Panera to be:

- (a) Potentially racist with few employees of color; almost none used as the cashier greeters or in management; few to no franchises in traditionally black neighborhoods of

Orlando such as Eatonville; inflated prices targeting a white, upscale socio-economic group; and white, European classical music always chiming in the background (one Panera I frequented had one black and one Latino employee; a Wendy's a block away was virtually entirely black and Latino);

(b) Perhaps hypocritically cashing in on current trends toward a lighter or healthier diet, as the lunch and dinner fare is mostly soups, sandwiches, and salads, but the meals are frequently supplemented with limitless soda and chips, not to mention the required offer of a 99 cent pastry if diners purchase a meal; and

(c) Promoting a faux, wholesome liberalism featuring a "community" bulletin board usually dotted with a few feel-good flyers about breast cancer, a food drive, or a local church function – but low wages and non-unionization for its employees.

Do not go to Panera hoping to find rock, rap, or hip-hop music playing, or flyers on the "community" bulletin board for anything black, gay, Latino, or Muslim related. The corporate controlled "community" is, in my view, a stereotype, wish, or idealization of the vanishing white America.

One does not need to be a trained sociologist to see who Panera attracts: high school girls hanging out after school (far more so than boys); college women (again, more visible than college men); women alone, lunching together, or in coteries; small Christian Bible study groups (sometimes using the back reserved room); some elderly; white soccer moms with children short on time to cook dinner; young couples whose chats strongly suggest "first Internet blind date;" and, at lunch rush, an assortment of mostly white professionals. It is not uncommon to see various college students studying or high schoolers getting tutoring at Panera. Unlike McDonald's, plugs for the laptop crowd are ubiquitous. Panera has done its audience analysis.

I wish to explain why I believe Panera uses religion simultaneously as a marketing tool and as a rhetorical device to keep wages low and prevent unionization. I arrive at the conclusions based on material linking Wal-Mart to theology (Moreton's book, 2009; Newton's dissertation, 2011).

Rhetorical Analysis: Hot Bread

With Panera, one must examine the full scope of its rhetorical presentation, not just its language. For at times, “we as technical communicators must deal intimately with words and texts as well as with objects” (Dombrowski, 2002, p. 4). The rhetoric it is carefully orchestrated: the light brown stucco of the exterior walls is evocative of the color of loaves of breads. The subtle Panera logo (Figure 2, below), of a woman with long hair holding a loaf of bread, seems too germane to Starbucks' to be coincidental:



Figure 2: Starbucks and Panera logos juxtaposed

Source: Google Images, 2014

Note the long hair and sinuous curves in each, suggestive of young, flowing sexuality. Note too that each logo has three strands of hair, unconsciously allusive to the Trinity. (In fact the Starbucks logo has three stars, evocative of both the Trinity and the Epiphany.) The Panera woman is holding her bread loaf with the love and care of an infant, reinforcing the concept of "comfort food" as well as the Christian Madonna and Child. The bread oval shape in Panera is hauntingly similar to the Jesus fish symbol that many Christians put on the backs of their cars. The oval can be interpreted to be representing New Testament Gospel stories of Jesus feeding

the masses with bread. Yet that biblical bread was presumably symbolic of spiritual sustenance; Panera's is all about the calories - and the cash. I see a classic, iconic Madonna/whore complex in the rhetoric of Panera: the Virgin in its logo; sexy young women behind the counter.

Nearly all of the young people at Panera's cash registers are high school girls or college women – and white. There is no Panera mascot or spokesperson like Ronald McDonald. The prettier young girls and women *are* the mascots of the corporate branding: aces in places. The Panera cashiers I encountered typically bore newer, popular names tags of Gen X and Z: Ashley, Aubrey, Brooke, Darby, Kylie, Nicole, Taylor. What I *didn't* find were any of the blended, neologistic African-American girls' names such as Danisha, Tashiqua, or Shaquita nor was I ever greeted by a Latina or Asian name. Panera serves white bread, by white females, with white music playing, peddling suburban, white Christian values. It is as multicultural as "Father Knows Best" or "The Brady Bunch."

At the registers, consumers will find charity boxes, to feed the poor, similar to the Ronald McDonald House boxes seen at McDonald's. There is an obvious irony to all of these charity boxes at both venues: customers may put spare change in them, but never tip the cashier. Yet the "charity" is actually standing right before diners in the form of a service worker making \$8 an hour, repeatedly reciting canned language, and who could use an extra buck or two. When the spare change is slipped into these charity boxes, both customer and worker enter into what I term "the American consumer stasis." In a sudden flash, charity, unfair wages, technical writing, training, uniforms, surveillance, globalization, greed, and gluttony intersect. I regard the moment as a marketing tool that deflects attention from the low wages. Panera believes it is teaching "values" to both its clientele and its young cashiers by promoting charity. The supercorporation controls the ethos of the transaction; workers and consumers are powerless and voiceless.

Aristotle denounced "making profit in petty or disgraceful ways" (*Rhetoric*, II, 6); the philosopher would likely see through Panera's carefully scripted manipulation of charity.

Panera's symbolic bread loaves – dozens of which sit behind the cash registers – are occasionally purchased by customers, but are really used for sandwich making and in truth "exist for display and branding image more than anything else" (Anonymous manager, personal conversation, May 27, 2014). The leftover loaves, *some* nights, get donated to local churches and soup kitchens and therefore serve three purposes: they create atmosphere; they aid in a public relations campaign that links Panera to Christian values ("we help feed the poor"); and they conveniently act as a corporate tax deduction. However, one worker (the sole Panera Latino employee whom I interacted with, Xavier), told me that these donations "were hardly a seven night a week affair" and that staggering amounts of loaves of bread were simply discarded into dumpsters by Panera, likely all over the country each night (personal conversation, June 2, 2014). So the bread serves a fourth function: shameful, irresponsible corporate waste.

The phrase "hot bread!" is required to be shouted to the audience/customers anytime new loaves are taken from the ovens. Why not say "warm loaves?" Why say anything at all unless it is a rhetorical marketing device designed to appeal to the pathos of the patrons? The great authority on ambiguity, William Empson (*Seven Types of Ambiguity*, 1930; revised 1966) would easily spot the double-entendre here. "Hot" subliminally ties in to the physical appearance of many of the young female cashiers; "bread" has both a literal meaning and is slang for cash. Panera presents itself as the keeper of white, suburban, wholesome values, but it won't hesitate to subtly suggest an ancient linkage of cash and sex as its subliminal fare.

There is a distinct code to how Panera employees dress that ties into sexuality and power. Management is always in long sleeves; employees are always in short sleeves. This visual cue

creates the pecking order. The cashier young women (males are most likely to be in the "line" making sandwiches and soups) may wear "any solid, non-logo polo shirt as long as it is in the color of the rainbow" (Joe C., manager, personal interview, May 25, 2014). Black is not permitted. The typically pink, purple, light green, and light blue shirts accentuate cheerfulness, the theme of femininity and "service with a smile," but the bare arms of the young women also ties into the color theme of Panera (tan) and the sheer carnal desire of consuming comfort foods like bagels and pastry (also tan). My insider source, Xavier, told that me that one display of a tattoo, no matter how innocuous, means immediate dismissal and is the greatest sin at Panera. Although tattoos are more mainstream than ever before, they can still connote unsavory elements such as gang culture, prison life, biker culture, "lowbrow" life, and overt eroticism or tribalism to conservative-minded whites. Tattoos, at Panera more than any place, represent what in literature is known as "the other." And "the other" is simply not wanted at Panera.

The most mandatory question cashiers must ask is "Do you have your MyPanera Rewards Card today?" In fact, if the "do you have your MyPanera Rewards Card today?" is *not* asked, the cashiers get points deducted and if the infraction occurs enough, they will get fired for not keeping up with the program (Joe C., manager, personal conversation, May 25, 2014). Let's parse this sentence since it is tied in to both Panera's success and the ability of the low-level employee to hold onto his or her non-union job. (The analysis could apply for any of the numerous national corporations that use similar sentences.) "Do you have your MyPanera Rewards Card today?" has three pronouns (*you, your, my*) and all three cater to the consumer's egoism, a marketing technique borrowed from the Starbucks playbook: subsume the consumer's personal identity into that of the supercorporation's. Two of the pronouns are in possessive form, offering a fabricated sense of belonging and ownership. The tone of the sentence seems vaguely

parental. It is redolent of "Did you remember to pack your lunch today?" or "Did you remember to do your homework today?" Its ultimate redaction is "Were you a good, obedient boy/girl today just as I am being a good/obedient girl by asking you this mandatory question?" The seemingly innocent compulsory marketing question abounds with Foucaultian issues of power and control. Panera controls the cashier who in turns dictates normative behaviors and responses from the consumer. Thus technical scripting and training contribute to subservience and objectification. Note that the sentence is heavy on adverbs. Nouns and verbs are the building blocks of English; technical communicators are taught to stress nouns and verbs over adjectives and adverbs (Rude, 2011). A cashier might utter this clumsy sentence several thousand times a week.

Carolyn Miller (1984) argues that rules apply from repeated use of language, and that repeated utterances eventually establish a cultural meaning; these language choices also influence language choosers what to *leave out* of a text. In this sentence, the cashier is entirely absent from the sentence. She is irrelevant, invisible, existing solely as a mouthpiece for corporate greed. The primary sentence about the MyPanera rewards program on the corporate website reads: "When you're a member of our MyPanera program you'll enjoy rewards and surprises when you least expect them" (Panera.com, 2014). Note again how "you," in one form or another, is the most repeated word in the sentence, appealing to the consumer's narcissism.

As a final note, in my many hours of observations of Panera operations, I found a stark irony that said something about life in America: middle aged overweight and obese women often stop in to Panera to purchase pastries from young, slender women who would never dream of eating the goods themselves. It is like the old maxim on the street that the best dope pushers are not dope users. These may be unique moments of interesting, ironic, feminist scholarship. A slender young woman, unable to help an obese woman make a healthy choice, is forced to ask

"would you like a pastry?" and never "can I get you a salad today?" The drive for profits dictates the training manual dialogue, and trumps all other human values, empathy or bonds. Panera is the patriarchy of pastry.

The Panera website, like most corporate websites, has a "search" box and button. Plug in the phrase "union" and there will be no hits; plug in the phrase "worker's rights" and the site will actually shut down with a "forbidden 404 error" message that reads:

"You don't have permission to access /en-us/mypanera/search.html on this server."

I did this repeatedly enough on different days and on different computers to find the trigger phrase was not an anomaly. Panera seems like a harmless, wholesome American repast of soup, salad, coffee, bagels, and pastries – until anyone searches for "worker's rights" on its website, which is as censored as its bulletin boards. In the time it takes to say "MyPanera Rewards Card" a consumer can politically be transported from Ohio to China.

4.4 Lessons from Publix

In the "jeremiad against consumerism" it is never hard to find people who despise McDonald's, Wal-Mart, or Starbucks. All three supercorporations can engender deep-seated feelings of loathing or personal boycott – particularly in academic circles. Yet this kind of reaction never seems to occur when it comes to Publix. I felt it important for this study to understand why this was so.

Publix (est. 1930) is a regional phenomenon, though a high percentage of Americans have either heard of it or been to one as Florida is such a common tourist destination (or many simply have family ties in Florida). A northern regional equivalent might be Kroger. Publix has roughly 1,000 store outlets, three quarters of which are in Florida alone; Georgia is the state with

the second highest number; a smattering of outlets exist in a few other Southern states; inroads are being made into North Carolina. (Publix.com, 2014).

In many ways Publix is "Florida's supermarket." Nearly all Publix employees that I chatted with did not consider other Florida supermarkets like Winn-Dixie or Albertson's to be rivals. Rather, they saw Wal-Mart as their great threat. (At the time of this writing, one of Wal-Mart's Florida television campaigns is a direct comparison of savings young families make shopping at Wal-Mart compared to shopping at Publix). In response to inroads by another rival, Whole Foods, Publix has in recent years created "Greenwise" organic sections in its stores, and a few full "Publix Greenwise" outlets. I mention these comparisons to demonstrate that Publix, a regional enterprise, and despite its ubiquity and popularity in the Sunshine State, must go toe-to-toe with global goliaths. Only one marketing phrase is ever really associated with Publix: "where shopping is a pleasure." While most of us can recall various Coca-Cola or McDonald's jingles, we tend to accept the Publix mantra, coined in 1950, not as rhetoric or marketing but as some sort of simple truth. There is a "folksiness" and "realness" to Publix that eludes most national chains.

An aisle clerk in Lakeland, Cody P., on a break, told me all he could about Publix training, and to my astonishment, I ascertained that it barely exists. Entry-level employees receive a one day, six hour orientation that is a combination of videos, policies and procedures; are issued uniforms; and given a book on the history of Publix and its philosophies. He did not receive a map of the store: employees are expected to absorb the vast amount of information concerning product placement on their own. Publix has little OJT and more "sink or swim." Management wants to see that new hires have the personality to deal with the public and staff, and the work ethic to learn product placement by themselves. Publix is highly selective about

whom it hires; unlike McDonald's, more people *want* to work at Publix than it can hire, so for Publix, the screening process, like at Starbucks, is in many ways part of the training process. According to former hospitality columnist Jim Sullivan (2001), "The best managers source, recruit and interview new employees to maximize retention" (p. 18). Publix has low rates of turnover, and many individuals and even whole families make careers out of Publix. Why?

The key to Publix's financial success, public popularity, employee retention, and employee satisfaction is that it is employee-owned. After a few trial months, workers start getting paid in both salary *and* stock options. Publix is a privately-held corporation; these stocks are only available to employees – and the stock options add up. And they keep employees happy and solvent. I often wondered why grown men and women were often slicing meats in Publix delis or slicing breads in store bakeries – and seemed happy to do so, in comparison to the apathy of many young people in fast-food establishments. The reason is that Publix employees regard their stores *as their own*, and they probably have a lot bigger stock portfolio than many professionals who would never dream of spending their life in service work. Many consumers in America likely look down their noses at service workers at times; if these citizens compared their own 401K's with those of many lifelong Publix employees, they might look a bit differently.

If supercorporations are here to stay – and unionization is not an option – then the solution to the dehumanization of McDonald's and its copycats, and the pretentiousness of Starbucks and Panera is to adopt the Publix employee-owned model, plain and simple – preserving human dignity, serving the public with pride, and maintaining a regional identity.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND FURTHER STUDY

5. Analysis and Discussion

A service worker today may be analyzed through Zola's principles of naturalism in literary criticism – that the individual is trapped in a web of powerful, impersonal forces. When an individual accepts employment at a national or global corporation, he or she has symbolically enlisted as a pawn in a sales military. It is not just a handbag that is checked at the door, but any forms of personal expression, creativity, or individuality. Submission is the premium value that is rewarded, coupled with conformity to the corporation's prescribed behaviors, language, and values. The concept of job security is non-existent, which reinforces senses of anxiety and dispensability in the service worker. We have come to accept it as "normal" that workers are in uniforms from head to toe, under surveillance, paid low wages, provided canned language, and unable to unionize. We rationalize that "they are just kids" – but that is no longer true in this economy. We accept this in large part because Ray Kroc pushed these ideals on America – and supercorporations followed suit. We accept this because Wal-Mart can purchase large-scale television public relations commercials, and its employees cannot. We accept this because the training and technical writing so overwhelmingly beleaguers us that we accept this aspect of life as "normal," when it is in many ways dehumanizing and Orwellian. Coal miners receive technically written warnings about the physical risks of their tasks (MSHA, 2005); service workers do not receive warnings about the potential psychological hazards associated with the work: low self-esteem; low social status; the quelling of creativity and drive; the effects of monotony; the possible development of anger. These issues should be addressed more closely by trainers, supercorporations, and psychologists.

Ritzer is deeply troubled by McDonaldization because Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman stressed links between bureaucracy, efficiency, dehumanization – and the Holocaust. While the idea may seem startling, far-fetched, or absurd, the Bauman argument, based on some of Max Weber's own fears, is that *only* with a population of obedient people, efficiency, and a highly organized system of distribution – all centered on the principles of scientific management set forth by Frederick Taylor at the turn of the century – may systematic horror take place. While I do not think that any such destruction could ever transpire in the United States, I do believe it is entirely possible in other rationalized nations, and that another form of destruction takes place through the widespread rewarding of conformity: loss of creativity, individuality, and human spirit. In no small part, I believe a combination of McDonaldization and conformity, coupled with Internet addictions, has fueled recent cultural fads and films concerning "zombies." We need more dignity in national life, and fast-food enterprises could have a dramatic impact on humanizing the rite of the repast.

5.1 The Difficulty of Unionizing Service Workers

It is a daunting task to organize service workers. According to Ruth Milkman, professor of sociology at City University of New York, "these jobs turnover so quickly, that by the time you get around to organizing them [the workers] they're not on the job anymore" (Greenhouse, *New York Times*, 2012, Nov 29). The chances of entry-level workers unionizing is low: "under current legal conditions they [service workers] have little realistic chance of winning union recognition at any single work site of the corporation that employs them" (Early, 2014, p. 20). Featherstone stipulates that "the invention of the 'consumer' identity" has been an important part of a long process of eroding workers' power, and it is one reason working people now have so little power against business" (*The Nation*, 2005, Jan 3). As we have seen, unions simply do not

have the matching funds that supercorporations do, and in a way, we are so inured to service-workers, we are often oblivious to their plight. Trainers and technical writers, even if not in favor of unionization, should at least strive to make the service sector more humanizing, focusing on the dignity of the worker, and should act as voices for those that have none.

5.2 Euphemism as a Labor Tactic

We live in an age of euphemisms and subtext. For example, "family first" is allowed on Florida license plates, with stick figures of a mother, father, and two children, but can easily be interpreted as homophobic. Euphemism can be a powerful rhetorical device, and they abound in the workforce: being "fired" finds softer landings in phrases like "let go" or "the pink slip." In Table 9 below, I found the following terms used, mostly euphemisms, in 20 major companies.

One boards a ship or joins a team:

Table 9: Corporate euphemisms

Franchise:	Employee Terminology:
Bed, Bath & Beyond	Team Member or Associate
Chick-fil-A	Team Member
Corner Bakery, The	Breadhead
Dave & Buster's	Team Member
Disney	Cast Member
Dunkin' Donuts	Crew Member
Home Depot	Associate
KFC	Team Member
Lowe's	Associate
McDonald's	Crew Member
Panera	Associate
Publix	Team Member
Starbucks	Barista and Partner (internally)
Staples	Sales Associate
Subway	Crew Member
Target	Team Member
Taco Bell	Crew Member
Wal-Mart	Associate
Wendy's	Crew Member
Whole Foods	Team Member

Disney really started this trend with the clever usage of "cast member" decades ago. The boldest euphemism on this list is by far Starbucks' concept of a "partner." It usually takes many years to be a "partner" in a competitive law firm. At Starbucks, it merely takes a day. The most enjoyable, I think, is the Corner Bakery's "Breadhead," undoubtedly coined by someone well versed in the collected works of Jerry Garcia, Bob Weir, Phil Lesh, et al.

5.3 Exploring Links between Public Education and Corporate Training

When, in America, does education end and training begin? One area that this study certainly invites more exploration of is the link between standardized student curriculums of NCLB and service worker training. If the corpus of public education curricula is regarded as a form of technical writing – the quizzes, tests, textbooks – then for the non-college or non-military bound, the next piece of instruction they may very well encounter is a SWTm. Training manuals must be viewed as corporate extensions of textbook-based education. The relationship between textbook-based education and training manuals likely has room for investigation. Perlmutter (1997) stresses that "for the half of U.S. children who do not go to college, high school social science textbooks are the last officially endorsed guides to the ordering of meaning of U.S. and world history and society" (p. 68). The structure, content, tone, narratives, graphs and other visual presentations in textbooks should be considered in rhetorically assessing the training manuals that workers may face later in life. Anthologies and science textbooks contain "examples of model classification, description, definition, causal analysis, and example" (Jones, 1985, p. 116) – elements from which training manuals borrow heavily.

With attempts to homogenize curriculums stronger than ever before – not only through standardized curriculums but through the increasingly visible franchising of Kindergartens and

voluntary pre-school (VPS) – the links between "schooling" and low-level employee "training" must be drawn by more sociologists, educators, and technical communicators alike. We are socialized into school codes of conduct, classroom norms and behaviors, and technical instructions in the form of curricula, quizzes, tests and essays. Florida is moving into the direction of videotaping all classrooms; many schools and states, hungry for federal funds, are so driven by test data that "education" has become little more than practice-test drill centers for math and English. In Figure 3, below, we see a satire about the erstwhile No Child Left Behind:



Figure 3: Political cartoon of child mourning NCLB

Source: Susan Ohanian.org (2003) (Permission granted from Susan Ohanian)

In this satire, in the "education graveyard" are real books, art, discovery, process, joy, creativity, and the teachable moment. Many social critics have argued that NCLB only contributed to *The Closing of the American Mind* (Bloom, 1987) and may have been a politically tool to keep large swaths of the population "in check," prepared more for the military or Wal-Mart, while those in better school districts and prep schools move on to the good colleges and a professional life.

The emphases of public education – obedience and tests – on some level, prepares students for the primary instruments of the workforce: contracts, employment codes of conduct, training manuals – and the statistical evaluations many workers face. At issue is the close relationship between the two, and more study is called for.

5.4 Closing Remarks

In my research, I found Luedicke, Thompson, and Giesler's assessment that consumerism is a "morality play" to be the most compelling insight and metaphor of all. Building on their argument and use of metaphor, I wish to go one step further and state that terms like "supercorporations," "multinational corporations," "global corporations," or "worldwide enterprises" are euphemisms for what are in fact really postmodern *superfiefdoms* who control much of the world's means of production and the means of consumption. Postmodernism and globalization simply means that the Dark Ages are back, stronger than ever before. In this schema, A CEO is a euphemism for a king or czar; higher executives and stakeholders are really princes, dukes, and earls; and the millions of low-wage earners are essentially serfs in America; all but slaves in Asian sweatshops. Only nations with armies are more powerful, and perhaps only militarily so, not economically or in ways that so deeply shapes our daily lives. Starbucks, McDonald's, BP, Macy's, Wal-Mart and similar global operations are oligarchical *superfiefdoms* – all with ties to human rights abuses abroad.

During the Reconstruction period following the Civil War, sharecropping was often a close cousin of slavery. It could vary, but some aspects of it were "a twilight zone between freedom and involuntary servitude" (Daniel, 1979, p. 89). The McJobs of today – whether actually *at* McDonald's or any “*superfiefdom*” – might very well be in the contemporary twilight zone between sharecropping and raw survival. While I do not think McJobs are going to

disappear, if I had the chance to write an editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* or appear before the leaders of the supercorporations, I would, based on my investigations, make the following recommendations:

1. **Wages.** It is difficult and tedious to be on one's feet all day, dealing with the public, for \$8 an hour. Seattle has voted a \$15 minimum wage (*USA Today*, June 15, 2014). This may be extreme, but a service worker should receive at least \$12 an hour, nationally, and more responsible companies should be moving toward the Publix and Starbucks models of stock options and healthcare, and the Whole Foods model of ecological stewardship;
2. **Uniforms.** The Whole Foods model was the best I studied; one needs only one article (a hat, an apron) to identify oneself as an employee. The Whole Foods employees I interviewed took great pride in their buttons (often of rock groups or political movements). The head-to-toe concept we have become accustomed to might militarize service worker too greatly, tying into their submissiveness. If uniform policies could be more relaxed, some aspects of American culture could reclaim more of its pioneering and individual spirit;
3. **Repetition.** Phrases such as "Do you have your MyPanera Rewards Card?" need not be repeated 500 times a day by an individual; most cashiers I spoke to said they hated it and that it added to the repulsion and resentment of their jobs. A placard at a register suffices. In general, memorized lines should be abolished in favor of allowing individuals to be themselves. Natural dialogues would have a humanizing and dignifying effect on national life. Canned dialogues only contribute to the senses of inauthenticity and simulation that Baudrillard argued were so detrimental and un-dignifying in modern times.

* * *

Thomas Van Osdall (1973) once held that there is a "poetry of science" which functions as a "humanizing force in our culture" (Gresham & Kaltenbach, 1975, p. 5, citing Van Osdall). This poetry of science must be resurrected in our technical writing and training procedures involved in the service sector. All of us – technical communicators, teachers, trainers, and citizen consumers – can become more aware of how our professional and personal decisions affect the darker aspects of globalization. We can have a voice in professional organizations. We can be more involved in localism movements such as "Ourlando," which promotes local patronizing, fair wages, slow foods and local foods – and gainsays all of the simulation that the theme parks and globalized superfiefdoms stand for. We can develop and teach a rhetoric for those who need it. We can, with a clear conscience, always strive to keep the "human" in the humanities.

Rhetoric, rhetoric against the dying of the light.

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