A Proposed Schema for Analyzing the "Other" in Visual, Political Satire: The New Yorker Cartoon on Barack Obama

Safiyya Hosein
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A Proposed Schema for Analyzing the "Other" in Visual, Political Satire: The *New Yorker* cartoon on Barack Obama

Lynn University

Safiyya Hosein
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Acknowledgement

Words cannot express the tremendous gratitude I have for the people who have assisted me in the completion of my thesis which to date has been the largest task I have undertaken academically. I first wish to thank my family, particularly my parents for their continued support both emotionally and financially. I would also like to express a heartfelt thanks to the chair of my thesis committee, Dr. Valeria Fabj. Last but certainly not least, I would like to express immense gratitude to the library staff of Lynn University who assisted me in attaining crucial research and exhibited diligence and patience in introducing me to key methods in digital research. Special thanks go to Judy Alsdorf who helped me acquire many books and articles through inter-library loans which undoubtedly shaped the core research and thus theoretical conclusions of this thesis.
Part I: Introduction

Thesis Statement

This thesis will provide an image schema for analyzing the Other in satirical imagery. It will also strengthen previous theories in visual communication that argue that imagery, specifically satirical imagery, may also function in the form of visual ideographs. The case study that will be conducted to illustrate this argument will be an analysis of the controversial July/2008 New Yorker cartoon entitled The Politics of Fear which satirized Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle Obama, as “fist-bumping” terrorists in the White House. The purpose of this paper is to provide a framework or analysis tool for deconstructing the Other in visual, political satire and is a response to the existing fragmented methods of analysis. In a broader sense, this thesis is meant to build on theories that contribute to the existing debate that argues for incorporating imagery into rhetorical studies.

Background

The famous 20th century saying, “a picture is worth a thousand words” can arguably be one of the more commonly known pop culture clichés that has stood the test of time. Yet, in communication studies relatively little has been done to pay heed to such a phrase and the others similar to it. The information age and much of modern media have combined the unbreakable force of images and words to persuade an already media-saturated public for much of the modern era. Iconic images such as the flag raising at Iwo Jima, a mug shot of Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara and a nameless Chinese civilian standing in front of four military tanks have conjured words such as “patriotism”, “resistance” and “oppression” and have been iconic images since they first appeared in popular media. Such memorable images have become bigger than the
people and events that have long withered in history and yet popular media and the broader public continue to reference them as other-worldly forms.

For a significant period in its history, the dominant method of evaluation in rhetorical studies has been the observation and analysis of language. Famous scholars such as Kenneth Burke (Burke, 1969) and Marshall McLuhan (McLuhan, 1964) have been immortalized for their contributions in the study of language. Noted scholars such as Haig Bosmajian have produced works on the oppressive qualities of language (Bosmajian, 1983). All of their works as well as those of many more have inspired generations of rhetorical scholars to advance their contributions to the study of language. But at its heart, the essence of rhetoric is concerned primarily with symbol analysis. And yet somehow the notion of symbol analysis is predominantly synonymous with textual analysis while other forms of symbols such as images have suffered disproportionate inattention in rhetorical studies.

Recent inroads have been made to incorporate imagery into rhetorical analyses. Sonja K. Foss, a leading scholar in visual communication has notably contributed an image schema to provide a framework for image analysis in rhetoric (Foss, 1994). Dana L. Cloud (2004) and Catherine Palczweski (2005) have discussed the notion of including pictoral ideographs in rhetorical studies. And Janis L. Edwards and Carol K. Winkler have also included an ideographic analysis of cartoons in rhetoric, albeit in the form of parody (Edwards, Winkler, 1997). While Edwards and Winkler have argued for visual parody being a valid form of rhetorical representation, little else has been done in the realm of rhetoric to explore implications of satire in our global village. The argument that satire holds a special function altogether in rhetoric is one that will be explored in detail in this paper. Satire is a distinct form of commentary that has stood the test of time in literature and imagery since the time of the Ancient Greeks. It has been a
significant weapon in fighting oppression and authority and questioning the status quo since the early days of Horace and Voltaire. As such this thesis provides a framework for analyzing satirical images in rhetorical studies with attention paid to deconstructing the Other.

**Literature Review**

**Historical Imagery and Ideographs**

The argument for greater incorporation of image analysis in rhetorical studies has been a hot topic for years with various models proposed and theories discussed on how to approach image analysis. Leonard Shlain provided a comprehensive chronology of the dominance of images in human history, its decline and eventual revival in his controversial book, *The Alphabet vs. the Goddess*. Incidentally, Shlain pivoted the decline of images with the replacement of text and illustrated how a harmony of both now exists due in part to modern technologies (Shlain, 1998). For his research, Shlain consulted the works of famed communication philosopher Marshall McLuhan for his studies and philosophy on literacy.

It can be argued that McLuhan was one of the earlier researchers of image analysis in communication theory and not surprisingly, discussed ideographs in his book *Understanding Media*. In his chapter on “the written word”, McLuhan discussed the radical shift in attitudes that the phonetic alphabet created in previously image-dependent cultures using the Chinese ideogram as an example. His argument was that ideographs fostered a greater sense of tribalism or community whereas the alphabet bolstered more individualist values. McLuhan concluded that the nature of ideographs was consequently more communal due to the emotive quality of images because of its concrete nature as opposed to the detaching quality of text due to its abstract nature. Because images conjured more visual perception, it seemed more real and therefore held greater emotional sway and a collective pull as opposed to text which was simply
an arrangement of abstract characters (McLuhan, pgs. 82-83, 1964). In essence, he was arguing that the impact of ideographs was notable for its ability to inspire emotion.

Many rhetoriticians that implore for the greater analysis of ideographs often cite Michael Calvin McGee’s essays, ““Ideograph”: A Link between Rhetoric and Ideology” (McGee, 1980) and “The “Ideograph” as a Unit of Analysis in Political Argument” (McGee, 1979). Some, such as John M. Murphy (Murphy, 2002) have cited McGee’s essays to further their argument for ideographical analysis in political communication. It is interesting that McGee introduced the importance of ideographs in communication philosophy in conjunction with politics, thus echoing the importance of ideographs in the political sphere. McGee’s conclusions on ideographs only support McLuhan’s idea that ideographs contain an emotional and collective appeal, stating that ideographs “appear[s] to be both “idea” and “feeling” at the same time” (McGee, p.75, 1979). He goes on to further state that ideographs hold importance in political arguments due to the sometimes “non-rational” tone of persuasion in politics.

Visual Ideographs and Cartoons

However, the form of ideographs McGee discussed was mainly textual. Since then, communication philosophers such as Catherine H. Palczewski and Dana L. Cloud have analyzed pictoral ideographs with, the latter calling for an image-centered movement, thus highlighting the need for more careful image deconstruction. In Cloud’s article, ““To Veil the Threat of Terror”: Afghan Women and the <Clash of Civilizations> in the Imagery of the U.S. War on Terrorism” (2004), she also incorporated the need for ideographical analysis when examining Orientalist bias – a topic that will be covered in this thesis. Palczewski on the other hand focused on gender definitions and the early women’s suffrage movement in her article, “The Male Madonna and the

With the notion of ideographs being established with both Cloud’s and Palczewski’s articles, it should be noted that cartoons have also been the source of many image analyses in rhetorical studies. Cartoons deconstructed in ideographic forms and for its satirical value have been analyzed by Janis L. Edwards and Carol K. Winkler in their article “Representative Form and the Visual Ideograph: The Iwo Jima Image in Editorial Cartoons” (1997). Both authors noted that strategic images tend to reflect the values and beliefs of society at large and that parodied cartoons hold a special function in rhetorical analysis. Cartoons, notwithstanding the ideographic connotation, but nonetheless praiseworthy of socio-political commentary of the times have also been deconstructed in communication studies by authors such as Stephanie Kelley-Romano and Victoria Westgate in “Drawing Disaster: The Crisis Cartoons of Hurricane Katrina” (Kelley-Romano, Westgate, 2007) and “Blaming Bush: An analysis of political cartoons following Hurricane Katrina” (Kelley-Romano, Westgate, 2007). Ross F. Collins also discussed satirical cartoons during WWII in France in his article “A Battle for Humor: Satire and Censorship in Le Bavard” (Collins, 1996). Regarding political cartoons, W. Bradford Mello (Mello, 2007) discussed its changing nature in the 21st century. Jon P. Alston and Larry J. Platt (1969) provided analysis of religious cartoons in the New Yorker through the 1930-1968 years, concluding that cartoons are “social documents that reflect social values”.

There were also articles that directly addressed symbolism and metaphors in cartoons such as Janis Edwards’s piece titled “Metaphors and Enmity in the Gulf War Cartoons” (Edwards, 1993). Stating that “the rhetorical mode of the cartoonist is not straight argument but satire”, Edwards conducted a study examining 157 cartoons published during the first Gulf war
and illustrated how most of them assisted in aiding propagandist agendas in the media during the build-up of the war. She also touched on salient areas of cartooning that are of interest for this thesis – namely, the construction of the Other which can be defined as any group or individual that stands apart from the status quo. She noted that “the division of a world view into heroes and villains, friends and enemies, is a powerful tool of persuasion in that it contributes to a sense of group cohesiveness, bonding, and purpose, and opens the way for the expulsion of the Other” (Edwards, p. 65). However, it should be noted that Edwards’s article did not focus on satire but instead on metaphorical analysis and the power of political cartoons. Her study also applied a schema outlined in the book, *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination* (Keen, 1986).

Franklin entitled “Benjamin Franklin’s Pictoral Representations of the British Colonies in America: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology” (Olson, 1987) and “Benjamin Franklin’s Commemorative Medal Libertas Americana: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology” (Olson, 1990). Further research has also been done on ideographs in communication studies. James Jasinski (2002), Fernando Delgado (1995, 1999) and Mark P. Moore (1996) have also incorporated ideographical analysis in their works as well.

**Islamic Cartoons and Controversy**

The Orientalist stereotype and the controversy behind Islamic cartoons is nothing new to rhetorical analysis. In “Cartoons as a Site for the Construction of Palestinian Refugee Identity: An Exploratory Study of Cartoonist Naji al-Ali” (2007), Orayb Aref Najjar stated that cartoon analysis is inherently dependent on subjective interpretation despite the fact that it appeals to a more collective frame of mind. Najjar provided insight into the costuming of characters, noting that apparel reflects state of mind. He also states that caricature in itself is a form of symbolism, and determined that political cartoons are a form of political editorials reflecting dominantly held views, a conclusion echoed earlier by Alston and Platt (Alston, Platt, 1969).

Many insights and analyses were also given to the controversial Danish cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad by the Danish newspaper, *Jyllands-Posten*. Some scholars such as Lars Qvortrup, sought to discuss the nature of the issue through its relationship with digital media in our global village (Qvortrup, 2006). However, scholarly articles and news coverage on the Danish cartoon affair provided insight into religious tolerance and Orientalist stereotypes. The framing of news coverage on the Danish cartoon affair is directly comparable to the *New Yorker* cartoon on Obama. Tolerance towards the Danish cartoon affair was defended
under the banner of free speech and claimed the use of satire as its medium. Similarly the *New Yorker* cartoon was also defended under the grounds of satire.

Regarding the Danish cartoon affair, Adam Shehata did two conclusive studies on the news framing behind the issue. In the first, he charged that news coverage in both the “elite” Swedish and U.S. media were framed intolerantly after conducting an extensive research study on the news framing of the cartoons (Shehata, 2007). Shehata also wrote another article on framing the Muhammad cartoons from a cross-cultural perspective with Jesper Stromback and Daniela V. Dimitrova in “Framing the Muhammad Cartoons: A cross-cultural comparison of Swedish and US press” (Strombeck, Shehata and Dimitrova, 2008). Peter Hervik (2006), Dan Berkowitz, Lyombe Eko (2007) and Kumaralingam Amirthalingam (2007) also discussed the controversy with the latter focusing on the debate between free speech and religious sensitivities. Ali J. Hussain (2007) and Sandhya Bhattacharya (2007) provided crucial insight into the racist implications and isolating nature of the cartoons for Muslims as well as valuable commentary on Orientalism. Edward W. Said explores the concept of Orientalism in detail in his now famous book, *Orientalism* (Said, 1979).

**Barack Obama and the New Yorker Cartoon**

The item of analysis for this thesis is none other than the depiction of Barack Obama in the Oval Office dressed up as Islamic terrorist bumping fists with his wife in the July/2008 edition of *The New Yorker*. Since at press time, no scholarly articles can be yet found on Obama’s religious identity, non-academic articles have been consulted to understand the framing of Obama’s religious identity in the media as well as the backlash surrounding the *New Yorker* cartoon. It should be noted that the article on Obama in the *New Yorker* was considerably
unfavorable. It was entitled “Where Barack Obama Learned to be a Pol” (Lizza, 2008) and documented the presidential candidate’s rise in Chicago politics, depicting him as a grasping politician who learned the art of game-playing in Chicago politics. In the article, reported tension with fellow politicians was relayed and former political allies who no longer support the candidate were also interviewed. The name of the much maligned cartoon was entitled *The Politics of Fear* and was drawn by the cartoonist Barry Blitt.

The name and image was undoubtedly a reference to the fear-mongering conjured by Republicans, Christian conservatives and right-wing radio trailing the Obama campaign in regards to his religious identity. In the *International Herald Tribune’s* article “The Man Behind the Whispers” (2008), Jim Rutenberg clarified that Obama is a practicing Christian who was raised by his atheist mother and Protestant grandparents but whose parentage includes a Muslim Kenyan father who alternately considered himself either an agnostic or atheist. For part of his childhood, he also lived in Indonesia with a non-practicing Muslim stepfather. However, the rumor about him being a concealed Muslim which eventually took on a life of its own was started by a now-revealed psychologically unstable, non-practicing lawyer known as Andy Martin (Rutenberg, J., 2008).

There was an intense backlash to the cartoon when it was revealed. Anna Pukas of the UK newspaper, *The Express*, accused the cartoon as being racist (Pukas, “Beyond a Joke”, 2008). The Obama campaign lashed out referring to the cartoon as “tasteless and offensive” (Gaskell, Saul, “Just Terror-ble!”, 2008). Even Obama’s presidential candidate rival, John McCain, joined in on the criticism, calling the cover “totally inappropriate”. The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) released a statement, regarding the cover as an attempt to “reduce the [Islamic] faith and its 1.5 billion followers into caricatures of themselves” (Gaskell,
Saul, “Mag runs for Cover”, 2008). The *New Yorker* attempted to explain its motive with the cartoon, stating in a press release that the cartoon “satirizes the use of scare tactics and misinformation in the Presidential election to derail Barack Obama’s campaign” (The New Yorker, 2008).

Much of the media backlash abroad such as *The London Times* (MacIntyre, “Satire and the Obamas”, 2008) and *The Express* (Pukas, “Beyond a Joke”, 2008) attempted to question the limits of satire in the mainstream press and boldly asserted that it contained racist implications. However, domestic coverage appeared tamer and did not delve into the potential to racially stereotype and otherwise. In a review in *Advertising Age*, Ann Marie Kerwin stated that the philosophy of left-wing intellectuals that stated that the sophistication of the cover could be lost on some in Middle America was ultimately “condescending” (Kerwin, 2008). A quick search of Lexus Nexus newspaper articles with the keywords “Obama, New Yorker” in the month of July 2008 found mostly “letters to the editor” in U.S publications responding to the cartoon.

One recurring analysis of the cartoon kept leaping out of most editorials discussing the cartoon. Many described the cartoon as depicting Michelle Obama as a Black Panther, sporting a pro-Black, 1960’s afro and military gear with a fist bump that closely resembled the famous Black Panther greeting. Barack Obama was dressed in Islamic garb, a form of dress many featured Islamic militants in the press have been spotted in (Manji, “The Globe and Mail”, 2008).

**Satire**

Several books provided an adequate understanding of the nature of satire and its purpose. In *Satire: From Horace to Yesterday’s Comic Strips*, James Scott stated the obvious purpose of satire is an attempt to ridicule. He also provided historical knowledge on the topic, noting that it
existed since the times of the Greeks and Romans. In his book, Scott mainly featured the many
different manifestations of satire through plays, poetry, fiction and comics (Scott, 2005). In The
Anatomy of Satire (Hightet, 1962), Gilbert Hightet identified two main kinds of satirists – the kind
that likes people but thinks of them as foolish and the kind that simply hates people (Hightet,
1962). Blitt would be categorized as the former. In Satire: A Critical Reintroduction, Dustin
Griffin discusses the rhetoric of satire in his second chapter, noting that satire has two rhetorical
functions – to inquire and to provoke (Griffin, 1994). In The Difference Satire Makes: Rhetoric
and Reading from Jonson to Byron, Fredric V. Bogel directly ties literary satire to
communication theory in his first two chapters, noting that one of the main functions of satire in
rhetoric can be described as one of Kenneth Burke’s “representative anecdote” (Bogel, 2001).
Robert Wess provided a gracious interpretation of Burke’s concept of “representative anecdotes”
that can be unified with Bogel’s view of representative anecdotes (Wess, 2004).

Not to be outdone, Burke has also contributed critical writings on satire such as in his
essay “I want to write a Satire” which was featured in a book containing a collection of his works
with commentary by William H. Rueckert and Angelo Bonadonna in the book On Human
and which was also published posthumously. Burke also discussed irony, a form of satire, in his
discussed the complexity of this fourth master trope and how it distinctly applies to a rhetorical
relationship with the Other in his article, “Kenneth Burke: A Dialogue of Motives” (Murray,
2001). Robert Hariman explored the importance of satire in democratic culture in his article,
“Political Parody and Public Culture” (2008). Roland Barthes’s semiotics theories will be
discussed in relation to how it affects visual satirical evaluation. Hence his book Mythologies
which provides detailed explanations of his signification theory and his work on myth will be used (Barthes, 1972). Communications scholar, John Fiske's also provided valuable explanation on Barthes’s signification theory in his textbook *Introduction to Communication Studies* (Fiske, 1990).

**Visual Communication and Image Schemas**

A growing phenomenon amongst communication philosophy has been the ascendance of visual communication. Scholars such as Palczweski and Cloud have contributed remarkable works dissecting and discussing visual imagery as noted above. However, another rhetoritician, Sonja K. Foss has demonstrated throughout her career a committed diligence towards the development of visual communication. Foss’s articles such as “Visual Imagery as Communication” (Foss, 1992), “Visual Communication in the Basic Course” (1992) and “Rhetoric and the Visual Image: A Resource Unit” (1982) have received popular acknowledgement in the field of rhetoric and have provided invaluable contributions to visual analysis in rhetoric as well as assistance in teaching visual communication. It was Foss who provided a proposed schema for visual analysis for rhetoric in her article “A Rhetorical Schema for the Evaluation of Visual Imagery” (Foss, 1994). To date, her article as well as Valerie V. Peterson’s response to her schema, “The Rhetorical Criticism of Visual Elements: An Alternative to Foss’s Schema” (Peterson, 2001) appear to be the only image schemas popularly referenced in the field of rhetoric.

However, there exists one other image schema that pre-dates both authors’ articles but has not been referred to in most research done for this paper or most articles on visual analysis. Sam Keen created a detailed image schema that was used to examine “the enemy” – a
construction of the Other in his book, *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination*. Janis Edwards applied this schema for rhetorical analysis in her previously mentioned article, “Metaphors and Enmity in the Gulf War Cartoons” (1993). While Keen’s schema is ground-breaking, his focus on limiting the Other to simply “the enemy” has proven to be too rigid a construction for the research of this paper.

**Justification**

Based on research, it is obvious that a debate on satirical images has existed for some time in rhetoric as has been proven with the Danish Muhammad cartoons and Edwards’s and Winkler’s research on the Iwo Jima image. However, as the Muhammad cartoons have proven, approaches to satirical images have become more complicated when discussing racial, religious and minority status components otherwise known as characteristics of the Other. Satire may have endured in part due to the fact that when it offended throughout history, it normally offended to a more homogenous society. When Edwards and Winkler deconstructed the parody images of Iwo Jima in editorial cartoons, the rhetorical representations and thus functions were easier to assess because it applied only significantly to one segment of the world population.

While Berkowitz and Edo insist on the sacred right to offend and are correct in their assumption, it cannot be ignored that with the advent of digital media, which has introduced the concept of viral viewing, offensive images lend to a more complicated form of reaction and inevitably scholarly discussion. While the freedom to interpret and discuss is a sacred hallmark of scholarly discussion, it would not hurt to provide an interpretive framework for satirical images for examination in rhetorical studies. One thing that is absent from the review of literature is that such a schema does not exist in rhetoric. Yet such a schema is needed in the face
of our multi-polar, politically diverse, multicultural world. The schema thus proposed here need not inhibit interpretation but instead assist in analysis by identifying commonalities in satirical images depicting the Other and thus create a standard of analysis from which to follow.

**Theory-building Methodology**

The methodology proposed to construct a rhetorical schema for the evaluation of satirical imagery when depicting the Other will be developed through merging the selected theoretical perspectives of Kenneth Burke’s various theories on satire and its different forms coupled with specific aspects of Roland Barthes’s signification theory. Hence the methodology is split into two parts. The first focuses on Burke’s theories and how they specifically contribute to the theoretical nature of satire. The second part focuses on Barthes’s theories and how they contribute to the building of image construction and analysis. Both parts of the methodology serve as the groundwork to construct the schema. The portion on satirical nature focuses on the function of satire, the perspective of the satirist and the relationship between irony and the Other. The Burkean perspective that is developed for this is Burke’s proposal that satire functions as a “utopia-in-reverse”. Another portion of Burke’s theories that is explored is the idea that the satirist’s perception is a form of his representative anecdote as well as how his theories on irony connect to the Other. Special emphasis is placed on the academic article, “Kenneth Burke: A Dialogue of Motives” by Jeffrey W. Murray. The second part of the methodology focuses entirely on image construction and analysis. This portion draws on Barthes’s order of connotation in his signification theory as well as his theories on the deconstruction of myth will be paid attention to.
Several articles are explored in the discussion portion of the thesis are intended to enhance the methodology further lay the groundwork for the schema. These are Dana Cloud’s "To veil the threat of terror": Afghan Women and the <Clash of Civilizations> in the Imagery of the U.S. War on Terrorism", Catherine Palczewski’s “The Male Madonna and the Feminine Uncle Sam: Visual Argument, Icons, and Ideographs in 1909 Anti-Woman Suffrage Postcards", Janis L. Edwards and Carol K. Winkler “Representative Form and the Visual Ideograph: The Iwo Jima Image in Editorial Cartoons”, Sonja K. Foss’s “Rhetorical schema for the use of evaluating imagery” and Valerie V. Peterson’s, “The Rhetorical Criticism of Visual Elements: An Alternative to Foss’s Schema”.

Palczweski’s article forms the groundwork for examining imagery in the form of ideographs. In the case of Cloud, her article serves as a backdrop for how imagery (in this case satirical imagery) can function broadly as an ideograph. It should be noted that Cloud’s methodology also incorporated theoretical elements of Burke’s and Barthes’s, though not the same theoretical elements that are being consulted for this paper. The Edwards and Winkler portion emphasizes how parody holds a special function in rhetorical analysis. All these articles are crucial to developing the ideographical step in the image schema. Additionally, Edwards and Winkler’s article are of great influence with developing a schema that deconstructs satirical imagery. The rhetorical schemas mentioned above are the only schemas found in the research done for this paper. A comparison of both is conducted in the third chapter. Besides the development of the schema, the thesis argues that satirical imagery can function as an ideograph. This is also explored in the discussion portion of the paper which focuses on the development of ideographs in communication studies.
Both Sonja Foss’s article, “A Rhetorical Schema for the Evaluation of Visual Imagery”, and Valerie V. Peterson’s “The Rhetorical Criticism of Visual Elements: An Alternative to Foss’s Schema”, are used as the basis for developing the schema of this thesis. Special attention is paid to Foss’s analytical framework which places function as the empirical instrument of analysis as well as Peterson’s analytical perspective which emphasizes visual elements and aestheticism as the primary critical tool of interpretation. Both schemas serve as added evidence for the need for philosophical frameworks in rhetorical studies as a way of developing common ground when attempting to incorporate image analysis in rhetoric.

Outline of the Schema

The schema outlined in this thesis offers a new model for analyzing and understanding the Other in satirical imagery as well as the complex nature of satirical imagery in general. Hence the schema is meant to build on existing theoretical perspectives on how to approach visual analysis and how to deconstruct imagery of the Other as well as satirical imagery in general. Furthermore, it aims to assist in the development of image schemas in rhetoric by taking them to a more specified level where image analysis is concerned. As a result, an outline of the schema is provided.

The schema is developed using three steps. Before each step is detailed, some required background work on the satirist and his/her purpose will be explored. Therefore, this schema breaks from Foss’s schema which is strictly anti-intentional. This schema can be considered to be moderately intentional, thus the purpose of the satirist is acknowledged. The layered interpretive model provided by Najar in his article “Cartoons as a Site for the Construction of Palestinian Refugee Identity: An Exploratory Study of Cartoonist Naji al-Ali” (Najjar, 2007) is
used to develop the schema. The three steps are as outlined:

1. The identification of the function being communicated by the satirical image. This step is inspired by Foss’s work on function and places emphasis on the value of function in a rhetorical analysis for satirical imagery and the Other. Thus her schema lays the groundwork for this step. Step one must be applied to Burke’s observation that satire functions as a utopia-in-reverse. This observation is the primary foundation for the entire schema as well. This step is primarily responsible for reversing the actions, speech and aesthetic characteristics of the piece.

2. Identification of the “recalcitrant Other” and its dialogue. The notion of the “recalcitrant Other” is a philosophical concept explored in Murray’s article, “Kenneth Burke: A Dialogue of Motives” (Burke, 1969), which will be further developed for the purpose of this schema. This step basically identifies the Other, provides evidential data from the visual elements to support the identification and determines the dialogue of the Other. Since Peterson’s schema underlined the importance of visual elements in rhetorical analyses, her schema provides the foundation for this step.

3. The third step examines the piece in compartments as well as in its entirety for any ideographical components. If there are ideographical allusions, the critic must then determine the social message conveyed from the use of the ideograph(s) and the effectiveness in using ideographs to convey the message. The third step explores how the use of ideographs assisted in conveying the message of the piece. The criteria used to determine if any aspect of the image or the image in its entirety functions as an ideograph can be found in Michael Calvin McGee’s four requirements for identifying an ideograph.
Limitations

The limitations of this study are obvious in its method of interpretation. Since a schema is simply a conceptual framework or a plan, the pitfalls of one are that it consequentially may rely on highly subjective interpretation. For instance, some critics may argue for different evaluative methods to analyze the Other and satirical imagery. Some may also argue about the limitations of creating image schemas for rhetorical analyses. Furthermore, critics may find the tools of analysis for this particular schema to be somewhat flawed and may instead recommend a different method of evaluation. Other critics may argue for a different kind of methodology to formulate a schema such as this. A possible different methodology that can be explored would be one based off of public sphere theory. Also, the schema can be seen as open-ended considering that it may be interpreted from two opposite angles depending on who assesses the image and where their political and social views align. Last but not least, this schema only evaluates one artifact for the thesis. However, it is encouraged that this schema be used to evaluate other future artifacts to strengthen its validity.
Chapter Two – Methodology

A Marriage of the Selected Theories of Burke and Barthes and their Relation to Satire and Image Construction

Part I – Kenneth Burke’s Evolved Philosophies on Satire

This chapter provides the methodology for the thesis and discusses the primary theories that construct the conceptual perspective for the image schema outlined in chapter four. The methodology for an image schema created to evaluate the Other in satirical imagery is a marriage of selected theories of Kenneth Burke and Roland Barthes. These philosophers were chosen for their extensive work in rhetoric and semiotics and also because many of their theories have been tested repeatedly and proven to be successful. Several useful theories on Burke’s evolving positions on satire have been featured as well as his observation that satire functions as a utopia-in-reverse. The latter theory has proven to be of immense importance in designing the schema. Burke’s concept of representative anecdotes has also been chosen to provide a theoretical perspective that communicates the frame of mind of the satirist. His fourth master trope, irony, and its powerful relationship to the Other is also discussed. Roland Barthes’s theories are discussed in the second part of this chapter. Barthes’s order of connotation in his signification theory is used to illustrate the usefulness of analyzing the Other in satirical imagery. A discussion of his research on myth is featured to conclude the methodology.

Kenneth Burke mused about satire throughout his distinguished career, naming irony, a type of satire as one of his “Four Master Tropes” in his earlier book, A Grammar of Motives (1962). In another book, Attitudes Towards History (1984), he declared satire as a “poetic category” stating:
"The satirist attacks in the Others the weaknesses and temptations that are really within himself. . . . One cannot read great satirists like Swift or Juvenal without feeling this strategic ambiguity. We sense in them the Savanarola, who would exorcise his own vanities by building a fire of the Other people's vanities. Swift's aptitude at "projection" invited him to beat himself unmercilly." (Burke, "On Human Nature", 2003).

He later recalled this quote in the collection of writings compiled and commented on by William H. Rueckert and Angelo Bonadonna in the book On Human Nature: A Gathering while Everything Flows: 1967-1984 stating that this was his frame of mind when writing the second part of his own satirical essay, "Helhaven".

In On Human Nature he expounds on the quote, almost recanting earlier thoughts on satire as a "poetic category" by stating that it was not until he first attempted to write "Helhaven," which he originally named "I want to Write a Satire," that he recognized the sophistication in its nuances. In essence, he didn’t realize the complexity of satire until writing his own. In the essay, "Why Satire with a Plan for Writing One" he stated:

For quite a long time, I had been content to abide by a theory of satire that I had offered in a book, Attitudes toward History, published in the thirties. Approaching satire from the standpoint of the distinction between "acceptance" and "rejection"... I put satire on the negative side of the equation. In contrast, for instance, I thought of epic, tragedy, and comedy as on the "acceptance" side... (Burke, "On Human Nature", 2003).

Even after Burke recognized this in his philosophies, he still continued to term some aspects of satire as a negation or rejection of sorts. However, stumbling on this idea proved remarkably insightful for him because he no longer framed satire from the dichotomous view of either "acceptance" or "rejection." He began to see satire as encompassing both components.

**Satire's Function as a "Utopia-in-Reverse"**

It is clear from the previous quote that even Burke grappled with the function of satire in his earlier years. He later concluded in his essay, "Why Satire with a Plan for Writing One," that
the primary function of satire was to act as a form of “utopia-in-reverse” (Burke, “On Human Nature”, 2003). It seemed at last, that the theorist had stumbled upon the perfect description of satire’s fundamental function in a social narrative throughout its existence. Scholars have always defined the sole purpose of satire is to mock. In his book, *Satire: From Horace to Yesterday’s Comic Strips*, James Scott simply stated “The genre of literature whose purpose is to ridicule is SATIRE” (Scott, 2005). Scott later goes on to explain the purpose and types of satire and explore the different ways in which civilizations used them, citing examples of it in media, cartoons, poetry, fiction and essays. While Scott may be correct, the philosophy behind satire is important.

In “Why Satire with a Plan for Writing One”, Burke stated:

> But to my earlier notion that we are all, including the satirist, tarred by the same brush, there are added the sophistications whereby we can get the curative *accents* of assertion and perfection by calling for a Utopia-in-reverse (Burke, “On Human Nature”, 2003).

His observation hits to at the very core purpose of satire, especially when considering that earlier forms of it mocked ideas that yearned literally for a moral sense of utopia.

A perfect example of this would be the famous satirical novel, *Candide*. Scott noted that Voltaire, author of *Candide*, who he referred to as a “freethinker,” mocked the German philosopher Gottfried Liebniz who believed that our world was the best world to live in because it was created by a perfect God (Scott, 2005). Gilbert Highet in *The Anatomy of Satire* added to this by noting that almost every kind of human suffering is inflicted on the main characters in *Candide* but pointed out that, despite it all, the satirical manner in which they all suffered inspired laughter as opposed to sadness. Hence the purpose of the novel was obvious. It was not meant to mock human suffering but the idea behind the spiritual utopia religious philosophers such as Liebniz and the Catholic Church rallied around and that Voltaire attacked in his writings.
It is important to understand that when approaching satirical analyses that this is the hallmark attribute of satire – to mock something as incredulous (Highet, 1962).

In the case of *Candide*, one can deduce that the “utopia-in-reverse” is literal since the definition of utopia conjures up an idyllic state or being and Voltaire literally conjured up a world that is the very opposite of idyllic, especially in a spiritual context. However, Burke’s “utopia-in-reverse” function always applies, even from a metaphorical or symbolic stance since satire is intrinsically tied to the questioning of moral norms through utilizing the element of ridicule and laughter - whether bitter or comical. Highet also noted Alexander Pope’s famous poem, “The Dunciad,” a satirical piece prophesying a new coming of The Dark Ages, naming characteristics such as selfishness and stupidity as its chief causes (Highet, 1962). In essence, the reverse of those characteristics would be Pope’s idea of utopia and consequently his call for it thus functions as satire (Highet, 1962). Hence the “utopia-in-reverse” portion is indicative to the negative aspect of a satirical piece and builds on the complex relationship satire has with Burke’s concepts of “rejection” and “acceptance.” Satire can be defined along the lines of being essentially the opposite of the utopia-laden values it is calling for. From that sense, it is somewhat of a paradox, thus indicating the nature of its complexity.

Modern-day satirical pieces can also be taken in the context of being a “utopia-in-reverse.” When applying this function to the Danish cartoon affair, the “utopia-in-reverse” function clearly indicates that the moral values being questioned were not freedom of speech but were instead perceived Islamic values. To some extent, censorship was discussed with an unveiling of the Prophet Muhammad’s face. However, as Ali J. Hussain pointed out, that was hardly an issue of free speech when considering that there have been images of Muhammad’s face in Islamic art that are known to Europeans. The most detailed piece is exhibited in Europe in
France’s national museum. In essence, the utopia-in-reverse or the negative aspects which are akin to Pope’s much maligned characteristics of stupidity and selfishness, is none other than Islamic values in this satirical piece. Hussain commented on this in his article, “The Media’s Role in a Clash of Misconceptions: The Case of the Danish Muhammad Cartoons.” In one of the cartoons the prophet Muhammad is depicted with an unkempt beard and moustache, half-dressed with an outer vest over one of his shoulders holding a dagger in one hand and extending his hand to block two fully covered women in the background. According to Hussain, the function is obvious:

Clearly, this image plays on both of the major themes that compose Europe’s millennium-long obsession with Muhammad: the secret exotic sensuality of Muhammad’s polygamous relationship with a harem of veiled women and Muhammad’s own violent, saber-swinging character. (Hussain, 2007).

Burke’s “utopia-in-reverse” function applies succinctly to the framing of the Danish cartoon affair and reinforces a crucial, elemental characteristic regarding the function of satire. If the value or utopia being upheld in the Danish cartoons was freedom of speech then why would there be emphasis on satirizing Orientalist elements that alluded to sexuality and violence? Why were not orthodox Muslim views’ on press freedoms and speech the obvious subject of the cartoon? Or why was the Islamic world’s treatment to free speech not satirized in that case? Burke’s observation that satire takes on the utopia-in-reverse form frames the core of satire’s nature when addressing its function. In order to decode its message one must recognize its dual nature – what it presents and what it calls for, which is almost always the opposite of what it presents. From that frame, we see the utopia-in-reverse. The behavior or idea being exhibited is what is to be mocked and ridiculed. The opposite of such a behavior or idea is what the message calls for.
Satire as a Representative Anecdote: A Satirist’s Perception

Function aside; Kenneth Burke’s general philosophies have also played a role in developing theory about the rhetoric of satire. In *The Difference Satire Makes: Rhetoric and Reading from Jonson to Byron*, Frederic V. Bogel likens the psyche of a satiric message to one of Burke’s “representative anecdotes” stating that:

First, instead of taking the originating moment of satire to be the satirist’s perception... we would come up with an alternative “founding moment”, not a historical event... but a convenient fiction, what Kenneth Burke calls a “representative anecdote”. In this revised scenario, the crucial fact is not that satirists find folly or wickedness in this world and then wish to expose that alien something. Instead satirists identify in the world something or someone that is both unattractive and curiously dangerously like them, or like the culture or subculture that they identify with or speak for... (Bogel, 1943).

The idea that Burke’s concept of a representative anecdote can be applied to a satirical message is yet another lens in which one can view satire. However, the use of representative anecdotes in satirical analysis is better utilized when exploring the conceptual frame of mind of the satirist. First, it must be noted that in *A Grammar of Motives* Burke states that “any selection of reality must, in certain circumstances, function as a deflection from reality” (Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*, 1969, p.59). Representative anecdotes have a particular relationship with scope and reduction as Burke explored in *A Grammar of Motives*. At times, this bleeds into views of reality which often appear subjective in the field of dramatism. In essence, Burke’s aforementioned quotation on reality can be applied to the frame of mind of a satirist wherein the satirist’s work is simply his/her own reality which he/she manifests as a kind of deflection from general reality.

In “Representative Anecdotes in General, with Notes toward a Representative Anecdote for Burkean Ecocriticism in Particular”, Robert Wess theorizes that representative anecdotes can
be perceived as “a part of” reality as opposed to “apart from” it (Wess, 2004). This can be applied directly to the context of a satirical message. In this case, both Bogel’s and Wess’s view applies. In the case of Bogel and his theories on the satirist’s frame of mind, the message is representative of the satirist’s reality. By explaining the familiarizing aspect of a satirical message to the satirist, consequently the message functions as “a part of” his/her reality. Wess argues thus that a representative anecdote is inherently reality-based, thus supporting Bogel’s view about the satirist’s ideal (Wess, 2004).

One must also keep in mind that satire insists on being reality-based while deliberately exaggerating components in order to its paradoxical nature (Highet, 1963). All forms of satire — whether visual or textual - convey this. The paradoxical nature of satire comes entirely into play at this stage. A message is “a part of” reality all the while being “apart from” it. In regards to the actual satirical artifact, the realistic portions of the message are also a “part of” audience reality while the deliberately exaggerated components of the message are most certainly “apart from” it.

**The Relationship between Irony and the “the Other”**

In “Kenneth Burke: A Dialogue of Motives,” Jeffrey W. Murray expounds on Burke’s fourth master trope, irony, by stating that it is more dialogical as opposed to dialectic. His observation is ground-breaking because he significantly adds to a rhetorical perspective of satire by introducing the the “Other” into the field of communication studies in relationship to Burkean philosophy. Both Burke and Murray observes irony for its satirical characterization – namely that it is an instrument of provoking discussion on a topic of controversy. To build on his argument, Murray connects Burke’s master trope to a previous philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas, whose writings placed emphasis on ethics and the rhetorical Other (Levinas, 1984). Levinas’s theories
are crucial to the construction of Murray's argument that irony owns a special place in Burkean master tropes as primarily a dialogical trope as opposed to a rhetorical one. He further backs up his belief in this by providing an interpretation of Burke's charge that irony is indeed a “perspective of perspectives,” lending to the idea that such a state of existence naturally implies dialogue between more than one point of view.

However, to explore Murray's theory, it is important to understand the perspective of Levinas's views of the Other and its relationship to ethics. Levinas believes that the foundation of ethics in Western thinking relies on one's responsible relationship with the Other. As Murray stated, he believes that "the Other is the source of ethics" (Murray, 2001, p.24). Murray states that Levinas wholeheartedly objects to what he considers to be the "self-centeredness of Western thinking" by primarily focusing on metaphysics as opposed to ontological knowledge. It is Levinas's belief that Western epistemology has led to a reduction in the complexity of the Other, further leading to the tendency to generalize and, above all, misunderstand. Finally, Levinas capitalizes on the concept of phenomenology which he describes as "the careful study and description of lived experience, of phenomena as they present themselves in the world." This leads him to stress what he deduces as a phenomenological account with the Other, which he describes as "a phenomenon, a lived experience" (Murray, 2001).

From this, Murray connects the dialogical nature of Burke's fourth trope by reiterating once more the intrinsic ties that any form of satire has to ethics and by relating its relationship to a rhetorical Other. He states:

"Ultimately, irony depends upon the perspectives of the Others – of the Other symbol users – and is thus an explicitly dialogical rather than rhetorical trope. Moreover, this
inclusion of the voices of the Others in the construction of “truth” distinguishes irony as ethical.” (Murray, 2001).

Murray then further builds on his argument that irony is automatically dialogical because of its surreptitiously defiant nature. This phenomenon he describes as “the recalcitrant Other.” In other words, Murray simply rehashes the basic purpose of satire which is to question. The nature of irony and satire in general is to defy, hence its recalcitrant existence. Murray believes that Levinas’s perspectives on the Other provide an extension of Burke’s traditional views of recalcitrance, stating that “recalcitrance is a symbolic-phenomenological account of the universe” (Murray, 2001, p.28).

Murray’s extension of Burkean beliefs on recalcitrance by conjoining it with Levinas’s thoughts is fundamental to a theoretical understanding of the nature of satire. His views highlight the raw purpose of satire. The idea behind the “recalcitrant Other” is of particular importance to satire in the modern day. The “recalcitrant Other” is basically a representation of an Other that resists the status quo or, by its nature, stands unforgivably apart from it. The introduction of a “recalcitrant Other” inevitably formulates a dialogue that the satirical piece seeks to implement. On one hand, the piece involuntarily questions in the way that all forms of satire do. When the “recalcitrant Other” becomes a question, inevitably a response or a series of responses is set in motion from both the status quo and the Other. This consequently sets off a dialogue between both or all groups, proving that not only is satire a powerful form of dialogue but that it also shares a deep affinity with the Other. Satire is often characterized as a powerful tool of resistance. It is one of the greatest platforms for introducing controversial topics for confrontation in a social narrative. Hence its kinship with the Other and the ethical questions
that are imposed with our encounters with the Other takes special precedence in this artistic form.

There is one thing to consider however when addressing Murray’s stance that satire should be counted as a dialogical trope as opposed to a rhetorical trope. One must pay heed to the source which is Burke’s “A Grammar of Motives” when considering his argument. Murray mentions that Burke posits irony to be mainly dialectic. Therefore, Burke himself understood the conversational ability irony possessed. However, by stating that irony is dialectic, he may have meant to simply distinguish that irony summoned a particular kind of dialogue – this being, of course, a conversation containing logical argumentation which is the definition of “dialectic.” While Burke may not have mentioned anything close to Murray’s idea of the “recalcitrant Other,” he sowed the seeds for the kind of argument irony implied by simply framing the kind of conversation irony and for that matter, satire inspired – one that depended on a “recalcitrant Other.” Burke states in *A Grammar of Motives*:

> Hence, from the standpoint of this total form (this “perspective of perspectives”), none of the participating “sub-perspectives can be treated as either precisely right or wrong. They are all voices, or personalities, or positions, integrally affecting one another. When the dialectic is properly formed, they are the number of characters needed to produce the total development. (Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*, 1969).

**Part II - Roland Barthes’s Semiotics and its Relationship to Satirical Imagery**

**The Order of Connotation**

Roland Barthes’s use of semiotics is highly applicable to satirical imagery. In his iconic book, *Mythologies*, Barthes states that there are three main components of a myth or an image. He refers to this as the signifier, the signified and the sign. Since satirical imagery is largely meant to question a social norm by ridiculing it at first, the concept of what the image represents...
is of paramount importance. This is where Barthes’s three components come into play. After deconstructing the imagery of a bunch of roses in *Mythologies*, he states that “on the plane of experience, I cannot dissociate the roses from the message they carry…” (Barthes, 1972, p.113). Such an observation can be applied to satirical imagery. Satire is meant to question in the form of ridicule and therefore its imagery can convey a series of messages. However, these messages are normally framed in the form of questions. In this case, it is meant to question the existing status quo beliefs on a topic by ridiculing it first.

In Chapter five of his book, *Introduction to Communication Studies*, John Fiske explores the phenomena of Barthes’s theory of signification, specifically narrowing down on Barthes’s two orders of signification termed denotation and connotation (Fiske, 1990). The most applicable of these orders to satirical imagery rests in Barthes’s idea of connotation. Fiske states:

Connotation is the term Barthes uses to describe one of the three ways in which signs work in the second order of signification. It describes the interaction that occurs when the sign meets the feelings or emotions of the users and the values of their culture. This is when meanings move towards the subjective, or at least the intersubjective: it is when the interpretant is influenced as much by the interpreter as by the object or the sign. (Fiske, 1990)

Such an aspect connects both the semiotics of a satirical image and how it relates to the Other. On one hand, it opens the debate surrounding a response to the Other by mentioning its complex position in wider culture. On the other hand, it mentions the impact of the image as a means of influence. In a satirical image that depicts the Other, the reaction elicited is normally a cultural reaction since the Other invariably stands away from the cultural norm and the image is normally meant to provoke discussion of this. In this sense, certain cultural values of the mainstream may even be enforced or brought into question. The satirist may sometimes ridicule a perception of the Other or may even lampoon values of the the Other’s culture which are
unfamiliar to the mainstream culture. In this case, culture is very much at play. Barthes’s order of connotation reinforces that once a minority aspect is satirized, we immediately decode the meaning of an image through our cultural lens.

The second aspect of Fiske’s statement and his general views on connotation has more to do with the power of satirical imagery as an influential tool and the appropriateness of it in a debate in our politically correct, globalized era. At this point, the significance of the image simply reinforces the purpose of satire to create discussion and the perception of the satirist him/herself as well as what is being satirized. But it does not stop there. The contribution it has made to the debate also comes into question. In this case, is the discussion being provoked one that has taken place before? A satirical image normally provokes a kind of discussion or an aspect of a discussion that has not taken place yet. *Candide* was so powerful because the room to question moral utopia and the Church was original and unique in its time as were other works of satire. Hence the historical reason for introducing a topic of discussion through satirical means always introduced it as a laughing matter whether bitterly or otherwise.

It is no secret that when a discussion of the Other arises in media and the greater society, the Other is normally left with the task of defending one’s self or being defended by mainstream members of society. So if a satirical image tasks the Other with a means of defending themselves once more, how satirical is the image when taken in the context that satire is meant to provoke discussion? A discussion is not provoked if it already exists and is framed in the context of the Other being charged to defend itself yet again. It is merely the continuation of a same old discussion. Furthermore, if it is a topic that has not even had a chance to die down, a discussion has not even been revived. In that case, certain satirical imagery that excoriates the values of the
Other need not necessarily fall under the immunity of “satire” which has a strong history of being offensive.

This inevitably raises the question as to whether a satirical image is always an appropriate method of engaging in debate. A satirical image depicting the Other deserves an earnest response from the Other. If they are given the task of defending themselves yet again, no originality and no newer dimension of the discussion is achieved. In essence, satire, as evidenced by interpretation of Burke’s master trope of irony, is dialogical. However, it must be stressed that satire has primarily been responsible for introducing altogether new dialogue or different aspects of one. Hence the reason that it has always been introduced has been in a notably clever form. Therefore, it must be reiterated that a primary function of satire is not simply to start a conversation but to introduce an original one or an original aspect of one. At this point, the freedom to create satire is not necessarily a focal point, but the sensitivity over already pre-conceived views of the Other and their lack of acceptance in the greater society. Satire has always managed to progress a conversation to another level. If a discussion arises where the Other is put in the same defensive spot, it has simply not achieved its age-old tradition. This begs the question as to whether satire is an effective tool in engaging a discussion with the Other or isolating them even further.

**The Impact of Myth**

Another aspect of Barthes’s philosophies that Fiske touches on is his concept of myth and how it fits into the order of signification. Fiske states:

A myth is a story by which a culture explains or understands some aspect of reality or nature. Primitive myths are about life and death, men and gods, good and evil. Our sophisticated myths are about masculinity and femininity, about the family, about success, about the British policeman, about science. A myth, for Barthes, is a culture’s way of thinking about something, a way of conceptualizing or understanding it. (Fiske, 1990).
Barthes’s idea about myth fit perfectly into a study of satirical imagery and supports any theory that hypothesizes that satirical imagery can sometimes function ideographically. Fiske continues on to state that not all myths are universal and that in a society there are dominant myths versus counter-myths. He also mentions that Barthes argued “that the main way myths work is to naturalize history” (Fiske, 1990).

This is particularly important to characterizing the Other in imagery as a whole – especially satirical imagery. History is the most effective tool in epistemologically constructing an image of the Other in the greater society. Based on history, whether passed down orally or otherwise, the construction of the Other is developed in one’s mind. For instance, historically, European literature has often constructed Jews and Muslims through various forms of art and literature as bearing particular derogatory characteristics. Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia have normally run deep in these constructions. In the case of Jews, who throughout European history have suffered intermittently from massacres, expulsions and forced conversions, art and writings from some of the most respected members of society fostered a sense of anti-Semitism. Some of these works have endured throughout the centuries to have become classics as seen in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* and Charles Dickens’s *Oliver Twist*. Both works constructed their main Jewish characters as greedy, amoral and self-serving – an epistemological perception that contributed to anti-Semitic bias in European society and its civilizations abroad.

The same can be said of Islamic characterization in European works such as in Shakespeare’s *Othello* and Mozart’s *Abduction from the Seraglio* which aided in constructing a lascivious and barbaric Orientalist myth. This consequently embedded a sense of Islamophobia in epistemological perception which emerges in aspects of mainstream media until today, most notably in Hollywood movies. In the case of both groups that have shared a long history of being
cast as the Other in European civilization, when aspects of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia crop up in mainstream media, it is sometimes hard to notice as Ali J. Hussain noted in his article, “The media’s role in a clash of misconceptions: the case of the Danish Muhammad cartoons” (Hussain, 2007) when discussing Islamophobia. According to Hussain, this may be due to the Christian mores of which European civilization were built where the rigid belief in God stemmed from acceptance of the Christian Trinity (Hussain, 2007). Hussain stated that from that point of view, the founder of the Islamic faith, the Prophet Muhammad, would be seen as a heretic for rejecting the Trinity. This can also be said of the Jewish faith which is yet another Abrahamic faith that also rejected the Trinity. Hence, both groups were cast as the Other based on the religious fervor of earlier centuries in Europe.

When considering that history is largely responsible for epistemological perceptions, it is no wonder that when imagery seeks to ridicule an idea by displaying a particular stereotype that the image can sometimes function ideographically. A construction of the Other that immediately conjures up centuries of widely held biases textually in one’s mind have the power to create discussion. It may not necessarily enforce a stereotype, but it functions ideographically enough to summon an idea that may provoke discussion.

**Conclusion**

The theoretical perspective for building an image schema for satirical imagery that depicts the Other must include a combination of the aforementioned theories. It is important to note the primary function of satire takes on the form of Burke’s idea of a “utopia-in-reverse” and is a complex paradox of his concepts of “rejection” and “acceptance” altogether. It is also important to note the disposition of the satirist which is akin to Burke’s “representative
anecdote. Philosophers such as Wess and Bogel have theorized the connection to reality that "representative anecdotes" seek to explore. In this case, when applied to the satirist’s frame of mind, the “representative anecdote” is simply the satirist’s reality, which is manifested in the satirical piece.

No rhetorical schema exploring satire would be complete without mentioning Burke’s fourth master trope, irony, which is a form of satire. While Burke states that the trope itself is dialectical in nature, Jeffrey W. Murray takes his idea one step further by supposing the trope to be dialogical and explores how it fundamentally plays into our discussion with the Other. Such a theoretical analysis is an invaluable contribution to communication studies. It also reiterates satire’s close relationship with the Other and supports the idea that the kind of dialogue that satire creates normally includes perspective from what Murray terms the “recalcitrant Other.”

While Burke’s theories have shaped the theoretical backdrop for how satire functions and is perceived, Roland Barthes’s semiotics specifically contributes to how satirical imagery can be analyzed. His theories on signification and namely his order of connotation and the impact of myth are the fundamentals needed to decode satirical imagery. Barthes’s observations on particularly myth, its relationship to history and consequently its impact on epistemological perceptions of the Other complete the theoretical perspectives needed to create the schema.
Chapter Three – Discussion

Part I – Ideographical Research in Communication Studies

The following chapter discusses several important articles on ideographical analysis which has proven to be of immense value to the research for this paper. Several of Michael Calvin McGee’s theories on ideographs have been discussed as well as three significant articles that have shaped the theoretical perspective for the image schema discussed in chapter four. The three articles are “Representative Form and the Visual Ideograph: The Iwo Jima in Editorial Cartoons” by Janis L. Edwards and Carol Winkler, “‘To Veil the Threat of Terror’: Afghan Women and the <Clash of Civilizations> in the Imagery of the U.S. War on Terrorism” by Dana L. Cloud and “The Male Madonna and the Feminine Uncle Sam: Visual Argument, Icons and Ideographs in 1909 Anti-Woman Suffrage Postcards” by Catherine H. Palczweski. This chapter also contains a comparison of image schemas that have been created for rhetorical studies in the past.

It can be argued that the late Marshall McLuhan was one of the first communication scholars to pay close attention to visual ideographs. In his book, Understanding Media, McLuhan touched indirectly on the significance of ideographs when stressing the communal qualities that images evoked in a society as opposed to the abstract, phonetic alphabet. To do this, he pointed to the Chinese ideogram and Chinese society’s acceptance of it which he claimed aided in fostering a sense of tribalism and family. McLuhan stated:

Many centuries of ideogrammic use have not threatened the seamless web of family and tribal subtleties of Chinese society... Only the phonetic alphabet makes such a sharp division in experience, giving to its user an eye for an ear, and freeing him from the tribal trance of resonating word magic and the web of kinship. (McLuhan, 1964, p.83-84)
McLuhan’s theories on the alphabet and his subsequent views on imagery (McLuhan, 1964), particularly his mention of ideograms may have laid the groundwork for the interpretation of ideographs in communication studies. Later on, Michael Calvin McGee would release a series of writings on the study of ideographs. However, this time McGee’s research would concentrate primarily on ideographs from a textual interpretation in keeping with the nature of rhetorical studies of the time.

In his article, “The “Ideograph”: A Link between Rhetoric and Ideology”, McGee builds on the tribal qualities of ideographs by stating that they “presumptuously suggest that each member of a community will see as a gestalt every complex nuance in them” (McGee, 1980). He goes on to state that “ideographs are one-term sums of an orientation” thereby implying that they function entirely as a collective definition. With this in mind, McGee unknowingly parallels them to the function of myth in society, stating that one is not “permitted to question the fundamental logic of ideographs” (McGee, 1980). Incidentally, though he may not have mentioned myth, this is primarily how myth has always been received in a society. This is of dire importance when approaching any visual depiction of the Other, especially when considering that our epistemological perception of them has a tendency to lean to one of oversimplification and of a sense of negation. Throughout time, many narratives that have included the Other have contributed to a mythologizing of it. As Levinas stated, we have a tendency to categorically lump them as all the same (1984). Furthermore, certain images are apt to be conjured in our minds based on what we know of them historically, by word of mouth and through the media.

Therefore, if one were to consider ideographs strictly from a visual perspective, it can be argued that ideographs have an identical function of myth in persuading us not to question but to simply accept the facts or in this case, the image, at hand.
McGee worked extensively on his theory of ideographs, arguing that certain textual arrangements acted symbolically to enforce a sense of ideology. His work inevitably brought him to a scholarly discussion of the special relationship ideographs had with politics. In his article, "The "Ideograph" as a Unit of Analysis in Political Argument", McGee stated that he was "convinced that the nature, and even the fundamental existence, of an "ideology" can be established only through careful analysis of specific rhetorical documents" (McGee, 1979). If McGee’s work was to explore the function of ideographs in rhetoric, such a statement can be applied to imagery – specifically visual satire. The argument that text is not the only viable form of symbols has been debated for some time. At the same time, there has been progress in the changing landscape of rhetoric that argues that it would be of interest for rhetoricians to examine imagery.

Satirical imagery, especially a political image that depicts the Other, can easily function as one of McGee’s “specific, rhetorical documents.” If rhetoric is meant to decode symbols and to understand the essence of persuasion, then satirical imagery may be a topic of interest. Satire is never meant to be casual but always intends to make a statement of meaning whether visual or otherwise. It always questions, and when done well, is an impactful statement. As a result, it should be of great interest to rhetoricians. Several communication scholars have argued for the inclusion of satirical imagery as well as other kinds of imagery to function as ideographs. Their works have been discussed below.

Janis L. Edwards and Carol Winkler

Of all the research done on ideographs, Janis L. Edwards and Carol Winkler’s article, “Representative Form and the Visual Ideograph: The Iwo Jima in Editorial Cartoons” is the most
important to this thesis. This is precisely because both Edwards and Winkler introduced the concept that visual parody as a form of satire, deserves a special place in rhetoric that should be understood as a representative form. To prove their example, they used parodied cartoons depicting the Iwo Jima flag raising incident (Fig. 2). In their article, they stated:

We contend that the Iwo Jima image, as appropriated and parodied in recent editorial cartoons, is a special type of symbolic form that represents an essence of cultural beliefs and ideals at a high level of abstraction. As such, we will argue, the parodied image constitutes an instance of depictive rhetoric that functions ideographically. (Edwards, Winkler, 1997)

Both Edwards and Winkler expand on McGee’s work by determining that visual imagery can function as ideographical representation, stating that “visual images bear an iconic relationship to the ideas they represent” (p. 304). Although McGee confines ideographs to being definitively linguistic, Edwards and Winkler prove that McGee’s four main characteristics that constitute an ideograph can be applied to visual imagery as well. McGee stated that an ideograph first needed to be an “ordinary term in political discourse.” Edwards and Winkler proved that the Iwo Jima image can be applied to this due to its popularity and the government’s use of it to “nurture Americans’ personal involvement in the war effort” (p. 298). Claiming that McGee argued for the importance of an ideograph being accessible to both elite and non-elite members of society, both authors contended that the Iwo Jima image again fits that requirement considering the context of the editorial cartoon due to the large syndication of cartoonists who thus have a “national forum for addressing the public” (p.298).

Edwards and Winkler then mention McGee’s second characteristic of an ideograph which is an “abstraction representing collective commitment” (p.298). They both contend that the ambiguity of the Iwo Jima image - and thus any other ideographical image - appeals to groups in
society that may otherwise be excluded. However, they later contend that a parodied cartoon which they argue is ideographical actually does the opposite of this when indicating cultural diversity. Needless to say, both authors stated that in this characteristic, the Iwo Jima image appeals to the commonality of all Americans because of “the anonymity of the soldiers’ faces and the reliance on the flag as an icon for patriotism” (p.399).

McGee’s third characteristic of an ideograph states that it must “warrant power and guide behavior” in situations that might be otherwise deemed as antisocial. Again, Edwards and Winkler argue that the unifying and patriotic aspect of the Iwo Jima image can be applied to this characteristic because the image was used by the government to stir up public support for World War II and, consequently, casualties which can be described as antisocial under other circumstances. Incidentally, parodied cartoons of the Iwo Jima image have actually been used to criticize the government’s involvement in other wars and thus expose the “anti-social” nature of its actions. It has been used to in cartoons parodying the Persian Gulf War, the U.S. military’s defense of Saudi Arabia, and its invasion of Haiti (p.302).

McGee’s fourth characteristic states that an ideograph must be culture-bound. Edwards and Winkler again illustrate how the Iwo Jima image – and parodies of its image - can be applied to this characteristic. Though Edwards and Winkler did not state this, it can be argued that when taken in a satirical context, McGee’s fourth characteristic is at odds with the over-simplifying nature of his second characteristic. Edwards and Winkler stated that the widely known aspect of the Iwo Jima image – the cultural diversity of the soldiers of the image (which cannot be seen in the image but was well-known due to the image’s popularity) - placed the Iwo Jima image as a cultural referent. The authors quote John Wetenhall who stated “that the group indeed included a son of immigrants, an Indian, boys from the Midwest, the plains [and] the East” (p.302).
Thus, under the philosophy of McGee's requirements of what constitutes an ideograph, Edwards and Winkler illustrated that imagery can also function as a representative form and as an ideograph. Their emphasis on parody further opened the debate on parodied images and, consequently, satire as holding a special function in rhetorical discourse. In their arguments on the culture-bound requirement for visual ideographs, the authors may have even accidentally stumbled on how certain forms of satirical imagery, such as parody and irony, can actually be of use for a rhetorical analysis of the Other. They state that “the use of irony in editorial cartoons makes the medium particularly suited to society’s infliction of penalties on individuals who might ignore or misuse the ideograph. The question of society’s tolerance of cultural diversity serves as an example” (p.302). Such an observation can be applied to the Other in cases where they are ostracized for their “Other” characteristics and which in turn may be explored in satirical imagery.

Dana L. Cloud

In ““To Veil the Threat of Terror”: Afghan Women and the <Clash of Civilizations> in the Imagery of the U.S. War on Terrorism”, Dana L. Cloud explores the relationship between ideographs and the Other and asserts the idea that photographs can function as ideographs.

Building on the observations of Edwards and Winkler, Cloud states:

Amplifying Edwards and Winkler’s claims, I argue here that photographs and other images can enact ideographs visually and index, or point to, the verbal slogans capturing society’s guiding abstractions. The imagery of the <clash of civilizations> may be uniquely suited to this role: In setting up visual binary oppositions between U.S. citizens and enemy Others, it literally constitutes the clash between them. Photographs of self and Other enact the clash when they are set alongside one another. (Cloud, 2004, p.289).

Cloud’s methodology invokes several aspects of both Burke’s and Barthes’s theories—specifically semiotics and the ability to construct identity in terms of negation (p.292). Her
argument is that a photograph can invoke strong emotion and can stand for an even stronger statement as a visual ideograph as opposed to a linguistic one. Furthermore, the visual ideograph itself assists in placing the linguistic ideograph in the mind of the viewer observing the photograph. In regards to how this affects one’s perception of the Other, Cloud states that “photographic images are marked by metonymy, the reduction of complex situations into simpler visual abstractions” (p.289).

Although Cloud’s article on visual ideographs focuses exclusively on photographs as opposed to cartoons, her argument sets the stage for how we may observe cartoons depicting the Other. Cloud reveals to us that everyday photography depicting the Other normally does so under binary terms and thus lends to a metonymic interpretation of our relationship to them. This consequently leads to a negation of their identity in our eyes and is responsible for an oversimplified bias in our perceptions of them. With that thought process in mind, satirical imagery can open up discussion of our views of the Other by lampooning our perceptions and stereotypes of them. And by doing so, we can delve deeper into our inner prejudices of them and recognize the complexity of their identity in relationship to ours when discussion arises.

Catherine H. Palczewski

Catherine Palczewski’s article, *The Male Madonna and the Feminine Uncle Sam: Visual Argument, Icons and Ideographs in 1909 Anti-Woman Suffrage Postcards* is another insightful article tying imagery to ideographs in communication studies. The article examined the woman’s suffrage movement in 1909 as told through postcards. At the time, postcards were a highly influential medium of communication. Interestingly enough, satirical images were also the
subject of the postcards but Palczewski’s focus was mainly on how the postcards sought to explore the roles of gender, specifically the ideographs of <man> and <woman>.

Palczewski stated in her article (Palczewski, 2008, p. 175) “Thus, even though woman suffrage may have been won, suffrage postcards offer valuable insights into how sex and citizenship were negotiated through visual argument.” She touched on the anti-Catholic bias highlighted in the postcards at the time and sought to examine how the role of gender, specifically images of Uncle Sam and the Madonna, created anti-suffrage messages. Based on a collection of postcards produced by the Dunston-Weiler Lithograph Company of New York during “The Golden Age of Postcards,” Palczweski examined the anti-suffrage argument and concluded that the message conveyed was that suffrage would somehow assist in the “de-feminization” of women and the “feminization” of men. She stated:

Two themes in particular reinforce the verbal arguments opposing woman suffrage and supporting masculine conceptions of citizenship: (1) women lacked the physical power necessary to enforce their vote, and (2) the public realm was unsuited to proper women. (p. 375).

Palczweski’s argument adds to the existing debate on including imagery analysis in communication studies by adding that her essay “easily demonstrates how visual arguments function as part of a larger public controversy” (p.385) and notes that, while many critical studies have been done on postcards, “none examine the intersection of political cartoons and postcards, even though postcards were cheap, easily accessible, and did not present the demands of literacy that newspapers did” (p.384). This argument further supports the notion that postcards, especially when taken in the context of its popularity during their Golden Age, can be seen as viable candidates for functioning as ideographs. It also further strengthens the unique qualities that cartoons themselves present in rhetorical discussion. Palczweski notes early in her article
that McGee urged scholars “to look to “popular” history, such as novels, films, plays, even songs” (McGee, 1980) “when tracking the vertical structures ideographs” (Palczweski, p. 373). She notes that, while McGee focused on linguistic ideographs, his quote can be applied to visual artifacts in the method similar to which Edwards and Winkler chose to interpret his works.

Noting the various observations Edwards and Winkler and Dana L. Cloud have concluded in their study on ideographs, Palczweski adds to the debate of ideographical functions by stating that her study “presents a third version of the play between icons and ideographs: iconic images can be used to maintain the social control power of verbal ideographs, in this case the ideographs of <man> and <woman>” (p.387). Palczweski’s article is of value because it ties into cartoon imagery with politics at the time and shows how imagery displayed in a popular medium of communication at the time can function as ideographs.

**Part II**

**A Comparison of Image Schemas for the Evaluation of Visual Imagery**

An image schema for rhetorical studies can be defined as a conceptual framework inspired by a discovery of underlying patterns found in imagery or symbol analysis. Image schemas are a rarity for communication studies, quite possibly because the movement to incorporate image analysis in rhetoric has been a recent affair. However, image schemas have gained momentum for some time in different fields of study – most notably in cognitive linguistics whose version of image schemas bear no resemblance to rhetorical kinds. While doing research, only two image schemas for communication philosophy have been found. The first, “A Rhetorical Schema for the Evaluation of Visual Imagery” by Sonja K. Foss, appeared to be the first of its kind. The second, “The Rhetorical Criticism of Visual Elements: An Alternative to Foss” by Valerie Peterson was a response to Foss’s schema. There is a possibility that more
image schemas in rhetoric exist. However, these two are clearly the most popular and easily accessible. As the rise and prominence of visual communication continues, image schemas may become more common. The benefits of image schemas can add significantly to the ever-evolving philosophies on imagery and can help consolidate different arguments on how imagery should be evaluated.

**Sonja Foss’s Rhetorical Schema for the Evaluation of Visual Imagery**

It appears that the traditional manner of creating an image schema in other disciplines such as cognitive linguistics demands a more technical approach. Sonja Foss’s image schema for communication studies was original not only because it was a new methodology that was introduced to visual communication but also because of its philosophical approach to image schemas in general. Foss stated in her article:

> Although rhetorical critics may feel nostalgia for a culture in which public discourse had primary impact, they are recognizing that to confine their study of symbols to speech making is to miss a great many of the symbols that affect us daily. (Foss, 1994, p.213)

Her observations mark a turning point in rhetoric signaling a greater demand for newer methods of symbol analysis. With that admittance, Foss states that “the need remains for a schema of evaluation that allows for judgments to be made about images from a rhetorical perspective” (p.215). Her point could not be clearer. Foss implies explicitly in her article that she does not intend to constrict rhetorical or artistic interpretation. The point of an image schema should never be about that and should take steps to safeguard against such an occurrence.

However, she does indicate a need for consolidation in methods of visual evaluation stating that “the inadequacies in aesthetic theories for the rhetorical evaluation of images led me to develop this proposal for a rhetorically centered schema” (p. 215).
Foss’s image schema is an assessment tool for visual imagery broken up into a three-step process and it is primarily focused on the concept of function and how it applies to rhetoric. She is quick to point out that the schema is entirely function-based as opposed to purpose-based, indicating an anti-intentionalist view which downplays the purpose of the creator when creating his/her work since she did not “wish to suggest that the criterion for the judgment of an image is the intention of the image’s creator” (p.215). She further elaborates on her anti-intentionalist approach to the schema which she states is also meant to “suggest that a work, once done, stands independent of its production, and the intentions of artists or creators are irrelevant to critics’ responses to their works” (p.215).

Foss thus sets the tone for how imagery should be evaluated in rhetoric with the assistance of an image schema. Bringing attention to the function of an image as opposed to its purpose is crucial to rhetorical interpretation and serves as a building block for future image schemas in rhetoric. Her schema is meant to be applied to any type of visual imagery. However, her emphasis on function over purpose indicates a skilled and intuitive background in visual communication. If function is the driving force for a rhetorical schema then it acknowledges that different types of images serve entirely different functions altogether. It also indicates the superficiality of the intended purpose of the creator of an image and takes interpretation and debate to a rhetorical level by acknowledging the complexity of the function of an image notwithstanding the intent of its creator.

In the case of satirical imagery, where the purpose of satire in incidents such as the Danish cartoons has been the primary focus of both media and academic debate, Foss’s schema indicates the uselessness of rhetorical interpretation from that angle. It also indicates the hypocrisy one may illustrate when interpreting satirical imagery from a purpose-driven method
while interpreting other kinds of imagery from a function-driven method. This is especially important since, by and large, imagery is interpreted from a functional perspective, where emphasis is placed on what messages an image conveys as opposed to what it intends to convey. It also reminds us that, due to the acknowledgement of audience involvement, image interpretation in the media is always a collective effort as opposed to a singular one. This is an element that function automatically acknowledges as opposed to purpose.

As stated before, Foss’s schema is divided into a three-step process with the concept of function serving as its basis. The first portion of the schema delves into the proposed function of the visual which is a translation of what the artifact communicates, regardless of its creator’s intent. She states that it is an “identification of a function communicated in the image, accomplished through the critic’s analysis of the image itself” (p. 216). Foss states that after this is identified, it is expected of the critic to support his or her facts with analytical and physical data regarding his/her observation. She also notes that more than one function may be assigned to the image. However, each observation must always be backed up with actual facts.

The second part deals with how well the function is communicated and what aspects of the visual support it. Hence it is “an assessment of how well that function is communicated and the support available for that function in the image” (p. 216). This entails discussing the stylistic qualities of the image itself such as “the subject matter, medium, materials, forms, colors, organization, craftsmanship, and context [which are to be] examined by the critic for their contributions to the communication of the function” (p. 216). In short, the second step in the schema focuses primarily on how the actual artistic attributes of the image support how the function is communicated.
The third part deals with the legitimacy of the function and the consequences of its message or, as Foss stated, it “involves the scrutiny of the function itself – reflection on its legitimacy or soundness, determined by the implications and consequences of the function” (p.217). Foss further states that the third step is merely a chance for the critic to elaborate on his/her reasons for actually analyzing the image in the first place. This step is critical because it allows the critic to state the perspective and reasons for the assessment. Foss explains that, “the critic may be interested for example, in whether the image is congruent with a particular ethical system or whether it offers emancipatory potential” (p.217). This step may also quell any concerns of bias by the reader by being given a full explanation of the author’s mission in evaluating the image in the first place.

The third step allows readers who read the critic’s assessment when using this schema to understand his/her intent and reasons for evaluating the image in the first place, since it clarifies the angle the critic is coming from when assessing the image. The third step may be the most important of all steps since it is the most concerned with rhetoric. It is also the most important step when considering an image schema such as the one proposed in chapter four. An image schema that evaluates the Other in satirical imagery exists because of this step and consequently is a continuation of the third step in Foss’s rhetorical schema for the evaluation of visual imagery.

**Valerie V. Peterson’s Rhetorical Criticism of Visual Elements: An Alternative to Foss**

Valerie V. Peterson starts off her article with praise for Foss’s commendable work in the development of visual communication but nonetheless addresses what she refers to as the “weaknesses” in Foss’s schema with a plan for an improved schema. Peterson takes issue with
the notion that Foss’s schema focuses exclusively on function, noting that “the rhetorical nature of Foss’s schema is reflected by the attention it pays to function and not to aesthetics” (Peterson, p.21). Her main issue, however, is the interpretive value of the schema and how dependent it is on critical analysis, which Peterson asserts can affect the qualitative criticism of an image. She states:

By stating critical analysis with images, critics put the (interpretative) cart before the (perceptual) horse... as a consequence, critiques of visual rhetoric based on image are more open to accusations of interpretive license and weak critical accountability than other qualitative methods of critical analysis (Peterson, p.22).

Peterson also states that “Foss’s schema gives undue precedence to visual images, supports critical circularity, divorces function from aesthetics, and reflects modernist assumptions that may work against important critical projects” (p.21). These are the main issues she has with Foss’s schema which she further elaborates on. Peterson’s objection to Foss’s image-centrality is that it allows critics too much room for interpretation. Her accusation that the schema is circular is that it lends to the possibility that critics may disregard the characteristics of qualitative analysis in favor of “peering into a critical looking-glass where they find what they expect to find and see what they can’t help but see” (p.22). Her issue with function is that it disconnects entirely to aesthetics, disregarding aesthetical contributions to rhetorical analyses as well as “missing the role beauty plays in assessments of rhetorical excellence” (p.22). Finally she states that Foss’s schema is appropriately modernist which characteristically “splits form and function,” focuses on “the centrality of images” and is consequently only good enough for modernist analyses. Peterson finds this to be an issue because not all visuals such as “fragmented, multiple, mass-produced, polymorphous, or highly stylized” ones may adhere to
modernist analyses (p.23). From her criticism, it is clear that the root of Peterson’s issue with Foss’s schema is that it is substantially function-based.

Unlike Foss, Peterson does not explain her schema in a step-by-step format. Rather she suggests an alternative framework based on paying attention to specific elements. The crux of her schema is merely a refocus on visual interpretation. Declaring that Foss’s schema is primarily “image-centered,” Peterson states that it is imperative to focus on visual elements rather than the image as a whole. It is her belief that by doing so, one may refrain from adding bias to interpretation. Throughout her paper, she refers to this practice as “shifting attention” or “shifting starting points.” In essence, the schema calls for assessing parts of an image first instead of the image in its entirety in order to “avoid the trap of ideological determinism” (p.25).

Furthermore, Peterson states that a crucial aspect of visual, rhetorical analyses should rely on the rhetoritician’s proficiency in visual terminology.

Peterson states that “the inductive nature of the alternative schema fits such an understanding by deferring the determination of the function of an image until after visual elements are noted and assessed” (p.26). Yet throughout her paper, she disregards the importance of function in rhetoric and consequently visual communication which often assesses the philosophical consequences of an image. This may have been the reason for Foss’s emphasis on function when constructing an image schema for rhetorical evaluation. With that said, she raises some vital points on how images should be assessed. There is merit to assessing aspects of an image first before assessing it in its entirety whether it may guarantee a more unbiased assessment or merely a more meticulous one. And her point that a rhetoritician’s knowledge of visual terminology is also note-worthy even if it demonstrates the scholar’s familiarity with the ways and methods in which images are created.
However, the most troublesome aspect of Peterson’s schema is that her schema, more
than Foss’s, is guilty of creating too much room for interpretation. Peterson believes that visual
elements should be assessed from a sensory and perceptual angle. This, in and of itself lends
enormously to high interpretive tendencies since aspects of an image may create different
perceptions amongst different people. She denigrates the power of human and even cultural
experience as well when addressing the context of perception. For example, in Chinese culture,
the color red is seen as a festive color and consequently is used often in their festivities such as
New Year celebrations. The color blue on the other hand is considered to be the color of
mourning. Consequently, when assessing a visual element purely from a perceptual angle, there
may be a tendency for some critics of that culture to associate those colors with particular senses
when doing a rhetorical analysis of a visual element. On the other hand, someone of another
culture that does not associate particular moods and festivities with both colors may in fact hold
different perceptions about them.

Another problematic aspect of Peterson’s schema is her treatment of evidence that is to
be used to strengthen the assessments of a critic. She mentions that, while critics may agree on
what constitutes certain elements, many may not agree on certain border-line cases (p.24). In
such an instance, she charges that it would be best then that “critics... defend their readings with
evidence from text themselves” (p.24). She then goes on to suggest some famous scholars’
guides on interpretation. This is troublesome because critics may already disagree on elements
before a border-line case is called into question since evaluating elements is inherently
interpretive. Secondly, while using guides as a method of backing up assertions may enhance
opinion, it may also be reductive when considering the many other guides that are readily
available to defeat the interpretation and context of the guide a critic may use. Also, this
assertion again creates greater room for interpretation since a critic may assess a visual element from a perceptual and consequently subjective manner and then merely find a guide of interpretation that correlates to his/her perceptions to provide evidence for his/her bias.

Peterson also initially stated that Foss’s schema “miss[es] the role beauty plays in assessments of rhetorical excellence” (p.22). Again, the notion of beauty is perceptual, which she readily admits is her aim for her schema. However, she again fails to see how perception is intrinsically tied to interpretation and thus biased. Beauty is of course in the eyes of the beholder and consequently subject to individual interpretation. In regards to Foss’s schema, she fails to see that Foss does not downplay the importance of beauty but rather chooses to frame it from a rhetorical analysis, consequently exploring its rhetorical function in an image.

Peterson also states that Foss’s schema is circular because it identifies the image and the function and then determines how it is communicated. She states that

“Because these elements are what make up the image in the first place, such an assessment is circular. In contrast, the schema proposed here builds its understanding of what the image “is” from the visual elements encountered, placing the elements first in the critical process and building from there.” (p.26)

This indicates that she misinterprets the purpose of Foss’s schema. Foss’s focus is clearly not on individual visual elements but rather approaches image analysis from a rhetorical aspect. She’s interested in function and consequently symbol analysis. Therefore she approaches imagery from the context of images being a symbolic form. And in the tradition of rhetorical analysis, she merely seeks to see the function of the image and how well it is communicated.

Peterson provides her own assessment using the image schema proposed in her paper. She evaluates a selection of images in the chapter called “The Art of Making Love” in the book “The Joy of Sex.” In her commentary, she clearly indicates a sense of interpretation and even
bias in her own analysis. For example, she states “too close to be voyeurs hiding behind a door or screen and too far to be a part of the action itself, viewers are invited to share safely in the interaction portrayed without the guilt of spying or the responsibilities of participation” (p.29). This is a clear instance of bias and interpretation. How is she to know what viewers would feel like viewing the book? By focusing on sensory stimulation and perception, Peterson’s schema largely presents itself as a tool for author perception as opposed to actual viewer perception, which most definitely varies from viewer to viewer.

**Conclusion**

Through various articles discussed in this chapter, it is easy to see how imagery, satirical or otherwise, illustrates the need for a consolidation of arguments that can contribute to a conceptual framework thatexplores any analysis of satirical imagery. In addition to pointing out how such imagery can become ideographical, it also creates a sound argument for how open-ended the ensuing debate on image analysis continues to be since image interpretation is inherently a subjective matter. The strongest evidence of such a debate is of course the two image schemas discussed above. Both approached image analysis from two very different points of view and despite the criticism of particularly Peterson’s schema, both schemas have substantially addressed critical issues facing image evaluation in rhetoric today.

By reiterating the controversies that arise in analyses concerning satirical imagery as well as the Other, the arguments outlined above justify the need for an image schema for the evaluation of the Other in satirical imagery. The discussion of articles outlined in this chapter builds on the theoretical perspectives of chapter two which explored Levinas’s ethical responsibilities when engaging in dialogue with the Other. It further builds on Murray’s
observations who asserted that irony, or in more broadly terms, satire, reserves a unique place in Burkean philosophy as a dialogical trope.

By exploring how different visuals may function in different forms from a rhetorical perspective and by exploring the rhetorical image schemas available, we can inevitably learn the complex nature visuals play in communication studies. Such an understanding leads to other, more complicated observations. For instance, if satirical imagery may function ideographically or if imagery in general may manifest as different forms rhetorically when considering the thin line of difference between ideographs and icons, then maybe there is a need for image schemas that address different forms of imagery. However, a more important observation this leads to is an inevitable exploration of the kinds of elements popularly focused on in imagery today such as the ideographical \(<\text{Other}\>) or simply “Other” in imagery whether it is ideographical or not\(^1\). This leads to the inevitable observation that an image schema dedicated to the evaluation of the Other in satirical imagery would be beneficial to communication studies and is hence an idea that can be explored.

\(^1\) In scholarly articles, ideographs are normally referenced grammatically different. The image/word being explored is normally inserted between two \(<\text{>}. \) For instance the Other is normally written as the \(<\text{Other}\>) to indicate that it is an ideograph being discussed.
Chapter Four

An Image Schema for the Evaluation of the Other in Satirical Imagery

Preparation and the Identification of the Function

This chapter will detail the proposed image schema for the evaluation of the Other in satirical imagery for communication studies. The schema will be built on the methodology from chapter two and the theoretical perspectives from chapter three and is intended to be an analysis tool for further work in studies concerning the Other and satirical imagery in general. The previous schemas of Foss and Peterson have been used as the foundations for this one but have been used in the context of creating an analytical framework to deconstruct the satirical Other.

As stated before in “A Rhetorical Schema for the Evaluation of Visual Imagery,” Foss’s schema focused entirely on function and its rhetorical consequences. Her observation that function plays a pivotal role in image evaluation does go to the core of the debate on images, especially on how they are interpreted and how their consequences matter in communication studies. Foss’s schema evaluated imagery through exploring the rhetorical angles of function, stating that “function... made central to the evaluation of imagery from a rhetorical perspective, is not, then, the function its creator intended but rather the action the image communicates by the critic” (Foss, p.216).

Therefore the first portion of this schema builds on Foss’s image-centered one by arguing for the analysis of the function of the image as well as the characters and elements explored in the image. This portion will use characteristics of Peterson’s schema as well. The second portion of the schema builds further on Peterson’s by emphasizing and assessing the visual elements in the image as well as their rhetorical implications. This is particularly crucial considering the political motivations and sometimes bias of the satirist or critic. For the evaluation of the image
to be as unbiased as possible, it is important to observe visual images in parts as opposed to its entirety which can conjure a degree of political bias. For instance, if one assesses an image that alludes to Eva Peron, the critic may be inclined to conduct an analysis based on the perspective he/she holds about Peron individually. Peterson mentioned the possibility of political bias in her own schema by stating that critics who evaluate using visual elements “defer the labels of... experts who would use arbitrary and sometimes politically charged categories to identify styles and kinds of images” (Peterson, p.25). This is important since the construction of the Other in media is always politically charged.

Acknowledging the importance of function in imagery is key to understanding its pivotal role in visual satire as well as the value it holds in critical analyses of such types of imagery. It can be argued that establishing the function of an image also establishes whether the image in and of itself is satirical which is necessary to a critical study on satirical imagery. This is particularly important since most offensive cartoons in this day and age defend themselves not only under the banner of free speech but also under the banner of satire.

While Foss’s schema has served as a guiding principle for this one, considering the nature of the type of imagery that this schema explores, it will not be strictly anti-intentional. The reason for this is because purpose bears a crucial relationship to satire and thus must not be abandoned entirely when evaluating the image. Therefore, the background work required for this schema must consider the intent of the artist. However, it should not cloud the critic’s evaluation and by no means does it embrace intent as a basis for its framework. It places function firmly over purpose, echoing Foss’s views that the image itself stands independently on its own despite the intentions of its creator. Therefore, this schema should be considered to be moderately intentional. This is because the topic of discussion is satire where historical and enduring
characteristics have a secure relationship with the purpose of the artist. Therefore, this aspect must be acknowledged. In this unique form of imagery, purpose serves as a founding reason for why the art-form exists to begin with. As stated before, throughout time, the purpose of satire has always been to ridicule particular beliefs and opinions. Another connection that purpose shares with satire is that it has always been a primary factor in gauging how it is received. Therefore, to divorce the purpose of a satirical image entirely from its function in a rhetorical analysis would defeat the reasons for evaluating it to some extent. As a result, it must be acknowledged that purpose provides nominal but crucial insight into the type of image that is being analyzed. Furthermore, there is a reason for examining the purpose of the satirist itself. Only by examining his/her purpose can it be determined if the image is indeed satirical.

If the purpose of satire is to ridicule and thus provoke discussion, then the principle function as well should satisfy such a requirement for the image to be truly satirical. This automatically acknowledges that this schema is open to an image having more than one function. In this case, purpose is tied to at least the first function or the principle one. This, however, does not mean that they are one and the same or always should be. The purpose should be stated in the evaluation. However, the function determines if it is indeed executed. Therefore, this schema which is moderately intentional addresses purpose in the manner of how it is best conveyed through its primary function. When considering that the framework of the first step must be addressed with Burke’s utopia-in-reverse observation, the first part of the analysis must determine if the image is indeed satirical. Burke’s utopia-in-reverse demands this automatically since satire normally brings attention to the opposite of what the image is displaying. Therefore the image should be the opposite of the purpose. For instance, if the purpose is to lampoon a
particular belief by stating that the belief is simply not true, the image would then display the belief in a mocking fashion.

With that in mind, this stage does not in any way complete the first step nor can it be seen as the entire first step. As stated before, it is merely the background work done to determine if the image is satirical or not and thus if it can be applied to the schema. This stage also calls attention to the very nature of satire in the 21st century and connects the piece to the satire of past centuries. Thus, this stage reiterates the very definition of satire. It reminds scholars and readers alike that not all offensive images are satirical or can seek explanation under the banner of satire. This is also a reminder that some offensive images are simply hateful. While hate speech may be protected in countries with more libertarian laws, their images should be defined as just that – hate speech defended under the banner of free speech but by no means satire. Reinforcing the nature of satire, how it works and its purpose throughout the ages is important in media studies. This stage also acknowledges the intellectual aspect of this rhetorical trope and illustrates its position in 21st century media. While satire is complex in its execution and even in its messages, it is not complex from a media standpoint when we collectively define satire as it has always been defined.

The evaluation must thus start out with background work which in this case would be the identification of the purported purpose and then proceed from there. For instance, the artist or publication that produces the image may state that the image is satirical because it satirizes a particular hot topic of debate in the media. After naming the purpose of the artist - which may be to satirize or ridicule a particular reaction to a social institution - the critic must proceed to the first step. Such an example can be provided with the Danish cartoons where the publication, *Jyllends-Posten*, claimed that their images were satirical. The purpose of the images and thus the
artists’ intent was to satirize perceived self-censorship in Denmark, prompted amongst Danish citizens who were fearful of a backlash from Muslims. The cartoons purportedly arose from a response from the writer Kare Bluitgen who had a difficult time recruiting an illustrator for his children’s book on the Qu’ran and the Prophet Muhammad. According to the publication, other incidents that indicated a perceived sense of self-censorship later inspired them to create a series of “satirical” images on the topic (Fig. 5).

However, not one image dealt directly with speech and Islam. Many tied the Prophet Muhammad to terrorist tactics and misogynistic practices instead. Using the utopia-in-reverse method to determine purpose in this case is straight-forward. By reversing the actions and speech in the image, the message of the piece can be discovered. A concrete example of this would be the Danish Muhammad cartoon that portrayed Muhammad with a bomb on his turban with the “shahada”, the Islamic testimony of faith, written on the bomb in Arabic (Fig.5). The satirical image here blatantly connects the founder of the Islamic faith with a bomber. When reversing the testimony and the ideal of Muhammad (who is regarded as the consummate Muslim), it is obvious that the message connects peaceful values (no bombing) with non-Muslim values (no shahada) as opposed to calling for free speech, which the satirist claimed it did.

The satirist may claim that the controversy over cartoon depictions of the prophet Muhammad in orthodox Islam indicates a level of self-censorship, but as Hussain pointed out, there have been images of the Prophet Muhammad in the Islamic world for centuries (2007). Therefore, the image’s message which should have been the opposite of what it displayed did not in any way correspond with the artist’s intention, making the image more offensive and shocking as opposed to satirical. Therefore, when addressing the topic of the Danish cartoons and its
sacred right to offend, the cartoons should not be defended as satirical but rather as controversial or even hate speech, which is tolerated under free speech laws.

After naming the purpose of the artist, the critic must proceed to the first step. This involves the same method of identification if the message is indeed satirical as discussed before. Hence, the identification of the function being communicated by the satirical image is the first step of this schema with Burke’s utopia-in-reverse observation as the method of evaluation. It must also follow the trend of Peterson’s schema which uses visual elements to build the critical argument. This first step can be determined by reversing the satirized elements in the image. Keeping in mind that satire normally exaggerates for dramatic effect; the analyst must focus on the exaggerated characteristics and behavior of the image and apply it to Burke’s observation. By reversing the character’s actions, speech or even simplifying the caricatured elements to normalcy, the message of the piece can be discovered or at least explored and hence the function communicated. Like Foss’s schema, this step allows for more than one function. However, each function must correspond to Burke’s “utopia-in-reverse” method. As is the case with Foss’s schema, it is mandatory that the critic use existing examples in the image to back up his/her assertions “proposed by showing the steps taken from the physical data” (Foss, p.216).

The reason for the reversal of the actions, speech or behavior of the image is obvious. It is the methodology used to proceed with the first step. However, it must be stated why the importance of such visual elements in cartoons are so crucial to analysis. In his article, “Cartoons as a Site for the Construction of Palestinian Refugee Identity” (2007), Orayb Aref Najjar created an analytical model to examine the way in which the late Palestinian cartoonist, Naji al-Ali, constructed Palestinian refugee and Arab identity. He also conducted an analysis on several of al-Ali’s cartoons. Najjar’s model incorporated psychological, cognitive and anthropological
elements and was divided into three "layers." Layer one examines the setting of the cartoon and consequently the social and political context of the characters. Layer two incorporates the artistry of cartoons, also known as "the cartoon code" amongst cartoonists, to help assist in the analysis. Layer three deals with interpretation – as a collective community with shared cultural symbols (Najjar, 2007, pgs. 260-263).

All of these layers are pertinent to this schema. However, for step one of the schema which deals with function, layer three of Najjar’s model is of particular relevance. The interpretive measure for the function of this schema is dependent on how function can be decided as a collective community with shared symbols. Because this schema builds on Foss’s views of function while keeping in mind some of Peterson’s criticism of it, the function of the image should be decided primarily with the entirety of the image in mind. However, it must first be determined by individually selecting the visual elements - which in this case are cultural symbols - and then proceed to interpreting how they form the function of the image. For instance, the critic should look at how visual elements interplay with one another to create the function. Therefore stress is on the entirety of the image but it must first begin with the recognition of the individual visual elements. Function is dependent on a variety of characteristics but mainly of a combination of behavioral and visual elements. It is important to see how all these elements collectively make up the image. Therefore the function of the image should be interpreted with the image in its entirety, but use visual elements as its building blocks. The critic must see the broader picture and therefore see how the elements interplay together to create the function(s).

It is important to acknowledge the hybrid of both Foss’s and Peterson’s approach to image evaluation with step one. While both schemas stood independently of each other, this schema unites the arguments of both. Thus, this schema builds on the evaluation methods of the
previous two. It acknowledges that, with specific forms of imagery and generally in some cases, proof of function can be enhanced and identified by visual elements. In other cases, the image in its entirety may be all one needs to determine the rhetorical function. In the case of satirical imagery, paying close attention to visual elements is of direct value to examining the function of the image and ultimately determining it.

Najjar’s framework of interpretation is insightful to the analysis of satirical imagery and our views of the Other because cultures collectively share symbols they are intimately acquainted. Cultural symbols may include scapegoats, stereotypes as well as other artifacts that may conjure negative or positive reception. This is yet another reason why the function of the image should be interpreted in its entirety but with the use of visual elements as its building blocks. It is important to see how any recognizable cultural symbols identifying the Other(s) in the image mesh together to create the mood of the image. The context of this step is to stress that visual elements matter but not as much as the entirety of the image because that is the end goal to determining function. The critic must individually recognize the cultural symbols before piecing them together to interpret how they interact with one another in the larger picture to create the decisive commentary on the Other. Recognizing the individual elements alone will only provide clues and one-sided arguments. However, when put together while viewing the commentary made on each part of the image – the protagonist, antagonist etc. - the critical outcome may be very different. Therefore, it is the larger picture that should be given precedence in deciding function and this can be determined from not only seeing what mood and behavioral characteristics are created in the image but also what message is being conveyed.

The function of the image can be determined from a variety of visual elements in the cartoon – whether it is descriptive elements, behavioral or a combination of both. Thus, it can
range from a combination of the setting, the characters and the speech. But the critic must bear in mind that the image is satirical and thus all or most elements are subject to exaggeration to make a point. The point of the messages, as stated by Burke, lies in a reversal of the visual elements. Therefore, these visual elements which make up the satirical image and thus its message must be individually considered in order to determine the message. It is possible that each individual element may carry a piece of the message or commentary on the Other. Hence, it is important to look for interpretive clues in the visual elements and to explore the use of each of them in the first place.

The main focus of the first step is to determine what message is being communicated. It is therefore important to establish the behavior of the characters and what is translated through their actions and characteristics. For instance, the critic may find the characters to be a number of demeanors ranging from threatening to timid. To determine that the piece is indeed satirical, it is important to establish that the message unmistakably communicates what is being ridiculed and can be determined by reversing the opposite of the piece. It should also correspond with what it claims to be satirizing. There is always an indication of this in the subject matter. This can be found with accompanying content such as the title or article that comes with the cartoon.

**Identification of the “Recalcitrant Other(s)” and the Dialogue**

With the message discovered and the function communicated, identification of the “recalcitrant Other(s)” and the dialogue it represents is the next step. It must be stated that the image may contain more than one rhetorical Other. Considering the provocative nature of satire, the Other should be easy to spot. However, as is the case with Peterson’s schema, the critic must use visual elements to support his/her assertion of the identification of the Other and how its
recalcitrance is communicated. Therefore, visual elements are the tools of analysis for this step. Identifying the Other through visual elements is crucial since, according to Peterson, critics who evaluate using visual elements are less inclined to use politically charged terminology (Peterson, p.25). This is important since the construction of the Other in media is always political and is therefore prone to bias.

As pointed out by Peterson, the use of identifying visual elements relies more on sensory perceptions, whereas evaluating an image in its entirety may lead to the critic putting “the (interpretive) cart before the (perceptual) horse” (p.22). Hence the critic is more likely to rely on subconscious judgment when evaluating an image in its entirety. It is important to recognize that, when analyzing a depiction of the Other, one considers Levinas’s view in regards to the Western construction of the Other which he states always leads to an over-simplification and negation of the archetype (Murray, p. 24). As Hussain has pointed out, the construction of the Other is normally epitomized in cultural works we take for granted such as in the arts. When a stereotype re-surfaces in the media, we “have been biased for so long that [we do not] even notice this discrimination” (Hussain, p.118).

Najjar’s model also pertains to step two of the schema and thus can provide further insight. Layer one of his model analyzes the political and social context of the characters as well as the setting of the image. Keeping in mind that his model was not intended for interpretation of satirical cartoons but of cartoons nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that his first layer pays attention to the look of the characters because “costumes provide information on class and status and place the characters within their interpretive community” (p.261). When applied to the context of satire, this reiterates the need for paying attention specifically to visual elements which include setting, speech and behavior that is being caricatured. When reversed, it may say
something specifically about the class and status of characters. This may provide considerable insight about marginalized populations that the Other normally represents. When observed in their satirical form, this simply reiterates the social and political context of the characters themselves which is what Najjar’s first layer explores.

Costuming and physical features in particular are of precedence when evaluating the Other. As pointed out by Hussain, visual depictions of the Other in every civilization have occurred for over centuries. The visual Other may be manifested with particular facial features or dress that can elicit a series of emotions and bias based on one civilization’s relationship with the Other. It also may include a hint of historicity depending on the length of contact one civilization has with the Other. If the Other has endured as a minority in civilizations for centuries past, they may also be sensitive to particular characterizations of them which can come to the foray when depicted in satirical images. For instance, in February 2009, The NY Post published a cartoon of a chimpanzee being shot by two policemen with the caption of one policeman stating “They’ll have to find someone else to write the next stimulus bill” (Burkeman, 2009). The cartoon was a clear reference to President Barack Obama’s much touted stimulus bill at the time (Fig. 3). It instantly created controversy because of the supposed allusion made between President Obama and a chimpanzee which later prompted the publication to issue an apology for its racially insensitive content. This was due to the fact that African-Americans were routinely referred to as apes: a common racial slur made against them in previous decades and centuries in the United States. Such an example illustrates the unique connection that historicity has with the Other in satirical images. It is just one of many examples of cultural symbols that are used in satirical images to provide commentary on the Other.
All of this is reminiscent of Levinas's views that pertain to having an ethically responsible relationship with the Other as well as Hussain's charge that when images surface, the greater collective society are usually biased for so long that it is difficult to see the discriminatory image for what it is. This in turn creates an inter-societal conflict between the majority and the Other – a vicious conflict that has evolved for centuries. Hussain's observation not only strengthens Levinas's views but also provides insight into the sensitive controversies that revolve around satirical imagery and the offenses they may conjure in an era where political correctness is of crucial importance more and more as a plethora of majorities interact with various Others.

Besides costuming, visual elements in a satirical image may also include but are not limited to caricatured elements, exaggerated behavior and parodied speech. Parodied speech in particular does hold a special function in the field of communication and can be aligned with many earlier references explored about speech in general. Because the topic of discussion is of course parody and the primary method of evaluation is Burke's utopia-in-reverse method, all parodied speech should be evaluated with the method in mind. With the use of identifying the visual elements that construct the "recalcitrant Other(s)," the dialogue must be determined next. This is done by combining the function or the communicated message with the identification of the Other(s). By using the visual elements of the piece to determine the composure of the Other(s), for instance deciding if they appear aggressive as opposed to being victimized, the tone of the dialogue can be deduced. This, coupled with the message established from the first step, completes the dialogical nature of the piece.
**Identification of Ideographical Content**

There is a third portion of the schema that is optional and can be utilized should a particular theme in the image develop. Particular attention has been paid to visual ideographs in this thesis in anticipation that some images or parts of an image may function as ideographical. This paper asserts the views of Janis Edwards and Carol Winkler in their article, “Representative Form and the Visual Ideograph: The Iwo Jima Image in Editorial Cartoons,” that state that parody should be regarded as a special representative form in rhetoric that is often used as a powerful political statement when conjuring a reference to an iconic entity (1997). This lends to the idea that a cartoon or an aspect of the cartoon that is rendered as ideographical is often used as a form of commentary in visual satire. Since there is a strong likelihood that aspects of a satirical image may be ideographical, it thus makes sense to include a method of evaluation for deciding if the image is in fact ideographical, propose a method of analysis and consequently evaluate the effect of the ideographical input. As a result, the third step of this schema proposes that all components of the image such as characters, setting and behavior be observed for recalling specifically iconic events or entities. If they do, the critic must then determine the social message communicated by the use of the ideographical connotation. The criteria of evaluation that the critic must use to determine the ideographical connotation is to apply the image or an aspect of it to McGee’s four basic requirements for functioning as an ideograph.

To paraphrase McGee’s four basic requirements, an ideograph must be an ordinary term in political discourse, an abstraction representing collective commitment, warrant power and guide behavior as well as be culture bound (McGee, 1979). Ideally, the entity that is being referenced in the image should satisfy these requirements and the critic should take the initiative to apply the entity to these requirements. McGee also stated that ideographs are “one-term sums
of orientation.” Thus the critic should look at the mainstream outlook of the scenario or the character being conjured, determine if it attributed largely negative or positive characteristics to society - which should be easy to assume since an ideograph is a one-term assumption - and then decide how effectively it communicated the message of the image. The critic should be wondering if the ideograph effectively communicated a powerful message and in what way. He/she should also determine the effectiveness of the ideograph itself. For instance, would the image be any less powerful if it utilized the ideograph or not?

Rendering if the ideograph conjures a negative or positive outlook should be straightforward. For instance, Edwards and Winkler explored how the Iwo Jima image was used for political commentary in cartoons as well as to assert the satirist’s opinions on political issues. If one considered the Iwo Jima image, its one-sum orientation would be positive. Some individual words and terms that the image may conjure would be “heroism,” “glory,” “patriotism” and “true American valor.” However, as Edwards and Winkler also pointed out, satirical images used to conjure the image normally take on the task of questioning the values they connote when a political event arises such as the official policy of gays in the military and the status of the Republican Party (Edwards, Winkler, 1997).

Thus, the critic should look at the ideographical aspect of the image and determine if the ideograph itself effectively questions a particular issue or otherwise assists in aiding the setting of the image itself. He/she should be asking if the ideograph assists in conjuring up the negativity or positivity of the message with its one-term sum of orientation. The critic should also evaluate how this aids in actually rendering the image satirical and what this says about the Other. Sometimes the Other in the image may take on ideographical characteristics. Or there may be an element in the image that assists in setting the tone of the Other’s disposition. It may assist in
conjuring up the perceived opinions of the Other and the portion of the message that is dedicated to commentary on him/her. It is important to explore ideographical implications since ideographs function in the same manner as myth. They defer the audience from questioning. They are accepted as universal truths. This is of particular relevance when examining imagery depicting the Other. If the ideograph in any way is related to the stereotyping of the Other, then the satirist has directly commented on deeply held perceptions of the Other – whether from an angle that encourages the questioning of the stereotype or the reinforcing of one. Since ideographs function from a subconscious level, their inclusion has the possibility of creating a powerful message.

**Conclusion**

The exploration of ideographical inclusion in a satirical image completes the final step of the schema. The purpose of this analysis tool was to break down the most important aspects of a satirical image that depicted the Other and to provide a three-step framework for critical evaluation that objectively tackles artifacts that explore the Other. The hybrid of Foss’s and Peterson’s schema provided compelling material on addressing such a topic. The meticulous application of analyzing visual elements as well as exploring the function of the image have proven to be insightful in creating an executable schema that aimed at being objective in its treatment of the Other in satirical imagery. This objectivity has been increased by examining the complexity of one civilization’s relationship with the Other hence the discussion of Levinas’s views, historicity as well as Najjar’s layered model of interpretation.

As stated in chapter one, the purpose of creating such a schema arose from the controversies that have revolved around previous cartoon images depicting the Other such as the Danish Muhammad cartoons. However, many more cartoons depicting the Other have been
published since then and have also sparked outrage and controversy as well. The *NY Post* cartoon that was cited earlier that depicted President Barack Obama as a chimpanzee is just one example. It echoes the controversies of a previous cartoon caricaturing him during his election campaign. This one was the famous *New Yorker* cartoon that caricatured Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle Obama, as fist-bumping terrorists. The cartoon created such a stir that an *Entertainment Weekly* cover reprised its connotation later that year with Steven Colbert playing the role of Michelle Obama in the cartoon and Jon Stewart playing the role of Barack Obama – a clear nod to the defense of the image being satirical since the media personalities on the cover of the magazine were none the other than satirists (Wolk, 2008). The induction of Barack Obama in national American politics and his historic win as the first bi-racial American president with African-American roots will undoubtedly inspire greater discussion about future depictions of the Other in cartoons. Thus the next step of this thesis will be to apply this schema to the *New Yorker* cartoon depicting President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle Obama during the presidential campaign of 2008 (Fig.1).
Image Schema for Evaluating the “Other” in Satirical Imagery

**Background work**
- Evaluate the background and purpose of the satirist

**Identification of the function of the image**
- Method of evaluation is Burke’s "Utopia-in-reverse" observation

**Identification of the “Recalcitrant Other(s)” and the Dialogue**
- Use of visual elements to analyze imagery depicting the Other(s)

**Identification of Ideographical Content**
- Use of McGee’s four requirements that constitute an ideograph
Chapter Five

Analysis of the Other in “The Politics of Fear” by Barry Blitt from the July/08 *New Yorker* Issue Cover

**Background Material and the Identification of the Function**

This chapter will provide an analysis of the cartoon featured on the cover of the July 2008 *New Yorker* issue, entitled “The Politics of Fear” which was illustrated by the famed *New Yorker* cartoonist/satirist Barry Blitt (Fig.1). The analysis that will be used to examine the image draws from the schema provided in chapter four. This analysis is also intended to add to the existing methods of analysis in visual communication studies as well as provide insight into the controversial cartoon by Blatt for further research on the topic.

In the July 2008 *New Yorker* cover, the cartoon features a caricatured Barack Obama standing in the Oval Office dressed in Middle Eastern garb, reminiscent of the kind worn by the many images of Afghan men that are strewn across television sets daily in the midst of media coverage of the well-known “war on terror.” He also sports a turban and sandals. His wife, Michelle Obama, clearly the more dominant of the two, stands tall to the left of him with a furrowed expression on her face, in contrast with his complacent smile. Her legs are crossed and she sports an afro, military boots, army camouflage pants and a navy blue military-style jacket with a gun and bullets strapped to her side. The top part of her outfit is eerily similar to the attire of the African-American nationalist organization, The Black Panthers, who also wore jackets and guns as part of their uniform. Both characters are seen bumping fists with her fist bump being strongly implicative of the famous Black Panther gesture while her other arm is propped up on her hip. To the right of them, a crumpled American flag burns in the fire place while a picture of Osama bin Laden hangs above.
As stated before, it is important in the evaluation to state the purpose of the artist’s intention since this schema is moderately intentional. The New Yorker magazine as well as the previous work of Barry Blitt have won awards and widespread acclaim with satirical images. In previous years, the magazine has even been called out for their controversial cartoons, the latest being the July 2008 piece. Cartoons have become a hallmark of their eighty-plus year existence. Their online site proudly features a link named “The Cartoon Bank” where a consumer can purchase the artwork of previous cartoons throughout the publication’s history on t-shirts, as cover prints or even framed. New Yorker cartoons have gained such attention and notoriety that previous academic research has been done on the subject of their cartoons and the themes that they reflect. Such an example can be found in Jon P. Alston’s and Larry A. Platt’s article “Religious Humor: A Longitudinal Content Analysis of Cartoons” (1969) that conducted research on previous, decades-long New Yorker cartoons throughout 1930-1968 to highlight changing attitudes towards religion. The publication is also known for its satirical jest, with Barry Blitt as a beloved rising star in the realm of satire. The website also features a link to his previous covers, under the heading “The Politics of Satire”. Therefore the intention of this image was to produce a satirical message. From the point of view of this schema, this was its first and principle function.

The object of this thesis’s analysis legitimately constitutes as a satirical image when first considering that the title of the cartoon is called “The Politics of Fear”. The elements that determine this most are the inclusion of the bin Laden picture, since he is famously considered to be the most feared terrorist, and the main characters of the cartoon. Hence the bin Laden portion of the picture is the most blaring representation of the “fear” portion of the title and the Obamas are the most obvious representation of the political portion. As stated in the schema, all content
regarding the visual when published should be taken into consideration. In this particular situation, both the title and the visual work hand in hand in uniting the message and indicating its satirical quality. This claim is further enhanced by the tradition of the *New Yorker* cartoons as well as the continued work of Barry Blitt who is known for his satirical style. The title states the obvious and the visual proceeds to mock the title by both ridiculing and exaggerating it by displaying an unfounded, almost irrational fear.

Such an observation is further proven with the biographies of both characters. Never has Barack Obama been associated with the Taliban or any brand of Islamic militancy or Michelle Obama with The Black Panthers. The title also indicates a dual meaning when considering the mudslinging that took place during the campaign which nurtured and aroused suspicion about Barack Obama’s national and religious identity – an attempt that was most certainly intended to inspire fear in undecided voters. As step two will identify, the threatening atmosphere of the image does indeed mock the irrationality of the fear and the political incitements made about Barack Obama during his presidential campaign. The duality in the meaning of the title is also another indication of an artifact pertaining to satire. If one considers the reversal observation, one would realize that there is a corollary to the reversal. Hence, when Burke coined the term “utopia-in-reverse,” he was indicating a duality in satire as previously mentioned in this thesis. Metaphorically, Burke described the two sides of satire – the utopia and the reverse. Thus, a hallmark of a satirical image should really be two images: there is the image we see and the message which is the image normalized which would likely be the ones in our head.

The identification of the message and its function is straight-forward. The reversal of this image would be a non-Muslim Barack Obama with a non-Black Panther wife who demurred to him, as opposed to being the dominant of the two or possibly even his equal. There would be no
bin Laden picture hanging at the top of the fireplace and no crumpled, burning American flag. Therefore, the status quo of the Oval Office would remain the same as it did with previous Anglo-Saxon, Christian presidents. Considering the current controversial tendency to link Muslims to terrorism, which the bin Laden picture only too easily conjures, coupled with the anti-White rhetoric of the Black Panthers in the later stages of their movement, the function being communicated is a satirized message of the fear-mongering incited about Barack Obama’s “Otherness” in politics as a presidential candidate. He is not Anglo-Saxon and his past alludes to brushes with Islam during his childhood, creating him as the quintessential “Other” in national American politics.

There are a plethora of visual elements that indicates this. For starters, one should look at the behavioral dispositions of both characters, starting with Barack Hussein Obama whose campaign brought about the characteristics being debated in the image. He stands in a more relaxed demeanor, straight and tall, facing his wife with a congenial expression and a smile on his face. Being born to a Kenyan father who hailed from a Muslim background and also having lived in Indonesia as a child, Barack Obama was questioned throughout the campaign in regards to his ties to Islam. The consequent result was obvious fear-mongering regarding his religious and even his national identity. In the image, he stands with an affable expression, smiling towards his wife. This may or may not be a nod to his signature relaxed demeanor that alludes to his famed eloquence which has characterized him as a congenial individual. However, he is dressed entirely in Islamic garb with a turban on his head, unmistakably similar to the turban Bin Laden sports in a portrait above the fireplace in the image. This of course directly comments on the idea of Barack Obama being a closet terrorist. Barack Obama also stands closest to the image of bin Laden which is to the right of him and is consequently closer to the burning American
flag. As a result, it is not entirely off the mark to assume he was the one who may have cast the flag into the fireplace.

All of this is indicative of Barack Obama’s “Otherness” being satirized. The entire image is offensive and at the same time ridiculous. If Barack Obama hypothetically did cast the flag into the fireplace as a symbolic gesture towards burning American values, this only further illustrates the sheer preposterousness of such a notion that his ties to Islam, which includes an extended Muslim family who he has been largely estranged from for most of his life, could somehow interfere with his ability to be a true-blooded American president that is committed to protecting American values.

As is the case with satire, there is a dual meaning here as well. The satirist further ridicules the bizarre notion that automatically connects Islam with terrorism. This can be taken in the context of Barack Obama’s relationship to the religion which is the fastest-growing in the world and the second largest. While he may have extended family members that are Muslim and he may have lived in Indonesia, which is the most populous Muslim country in the world, he was there as an infant and has not ever been acquainted to Islamic terrorism in any way. His exposure to Islam has always been a mainstream version which makes up the majority of its practitioners today. Therefore, Blatt’s choice of bin Laden, arguably the most feared terrorist in the West, was meant to satirize the ill-founded fear that connects Islam to terrorism and Barack Obama to it. The reversal of such visual elements to normalcy would merely be symbolic of a mainstream branch of Islam, or in other words, a non-fanatical, non-extremist version. Hence, Blatt satirized the misconceptions of Islam’s portrayal in the image as well by using Barack Obama as an example.
The coverage of the image after it was published also proved to be insightful. Most editorials indicated that many were offended by the image and the cover gained international attention. From that aspect, the image accomplished what it had set out to do since satire is meant to offend through ridicule. However, one of the more interesting aspects of the coverage was that even members of groups whose Otherness were targeted admitted that the image was satirical while at the same time stating their offense. Such an example can be found in the statement released by the Center for Islamic Relations (CAIR) which stated that the image “reduce(d) the [Islamic] faith and its 1.5 billion followers into caricatures of themselves” (“Mag runs for Cover”, 2008). If one looks closely at the statement, they admit to the image’s use of caricature which is a form of satire, thus acknowledging the satirical style of the image. The other responses to the image were predictable, with some questioning the limits of satire in the mainstream press (“Beyond a Joke,” 2008). Hence the image, whose function and visual elements indicated satirical form, provoked a discussion. From that aspect, every portion of the image was a success when considering that the ultimate goal of satire is to provoke a discussion on the subject being satirized.

The next “Other” that is featured in the image is the wife of the then-presidential candidate, Michelle Obama. In the image, she stands aggressively tall and erect with her head slightly tilted towards Barack Obama with furrowed brows and a glint in her eye. Her head tilt and frown indicates that she is the aggressor since she seems to be leaning in to him or commanding him with a tilt of the head. Her expression communicates a feisty, possibly angry, no-nonsense, African-American female. The image stresses on her being of African-American descent with her hair in an afro, which was an aesthetic characteristic of the Black power movement in the 1960’s that encouraged African-Americans to wear their hair naturally as a
tribute of cultural acceptance and an embrace of their natural beauty. The afro is the first, reminiscent hint connecting Michelle Obama’s character to the 1960’s.

The second is none the other than her costume which indicates class and status as mentioned in Najjar’s model of analysis. Her outfit is a militant’s outfit, bedecked in camouflage pants, a military jacket, and a round of bullets strapped to the front of her chest and a machine gun hanging on her arm. Coupled with her afro, the outfit conjures up the idea of an African-American militant of the 1960’s. The meaning here is ideographical which will be discussed further in step three. When one thinks of an African-American militant, there are only two organizations from the 1960’s that conjure up such an image. The first and most popular is the Black Panthers, who encouraged African-Americans to exercise their fourth amendment rights in the face of police brutality in the 1960’s. At the time, statistics indicated to a grotesque profiling on the part of the police towards African-Americans. The second organization would be the Nation of Islam, an African-American organization that has existed for decades and continue to today. This is further enhanced when considering the image of its most famous founder, Malcolm X, who was featured holding a gun in an upright position, staring out a window in a famous picture from the 1960’s (Fig. 4). It is a likelihood that could be alluded to in the image considering that Islamic militancy is invoked in this image as well. However, it is important to link all visual elements to see the image in its entirety.

Michelle Obama is seen raising her hand in a fist bump that is eerily similar to the Black Panther gesture. It is the fist bump that is the most direct connection to her and the Black Panthers since the Black Panthers raised fist, known as their symbol, was an extremely popular gesture in the 1960’s that has endured for decades. Her jacket also alludes to the famous images of some Black Panthers of the 1960’s and her afro still stands out as a symbolic characteristic of
the Black power movement. Therefore, the overall image in its entirety unmistakably communicates Michelle Obama as a Black Panther. The connection between her and the Nation of Islam is further debunked when one considers that biographically she has never been tied to Islam. However, the Black Panther allusion arises from a mainly subconscious aspect since there are only a few hints that pinpoint her to being a Black Panther such as the jacket, the afro and the fist bump. Therefore, there is a chance that the image functions ideographically because while Michelle Obama is clearly seen as an African-American militant, the one-term assumption of Michelle Obama’s character is that she is automatically a Black Panther.

Since satirical imagery is meant to comment on a particular instance or event, one must consider the relationship of Michelle and Barack Obama and how it has been portrayed in the media. *Newsweek* did a feature on Michelle Obama in their December/2008 issue. In it, Allison Samuels stated that “early on in the primaries after she was labeled too forward and too loud, Michelle Obama demonstrated self-restraint and discipline by dialing back” (Samuels, 2008, p.30). The origins of the Obamas’ romantic relationship are widely known and publicly acknowledged. Michelle Obama was Barack Obama’s mentor, when they first met at their former employer, the law firm, Sidley Austin (Kornblut, 2007). Samuels’s observation of Michelle Obama being first portrayed as “forward and loud” was a shrewd observation of how she was originally portrayed in the media, particularly during the cutthroat Democratic primaries. This, coupled with her image as a self-made, well-educated, successful lawyer and originally her husband’s mentor, easily rouses assumptions of a “domineering” female. She has never been a wallflower or a “Stepford” wife. The archetypal personification of her as a strong, aggressive female in the Democratic primaries continued to dog her for some time during the election campaign when Barack Obama was chosen as the Democratic presidential candidate. In the New
Yorker cartoon, it is amplified to present her as a dominatrix-style character where she is the more imposing and the stronger of the two.

Furthermore, Michelle Obama has spoken candidly about her experiences as an African-American in institutions that boasted a majority White population such as Harvard and Princeton. Her undergraduate thesis was entitled “Princeton Educated Blacks and the Black Community” (Kornblut, 2007). The embrace of her African-American community appeared to be a point of anxiety for Conservatives. This too, was caricatured in the image with her portrayal as an African-American militant or a Black Panther. Samuels further discussed this, stating that “When the New Yorker caricatured the Obamas in July doing a “terrorist fist bump” in the Oval Office, the image stung. It was Michelle who came across as the domineering one – the angry Black woman” (Samuels, 2008, p.30). All of these perceptions and biographical information combined pinpoints to the stigmas held about Michelle Obama and the consequent caricatured elements of her in the image.

**The “Recalcitrant Others” – Barack and Michelle Obama**

The visual elements discussed also indicate who the “recalcitrant Others” of the piece are. Of course, Barack and Michelle Obama are the primary subjects of the image. Therefore, there are two “recalcitrant Others” in this piece. With the visual elements already noted, it is important to look at the social and political context of the characters. From a social angle, one must look at racial backgrounds. The first character, Barack Obama, is biracial while the other character, Michelle Obama, is African-American. From a social context this also helps to put their costuming and thus their caricatured aspects into context. Barack Obama is satirized as a closeted Muslim mainly due to his connection to Islam. But his racial background is not entirely
the subject for other reasons. That aspect is not satirized and is of little importance to the image. The connection between Barack Obama and Osama bin Laden, an Arab Muslim terrorist, is made. Islamic terrorism has been largely tied to the Arab world. Considering the tensions that have been created in the Arab world over the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the social and political context of Obama’s caricatured self alludes to this by tying him to the region with his garb and thus making the strong connection made between him and bin Laden in the picture. This is only further accentuated with the burning American flag. If one connects the Arab-Islamic aspect to both Obama and the burning American flag, the statement is a strong one pinpointing him to extremist Islamic branches of the Arab world. This is of course meant to be taken in a satirical context, thus the reverse of it points to Obama in fact being the opposite of such a concept. On the other hand, while Michelle Obama’s personality as an aggressive, strong woman is satirized, she is depicted as the Black Panther most likely in part because she is African-American. There are many ways to satirize an angry woman, but the definitive characteristic of Michelle Obama’s angry persona is incumbent on her portrayal as a Black Panther. This connects her angry female persona to something more extreme and ominous and, at the same time, directly relates her to her racial background.

The political context of the characters is also another matter. In this particular instance, Barack Obama bears the brunt of it since he is the presidential candidate. Placing both characters in the Oval Office, with him standing close to the Bin Laden picture with the burning American flag, is meant to satirize him and his Otherness. All environmental visual elements can be attributed to him since he is depicted as being the president of the United States in the image. Therefore the décor of the Oval Office can be attributed to his Otherness. Since he is president, he is the one who is thus hypothetically responsible for the hanging the portrait of bin Laden
above the fireplace. And since it is his office, and he is standing closest to the American flag, then he is most likely responsible for the flag burning. Since the image makes a political statement from a satirical point of view, the political context of the image takes precedence over all other forms of interpretation. Therefore, the political context of this image makes Barack Obama the primary subject of the cartoon and thus all of its strongest statements are connected first and foremost to him.

It must be noted that this does not end the political context of both characters. Michelle Obama’s caricature can also be taken into a political context. She is depicted as the “angry Black female” which carries its own political weight. As an Other that is displayed as angry or resentful, she is representative as a threat to the status quo. However, even this bleeds into Barack Obama’s political context. Much of the mudslinging that went on during the presidential campaign, which the image directly satirizes, is meant to provide commentary on the threat of an angry Black couple and the challenge it imposes from a mainstream point of view. The threat it imposes is of course satirized as irrational when taking the social context of the image which posits both characters as extremists.

As a result, this leads to an examination of the tone of the image or the context in which the tone of the image can be taken. It also defines the recalcitrant dialogue between the Others portrayed in the image and successively the dialogue of the entire image. Before filtering the satirical components of step one, the recalcitrant dialogue being communicated here is of a menacing kind for the status quo of American politics at the national level. On face value, the image can be seen as threatening and ominous based on the mere facts of the image. Both characters that have entered the foray of national politics are portrayed as extremists. Universally, this is undoubtedly a threat to the core of national values on every level. However,
with step one confirming that the piece is indeed satirical, the recalcitrant dialogue here communicates the satirized irrational fear of the Obamas being closet terrorists and Black Panthers. Furthermore, the piece displays the prospect of such an idea as ludicrous, consequently making it a somewhat laughing manner despite the offensiveness of the image when taken literally as opposed to symbolically, which is always the aim of satire. Therefore, this only adds to the satirical characteristics of the image.

**Analysis of the Ideographical Content of the Image**

Having noted earlier that there are hints of ideographical elements made in the image, both characters will be examined for a possible ideographical component and thus be observed for how the statement of the overall image is affected with the use of ideographs. This analysis found that the caricature of Barack Obama indicated an ideographical function. McGee stated before that ideographs develop over a period of time. Hence, Michelle Obama’s caricature may function more strongly as an ideograph considering that her caricature recalled an item that existed over forty years ago and has been referenced in pop culture for over a generation. This has given her the ability to be embedded in the national psyche from a subconscious level. At first glance, Barack Obama’s caricature brings to mind an Islamic terrorist. Such a stereotype may not have had as much time to be embedded in the national psyche. Thus, the context that is being referenced is a fairly recent affair by accounts of world history. The viewer may consciously think of the war in Iraq and the September 11th attacks when observing the image. An older viewer may even think of the Iranian hostage ordeal of 1979 and 1980 as well as an image of the Ayatollah Khomeini. When considering the September 11th incident, such an ordeal only took place seven years ago. However if one looks deeper, another cultural reference is being recalled. This is the definition of Orientalism – a referent that has been embedded in our psyche
for centuries. In this particular case, this ideograph is manifested with the purpose of highlighting a mainstream fear of losing one’s cultural identity by electing an Other to national office.

The Islamic terrorist referent is just the latest installment in Orientalist perceptions in Western civilization. It adds to the myth of the Orient, the Arab world and thus Islam despite the fact that the Arab world make up only a small fraction of the Islamic population worldwide. Edward Said won considerable praise for his work on such a subject. In his book, *Orientalism*, he generalized a common perception of the Arab-Muslim world by hypothesizing that perceptions were inclined to imply that “on the one hand there are Westerners, and on the other hand there are Arab-Orientals; the former are (in no particular order) rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion; the latter are none of these things” (Said, p.49, 1978). Said discussed the influence of art, geography and history as well and how all encapsulated perceptions of Orientalism.

It is safe to say that Barack Obama’s caricature does recall some long-held Orientalist perceptions manifested in the caricature he portrays. The bin Laden picture hanging above the fireplace in the image also aids in the construction of Barack Obama as an Islamic terrorist. He functions as the primary referent on irrational, violent ideology to strengthen the construction of Barack Obama’s caricature. Furthermore, the Islamic component of the caricature is the defining piece in the Orientalist construction of the caricature. Thus, the image itself may be ideographical when considering that the three figures present in the image all satisfy ideographical criteria. Barack Obama’s caricature can also be applied to McGee’s four requirements. For starters, his representation as an Islamic terrorist is undoubtedly an ordinary term in political discourse. It has been discussed time and again on Capitol Hill, in newsrooms and has spurned countless political debates. Furthermore, the current “war on terror” in which
America is still embroiled has created an icon of the term. Barack Obama’s caricatured image is simply a visual depiction of such an iconic representation.

The abstraction representing collective commitment can again be applied to not only Barack Obama’s caricature but to the entire image. For example, the picture of bin Laden, along with Obama as the devoted disciple of Islamic militancy bumping fists with his nationalist African-American spouse, represents from a militant point of view a collective commitment to the defeat of mainstream American values. This is manifested in their quintessential “Otherness” characteristics – his as a national candidate with past brushes with Islam and hers as the first African-American first lady. This is further highlighted by conjuring the idea of terror since all are militants in the image. The Bin Laden picture is thus juxtaposed at this point in time since he is the concrete referent to terror – both literally and psychologically. This terror is of course manifested in the terror of losing one’s cultural identity by paving the way for an “Other” to be elected to national office. Another side of the coin would be that the abstraction representing a collective commitment can be a reinforcement of national values united against militancy of the Others. Thus, a display of the threat they hypothetically impose can be a direct comment on what values unite us together as a majority. Of course, with this being a satirical image, the reverse is meant to make a caustic remark on the perverse notion of exploiting national values through fear-mongering for self-serving interests.

Barack Obama’s caricature most certainly warrants power and guides behavior, as more recent examples have shown in regards to national opinion. The threat of terrorism caused initial support for the war on terror as well as the war in Iraq. Therefore, Islamic militancy can guide behavior and, in and of itself, elicits power. The fact that a national presidential candidate is portrayed as the epitome of the most loathsome archetype on the national scene makes a
powerful political statement. In the case of a satirical image, it excoriates the belief equating Islam with terrorism. It also enforces the strong opinion that while Barack Obama has been considerably acquainted with Islam more than previous national candidates, he is by no means a terrorist, nor does he endorse terrorism. The caricature at this point is meant to mock the absurdity of such a belief to begin with.

Finally, Barack Obama’s caricature is inherently culture-bound. As noted earlier, it does contain elements of Orientalist bias which allude to an irrational, violent, non-democratic referent. Earlier works in past centuries such as Voltaire’s “Candide” and Mozart’s “The Abduction of Seraglio” aided in the construction of Orientalism. Obama’s caricature, which can be regarded as a modern-day Orientalist stereotype, has been epitomized in countless Hollywood movies. Hence, a visual depiction of such a stereotype can be used as a cultural referent to challenge the status-quo on widely regarded points of view.

With Barack Obama’s caricature functioning ideographically, there is a possibility that Michelle Obama’s caricature may also function in the same manner. From a rhetorical standpoint, Michelle Obama’s character does in fact satisfy all four of McGee’s requirements to be ideographical, therefore making this a factor. African-American military history is a known portion of military history in the United States. Furthermore, the role the Black Panthers played in the civil rights movement, which was in essence a political and social movement, is widely known among the American population.

The abstraction representing a collective commitment can be seen from two opposite angles. For starters, the point of view of the Black Panthers was a united militaristic front from their part to protect African-Americans from police brutality, as was seen in their origins. This
can be seen as the abstraction representing a collective commitment. This is a fact in African-American history that before the organization ballooned into a greater militant organization that espoused more divisive, racist views. From the view of the majority, the abstraction is manifested as an ominous militant force and the collective commitment is a united front against the achievement of the belief of the status quo.

An image that conjures the Black Panthers, and thus African-American militancy, also does warrant a certain kind of power and ultimately guides behavior. As stated before, the idea of an angry Black male or female is a politically charged concept. Thus, the power that is warranted is a collective reaction among the status quo – one that is negatively receptive to the concept of African-American militarism and the archetype of an angry Black male or female. The level of intensity may even differ when the archetype alludes to an angry Black male, which is what any reference to the Black Panthers includes. The guided behavior would be an overwhelmingly negative action taken to prevent another coming of the Black Panthers or any African-American militancy that is hostile to co-existing with the other racial groups. Such guided behavior could manifest in voting against a political candidate that recalls the Black Panthers. Hence the image satirized the fear-factor involved in conjuring a Black Panther or even an angry Black male or female and thus provoked discussion on the intent to affect voting behavior by alluding to such an archetype.

A Black Panther allusion is also a subconsciously culture-bound symbol. Their famous hand gesture which doubled as Michelle Obama’s “fist-bump” in the image is epitomized in pop culture as a Black power symbol. The Black Panthers are also famously known as a more extremist organization that evolved out of the Civil Rights movement in the sixties. They are iconic to the sixties for their controversies. Their name is also associated with nationalist
African-American militarism and can inspire a sense of fear or discomfort, due to the group’s racist nature in the latter part of their movement.

Hence, the Michelle Obama caricature does function as an ideograph with all aspects of the Black Panther allusion fitting all the requirements needed to be identified as one. Since, ideographs are one-term assumptions; it is thus easy to infer that the Black Panther allusion connoted the term “angry African-American militant”. As a result, the connotation is a negative one. Thus, in this particular situation, one can deduce that this ideographical connotation effectively conveyed a powerful message for satirical means. Blatt intended to mock the irrational fear-mongering perpetuated by and prevalent among Conservatives that Michelle Obama is an aggressive woman conscious of her cultural background, and that this would somehow be a threat to national politics. His best methods of indicating the absurdity of such an idea was to portray their fear-mongering as an extreme view that was not rooted in reality. Thus, his best way of insinuating such preposterousness was to portray her as a Black Panther. As a result, the ideographical connotation directly affected the intensity of the message.

It is important to note how the presence of two featured ideographs affects the rhetorical classification of the entire image. The overall image functions as an ideograph because the focus of the image is the characters who recall visual ideographs themselves. Even the portrait of bin Laden can be viewed as ideographical since his image also functions as an <Orientalist>. However, since his presence in the image can be regarded as passive because he is not intended to be an actual physical figure present in the image, it is safe to regard his portrait as simply a descriptive tool to aid in the construction of Barack Obama’s caricature. The image does not function traditionally as previous visual ideographs have before by recalling a singular event such as the Iwo Jima event explored by Edwards and Winkler. Instead, this ideograph can be
regarded as one because it unites two separate visual ideographs that bore little or no relation to each other until they were united in the image under the common construction of <extremist>. Nonetheless, the image still functions as an ideograph but just a more complex kind which sees the union of two ideographs – the <angry Black female> and the <Orientalist> united under one image as <extremist>.

As stated earlier, it is obvious that Barack Obama’s caricature functions as an ideograph along with the entire image. Visual elements in the image such as the portrait of Osama bin Laden thus assist in aiding the construction of his caricature as an <Orientalist>. Hence the connotation is a negative one. From a satirical standpoint, the ideographical input assisted in creating a stronger message on the fear-mongering tactics used by Barack Obama’s opponents to instill fear into the national public on his brand of “anti-Americanism” – a charge he was accused of throughout his campaign. His ideographical connotation and thus its potently strong effects can be viewed as conveying an even stronger message than Michelle Obama’s caricature since it references a more recent debate in national politics, heightened by an increasingly complicated relationship with the Arab and Muslim world during a time of war in the Middle East and Afghanistan. As a result, the ideographical input was imperative to the strength of conveying opinion on the fear-mongering of the campaign.

By displaying Barack Obama’s caricature in the strongest of terms by referencing Islamic militancy, the reversal of such an opinion was a stinging criticism of irresponsibly using his “Other” characteristics against him in such a distasteful manner. In essence, Blatt made the charge that the fear tactics took on a racist tone by implying that his brushes with Islam were somehow antithetical to American values or his ability to be an American president. Thus, in the true characteristic of satire, he proceeded to illustrate how such fear-mongering implications, no
matter how subtle, were abhorrently racist, be they in the form of questioning his ability to be a true-blooded American president with an extended family that contained Muslims or having an African-American wife who is conscious of her cultural background.

**Conclusion**

The findings of this analysis found that the *New Yorker* cartoon effectively satirized the Obamas as fist-bumping terrorists during the 2008 presidential campaign in response to the fear-mongering about Barack Obama’s religious and national identity as well as Michelle Obama’s personality as an assertive African-American female. The conclusions as well as the descriptive content of this analysis were directly drawn from the application of the schema detailed in chapter four. Without the use of the schema, these findings would not have been concluded. The schema was also instrumental in conveying that the cartoon was not only satirical but that it gave no indication of being so otherwise.

As the above example illustrates, taking a combined approach of function and visual elements to deconstruct satirical imagery depicting the Other can prove useful in addressing the sensitive and complex nature of both rhetorical items. Hence this schema and application extends the works of both Foss and Peterson by merging significant aspects of both their theories together with a methodology designed to assist in analyzing satirical imagery. The latter was provided by Kenneth Burke, whose insight into the nature of satire proved to be invaluable. One of the contributions that this schema provides in response to the existing schemas is that a combination of both function and visual elements can be used to address visual imagery from a rhetorical standpoint. Therefore, this schema upholds the belief that both visual elements and function are crucial aspects to image analysis and encourages the use of them in future analyses.
where appropriate. Finally, the schema and its application draw on the theories of Michael Calvin McGee and his work on ideographs for rhetorical studies. The latter step is meant to provide useful suggestions for analyzing imagery that may function ideographically.

The hybrid of theories to create the image schema illustrates the possible opportunities that can be utilized when building on existing work done by previous scholars to apply to newer issues facing the field of rhetoric and visual communication today. The application and the schema also illustrate the usefulness of creating analytic tools and then building on specific aspects to apply and create newer ones.

Image schemas can prove to be very useful in visual communication when analyzing general or specific kinds of imagery that are prone to communicating more complicated messages. Satirical imagery would be an example of this. As a result, more schemas are needed, specifically image schemas that effectively address evaluative methods for different types of imagery such as satirical ones and the characters that they satirize. There are numerous ways in which scholarly development of this schema can take place. For starters, it may be a stepping stone to serve as an example that different forms of imagery require different methods of evaluation. By creating an image schema for the purpose of specifically analyzing satirical imagery, this thesis hopes to encourage the creation of newer schemas for different kinds of imagery such as iconic imagery, modernist or post-modernist imagery. Furthermore, future researchers may choose to analyze satirical imagery from an entirely different angle. While this thesis chose a hybrid of traditional theories to analyze imagery, it encourages the exploration of approaching analyses of satirical imagery from a more modern theoretical perspective. Hence this thesis also encourages discussion on approaching satirical imagery from the perspective of public sphere and other modern theories.
Some researchers may debunk both Foss's and Peterson's schema and thus some or all of the evaluative methods of this one. Some may remove the ideographical step depending on the researcher's outlook on whether much of satirical imagery functions ideographically. But this schema opens the door to methods of evaluating satirical imagery as well as the Other. As a result, the purpose of this schema is to add to existing methods of evaluation to promote further development of them.
Appendix

Figure 1. “The Politics of Fear” by Barry Blitt. This is the cover of the July 2008 *New Yorker* illustrating the Obamas as fist-bumping terrorists.

Figure 2. The Iwo Jima photograph taken by Joe Rosenthal. This is the image Janis L. Edwards and Carol K. Winkler discussed in their article, “Representative Form and the Visual Ideograph: The Iwo Jima in Editorial Cartoons”.

Figure 3. The *New York Post* editorial cartoon illustrated by Sean Delonas and published on February 18, 2009. The cartoon was accused of containing racist undertones amid speculation that it depicted the nation’s first Black president, Barack Obama, as a chimpanzee.

Figure 4. A 1960’s image of the late Malcolm X standing behind some curtains with a gun in his hand.
Figure 5. The “Danish Muhammad Cartoons”. These are the cartoons depicting the “faces” of the Prophet Muhammad that were published by the Danish newspaper, “Jyllands-Posten”.

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