

The Rhetoric of the American Dream:
Freedom, Democracy and American Exceptionalism

by

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Keith, who has been unwavering in his support and encouragement. He offered an ear when I needed someone to listen, a shoulder to cry on when the creative juices were slow to come and he offered his cooking, errands and housekeeping when I needed to focus on my studies.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	ii
List of Figures	iii
Abstract	v
Introduction	1
Rhetorical Analysis – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama	3
Rhetorical Analysis – George Washington to Herbert Hoover	10
Summary	12
Difficulty in Defining the Dream.....	14
Varied and Conflicting American Dreams	14
The “Typical American”	22
Motive	31
Assumptions and Evolving Narrative	35
The American Jeremiad	45
Errand/Mission/Purpose.....	46
Lamentation of the Ills of Society.....	56
Reverence for Ancestors	59
Renewal/Recommitment.....	62
The Road to Mission Fulfillment Will Not Be Easy.....	64
Hope and Faith in People and Purpose	66
Conclusion	69
Works Cited	92
Appendices	99
Appendix A: Rhetorical Analysis	100
Appendix B: Tables	126
Appendix C: Quotes from Presidential Inaugurals in American Jeremiad Format	150

List of Tables

Table B1: Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama Word List Ordered by Frequency – Top 35	126
Table B2: Selected Examples of Phrases Used Synonymously with Democracy – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama	127
Table B3: Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama	128
Table B4: Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When the Lists of Presidents Serving Multiple Terms are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama	132
Table B5: George Washington to Herbert Hoover Word List Ordered by Frequency – Top 35	134
Table B6: Selected Examples of Phrases Used Synonymously with Democracy – George Washington to Herbert Hoover	135
Table B7: Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party – George Washington to Herbert Hoover	136
Table B8: Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency by Political Party Affiliation – George Washington to Herbert Hoover	142
Table B9: Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When Lists are Combined of Presidents Who Served Multiple Terms – George Washington to Herbert Hoover	143
Table B10: Quotes from Inaugural Addresses Expressing American Exceptionalism – George Washington to Herbert Hoover	147

List of Figures

Figure A1: Concordance Results of a Wildcard Search for “free*” in the Inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	102
Figure A2: Concordance Results of a Wildcard Search for “democ*” in the Inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	103
Figure A3: Concordance Results on Search of “world” in the Inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	105
Figure A4: Concordance Results on Search of “earth” in the Inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	106
Figure A5: Concordance Results on Search of “globe” in the Inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	107
Figure A6: Top 5 Worlds in Order of Frequency in Inaugurals Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	109
Figure A7: Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When Democrats’ Inaugurals Are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	110
Figure A8: Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When Republicans’ Inaugurals Are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	111
Figure A9: Most Frequently Cited Words When Multiple-Term Presidents’ Top 5 Lists Are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	112
Figure A10: Democrats’ Most Frequently Cited Words When Multiple Term Presidents’ Top 5 Lists Are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	113
Figure A11: Republicans’ Most Frequently Cited Words When Multiple Term Presidents’ Top 5 Lists Are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.....	114
Figure A12: Concordance Results on Search of “liberty” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover.....	117

List of Figures Continued

Figure A13: Concordance Results on Search of Words with the Root “free*” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover	118
Figure A14: Concordance Results on Search of Words with the root “democ*” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover	119
Figure A15: Concordance Results on Search of “world” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover	121
Figure A16: Concordance Results on Search of “earth” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover	122
Figure A17: Concordance Results on Search of “globe” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover	123
Figure A18: Concordance Plot on Search of “world” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover	125

Abstract

What is the American Dream?

The American Dream, significant for its connection to American national identity, has eluded concise definition for more than two centuries. In spite of numerous failed attempts to encapsulate varied and diverse individual dreams within a singular definition, the notion of a common American Dream that rests within assumptions of shared experience endures.

This study examines the rhetoric of U.S. Presidential inaugural addresses – George Washington through Barack Obama – combining word frequency searches with a contextual analysis that uncovers common principles associated with the American Dream that have been perpetuated by the nation’s leaders.

Discussions inspired by the results of the rhetorical analysis include: the role that American exceptionalism has played in the development of national identity; the varied and often-competing nature of individual American Dreams; and, beginning with the inaugurals of the Presidents of the late nineteenth century, the systematic employment of a rhetorical strategy that facilitates a narrative of shared experience but maintains the ambiguity of the American Dream.

Introduction

What is the American Dream? U.S. citizens (and those who desire to be citizens), scholars, students, leaders of our nation and people from foreign lands - they are all talking about the American Dream. Hundreds (if not thousands) of books and scholarly works have been written about the American Dream; many more make reference in their works to the American Dream as a commonly-understood concept. There are few Americans who are not at least familiar with the expression. National pollsters survey public opinion in an attempt to determine the extent to which the Dream is being realized by the nation's citizens. Immigrants have, for centuries, flocked to the "New World" in hopes of achieving *their* American Dream. Xavier University in Cincinnati has established a center that is devoted entirely to the study of the American Dream (xavier.com). Republican leaders gather annually in Washington, D.C. for the "Defending the American Dream Summit" (defendingthedream.org) and in 2011, newly-elected national Democratic Party Chair, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, reminded party members that they had a duty to "ensure that everyone has a shot at the American Dream" (democrats.org). So, with everyone talking about the American Dream, why is it so hard to determine exactly what the Dream is?

James Truslow Adams is credited with coining the phrase, "The American Dream," in *The Epic of America* (1931), a chronicle of what he termed America's "national story" (vii). Adams described his book as an attempt to identify those traits that

are “‘typically American’ and, in especial, of that American Dream of a better, richer, and happier life for all of our citizens of every rank which is the greatest contribution we have as yet made to the thought and welfare of the world” (viii).

For enlightened scholars in the twenty-first century, Adam’s expression “typically American,” stands out as a generalization in stark contrast to the realities of a culturally diverse American society. While regularly conceived of as a singular concept, there is no singular American Dream that can adequately represent the experiences, emotions, beliefs, aspirations and hopes of the collective American population. In fact, as educational historian James Anderson points out, “the nation’s past is characterized by different and conflicting American Dreams” (128). Yet, the notion of a common American Dream persists, drawing strength from an ideological narrative of shared experience; or as Adams described it, a common “national story” (vii).

Historian Robert Berkhofer explains that in order for cultural ideologies like the American Dream to appear to have a basis in historical fact, they must first be woven into a single “Great Story” that can be adopted by many (281). Inspired by Berkhofer’s assertion, and perplexed by the general acceptance of the American Dream in spite of its ambiguities and the conflicting ideals of the American public, this research began as an attempt to answer the question: What are the basic tenets of the American Dream that persist in the “Great Story” as told by our nation’s leaders: the United States Presidents?

Scholars who study Presidential rhetoric such as Vanessa Beasley, David Zarefsky and LeRoy Dorsey, among others, commonly agree that due to their unifying purpose, inaugural addresses contain more ideological clues than other forms of

Presidential discourse such as political campaigns with their often divisive rhetoric and the administrative agendas that commonly comprise State of the Union addresses (Zarefsky 24). Therefore, inaugural addresses were chosen as the focus of this study.

Combining a rhetorical analysis with a thorough contextual analysis, the research reveals pervasive employment by the vast majority of U.S. Presidents of American exceptionalist sentiment. For the purposes of this paper, American exceptionalism is used in its comparative sense and by the U.S. Presidents to suggest American superiority in moral and civic ideals that should serve as an example for the nations of the world to follow. In addition, broad definitions of freedom and democracy appear with regularity. Therefore, the basic tenets of the American Dream, as perpetuated in the inaugurals of the U.S. Presidents, are freedom, democracy and American exceptionalism.

Rhetorical Analysis – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

The study was conducted in two parts. The original intent was only to examine those inaugurals delivered following the period when Adams’s “American Dream” phrase first appeared in print in 1931. However, as the original analysis yielded some unexpected results, an identical study was conducted on the inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover in an effort to ascertain both commonalities and points of departure. While a summary overview is provided here, a detailed description of the method employed and the results of the study are provided in Appendices A and B.

When the twenty inaugurals, beginning with Franklin Roosevelt’s first inaugural in 1933 to the most recently delivered by Barack Obama in 2009, were placed back to back into a single text and run through a freeware tool to determine word frequency – and

when all root words and synonymous phrases were added together – “world” ranked first with 252 instances, “freedom” ranked second with 210 instances, and the concept of democracy (with 198 instances) ranked third (Figures A1 through A5).

Next, the *individual* inaugural texts were run separately through the word frequency tool to determine the most frequently cited words per individual President. “Freedom,” “democracy,” or “world,” appeared in the top five lists of all Depression- and post-Depression Presidents – with the exception of three - Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter, and Barack Obama (Table B3). While the three Presidents mentioned here did not expressly cite “freedom,” “democracy,” or “world” with frequency, they did, however, use phrases that are synonymous with the concepts listed above and will be discussed later in the manuscript.

To ascertain whether political party affiliation influenced word choices, the most frequently cited words were determined by political party. When the top words of Democratic Presidents of this period were revealed, “world” and “democracy” took top slots behind “people” and “nation” (Figure A7).

When all of the top five word lists of Republican Presidents from this period are combined, “world” is tied for the number one spot with “freedom.” “America” and “people” share the second position and “peace” comes in third (Figure A8).

Finally, to determine what affect personal speech styles had on the results, and given the fact that some Presidents served multiple terms, the top five word lists for Presidents serving multiple terms were combined into a single top five list by President (Table B4). When those serving multiple terms were combined, “world” remained in the

second position behind “people” and “freedom” was tied in the third position with “America” and “must” (Figure A9).

When the list that collapsed multiple inaugurals was run by political party, the position of “world” for Democrats remained in the number two spot along with “must” and “nation” (Figure A10). For Republicans, “world” tied in the first position along with “freedom,” “America,” “must,” and “people” (Figure A11).

Regardless of the many ways in which the data was run, “world” appeared in all listings of the top five most frequently used words when the texts were combined. While the freeware’s word frequency tool provided a listing of key words by frequency, the results were limiting from a contextual standpoint. Therefore, a close contextual examination was performed on each of the inaugural addresses with a focus on the way in which “world” was included. Whereas, the predominance of “freedom” and “democracy” in the inaugurals was not a surprise, the concordance uses of the word, “world,” were. In the majority of the inaugural addresses, the use of “world” was used to articulate America’s mission as a global example of moral and civic ideals. This characterization of America as a model for the rest of the world is reminiscent of John Winthrop’s characterization of the first New England Puritan colony. Winthrop urged his congregation to be mindful of the fact that “We shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are on us...we shall be made a story and byword throughout the world” (qtd. in Fischer 19-20).

In fact, the contextual analysis links the inaugurals to the Puritans in yet another intriguing way. The results of the contextual analysis point to systematic use by

Depression- and post-Depression Presidents of a rhetorical strategy known to historians and rhetoricians as the American Jeremiad; a strategy that was first used by the spiritual leaders, like Winthrop, of the Puritans who migrated to the “New World” in 1630 and settled the Massachusetts Bay Colony (Cullen 12-13). The Jeremiad format is described by scholars as a rhetorical strategy that maintains ambiguity and avoids divisive issues (Bercovitch 10-11). Placing the Depression- and post-Depression inaugural addresses next to the Jeremiad structure reveals astonishing similarities and will be discussed in greater detail later in the manuscript. Quotes from the inaugural addresses arranged in the Jeremiad format, beginning with Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama are provided in Appendix C.

Sporadic use of the Jeremiad format began with Presidents who served during what some have termed the Second Industrial Revolution, the period 1870-1914; a period marked by rapid and immense change. Following what David Walker Howe called the “twin revolutions” of communications and transportation that witnessed the development of Morse Code, the extension of the U.S. Postal Service and the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad; for many, the Second Industrial Revolution signaled an end to the America they had become comfortable with (1-2). America’s socio-political institutions, with their foci on the (primarily white, Protestant) individual engaged in agricultural pursuits, were rapidly being replaced by industrialized capitalism with its focus on mass production, mass consumerism and the urban lifestyle.

The mills, factories and the streets of the cities were filled with new immigrants from southern and Eastern Europe comprised of peasants from Austria-Hungary and the

Balkans, Jews from Russia and Catholics from Italy (Higham 78). The cramped conditions in the densely populated cities “magnified all manner of vice” and the new immigrants were easily blamed for perceived increases in drunkenness, crime, illiteracy, poverty, idleness, political corruption, labor unrest and social class stratification (Johnson 5-8). Jim Crow was replacing federal Reconstruction in the South and settlement opportunities in the West were waning. In other words, use of the American Jeremiad in Presidential inaugurals - a tool used to maintain ambiguity and avoid divisive issues – increased precisely at the same time when socio-political ambiguities and cultural tensions were on the rise.

Use of the American Jeremiad format continued to escalate in the early decades of the twentieth century and evolved into systematic practice beginning with the inaugurals of Depression-era Presidents. All six elements of the American Jeremiad are evidenced in each inaugural beginning with Herbert Hoover in 1929 and continuing through to the most recent inaugural delivered by Barack Obama in 2009. Such pervasive use by Depression- and post-Depression era Presidents is meaningful for its significance to the development and maintenance of national identity or as in Adams’s characterization, America’s “national story” – during modern times.

First, consider that in his seminal work, *The American Jeremiad*, Sacvan Bercovitch posited that the American Jeremiad strategy - which first took root in the sermons delivered by Puritan clergy and whose patterns and themes were repeated in popular and political rhetoric well into the nineteenth century – was successful because it was used to maintain ambiguity and to avoid divisiveness (16-17).

Second, David Zarefsky claims that some Presidents use such ambiguity to their advantage in appealing directly to the American people to garner support of their administrations' policies (25).

Third, Vanessa Beasley, in *You, the People*, points to the didactic function of the inaugural address to "teach American culture to its listeners, giving chief executives the chance to remind the American people what they ought to know or believe" by linking rhetorically the best of the nation's nostalgic past with an idealized present and future (10).

Finally, consider what historian Daniel Boorstin says of the power that these messages have to compel Americans towards a collective national image: "this world of ambiguity is created by those who believe they are instructing us, by our best public servants, and with our own collaboration. . . . [because] the solace of belief in contrived reality is so thoroughly real" (36-37).

By coupling the observations of Bercovitch, Zarefsky, Beasley and Boorstin with the pervasive use of the American Jeremiad in the twentieth and twenty-first century inaugurals, we are provided with clues to the endurance of cultural ideologies such as the American Dream despite the ambiguities and the tensions that are inherent in a culturally diverse society. When images of national identity are delivered by those holding the highest office in the land as ambiguous concepts inspired by divine providence and infused with historical importance and continuity, they take on a significance that implies reality. The rhetorical analysis uncovered *what* the Presidents were saying about the American Dream, but in the discovery of the pervasiveness of the American Jeremiad, we

can examine *how* they were saying it. In their employment of the American Jeremiad to tell America's "Great Story," the Presidents found a vehicle with which to perpetuate the narrative of common experience.

However, use of a rhetorical strategy that is used to maintain ambiguity and avoid divisiveness raises questions about motive. In other words, the rhetoric of the inaugural addresses is significant not only for what the Presidents include, but rather for what they exclude or diminish. The way in which the Presidents have framed the "national story," basing it on loosely-defined terms of freedom and democracy that Americans can readily embrace, and infusing it with a moral and civic superiority that should serve as an example to the rest of the world, bears significance upon the way in which Americans have perceived themselves and their relationship to the global community.

If Americans (and those who desire to be Americans) cannot readily come up with a common definition of the American Dream, no matter - they still cling to its possibilities. Yet, they cling to an image that has been created and perpetuated by the Presidents in their inaugurals that at best ignores cultural dissonance and at worst omits the uglier realities of America's story. The Puritan jeremiad was used in the seventeenth century to convince the congregations that they were "God's chosen people" and therefore divinely entitled and justified in their attempts at assimilation and persecution of those who refused to conform. The Presidents' use of the jeremiad strategy has served to perpetuate a narrative based on a nationalist sentiment that has been responsible for some of the nation's most shameful domestic and foreign policies, such as the treatment

of Native Americans, slavery, immigrant assimilation, imperialism and interference in foreign affairs, to name a few.

Rhetorical Analysis – George Washington to Herbert Hoover

As mentioned previously, the study was conducted in two parts. In order to determine if the patterns regarding the frequency of “freedom,” “democracy,” and “world” (in the context of American exceptionalism) appear in the inaugurals of the U.S. Presidents before Franklin Roosevelt, identical freeware searches were run on the inaugurals beginning with George Washington through Herbert Hoover. In addition, a close contextual reading was conducted to ascertain the uses of phrases synonymous with democracy and the use of the word “world.”

Following the method used in part one of the study, the inaugural texts of Washington through Hoover were combined to reveal the most frequently cited words. The *individual* texts were then run through the freeware to determine top five listings for each President and by political party, and the top five lists of those serving multiple terms were combined to limit the way in which speech styles had an effect on the results. Again, only a summary overview is provided here; the precise method and results are available in greater detail in Appendices A and B.

In comparison to the inaugurals comprising part one of the study, a greater emphasis on representative government is found in the Presidential inaugurals beginning with the Founders and continuing throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Therefore, the concept of democracy (when synonymous phrases are included) tops the combined list of the inaugurals of Washington to Hoover. The concept of democracy

appears in each of the top five lists run by political party and in the results that collapse word lists of Presidents who served multiple terms. “Freedom” appears in the fourth position when all texts were combined. However, if synonymous phrases that include “people” and “government” are subsumed within the concept of democracy, freedom moves up into the third position behind “states” (Figures A12 and A13).

Again, while the freeware tool was helpful, it was limiting from a contextual standpoint. The initial word frequency results for “world” in the inaugurals of George Washington through Herbert Hoover, with concordance hits that total 143, might at first suggest a lesser emphasis on American exceptionalism than in the inaugurals of Depression-era and Post-Depression Presidents (Figures A15 through A17). This is partially true, although a thorough reading of the inaugurals revealed that the vast majority (twenty of twenty-six) of Presidents in this grouping made reference to the United States in comparison with other nations, with an increasing focus in the late nineteenth century on America as an example to the rest of the world (Table B10).

For example, Thomas Jefferson referred to the American form of government as “the world’s best hope” (Par. 2). During a time of intense domestic debate regarding a balance between states’ rights and the authority of the federal government - and in a similar sentiment to John Winthrop’s “the eyes of all people are upon us” - Andrew Jackson cautioned: “the eyes of all nations are fixed on our Republic” (Par. 7). Martin Van Buren was the first to articulate blatant exceptionalist sentiment when he stated, “we stand without a parallel in the world” (Par. 3). James Polk was the first to tie the notion of superiority with a duty to be an example to the rest of the world – a practice that would

become commonplace for those who succeeded him. Speaking of those who would threaten the Union, Polk stated, “He would extinguish the fire of liberty, which arms and animates the hearts of happy millions and invites all the nations of the earth to imitate our example” (Par.12).

Full use of the American Jeremiad rhetorical strategy is evident in the inaugurals of William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and Herbert Hoover.

The freeware’s concordance plot tool, when used to search the word “world,” highlighted the periods when “world” was used with greater frequency. If viewed as a timeline, the plot appears to support an increased use of exceptionalist sentiment during periods of domestic strife when there was a concern that the United States may be judged unfavorably by foreign nations and during times of immense social and economic change - as in the period leading into the twentieth century (Figure A18). Furthermore, the plot supports the findings of the contextual analysis that suggest greater employment of exceptionalist sentiment in the inaugurals that follow the American Jeremiad format.

Summary

The results of the study suggest that the United States Presidents, as evidenced in the rhetoric of their inaugural addresses, frame America’s “national story” – the American Dream according to Adam’s definition – within assumptions of freedom, democracy and exceptionalism. The use of the American Jeremiad by Presidents beginning in the late nineteenth century - a rhetorical strategy known to maintain ambiguity and avoid divisive issues - provides clues as to why the American Dream has remained a part of America’s national story despite the difficulty in finding a common

and precise definition and sometimes competing and conflicting individual experiences. In the American Jeremiad, the Presidents have found a strategy that perpetuates the nation's most embraceable themes while avoiding discordant issues – they have told America's "Dream" using the avoidance rhetoric of the American Jeremiad. Applying Berkhofer's assertion then, the acceptance and pervasiveness of the American Dream lies within the *way* the "Great Story" of America has been told.

However, framing consensus ideology using only ambiguous references to America's most embraceable themes is problematic. In their acceptance of Adams's American Dream that holds within it the opportunity for "the ordinary man . . . of every rank" to achieve "a better, richer, and happier life," Americans are free to define "better," "richer," and "happier" in countless ways – and they do. In their acceptance of the "Great Story" of America as told by the Presidents using avoidance rhetoric, Americans favor idyllic narratives that have historically been exclusive and divisive and stop short of full disclosure. Each scenario is problematic when attempting to define the American Dream.

Difficulty in Defining the Dream

Varied and Conflicting American Dreams

When Michael F. Ford, founding director of Xavier University's Center for the American Dream, asked 1,300 adults to rank the top conditions needed for attainment of their Dream, the results hardly pointed toward consensus. The results from the March 2011 survey revealed that forty-five percent named "a good life for my family," thirty-four percent ranked "financial security" (which Ford points out is not the same as "Bill Gates-like riches"), and six percent ranked "wealth" as their top condition. When asked to define the American Dream, thirty-two percent cited "freedom," twenty-nine percent said "opportunity," and twenty-one percent pointed to "the pursuit of happiness" (*qtd. in Washington Post*).

The fact that Ford's 1,300 adults do not necessarily represent the entire United States population is precisely the point. Thousands of similar surveys are conducted each month with numerous agencies reporting wide and varied results. As an example, however, the respondents' answers in Ford's survey illustrate the difficulty in defining the American Dream. What is "a good life?" What are the definitions of "freedom" and "opportunity?" Does everyone define "happiness" in the same way? The obvious answer is no. Would the homeless living on the streets of Detroit answer in the same way that someone living in a loft in Manhattan would? Would men and women respond the same way? Do marginalized communities describe opportunity in the same way that middle

class white Americans do? Probably not. What role does age play in the way that Americans classify their American Dream? It is doubtful that those who survived the Great Depression and World War II would define their American Dream in the same way that those who matured amidst the relative peace and economic stability of the 1990s.

Yet, despite the difficulties in defining the American Dream, it is presented and accepted as a nearly tangible product of American freedom and democracy. Its broad appeal rests in hope. In *The American Dream*, historian Jim Cullen explained that “the pluralistic nature of freedom can be a source of frustration, but also a source of hope ...[and] all notions of freedom rest on a sense of agency, the idea that individuals have control over the course of their lives” (10). Andrew Delbanco, author of *The Real American Dream*, agreed that hope “and the idea that Americans were not fixed in their circumstances of birth, but were free to become whatever they could imagine,” has been the foundation of a belief in a common American Dream (61). The hopeful message that American freedom ensures self-determination, without regard to life station; the message that through hard work and perseverance any American can control his own destiny, “lies at the very core of the American Dream” (Cullen 10).

In his “2004 Keynote Address to the Democratic National Convention,” then United States Senator Barack Obama, used hope as a common thread to articulate the fluid nature of the American Dream:

It's the hope of slaves sitting around a fire singing freedom songs; the hope of immigrants setting out for distant shores; the hope of a young naval lieutenant bravely patrolling the Mekong Delta; the hope of a millworker's son who dares to defy the odds; the hope of a skinny kid with a funny name who believes that America has a place for him, too. (qtd. in *Washington Post*)

We want to belong; to associate ourselves with what the myriad possibilities of the American Dream represent to us as a nation, in our communities, and to our sense of who we are as individuals. Obama's words make us feel good about ourselves. We want to belong to a nation where former slaves are now free. We want to believe that, buoyed by their spirit and hard work, immigrants fleeing from religious persecution in their homeland founded a vast nation based on self-government and individual liberties - and we want to believe that we have embraced countless immigrants since who have gone on to realize their versions of the American Dream. We salute the brave soldier who fights to free strangers in distant lands from tyranny. We applaud the efforts of a millworker's son, who despite his humble beginnings strives to attain a higher station in life. We hold up now-President Barack Obama, the "skinny kid with a funny name who "believe[d] that America [had] a place for him" as proof that the American Dream can be achieved. Through his words, and by using these examples, Barack Obama reaffirmed our hopes and expectations for the American Dream.

However, these representations often fall short and when the realities of our experiences do not live up to the expectations of our imagination, the resulting

disillusionment, disappointment, anger, sadness and confusion can cause cultural dissonance (Knudsen 2). At the same time that we hold tight to the hopes of the American Dream, we live with the tensions that the image creates.

For example, events on the national scene today include protests and debates that revolve around the recent death of Trayvon Martin, a black teenager shot and killed in Sanford, Florida by George Zimmerman, a Hispanic man claiming that he was acting in self-defense under Florida's "Stand Your Ground" law. Before Florida Statute 776.013 (commonly referred to as "Stand Your Ground") was enacted into law in 2005, Florida law required those who felt their lives were in danger to make a reasonable attempt to retreat from the situation before resorting to the use of deadly force (*Tampa Bay Times*). "Stand Your Ground" eliminated the requirement to attempt a retreat.

Many interpreted Zimmerman's shooting of Martin as a racist act (NAACP). Zimmerman's accusers believed that Martin, because he was African American, had been targeted as a burglary suspect by Zimmerman who was serving as a neighborhood crime watch volunteer the night of the shooting. Zimmerman's supporters countered by pointing to a series of neighborhood break-ins as motive for Zimmerman's actions and offered his volunteer work with African American and Hispanic youth, and his own Hispanic origin as proof that race was not a consideration. A delay in the arrest and charging of Zimmerman with a crime fueled the fires of those who protested preferential treatment for those who commit crimes against African Americans. The reactions to the shooting of Trayvon Martin underscore the persistence of race conflict in America.

Yet, we want to believe in the image of an American Dream that promises racial harmony. We want to believe in the image of an American Dream that upholds the rights of *both* men. At the risk of over-simplifying a complex case in which all the facts have not yet been discerned, this example may at least illustrate the tensions when one man's American Dream which includes freedom from judgment based on the color of his skin is pitted against another man's American Dream which includes the freedom to bear arms in self-defense. The problem lies in an over-arching, ambiguous reference to freedom which contains beneath its umbrella a multitude of complicated, and often-competing, *individual* freedoms.

Another example is provided in the current national debate surrounding the proposed federal DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education of Alien Minors) legislation. Introduced by Senator Richard Durbin (D) and Representative Howard Berman (R) in March 2009, the act would provide a path to citizenship for the children of undocumented immigrants who have for much of their lives only known the United States as their home (Dream Act Portal). If the law were to be passed, undocumented minors who have lived in the United States for at least five years prior to the age of sixteen, who have graduated high school, and have either been accepted into a college or university or into U.S. military service, would be eligible for citizenship (U.S. Dept. of Education).

U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, maintains that "the DREAM Act is common sense legislation in keeping with core American values" (qtd. in Glickman). Duncan's rhetoric suggests that those who oppose the legislation, like members of the

Immigration Reform Caucus (IRC), do not share “core American values.” The IRC is comprised of members of the House of Representatives with a wide Republican base that, according to the group’s web site, has concerns regarding the nation’s ability to support continued illegal immigration. They are opposed to DREAM Act legislation as they view it as a form of amnesty for immigrants who have not entered the United States legally (IRC). In October 2012 President Obama announced his employment of executive privilege in establishment of a program that offers two-year deportation deferments for eligible young immigrants - a move that has some DREAM Act opponents crying foul.

As the largely partisan debate continues, the future of bright young students like Daniela Pelaez, valedictorian of her North Miami High School, hangs in limbo. In March, 2012 Pelaez was granted a two-year temporary stay of deportation orders to her native country of Colombia after having been raised in the United States since the age of four (Brown). A similar case is pending for “Felicitas,” the daughter of undocumented Mexican immigrants, who has lived in the United States since the age of three (Schmidt xii). “Felicitas,” an honors student, described the way she felt about having to turn down numerous offers for college admission and internships due to her undocumented status:

In some ways, my original American dream has died. . . . My lawyer tells me that legally I am a Mexican. This is not how I feel . . . this American ideology, American idealism, is how I am, the questioning, the free-thinking. . . . knowing that through hard work, through education you can do anything. . . . This is just completely American. . . . I am still like that, but they don’t want me here. (qtd. in Schmidt xiii-xiv).

The image inspired by Obama's words, "the hope of immigrants setting out for distant shores," is being interpreted in two different ways by Secretary Duncan and by members of the IRC. The image inspired does not reflect the realities facing Daniela Pelaez and "Felicitas." Immigrants may come to our shores as Obama stated, but what then? In these examples, the image again falls short.

What of the millworker's son in Obama's example who "dares to defy the odds?" Perhaps the millworker's son goes to college, excels in business and one day becomes successful on Wall Street. Does his American Dream that includes the attainment of wealth, magnify the growing chasm between the "haves" and the "have-nots?" Members of the Occupy Wall Street movement might believe so. Occupy Wall Street cites its mission as: "to fight back against the richest 1% of people that are writing the rules of an unfair global economy that is foreclosing on our future" (Occupywallst.org). Here again, the Dream's image becomes fuzzy. We want to believe in an American Dream that holds within it the "rags to riches" possibilities as told in the stories by Horatio Alger and are suggested in Obama's image of the millworker's son. However, when that Dream is perceived as a threat to financial security for others, the result is anger and disillusionment. The image creates competing visions.

In spite of the many disconnects between the experiences of Adams's "typical American" with the image of the American Dream, we still cling to the Dream. We highlight the success stories; we shine a light upon those who represent attainment of the Dream. In 2004, Barack Obama pointed to himself as a prime example as one person for whom the Dream held great promise. His was "the hope of a skinny kid with a funny

name who believed that America had a place for him” (qtd. in *Washington Post*).

Looking back from the vantage point of 2012 it would seem that Obama could see into the future. In 2008 Barack Obama was the first African American to be elected President. Obama’s official biography on the White House website begins with, “His story is the American story” (Whitehouse.gov).

President Obama was raised by his single mother and grandparents, managed college with the help of scholarships and student loans, graduated from Harvard Law School, served in both the Illinois and U.S. Senate before gaining wide popularity as a result of the keynote address he delivered at the Democratic National Convention cited earlier (Whitehouse.gov). He was elected as the nation’s forty-fourth President in November of 2008 and was re-elected to a second term in 2012. For many, the story of Barack Obama embodies the American Dream.

In a single paragraph in the 2004 Keynote Address, Barack Obama touched upon five different American Dreams with many more assumptions enveloped within those examples. Furthermore, in that single paragraph he moved the American Dream through nearly two centuries of American history; beginning with the days of slavery through to the twenty-first century. The American Dream is a fluid concept; its meanings have changed and evolved over time. Yet, in spite of its evolutions, within its consensus framework, remain assumptions regarding American “sameness.” Again, those assumptions lie within the way in which America’s “Great Story” has been told – and again, they are problematic when attempting to define the American Dream.

The “Typical American”

James Truslow Adams was a business man who enjoyed freelance writing about the history of New England (Columbia University Library). Although not an academic, his characterizations of the American Dream are widely cited by scholars and, as mentioned earlier, he is credited with being the first to coin the phrase, “The American Dream.” In Adams’s *The Epic of America* (1931), he defined the American Dream as “that American Dream of a better, richer, and happier life for all our citizens of every rank which is the greatest contribution we have as yet made to the thought and welfare of the world” (vi-viii). It is hard to imagine that there are but a few, rare individuals who would not embrace a national story that holds within it such lofty ideals - the opportunity for all of the nation’s citizens, equally, to attain “a better, richer, and happier life” and that contains within it the potential to contribute in such a noble way to the enhancement and well-being of the entire global community.

However, before wholly accepting the appealing image, it is important to consider who Adams included in his definition of the “typical American” – and it is even more important to note who he excluded or diminished. In the preface of his book, Adams explained that his purpose was “to paint a picture...which has made our national story” (vi-viii). The problem is that in *his* “national story,” Adams made sweeping generalizations of those traits which he considered to be “typically American” (vii-viii).

Adams’s development of the “typical American,” and his interpretation of the “national story,” reads in parts, like a grade-school primer. While he acknowledged

sectional differences, his description of “the varied, colorful life in far-scattered regions” lacks depth and is laced with contradictions (71). Instead of exploring the complexities of early American life, Adams fell back on stereotypes. He painted early New Englanders as snobbish and judgmental intellectuals so driven by the Puritanical work ethic and piety that they had time for little else other than to be their brothers’ keepers (59-70). Early Southerners on the other hand were aristocratic, leisurely men with close ties to England who, by virtue of their ability to manage large properties (including their slaves), were natural-born leaders (54-55). He pointed to George Washington’s Mount Vernon roots and Jefferson’s management of the Monticello plantation as proof (55). In a desire to find the best of both worlds, Adams considered Benjamin Franklin to be the exemplar of an “American” (69).

Regarding Franklin, Adams noted:

Shrewd, practical, always alive to the main chance, anxious to make money and rise in the world, yet keenly alive to a life above money-grubbing, he had on the one hand, none of the genuine depth or the religious fervor of the New England intellectual (nor his conscience), and, on the other hand, none of the humane quality or natural gentility of the Southern gentleman. . . If we were as yet able to say what an American is, we might name him as the first. (69)

Although Adams made numerous mentions regarding the plight of the Indians, he fell back on a stereotypical characterization of the savage: “Their nervous systems were unstable and they were of a markedly hysterical make-up, particularly susceptible to suggestion. . . . childishly lacking in self- control” (7).

Also, the condition of slavery was largely ignored in Adams’s national story; rather, he concentrated on the institution itself to describe the Southern economy and the sectional tensions that led to Civil War. In fact, the only mention of the slave condition was to compare it in a favorable light to the plight of the factory workers in the North: “The negro slave had at least one great advantage over the Northern factory worker. He was property and had to be taken care of. . . . The manufacturers . . . cared not a rap what they were doing to Americans as human beings” (180).

Furthermore, Adams’s description of the South during Reconstruction reads like a scene out of D.W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation*:

Scenes in the legislative halls of all the States would have been laughable had they not been tragic. Crowds of Northern muckers, and blacks who had been slaves a short time since, swaggered about, smoking and drinking at the States’ expense, ruling the South. . . .The war had left the South prostrate; Reconstruction left it maddened. (286)

Although Adams’s “national story” is comprised of over four hundred pages, little more than a paragraph is devoted to women – and again, he resorted to stereotyping in his characterization. In a section dedicated to the end of the American western frontier,

Adams conjured up the age-old western movie opposites: the prostitute and the virtuous frontier belle. In a nod to frontier life, Adams used these opposites to point out what he considered to be the civilized nature of western settlements:

In the larger frontier towns, particularly such as attracted men with money as miners or cowmen, prostitutes appeared naturally. . . . But a woman was always presumed to be virtuous in the sexual sense, and if she cared to remain so, - as, after all, most did, - she was absolutely safe both in fact and in reputation. . . . No man would think of approaching an honest woman. (289-290)

Adams makes only one other mention of women. In a single sentence he glossed over the subject of woman's suffrage: "Prohibition and Woman's Suffrage Amendments, after they had been ratified by the necessary number of State legislatures, were declared parts of the Constitution in 1919 and 1920 respectively" (393).

Adams's book can be read as a condemnation of the capitalist society that began to dominate U.S. cities in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It becomes apparent in the last several chapters that he felt as though his American Dream was being threatened by a consumer-driven society that had forsaken its principles in a quest for material gain (400). For this reason, immigrants, who comprised the bulk of the factory labor force, were given much more attention than Native Americans, African Americans or women in Adams's book. In the quote cited earlier that portrays the plight of the factory worker as worse than the slave; Adams was referring to the immigrant laborer (180).

Still, even though Adams paid greater attention to the significance of immigration to America's "national story," he made a distinction between those immigrants who came in the early waves during settlement and westward expansion, and "the more 'alien' immigration" after the closing of the frontier in the late 1800s during the period of the Second Industrial Revolution (312). Adams characterized this later wave of immigrants as transient residents who had no intention of becoming permanent citizens (313). Because they immigrated with the intention to work and then return to their home country, Adams suggested that they posed a problem due to their lack of a desire to assimilate (314).

In the examples cited earlier and in the quote that follows, Adams revealed that his American Dream – his "national story" - was predicated on Protestant, white, male dominance:

The earlier demand for slave labor had left us with the free-negro problem. The later demand for cheap white labor left us with another racial problem, although one somewhat less serious, since, after a generation or two, these people, [European immigrants], can be absorbed, whereas the negro cannot. (314-315)

When we no longer stop short and accept only a portion of the story, but consider the larger picture, Adam's definition of the "typical American" and his "Great Story" are less appealing.

Adams is just one in a long line who has attempted to arrive at a universal conception of what constitutes “typically American” traits - and in many cases the same sweeping generalizations and assumptions have been made.

In his *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782), J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur attempted to answer the question, “What is an American?” He responded that “they are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes” (51). They were European immigrants who found prosperity in the abundance of the land, freedom to worship as they please, and harmony in egalitarian, self-governing association (49-53). For Crèvecoeur, Americans comprised a new race of “the most perfect society in the world” (49).

It would be easy to stop short of further examination of Crèvecoeur’s literature and to accept the pleasing image of America that he created in *Letters*. Like Adams’s idyllic definition of the American Dream, Crèvecoeur’s depiction of life in the “New World” presents an embraceable concept. However, in stopping short, we embrace only the most attractive image and deny a more realistic picture. For instance, missing from Crèvecoeur’s “most perfect society,” was any real elaboration on the association that Native Americans, African American slaves, or females of any ethnic group had to these new Americans. Although Crèvecoeur did devote a chapter of *Letters* to his thoughts on slavery, it focused on comparing the evil condition of slavery in the South with what he perceived to be the more benevolent treatment by slave masters in the North and the grateful disposition of their happy slaves (230-231). Crèvecoeur may have been

sympathetic to the plight of the Southern slave, but this does not mean that he was ready to include them in his classification of those who comprised the new race of Americans. African Americans – like Native Americans and women - were missing members of the “most perfect society in the world” (49).

Missing also from the bulk of Crèvecoeur’s work in *Letters* was any connection to the civil unrest of the times. According to Marcus Cunliffe in “Crèvecoeur Revisited,” at nearly the same time that *Letters* was published, Crèvecoeur was penning a completely uncomplimentary image entitled *Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America* that was more in keeping with the realities of life in the colonies during the Revolution (135). Cunliffe explains that in the battle between Anglo-Americans and the British, Crèvecoeur was a Frenchman - and as he was neither Anglo-American nor British, he was open to suspicion as a traitor by both sides (135). Cunliffe wrote, “[T]he immediate reality was violence, bloodshed, hypocrisy; the suppression of free speech; intimidation and robbery in the name of high-sounding ideals” (135). In contrast to his portrayal of America in *Letters*, the “New World” in *Sketches* was neither unique nor free. A disillusioned Crèvecoeur bemoaned:

The range of civil discord hath advanced among us with an astonishing rapidity. Every opinion is changed; every prejudice is subverted; every ancient principle is annihilated; every mode of organization, which linked us before as men and as citizens, is now altered. . . .Men are the same in all ages and in all countries. (qtd. in Cunliffe 135)

Crèvecoeur fled the United States in 1780 aboard a British ship to his home country of France; he returned in 1783 as a French consul to find his wife dead, his children in desperate straits and his property burned down. He left again in 1790 never to return (133-134). Although Crèvecoeur's *Sketches* was uncovered from an attic in France in 1925, he remains best known for his portrayal in *Letters* of the "most perfect society in the world" (136). It is not hard to understand why; *Letters* provides the more embraceable concept.

Another attempt to uncover a uniquely American identity took form in Henry Nash Smith's *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* published in 1950. In *Virgin Land*, Smith claimed that the prevalence of symbols and myths found in classic literature and popular American texts provided evidence of a collective American imagination rooted in the uniquely American experience of westward expansion (102). Considered groundbreaking work at the time, Smith's theory became widely accepted as the "myth and symbol school" that gave rise to the academic discipline of American Studies (Wise 180). However, as they had been in Crèvecoeur's "most perfect society," Native Americans, African Americans and women were largely omitted from Henry Nash Smith's "popular imagination" (102). It was easy to fall short and omit the rest of the story in favor of a positive common representation. The constructed image that existed within Smith's popular imagination portrayed Americans as rugged individuals – the cowboys and frontiersmen of the nineteenth century dime novels – blazing trails over a vast wilderness continent of dense forests, treacherous mountain ranges and

inhospitable deserts to bring peace, prosperity and civilization across the land. It was an appealing, if not wholly accurate, American story.

When in the 1960s and 1970s minority and underrepresented groups demanded acknowledgment of their separate identities, the “myth and symbol school” began to fall out of favor. For those who held tightly to the theory of “one American mind,” the protestors were perceived as threats to the strength of American ideals. However, Alice Kessler-Harris points out that “this [Smith’s] interpretation of our past was built on silences” (341). Those whose identities had been silenced in the America of the myth and symbol days wanted only to be a part of, rather than apart from, the national identity and Adams’s idyllic American Dream. Those whose voices had been silenced understood the hypocritical ways of “the most perfect society in the world” and they were no longer willing to be excluded or diminished.

Broad, sweeping generalizations like these are now, for the most part, looked upon as tragic by-products of the nation’s denial of its homogeneous tendencies and its struggle, in the absence of a common religion, common ethnicity, and common values to find mutual ground upon which to unify Americans and to present a uniquely American “face” to the rest of the world. Yet, these examples are also instructional for pointing out the problematic nature of consensus ideologies like the American Dream; they may be comforting in their ability to offer a sense of American “oneness,” but at what cost? In the desire to define a singular American Dream that is often taken as an entitlement of American citizenship, we risk acceptance of pleasing, yet stilted versions of the nation’s history and the perpetuation of silenced American voices.

Motive

In some cases, even for those who attempted to portray Americans as products of a common societal mold, the diversity of American experience just could not be ignored. A prime example can be found in the reflections of Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, one of the most well-known observers (to American Studies scholars at least) of American culture. Tocqueville, along with his friend, Gustave de Beaumont, made a nine-month trek around America beginning in 1831 (Welch 10). Tocqueville organized his observations of American culture into two volumes entitled *Democracy in America*; the first volume was published in 1835 and the second in 1840.

In the preface to Volume I, Tocqueville seemingly attempts to portray all Americans on an equal socio-political plane:

Among the novel objects that attracted my attention during my stay in the United States, nothing struck me more forcibly than the general equality of condition among the people. . . . I soon perceived that the influence of this fact extends far beyond the political character and the laws of the country, and that it has no less effect on civil society than on the government; it creates opinions, gives birth to new sentiments, founds novel customs, and modifies whatever it does not produce. The more I advanced in the study of American society, the more I perceived that this equality of condition is the fundamental fact from which all others seem to be derived and the central point at which all my observations constantly terminated. (I, 1)

Tocqueville, however, unlike the others mentioned here, could not stop short. In his final chapter of Volume I, the reader is provided with the more realistic – and problematic – American story, especially when attempting to find common socio-cultural descriptors to describe a society that has been pluralistic from its very beginnings. In his chapter entitled, “The Present, and Probable Future Condition of the Three Races Inhabiting the Territory of the United States,” Tocqueville described a socio-political and economic hierarchy with “the white or European, the MAN pre-eminently so called” at the top the ladder and “below him appear the Negro and the Indian” (I, 396). Before providing a sympathetic depiction of the condition of Native Americans, slaves and free Blacks, Tocqueville made an attempt, in what could be described as the rhetoric of conflicted conscience to explain his dilemma. In the introduction to the final chapter, Tocqueville explained:

The absolute supremacy of democracy is not all that we meet with in America; the inhabitants of the New World may be considered from more than one point of view. . . . I never have been able to stop in order to show what these two races [the Negro and the Indian] occupy in the midst of the democratic people whom I was engaged in describing. . . . These topics are collaterally connected with my subject without forming a part of it; they are American without being democratic; and to portray a democracy has been my principal aim. It was therefore necessary to postpone these questions, which I now take up as the proper termination of my work. (I, 396-397).

First, Tocqueville negotiates the conflict between his earlier premise regarding the “equality of condition” and the oppression of “these two unhappy races” by qualifying that the “democratic people” that he had described in the rest of Volume I were white Anglo-Americans (I, 397). Next, he exposes his motive – his “principal aim” was to “portray a democracy” (I, 397). The last line of the quote is perhaps the most telling. If Tocqueville was to portray a democracy in its most favorable light, it was necessary to delay the telling of the rest of the story until after the more pleasing image had been created and firmly impressed upon the minds of his readers.

Motive is a powerful driver of rhetoric. Tocqueville’s principal purpose was to underscore the possibilities that democracy held as a positive means for social reform in France. As a product of the first generation born following the French Revolution, Tocqueville matured amidst the socio-political tensions of a country re-defining itself (Welch 8-9). Tocqueville had hopes that France might adopt the best of what democracy offered in America.

Motive played a role in the development of the works of Adams, Crèvecoeur and Smith as well. As previously mentioned, Adams was writing about the American Dream during the height of the Great Depression, a time when post-World War I anxieties and the decline of the national economy created a crisis of confidence in a strong American identity (Hartshorne 105). In the quote that follows, Adams expressed concern regarding the ability to maintain the continuity of the American Dream:

Ever since we became an independent nation, each generation has seen an uprising of the ordinary Americans to save that dream from the forces which appeared to be overwhelming and dispelling it. Possibly the greatest of these struggles lies just ahead of us at the present time – not the struggle of revolutionists against established order, but of the ordinary man to hold fast to those rights of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” which were vouchsafed to us in the past in vision and on parchment. (xiii)

Presumably driven by the desire to persuade his readers to resist the temptations of capitalist “money-grubbing” that he blamed for the economic decline of his times, Adams provided an idyllic phrase within which to situate what he considered to be the best of America’s nostalgic past and that held the greatest hope for America’s future.

Crèvecoeur hoped that *Letters*, a fictional novel intentionally disguised as the biographical work of a conflicted writer who was attempting to portray a realistic picture of the life of an American farmer, would solidify his reputation as a man of letters (Rice 108). However, in order to accomplish this he had to carefully negotiate a middle position between British loyalists and American nativists - the same middle position he was forced into as a Frenchman living in New England amid the rising conflicts of the American Revolution. His emphasis on the utopian agrarian possibilities throughout much of the novel, with a gradual and cautious threading of the realities of slavery, class distinctions and the philosophical differences that would lead to war by the novel’s end,

provided something for everyone. In “The Politics of Authorship,” Grantland Rice explains that European critics could read *Letters* as “a portrayal of the exotic, a benign literary hoax, a contribution to the English literary canon, a colonial panegyric, an invective against the Revolution, a Tory panegyric, an immigration tract, a French Catholic deceit, [or] a Rousseauistic conceit” and of course readers loyal to the idea of a new American republic, could read it as a “true documentary account of the Americas” (106).

The rise of American Studies in the 1950s as an academic discipline, and the acceptance of Smith’s “myth and symbol” consensus theory, coincided with a need to provide a cohesive and unified American front to the rest of world following Depression and World War and amidst Cold War anxieties (Susman 34). Utopian consensus ideologies bring comfort in times of national or regional crisis and at the time that Henry Nash Smith and others were proposing the theory of “one American mind,” concerns regarding Communism had Americans longing for the comforting elements of community that existed in a narrative of shared experience.

Assumptions and Evolving Narrative

As shown in the examples of Adams, Crèvecoeur, Tocqueville and Smith, motive played a significant role in the development of each author’s rhetorical strategy. Equally significant, however, are assumptions that are born out of lived experience. Cultural studies reflect, and the theories adopted by authors and academics engaged in those studies follow, societal evolution. The authors themselves are products of their historical

environments and the interdependent relationship between personal experience and motive inspires their works. Therefore, the literary works of the authors examined here reflect the cultural norms of their day, including the oppression of marginalized communities and attempts to find a negotiated middle position during times of socio-political upheaval.

When we consider motive, lived experience, assumptions and evolving narratives, then, the task of defining the American Dream in the twenty-first century becomes even more difficult. The many assumptions that accompany fluid and evolutionary narratives must be incorporated into a single “Great Story” and then that “Great Story” must be situated comfortably into present-day lived experiences. Barack Obama, in the quote discussed earlier attempted just this task. He attempted to address multiple American Dreams informed by over two centuries of evolving narrative and then submit the most embraceable assumptions as an inspirational foundation for hope in the present. In the eight years since Obama’s address to the DNC, a decline in the national economy have some questioning whether assumptions that have been present since at least Adams’s time still comfortably fit with their present-day experiences.

For example, in the same March 2012 *Washington Post* article that revealed varied definitions of individual American Dreams, Michael Ford attempted to dispel five present-day assumptions: the American Dream is not about getting rich; the American Dream is not about owning a home; the American Dream is not threatened by China (or other countries that have been identified as economic powerhouses); the American

Dream is not threatened by economic decline and political gridlock; and, the American Dream is not even American. (“5 Myths”)

Why the assumption about home ownership? What does he mean that the American Dream is not American? The answers to these questions and the assumptions that lie within them highlight the fluid nature of the American Dream. Each significant moment of change in American society brings forth new meanings for the American Dream.

The American Dream is not about getting rich. Adams would have agreed with Ford that the American Dream is not about getting rich; for Adams it was about opportunity (Cullen 177). According to Jim Cullen, Adams dubbed Thomas Jefferson “the apostle of the American Dream” and “Jeffersonianism . . . [as] the American doctrine” (135, 177). Another advocate for the American Dream, according to Adams, was Ralph Waldo Emerson (198). He credited Emerson as a “prophet” who captured in his works the essence of the “American soul” (198). Jefferson and Emerson were considered champions of the rights of the common man toward self-determination. In their time, self-determination was tied closely to the ability to establish homesteads and independently-owned farms amidst the vast expanse of the American wilderness (198).

Adams’s closing thoughts in *The Epic of America* expressed a concern regarding the direction in which the American Dream was headed. He recognized that two competing visions of the Dream had emerged in American society: one that equates the “good life” with the opportunity for self-determination and one that equates the “good life” with social mobility and the attainment of wealth. The movement toward the Dream

that focused on material wealth was, in Adam's opinion, largely responsible for the declining state of affairs during the Great Depression (400). He believed that by embracing a capitalist culture, Americans had "surrendered idealism for the sake of prosperity" (400). If, for Adams, Jeffersonianism was the "American doctrine," then Hamiltonian capitalism amounted to false prophecy. Michael Ford's attempt to dispel the myth that "the American Dream is about getting rich" appears to acknowledge that Adam's concerns were not unfounded.

Homeownership is not the American Dream. The answer to this interpretation depends largely upon when the question is being asked. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, historian James Cullen believed that the Jeffersonian ideal of land ownership had never lost its appeal. The independent frontier homestead was translated as business properties in the city after the Industrial Revolution, then as the white picket fences of the suburbs following World War II - and by the start of the twenty-first century, Cullen claimed, "No American Dream has broader appeal, and no American Dream has been quite so widely realized" (136). Of course this was before the housing market bust that now finds, according to Michael Ford, that one in five homeowners "owe more on a mortgage than their home is worth" (1). Ford explained that in today's economic climate "homeownership is more important to special interests than it is to most Americans, who . . . care more about 'a good job,' 'the pursuit of happiness' and 'freedom'" (1). It comes as little surprise then that Americans today, who are facing similar economic insecurities as those that were present in Adams's time, have adjusted

their priorities. For the time being, for many Americans, Hamiltonian capitalism takes a back seat to Jeffersonian ideals in their individual conceptions of the American Dream.

The American Dream is not threatened by China. As Adams had expressed his concern regarding the health of the American Dream during the Great Depression in 1931, numerous newspaper, magazine and web reports today indicate a concern by the American public regarding the health of the American Dream in light of the nation's faltering economy. Michael Ford believes that the responses to his survey, with nearly half of the respondents answering that China is the nation that is now charting the future of the world, are based on mistaken assumptions that China's economy is larger than that of the United States ("5 Myths"). While Ford acknowledges enormous U.S. debt to China, he counters the notion of China as a threat by arguing that America is still considered a land of opportunity and he points to a forty-three percent increase in the number of Chinese students attending college in the United States as proof.

More Chinese students may be attending American colleges than in previous years, but that does not necessarily change the perception that America's reputation as a global economic power is suffering – both at home and abroad. Joyce Hooi, a reporter for *The Business Times* in Singapore, was an exchange student in California in late 2008 ("Twilight 2). In a September 2011 article entitled, "The Twilight of America," Hooi expressed her disappointment with America for not becoming the country that it could have been:

My host family had a lawn, just like *Beverly Hills 90210*. But it also had seven cars for a six-member household, kept afloat by a raft of credit cards. The horrible thing about calling it the ‘American Dream’ is that one day you would have to wake up. That quarter, ‘Liquidation’ signs went up in windows and people began mailing their house keys to their creditor banks, a last-ditch gesture as they sank into homelessness. . . . America used to be the place to go if you wanted to be a better version of yourself. But now, there is nowhere to go but China. And over there, some of their toilets still don’t have doors (2)

The American Dream is not threatened by economic decline and political gridlock. This assumption is closely linked to the financial health of the nation, although it focuses more on the role that “politics” plays in individual attainment of economic security and opportunity for social mobility. Ford reports that in March of 2011 “eighty-three percent said they have less trust in ‘politics in general,’” and similarly high percentages revealed a lack of trust in “big business and major corporations . . . government . . . [and] media” (“5 Myths” 2). Nonetheless, according to Ford, sixty-three percent responded confidently that they would be able to attain their American Dream (2).

However, a *USA Today*/Gallup poll in April 2011 reported less favorable findings with only forty-seven percent of 1,013 adults indicating confidence in the opportunity for social mobility, with fluctuations in respondents’ answers depending upon their age (people over the age of fifty were the most pessimistic) and political party affiliation -

with Democrats responding more optimistically than either Republicans or independents (Mendes 1-3). Polling results differ greatly depending upon the way in which a question is asked, the demographics of the population that is being polled, and the time frame during which the survey is being conducted. However, there does seem to be a strong correlation between a lack of confidence in the nation's political health and a concern for the health of the American Dream. Adams expressed his dissatisfaction with what he perceived to be an avoidance by politicians of the divisive, but important issues of his day: "[T]he parties have come to dodge the real issues which may be counted on to divide public opinion, instead of seeking for them" (394). He summed up his lack of confidence in the following quote:

The story of our present decade must be but briefly sketched. It might be described succinctly by saying that Harding had to liquidate the war; Coolidge had quietly to liquidate the scandals of the Harding regime; and Hoover is now watching the liquidation of the 'Coolidge prosperity.' (393)

Perhaps the most curious of Ford's assumptions is that *The American Dream is not American*. This assumption is tied to the others regarding immigration, home ownership, and social mobility and is connected to the way in which America's "national story" has been told.

The period beginning the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century is marked by mass immigration to the United States. In *Epic*, Adams remarked that "English, Irish, Scotch, Germans, all who had come to our shores, had come to find security and self-expression" (68). In home ownership, they were able to find both. In fact, according to

historian, Jim Cullen, immigrant populations during this time exhibited the “greatest fervor” for home ownership (148). He cites a study of home ownership in 1900 as just one example: “55 percent of Germans, 46 percent of the Irish, and 44 percent of Poles owned their own homes – figures that would have been virtually inconceivable in Europe at the time” (148).

Ford reports that when immigrants are asked to “rate the condition of the American Dream on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means the best possible condition and 1 means the worst, 42 percent of immigrants responded between 6 and 10. Only 31 percent of the general population answered in that range” (“5 Myths” 2). In an April 2010 interview for *The St. Petersburg Times*, Ford cited similar findings and offered an opinion as to why this might be the case. “The American Dream,” Ford said, “is such a core part of our national lore, and yet it was created by and is sustained by non-native Americans. It’s not a dream by America. It’s a dream about America.” (“A Man” 2).

Most scholars agree that the American Dream did not begin as an American one. Although some historians place great emphasis upon varied regional characteristics of the early U.S. colonies - David Fischer, author of *Albion’s Seed* is chief among them - most agree that the American Dream evolved as an amalgamation of the varied dreams of immigrants from culturally distinctive regions in England, incorporating the greatest desires and countering the greatest fears, of an already diverse population at the time of the nation’s founding (“All Things”). These regional differences explain, in part, Adams’s contrasting portrayals of Americans in the North and South and his selection of

Benjamin Franklin as an American that, in his personal character, married the most appealing attributes of the settlers from each region.

However, as the results of this study point to use by the U.S. Presidents of a rhetorical strategy that has its roots in the sermons of the Puritans who migrated from Eastern England and settled the Massachusetts Bay colony, the discussion here will focus on understanding the Puritans and their influence on Adams's American Dream. According to Jim Cullen, the final part of Adams's American Dream definition, "the greatest contribution we have as yet made to the thought and welfare of the world," got its start among the New England Puritans (12-13).

For the Puritans, a better life meant the ability to live "a godly life," free from the religious persecution they had suffered in their homeland; one that was set down and ordered for them in the Scriptures and interpreted by their spiritual leaders (Fischer *Albion's* 156). A richer life meant the achievement of a deeper, spiritual oneness with God on a personal level. Their happiness was derived from their belief that they had been chosen, by God, to bring reform by their example to the ungodly civilizations in Europe and to ready an earthly paradise on the North American continent to prepare for the second coming of Christ (Cullen 33).

After examining the cultural trends of the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, David Fischer concludes that Puritans employed a strategy of adopt and adapt – adopting the best of what their former homeland offered and adapting it to their new environment (6). Often this adaptation was realized, as Fischer terms it, by "look[ing] upon the world through very special lenses" (50).

The special lenses found form in the rhetoric used by Puritan spiritual advisors in “meeting house” sermons (Bercovitch xi-xiii). As mentioned previously, this rhetorical strategy, the American Jeremiad, has been determined by historians and rhetoricians to be one that is used to maintain the ambiguity of an artifact in order to omit or avoid divisive issues and to encourage a sense of unity (Zarefsky 25). Close examination of the American Jeremiad, provides not only a better understanding of the Puritans but also provides a glimpse into America’s “national story” as told by the U.S. Presidents.

The American Jeremiad

The American Jeremiad, by Sacvan Bercovitch, distinguished professor in the humanities at Harvard University, was published in 1978 and quickly became considered a seminal work in the study of American culture for its discovery of a repeated rhetorical pattern of themes and metaphors found in religious, political and popular texts from the early Puritan settlers to the orations and literature of the nineteenth century. Based upon this discovery – a kind of rhetorical continuum - Bercovitch concluded that this pattern “helped to sustain a national dream through two hundred years of turbulence and change. . . [and] officially endorsed cultural myth” (xi-xiii).

Bercovitch performed a rhetorical analysis on the sermons preached to the Puritans that migrated from England in 1630, on the “election day sermons” of Puritan descendants forty years later in 1670, and on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Revolutionary era and Civil War era texts (10-11). He found a “persistence of the Puritan Jeremiad throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in all forms of literature, including the literature of westward expansion” (11). According to Bercovitch, the characteristics of the Jeremiad include uses of scripture to set out communal norms, condemnations for how far the community has fallen short of its goals, and reaffirmation of the promise that good things will come (16). The pattern contains six elements: a statement of purpose, a lamentation on the ills of society, a reverence for ancestors, a renewal or recommitment to purpose, a caution that it will not be easy to achieve the mission, and hope and faith in the people and the purpose.

Errand/Mission/Purpose

It was in his sermon entitled *A Modell [sic] of Christian Charity (1630)* delivered aboard the ship *Arbella* to the first wave of English Puritan emigrants to the American continent, that John Winthrop, spiritual advisor and governor of the soon-to-be-established Massachusetts Bay Colony, articulated the colony's purpose: "We shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are on us . . . we shall be made a story and byword throughout the world" (qtd. in Fischer 19-20). Their mission, or "errand" as it was termed, was to settle a "Bible Commonwealth" that would serve as a model to emulate, not only for all of the future British colonies on the American continent but also for the world at large (18-20).

The Puritans believed themselves to be exceptional – they were God's chosen people. Their errand was a continuance of the errand of their spiritual forefathers, Abraham and Moses, who led their followers out of Egypt and into the wilderness by the grace of God to the promised land of Zion (Bercovitch 14). In 1630 the Puritans were headed to a new promised land to ready a new earthly paradise for a second coming of Christ (Fischer 18-19). According to Fischer, the Puritans believed themselves to be "twice-chosen," first by God for their strict adherence to the teachings of the Scriptures, and by the General Court of Massachusetts who judged and monitored their moral character as they moved about their daily life (25).

There was no separation of religious and secular life for the Puritans; their errand was to provide to the world the perfect model of the "church state" (Bercovitch 8). In the "church state" model individuals participated in democratic elections;

exercised autonomy in business; had an egalitarian approach to property ownership; and, as long as they performed their work in a pious manner, Puritans were allowed to enjoy material wealth (Fischer 75-87, 151-174). According to Bercovitch, due to the interconnectedness between spiritual and secular, “liberty, equality and property were not merely civic ideals. . . . They were part of God’s plan” (111).

Long after the Puritan religious fervor had subsided and new religious sects competed for congregations throughout the New England colonies, faith in the ideals of liberty, equality, property and exceptionalism remained a distinctive feature of the New England colonies. Although the specific rhetoric changed to reflect a changing cultural scene, the method used to tell the story of American exceptionalism did not (17).

In the mid- to late-eighteenth centuries, Revolutionary forefathers were telling the American story using the same jeremiad rhetoric that the Puritan leaders found to be particularly persuasive. According to the Founders, colonial Americans, like the Puritans before them had been, were God’s chosen people. The Puritan mission that had called for bringing a unique Protestantism to the “New World” evolved into a mission to bring independence from England and self-government to a “New America” (119).

In his first inaugural, George Washington attributed American success in the Revolutionary War to “providential agency” (Par. 2). He later suggested America’s “chosenness” had been proven “since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered, perhaps, as

deeply, as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people” (Par. 3).

In contrast to the “belligerent powers of Europe,” John Adams acknowledged that providential blessing made possible the “experiment adapted to the genius, character, situation, and relations of this nation and country than which had ever been proposed or suggested” (Pars. 2 and 5).

In his first inaugural in 1805, Thomas Jefferson spoke to the superiority of the American republican model as “the world’s best hope . . . the strongest government on earth” (Par. 2). In his second inaugural he used the pilgrimage rhetoric of the Puritans in speaking to the help he would need to guide the country for four more years:

I shall need, too, the favor of that Being in whose hands we are, who led our fathers, as Israel of old, from their native land and planted them in a country flowing with all the necessaries and comforts of life; who has covered our infancy with His providence and our riper years with His wisdom and power . . . (Par. 15)

The story of American exceptionalism, with a purpose to be a model for the rest of the world, has remained a part of America’s story. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jefferson redefined the purpose from the religion of the Puritans to the “civil religion” of Republicanism (Bellah 2).

The concern over how the rest of the world viewed the United States tended to be of primary focus in the Presidential rhetoric during times when domestic tensions were

high or when, for instance, United States policy might be seen by other nations as overstepping or far-reaching into the business of foreign nations. For example, in his second inaugural in 1833, Andrew Jackson, in the midst of debates regarding the balance of power between states' rights and the authority of the federal government, used similar rhetoric to Winthrop's "all eyes of the world are upon us," to show concern for how sectional debates were being observed by the rest of the world: "The eyes of all nations are fixed on our Republic. . . . Let us realize the importance of the attitude in which we stand before the world" (Par. 4).

James Polk's inaugural, delivered during a period when the sectional tensions were escalating, contains a paragraph that speaks to all of the elements of what would later become James Truslow Adams's conception of the American Dream. In a single paragraph, Polk speaks to the value of a "system of united and confederated States" that permits individuals "to seek their own happiness in their own way" and to the "multitudes from the Old World [who] are flocking to our shores to participate in its blessing" (Par. 11). He continued by espousing individual freedoms and rights and stated boldly: "All distinctions of birth or of rank have been abolished. All citizens, whether native or adopted, are placed upon terms of precise equality" (Par. 11). Polk's pronouncement of equality for all is notable most obviously for its complete neglect of the slavery issue that so defined the period and for its avoidance of any acknowledgment of Native Americans or women.

Polk was also the first to explicitly state that the United States should serve as an example to the rest of the world. In framing his statement as an admonishment to those

who would threaten the Union during a period of escalating tensions, he used a positive exceptionalist spin to diminish domestic conflict. Speaking of those who favored secession, Polk said, “He would extinguish the fire of liberty, which warms and animates the hearts of happy millions and invites all the nations of the earth to imitate our example” (Par. 12).

A final spin in Polk’s inaugural is evident in the way in which he approached Democratic expansionist sentiments that attempted to use the now well-known notion of manifest destiny; the idea that Americans had, in response to their chosen status, a duty to spread their ideal democracy throughout the rest of the world. Following a request from Texas for annexation into the United States, and amid escalating tensions with Mexico over disputed territory that would lead to war in the following year, Polk stated:

Foreign powers do not seem to appreciate the true character of our Government. Our Union is a confederation of independent States, whose policy is peace with each other and all the world. . . . The world has nothing to fear from military ambition in our Government. . . .In the management of our foreign relations it will be my aim to observe a careful respect for the rights of other nations, while our own will be the subject of constant watchfulness (Pars. 22 and 27).

The inaugural of James Polk is a prime example of the ways in which inaugural rhetoric ramps up in favor of America’s chosen status and superiority in order to justify questionable domestic and foreign policies.

The use of American exceptionalism to diminish cries against imperialism continued in full force throughout the nineteenth century and into much of the first half of the twentieth. In fact, Edward Chester in “Beyond the Rhetoric,” found that although many issues were addressed in the Presidents’ party platforms, they were absent or diminished in the inaugurals (574). He cited the imperialist platform and the notion of manifest destiny as a notable example. Chester pointed out that in spite of that fact that the Monroe Doctrine (U.S. legislation that discouraged foreign powers from interference in any of the colonies on the American continent) was enacted in 1823, and territorial acquisition and defense in the Americas was a dominant factor for much of the nineteenth century, it is not referenced in any of the inaugurals before that of William Taft in 1909.

The first full use of all six of the jeremiad’s elements was made by William McKinley in his second inaugural at the turn of the twentieth-century (1901). During his first term the United States was at war with Spain in support of Cuban independence; the net effect of which was U.S. acquisition of the Philippines, Guam and Puerto Rico. In spite of his inaugural remarks to stay true to a policy against “territorial aggression,” and his calling for ratification of Bering Sea arbitration that would settle a dispute for rights to the fur seal trade, McKinley uses the jeremiad format to articulate America’s purpose of spreading freedom and democracy to others as justification for American imperialism:

The American people, entrenched in freedom at home, take their love for it with them wherever they go, and they reject as mistaken and unworthy the doctrine that we lose our own liberties by securing the enduring foundations of liberty to others. Our institutions will not deteriorate by extension, and our sense of justice will not abate under tropic suns in distant seas” (Par.7).

By the twentieth century, the mission simply to be a model had evolved to active promotion and defense of freedom and democracy in other nations. There continued to be an assumption of exceptionalism; that the American belief system and the American political structure was the best that the world had to offer. In his “Third Inaugural Address” delivered on January 20, 1941, Franklin Delano Roosevelt said

America has been the New World in all tongues, to all peoples, not because this continent was a new-found land, but because all those who came here believed they could create upon this continent a new life—a life that should be new in freedom. . . . our strong purpose is to protect and to perpetuate the integrity of democracy (Par. 25).

Dwight Eisenhower followed in his first inaugural in 1953 with: “We are called as a people to give testimony in the sight of the world to our faith that the future shall belong to the free....in the watchfulness of a Divine Providence” (Par. 61).

In his second inaugural Eisenhower asserted, “This is our home – yet this is not the whole of our world. For our world is where our full destiny lies – with men, of all people, and all nations, who are or would be free” (Par. 11).

In 1969, Richard Nixon’s focus was on peace. Again, America would take the leading role:

The greatest honor history can bestow is the title of peacemaker. This honor now beckons America – the chance to help lead the world at last out of the valley of turmoil, and onto that high ground of peace. . . . If we succeed, generations will say of us now . . . that we helped make the world safe for mankind. This is our summons to greatness (“First Inaugural” Pars. 11-13)

Ronald Reagan borrowed from John Winthrop, in both his acceptance speech at Republican National Convention in 1984 and again in his farewell to the nation in 1989, when he referred to America as “a shining city on a hill” (Reagan Presidential Library). In his second inaugural address, Reagan listed the ways in which America had lighted the way for the rest of the world:

[America] helped preserve peace in a troubled world; when Americans courageously supported the struggle for liberty, self-government, and free enterprise throughout the world, and turned the tide of history away from totalitarian darkness and into the warm sunlight of human freedom. (Par. 14)

During his 1997 inaugural address, Bill Clinton used the familiar biblical rhetoric of a promised land to remind the nation of America's purpose: "We must keep our old democracy forever young. Guided by the ancient vision of a promised land, let us set our sights upon a land of new promise And the world's greatest democracy will lead a whole world of democracies" (Pars. 1 and 24).

In his first inaugural in 2001, George W. Bush said:

Through much of the last century, America's faith in freedom and democracy was a rock in a raging sea. Now it is a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations. Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our country, it is the inborn hope of our humanity, an ideal we carry but do not own, a trust we bear and pass along. (Par. 6)

While a good number of nineteenth-century Presidents employed three or more of the jeremiad elements, only William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover, employ all six elements. However, the overwhelming majority (twenty of twenty-six) of the pre-Depression inaugurals articulate America's purpose as a model to the rest of the world. In addition, the rhetorical analysis revealed that all but three post-Depression Presidents – Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter and Barack Obama – cited "freedom,"

“democracy,” or “world” in their top five most frequently used words. Even though different words were used, expressions of American exceptionalism and America’s mission to perpetuate freedom and democracy around the world are present in each of these inaugurals.

Johnson used biblical rhetoric that recounts a historical “covenant . . . meant one day to inspire the hopes of all mankind. . . . [T]he American covenant called on us to help show the way for the liberation of man” (Pars. 6 and 14).

Carter approached the subject with more humility but the reference of America as a model is still present: “Our Nation can be strong abroad only if it is strong at home. And we know that the best way to enhance freedom in other lands is to demonstrate here that our democratic system is worthy of emulation” (Par. 15).

Barack Obama, wishing to get America back on track after what he perceived as a period during which she was distracted from her mission, encouraged a reaffirmation to America’s purpose “to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness” (9). Even though Americans had strayed, Obama asserted that, “We remain the most prosperous, powerful nation on earth . . . and [American] ideals still light the world. . . . [W]e are ready to lead once more” (Pars. 14 and 20).

As Robert Berkhofer has suggested, in order for cultural ideologies to enjoy broad acceptance, they must first be given a basis in historical fact. For over a century and a half before James Truslow Adams defined the American Dream, the nation’s leaders had

perpetuated the notion of American exceptionalism in their telling of the “national story.” Therefore, it is not surprising that this sentiment appears in Adams’s conception of the American Dream.

Lamentation of the Ills of Society

The second element in the American Jeremiad is a lamentation of the ills of society. The jeremiad gets its name from the biblical Hebrew prophet, Jeremiah, who was famous for his lamentations that warned that the many sins of the people were considered a break in their covenant with God and would not go unpunished (Murphy 126).

Regarding the Puritan lamentations, Sacvan Bercovitch observed: “[W]ithin the first decade of settlement, the clergy was already thundering denunciations of a backsliding people” (6). With such a lofty purpose as to be the model church-state for the world, the Puritan people were bound to stumble along the way. Denouncements of both secular and spiritual sins were regularly included as part of the meeting-house sermons, followed by a restatement of the Puritan mission, a threat of the consequences for non-compliance or failure of the mission, and finally, ending with a hopeful message that with God’s help, the mission would be successful (Bercovitch 8-10). According to Bercovitch, this Puritan rhetoric added exceptionalism to “moral obedience and civic virtue” (9). It merged city and congregation, and spiritual individual and collective society, for a common, divine purpose in a fashion that was uniquely New England Puritan – and would later become, uniquely American (9).

Similar sentiments are found in the rhetoric of the leaders of the Revolutionary era. Greater trials would come to the new Americans, precisely because they bore the weight of an exceptional mission of modeling a democratic republic for the rest of the world (Bercovitch 119). On July 3, 1776, statesman and future President John Adams wrote, “Americans shall suffer Calamities still more wasting and Distresses yet more dreadfull [sic]...The Furnace of Affliction produces Refinement, in States as well as Individuals” (qtd. in Bercovitch 119).

Abraham Lincoln’s inaugurals are unique in that they do not claim providential favoritism for the United States. His second inaugural, delivered after the nation had been torn apart by Civil War, is a lamentation: “Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other” (Par. 3). Lincoln believed that the Civil War was God’s punishment for failing to discontinue the practice of slavery:

If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came . . . (Par. 3).

As the laments of Adams and Lincoln reflected the societal concerns relevant to their time, the laments of the Presidents in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries reflect the concerns of the historical eras in which they served. For Roosevelt in 1941 the ills of society included the “self-serving wealth” that he believed brought forth the “undeserved poverty” of the Depression (Par. 27).

The major ill of society for Harry Truman was communism. The greater portion of Truman's inaugural was a point-for-point comparison of the evils of communism versus the good of democracy. The Soviet Union had tested atomic weapons in the summer before Truman's inauguration and no doubt contributed to his strong anti-communist stance (Miller Center). He pointed to the violence that he perceived to be inherent in communism and contrasts that with the peaceful aim of democracy. However, notably absent from his inaugural was any mention of Truman's authorization for the use of the atomic bomb against Japan just four years earlier (Miller Center). While the omission is not unexpected given the circumstances of the ritual inaugural, it provides an easy example of how the rhetoric stops short in the telling of America's story.

In 1953 Dwight Eisenhower was still concerned with nuclear weapons, "devices to level not only mountains but also cities... [and] the power to erase human life from this planet" (Par. 13). The threat of nuclear weapons continued to be a concern and was cited as a societal ill by several other Presidents in their inaugurals including: Lyndon Johnson in 1965, Ronald Reagan in 1985 and Bill Clinton in 1997. To global concerns of nuclear weapons, Johnson added the concerns over racial tensions at home in 1965. In 1969, Richard Nixon laments the use of "angry rhetoric" at a time when protests against war and in favor of civil rights prevailed upon the American scene (Par. 28). In 1989, George H.W. Bush cites among his concerns drug addiction and crime (Par. 14). In his second inaugural (1997), Bill Clinton added "terror" as a societal ill in the wake of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center and George W. Bush, in 2005, denounced

“ideologies that fuel hatred and excuse murder” following the September 11, 2001 attacks on America (Clinton par. 15, Bush par. 4).

Reverence for Ancestors

With the passing of the first generation of Puritans, came a new layer within the jeremiad. Clergymen from the second and third generations now reminded their congregations of two pilgrimages; Moses had led his followers out of Egypt into Canaan and John Winthrop had led his followers out of England to Massachusetts (Bercovitch 93). According to Bercovitch, the ancestors’ dedication to the purpose was commended, their methods celebrated and their memories preserved (93). The Puritan settlers may not have become the “city upon the hill” for the eyes of the world, but they had become the church-state model for the American Republican government (94).

It would be the errand of yet another generation to transform the church-state, self-governing model of a free society into an example for the rest of the world. The next generation, Revolutionary leaders, fell back to the mission and dedication of the Puritan forefathers and later, Jacksonian-era leaders would recall the mission of the Founding Fathers (185).

Bercovitch points out that this element of the Jeremiad, reverence to the ancestors for their devotion to the mission, provided continuity from one generation to another and from one American historical era to the next (97). This meshing of spiritual and secular and the continuity of the Jeremiad allowed for an easy rhetorical revision – the religious freedom of the founding Puritans became a general love of liberty - and liberty became equated with Republicanism (117-119).

Many of the nineteenth-century Presidents acknowledged their most recent predecessors. In his first inaugural (1817), James Monroe paid homage to “the illustrious men who have preceded me in this high station” (Par. 19). Perhaps because he considered himself to be a second generation President, “belong[ing] to a later age” than the Founders, Martin Van Buren’s inaugural is laden with respect for those who served before him:

In imitating their example I tread in the footsteps of illustrious men, whose superiors it is our happiness to believe are not found on the executive calendar of any country. Among them we recognize the earliest and firmest pillars of the Republic – those by who our national independence was first declared, him who above all others contributed to establish it on the field of battle, and those whose expanded intellect and patriots constructed, improved, and perfected the inestimable institutions under which we live. (Par. 1.)

Presidents of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have maintained the continuity and the revision of the Puritan mission from religious freedom to freedom in general in their use of the American Jeremiad in their inaugural speeches. Each inaugural shows reverence for those that came before them and their dedication to America’s mission. In 1965, Lyndon Johnson proclaimed, “First, justice was the promise [for] all who made the journey. . . . Liberty was the second article of our covenant” (Pars. 7 and 12). In 1985, Ronald Reagan remarked, “in a sense, our new beginning is a continuation of that beginning created two centuries ago” (Par. 8). With each successive passing of

the baton, the list of those for whom we owe our heritage grows. By Barack Obama's 2009 inaugural, the list of revered ancestors was quite long and included the Puritans, pioneers, laborers, African slaves and the soldiers of domestic and foreign wars:

Our journey has never been one of shortcuts. . . .It has not been the path for the faint-hearted. . . . it has been the risk-takers, the doers, the makers of things – celebrated, but more often men and women obscure in their labor, who have carried us up the long, rugged path towards prosperity and freedom. For us, they packed up their few worldly possessions and traveled across oceans in search of a new life. For us, they toiled in sweatshops and settled the West; endured the lash of the whip and plowed the hard earth. For us, they fought and died, in places like Concord and Gettysburg; Normandy and Khe Sah (Pars. 9-12).

A common trend to express political continuity was added beginning with twentieth-century Presidents – one that stresses “that while many things change, American ideals do not” (Ericson 738). Theodore Roosevelt acknowledged that “modern life is both complex and intense,” but expressed confidence in the strong, unchanged, spirit of the Republic to successfully weather the change (Pars. 3-4). As the United States was moving towards active participation in World War I, Woodrow Wilson attempted to calm anxieties by expressing faith in American principles:

The tragic events of the thirty months . . . through which we have just passed have made us citizens of the world. . . . And yet we are not the less American on that account. We shall be the more American if we but remain true to the principles in which we have been bred (Pars. 9-10).

Four years after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, George W. Bush, closed his second inaugural with:

When the Declaration of Independence was first read in public and the Liberty Bell was sounded in celebration, a witness said, ‘It rang as if it meant something.’ In our time it means something still. America, in this young century, proclaims liberty throughout all the world, and to all the inhabitants thereof. Renewed in our strength – tested, but not weary – we are ready for the greatest achievements in the history of freedom (Par.30).

Renewal/Recommitment

The fourth element of the Jeremiad is a renewal, or recommitment, to the purpose. Perhaps feeling further removed from the purpose of their ancestors and feeling the sting of the clergyman’s lamentations, second generation Puritans sought assurance that they and their children would forever be blessed as part of God’s favored people (Bercovitch 63). This required a physical commitment on their part to renew their covenant with God and took the form of the ritual of baptism; a practice that began in the mid-seventeenth century (66-68). In the later rhetoric of public policy, this renewal evolved into “I pledge in the name of God to [the cause]” and then to a simple pledge or recommitment to the purpose or mission.

Second generation Martin Van Buren recommitted himself to the principles of the Founding Fathers and “strict adherence to the letter and spirit of the Constitution” (Par. 15).

In 1921, Warren Harding urged a renewal to:

Our foundations of political belief . . . a precious inheritance to ourselves, an inspiring example of freedom and civilization to all mankind. Let us express renewed and strengthened devotion, in grateful reverence for the immortal beginning, and utter our confidence in the supreme fulfillment.

(Par. 2)

In 1953, Dwight Eisenhower urged a renewal in faith and returned to the metaphor of pilgrimage: “At such a time in history, we who are free must proclaim anew our faith. . . . We bring all our wit and all our will to meet the question: How far have we come in man’s long pilgrimage from darkness toward light?” (Pars. 9-10 and 14).

Lyndon Johnson acknowledged the ultimate sacrifice, the lives of soldiers fighting in the Viet Nam War, as proof of the nation’s commitment to its purpose: “If American lives must end, and American treasure be spilled, in countries we barely know, that is the price that change has demanded of conviction and of our enduring covenant” (Par. 15).

In 1997 Bill Clinton asserted, “We will stand mighty for peace and freedom. . . . To that effort I pledge all my strength and every power of my office” (Pars. 24 and 29).

The Road to Mission Fulfillment Will Not Be Easy

The Puritans did not expect that the path toward fulfilling their exceptional role would be easy. In fact, they believed that every trial set before them; whether natural disaster, human suffering, societal ill or the actions of their detractors, only served as proof that theirs was an exceptional mission. Bercovitch explains that the special attention to “the justly afflicted saint” had its roots in the scriptural predictions in the last chapter of *The Holy Bible*, the Book of Revelations (57). The Book of Revelations foretells the second coming of Christ, but not before an apocalyptic ending of the earthly world (57). The Puritans expected that they would be tested at every turn since theirs was to battle through all earthly trials in their quest to ready the “New World” for Christ.

Again, the rhetoric suggested continuity with the Puritans’ scriptural ancestors. Bercovitch pointed to the sermon entitled, *The Day of Trouble is Near* (1674), delivered by Puritan clergyman, Increase Mather, as an example of the rhetorical links that were made between the trials of the biblical ancestors and the difficulties that lie ahead for the New England Puritans:

Christ himself was exposed to sufferings, [and] David speaking as a Type of Christ saith, *Thou hast showed me great and sure troubles*. [Thus] God hath covenanted with his people that sanctified afflictions shall be their portion. . . . Here the Lord hath caused as it were New Jerusalem to come down from Heaven; He dwells in this place: therefore we may conclude that he will scourge us for our backslidings. . . . if New England shall forsake the Lord judgment [sic] shall quickly overtake us. (qtd. in Bercovitch 60)

For the Puritans, the great trials came from both external forces and from within their own backsliding ways. Similarly, the inaugurals of twentieth and twenty-first century Presidents highlight both domestic and global trials. Often this section of the Presidential jeremiads speaks to the exceptionalist nature of the trials themselves and is particularly evident in the remarks of Presidents serving in times of economic decline or during times of war. For example, following the Great Depression, Franklin Roosevelt suggested, “In the face of great perils never before encountered, our strong purpose is to protect and to perpetuate the integrity of democracy” (“Third Inaugural” par. 35).

In 1953, following World War II and the Korean War, Dwight Eisenhower suggested, “For our own country, it has been a time of recurring trial. We have grown in power and in responsibility. We have passed through the anxieties of depression and of war to a summit unmatched in man’s history” (“First Inaugural” par. 8).

In light of the 2001 terrorist attacks on America, George W. Bush observed in 2005, “For half a century, America defended our own freedom by standing watch on

distant borders. After the shipwreck of communism came years of relative quiet, years of repose, years of sabbatical – and then there came a day of fire” (“Second Inaugural” par. 3).

Embroiled in wars abroad and amid economic recession at home, Barack Obama stressed, “These are indicators of crisis . . . the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many” (Pars. 4-5).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

According to Bercovitch, a peculiarity of the Puritan Jeremiad was an expectation of failure (11). Falling short of full attainment of the errand would therefore necessitate God’s help and intervention for the goal to be achieved. This merely served to reinforce the perception of exceptionalism among the Puritans as a people worthy of God’s help and the loftiness of their purpose (11-16). There was never a call to reconsider the mission, but rather the mission was strengthened by its very elusiveness. The mission *would* be achieved. The Puritans had God on their side (11-16).

Franklin Roosevelt’s closing message of hope in 1941 contained the same sentiments. The purpose “to perpetuate the integrity of democracy” is buoyed by the elusiveness of “the spirit of America, and the faith of America” and in accordance with “the will of God” (Pars. 35-37).

Similarly, Lyndon Johnson expressed his faith that the “the liberation of man” would be achieved in accordance with “the American covenant” and he used an ambiguous description of “what we are” and “what we believe” as the basis of that faith: “If we succeed, it will not be because of what we have, but it will be because of what we

are; not because of what we own, but, rather because of what we believe” (Pars. 14 and 28).

The noble purpose for Reagan, to pass the “dream [of freedom] to a waiting and hopeful world,” was the same as Roosevelt and Johnson and the ambiguity remained as well. Roosevelt’s “spirit of America” and Johnson’s “what we are [and] what we believe” was described by Reagan as “the American sound” (Par. 41).

Bill Clinton wanted to keep “the American Dream alive for all her children” but he did not define the Dream. Reagan’s “American sound” became in Clinton’s words, “America’s bright flame of freedom spreading throughout all the world” (Par. 33).

Bercovitch finds a refusal to reevaluate the mission even in the face of failure to be a uniquely American phenomenon rooted in New England Puritan tradition and the American Jeremiad (11). He explained:

Indeed, what first attracted me to the study of the jeremiad was my astonishment, as a Canadian immigrant, at learning about the prophetic history of America. Not of North America, for the prophecies stopped short at the Canadian and Mexican borders, but of a country that, despite its arbitrary territorial limits, could read its destiny in its landscape, and a population that, despite its bewildering mixture of race and creed, could believe in something called an American mission, and could invest that patent fiction with all the emotional, spiritual, and intellectual appeal of a religious quest. . . . The question in these latter day jeremiads, as in their seventeenth-century precursors, was never “Who are we?” but, almost in

deliberate evasion of that question, the old prophetic refrain: ‘When is our errand to be fulfilled? How long, O Lord, how long?’ (11)

In the persistence of the jeremiad pattern from the sermons of the Puritans to the Presidential inaugurals of the twenty-first century, we find a plausible answer as to why, in spite of the fact that we cannot readily come up with a precise definition of the American Dream, we still cling to its possibilities. The acceptance and prevalence of a national ideal that holds within it so many different and conflicting dreams requires artful delivery of its most embraceable themes and surreptitious side-stepping of discordant issues. In their use of the American Jeremiad, the Presidents found a strategy that accomplishes this task. In their inaugural addresses, the Presidents have wrapped the “nation’s story” in broad embraceable themes of freedom, democracy and American exceptionalism. They employ ambiguous phrasing such as “the spirit of America” and the “American Sound” and congratulate us on who we are and what we believe.

Conclusion

There is no *singular* American Dream. For students studying American culture in the twenty-first century, it seems rather obvious that a “one-size-fits all” approach to defining American character is inconsistent with the realities of a nation populated by persons of varied socioeconomic standing; who represent distinctive geographic regions; are redefining gender and familial relationships; and, are exercising freedoms in wide-ranging lifestyle choices that represent diversity in religious practices, sexual preferences, and political philosophies.

This research began with the question of why, in light of the diverse experiences of the American people, has the concept of the American Dream persisted in its singular use that denotes common and shared cultural experience?

Examples presented here have shown that although numerous attempts have been made to define the “typically American” experience, they are problematic in that they often paint idyllic representations that stop short of full disclosure leaving unresolved conflicts between often competing individual freedoms, political gridlock, and unrealistic expectations. Attempts to highlight American “sameness” have historically excluded or diminished Native Americans, African Americans, women and non-white European immigrants from accounts of the national story. Often, personal motive and lived experience has contributed to stilted or idealized portrayals of a common American culture that is misleading or inaccurate. The fluid nature of the American Dream,

cumulative and ever-changing, makes determination of a precise definition an improbability.

Yet, the concept of the American Dream as common ideology persists. To further examine why, and inspired by Berkhofer's assertion regarding the significance of credible storytellers to the acceptance of consensus ideology, this research focused on determining what the United States Presidents have identified as the basic tenets of the American Dream. The results of this study have established that, interconnected with and contained within the broader national story - and perpetuated in the inaugural addresses of the American Presidents – the basic tenets of the American Dream are: freedom, democracy and American exceptionalism.

In an unexpected development, the results of this study have also provided an answer to the question of *how* the Presidents have perpetuated consensus ideology in spite of the diversity of individual American experiences. In their employment of the American Jeremiad strategy, Depression- and post-Depression era Presidents (whether consciously or sub-consciously) found a rhetorical tool with which to create an image of national unity that ignores or diminishes the discordant realities inherent in a culturally pluralistic society.

No other studies to date have been identified as having made such a close correlation between the Presidential inaugurals and their relationship to the American Jeremiad. However, others have studied the Presidential inaugurals in an attempt to identify commonalities, and their findings are similar to those discussed in this manuscript.

One such analysis, conducted by David F. Ericson in 1997 and published in *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, suggests that the inaugurals comprise eleven common characteristics that he identifies as being “permanent” in American politics: 1) civic virtue; 2) non-partisanship; 3) national unity; 4) general policy principles; 5) cooperation with Congress; 6) popular support; 7) a providential supreme being; 8) the American mission; 9) political continuity; 10) the President’s role as defender of the Constitution and union; and, 11) federalism (727-728). Although Ericson’s reason for his examination differed from that which was the impetus for this research, and the categories he identified are more expansive, the results of his study tend to support the claims made here; particularly his findings with regard to unity, mission and political continuity. In addition, Ericson observed the same marked changes in inaugural rhetoric beginning in the latter decades of the nineteenth century as those that were observed in this study.

In the area of civic virtue, Ericson found that eighty-eight percent of the inaugurals examined (his study was published before the elections of George W. Bush and Barack Obama) suggested that the American people would need to make sacrifices in order to reach their highest potential for realizing the greatest common good (729). Ericson found that this caution was often sandwiched between an admonition regarding society’s ills and was followed by a reassurance that the American people would meet the challenge (729). His observations support the findings in this study that suggest an adherence to the jeremiad elements of lamenting the ills of society, cautioning that the road to mission fulfillment will not be easy, and expressing hope and faith in the

American people and purpose. Ericson referred to the use of the jeremiad form in his analysis of this theme but did not draw any further conclusions regarding its use.

Ericson made the connection between his theme of nonpartisanship and national unity and suggested that the use of nonpartisanship rhetoric spikes during times when partisan politics are particularly troublesome. Ericson observed, “The theme is best viewed not as a blanket condemnation of party behavior but as a cultural constraint on party behavior that may be invoked precisely when it seems strongest” (731). This observation supports the claim that the Presidents create an image of nonpartisanship in order to detract from the reality of partisanship divides and lends further support to the assertion in this study regarding the avoidance of divisive issues. Ericson suggested that in the broader theme of national unity “few new presidents mention the nation’s troublesome ethnic and racial divisions, except when they can hardly avoid it. . . . while many new presidents do mention sectional and party divisions as threats to national unity, they almost always do so only to discount the nature of those threats” (731-732).

Regarding the theme of general policy principles, a category that considers the frequency with which the Presidents discussed either their desire to continue the policies of their predecessors or to propose new policies under their administrations, Ericson reports that “a twentieth century variant on this theme heightens the lack of specificity” (733). His observation suggests agreement with the results of this study regarding a move towards greater ambiguity in the inaugurals beginning with the approach of the twentieth century. Similarly, he finds that beginning with Woodrow Wilson; Presidents cease to acknowledge the need for cooperation with Congress as the legislative-making

body while at the same time a trend towards garnering support of the national populace increased (733-734).

Ericson's findings acknowledge the prominent theme of Americans as a "chosen people" with a mission that has evolved over time, and especially since the turn of the twentieth century, into a promotion of democracy around the world (736-737).

Ericson concludes that "[these themes] reappear because they are so much part of American political culture; and because [the Presidents] . . . often without conscious forethought, find it politically useful to invoke them in their inaugural addresses" (740). Even as some might not agree with the first part of Ericson's statement, it is hard to argue with the latter. It also provides a plausible explanation regarding the time frame when use of avoidance rhetoric began being used systematically by the Presidents.

The results of this study point to use of the American Jeremiad during times when cultural tensions were high as they were during the Second Industrial Revolution, Depression and world war and that systematic employment of the American Jeremiad followed the historical period when the nation first began to be identified as a major player on the global stage. In addition, the increased use of the American Jeremiad in the Presidents' inaugurals coincides with a host of changes in the ways in which the Presidents governed beginning at the turn of the twentieth century; changes they no doubt considered to be politically expedient as has been suggested in Ericson's observations. This point supports David Zarefsky's assertion that Presidents find ambiguity beneficial in their efforts to persuade the American people in favor of their administrations' policies.

Rhetoricians have pointed to this period as one that gave rise to the “rhetorical presidency” (Gould 41). The “rhetorical presidency” is characterized as one that changed the nature of the interaction between the President and the American people and scholars most often point to the presidencies of Theodore Roosevelt, William Taft and Woodrow Wilson as the first to have adopted the elements that characterize the “rhetorical presidency:” greater participation in the campaign process; greater and more frequent use of mass media; travel outside of the United States during their tenure in office; direct appeals to the public (rather than to Congress) for support of their administrations’ policies; and, an expansion of executive power (Gould 41-49).

The “rhetorical presidency” centers on a President’s direct interaction with the public. Prior to the twentieth century, it was considered bad form for Presidents to speak directly to the American people; rather, the proper way to ensure that all branches of the government worked in accordance within a true Republic was to adhere to clearly delineated roles - party surrogates championed agendas and the presidency remained a “Constitutional office rather than the seat of popular leadership” (Cesar et al. 159-161). The contextual analysis of the inaugurals bears this out; there are many more references to the Constitution, Congress and federative government in the inaugurals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than in those of the twentieth and twenty-first. In fact, Edward Chester points out that the inaugurals of Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding, Harry Truman, John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson made no mention of the Constitution at all (576). Chester’s article was published in 1980 and so his observation ends with the inaugural of Jimmy Carter. More recent Presidents who

made no mention of the Constitution in their inaugural addresses include George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama.

As commented previously, most rhetoricians begin their discussions of the “rhetorical presidency” with Theodore Roosevelt. However, in the case of Presidents moving toward greater use of the media, William McKinley deserves a mention as well. McKinley, according to historian Lewis Gould, was the first President to move the press corps into the White House and his secretary delivered two briefings per day (42). In addition, McKinley was the first President to employ all six elements of the American Jeremiad in his inaugural. A first connection can be made in the example of McKinley between the use of the American Jeremiad in the Presidents’ inaugurals and the rise of the “rhetorical presidency.”

Theodore Roosevelt, according to Gould, was the nation’s first “celebrity president” (43). He was an author, rancher, politician and military hero who enjoyed the spotlight (43). Newspaper accounts of his particularly spirited daughter, Alice, and photographs of the Roosevelt grandchildren playing on the White House lawn, sparked an immense public interest in First Families that continues today (43-44). Roosevelt used the media attention to garner support for and to silence critics of his policy on acquisition of the Panama Canal (44). His visit to the Canal’s site was the first time that a President travelled outside of the United States during his Presidential term – a practice that has become commonplace since (Schoultz 171).

The Panama Canal had been a major focus for Roosevelt during his inherited first term as President following the assassination of McKinley in 1901. Roosevelt and his

advisors had been under scrutiny for “closed door” deals with Panamanian revolutionaries. In exchange for Roosevelt’s employment of military intimidation tactics (naval vessels to stop Colombians from preventing a Panamanian revolution), that would ensure Panama’s independence, the Canal would be under U.S. control (Schoultz 162-167). During his presidency, Roosevelt denied that his administration had any advance knowledge of the Panamanian revolt against Colombia, but some argue that he later took credit for his personal role in the negotiations in his autobiography published in 1912 (Holden and Zolov 88).

In spite of Roosevelt’s focus on the Panama Canal, and the accusations of impropriety that followed, he made no mention of the Canal or specific policies related to extensive U.S. involvement in Central and South America in his 1905 inaugural address. Instead, he used the ambiguity and avoidance rhetoric of the American Jeremiad.

In respect to foreign relations, Roosevelt maintained:

We have become a great nation, forced by the fact of its greatness into relations with the other nations on the earth, and we must behave as befits a people with such responsibilities. . . . We must show not only in our words, but in our deeds that we are earnestly desirous of securing their good will by acting toward them in a spirit of just and generous recognition of all of their rights. But justice and generosity in a nation, as in an individual, count most when shown not by the weak but by the strong. While ever careful to refrain from wrongdoing others, we must be no less insistent that we are not wronged ourselves. (Par. 2)

Taking Roosevelt's statement at face value, the American people might have missed the subtle references in "recognition of their rights" as choosing the rights of the Panamanian rebels over the rights of the Colombians in order to gain U.S. control over the Canal. In addition, such an ambiguous phrase as, "we must be no less insistent that we are not wronged ourselves," may not have been read by the American public as a violation of a previous treaty between the U.S. and Colombia - the 1846 Bidlack Treaty - that recognized Colombia's sovereignty over the region (Schoultz 169).

Much may have been missing from Theodore Roosevelt's inaugural address, but the elements of the American Jeremiad were not. Roosevelt stated the purpose: "Upon the success of our experiment much depends, not only as regards our own welfare, but as regards the welfare of mankind. If we fail, the cause of free-government through the world will rock to its foundations" (Par. 3). He paid reverence to the ancestors: "great men who founded this Republic in the days of Washington, which made great the men who preserved this Republic in the days of Abraham Lincoln" (Par. 4). His lamentation rested with the complexities of "modern life" and the burdens of being a powerful nation (Par. 3). He requested a recommitment and "devotion to a lofty ideal," which was made great by the Founding Fathers and those who preserved the Union (Par. 4). He expressed "faith that we shall not prove false to the memories of the men of the mighty past . . . [and] a fixed determination to show that under a free government a might people can thrive best" (Pars. 1 and 4).

While William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt were frontrunners of the "rhetorical presidency." The presidency of Woodrow Wilson is the best exemplar.

Wilson travelled extensively throughout the United States taking his public policy proposals directly to the people and he travelled outside of the United States in 1918-1919 to attend the Paris Peace Conference (42). Wilson actively campaigned during his run for a second term and gave press briefings every Tuesday morning.

In addition, Wilson was the first President since John Adams to deliver his State of the Union address directly to Congress – the practice continues into the present day - and he believed in the power of public opinion to affect change (42). In *Constitutional Government* (1908), Wilson wrote, “He [the President] has no means of compelling Congress except through public opinion” (qtd. in Ceaser et. al 163). Wilson, no doubt, would have been thrilled with the impact that television has had on these annual messages as they give Presidents even greater opportunity to pressure Congress for support of their policies under the direct scrutiny of the American people.

In recent decades, however, it has been the President more so than Congress, who has been under the watchful eye of the public and the relentless scrutiny of the political pundits of mass media (Ceaser et al. 165). It is this development that demonstrates the biggest change with regard to Presidential rhetoric. Beginning with the twentieth century, Presidential rhetoric moved away from a reflection of Presidents as Constitutional officers and in support of the role of “popular leader” (162). As a result, “calm and deliberate discussion of reasons of state” has been replaced by incitement “in the name of a common purpose and a spirit of idealism” (163). The political expediency focus of the “rhetorical presidency” answers the question of *why* the American Presidents

turned to the ambiguous avoidance rhetoric of the American Jeremiad as the twentieth century approached.

It seems appropriate here when discussing politically-expedient Presidential rhetoric, to make mention regarding the affect that political advisors and speechwriters (or ghostwriters as some have made the distinction) may have on perpetuating American national ideology. There is no evidence that suggests that twentieth- and twenty-first century Presidents, or their speechwriters, purposely sought to frame their inaugural addresses within the American Jeremiad rhetorical format; more studies would be needed to determine to what extent, if any, the American Jeremiad has been discussed in the formulation of Presidential public discourse. It is known that Presidents throughout time have called upon others to assist them in the writing of and to advise them on the content of their public speeches. Some scholars have suggested that an increase in the frequency of public announcements and speeches have modern Presidents relying more heavily upon speechwriters – so much so that “at a time when presidents are judged more by their rhetoric, they play less of a role in its actual formation” (165).

However in ceremonial, ritual speeches such as the inaugural addresses, it seems fairly safe to assume that Presidents still play a large role in the development of content. Based upon the results of this study, the rhetoric has increasingly moved towards the creation of an ambiguous image, nearly devoid of discordant content, with intent to foster “common purpose and a spirit of idealism” (163). The net effect of the increase in inspirational rhetoric has resulted in a disconnect between the public perception of

enhanced power of the President and the true inner-workings of our political system that is designed to balance power among tripartite branches of government (163).

This study is significant as it underscores the power of presidential rhetoric and political continuity to perpetuate consensus ideology and troublesome elements within that ideology that maintain exceptionalist sentiments of American superiority.

Furthermore, this research reveals how the use of avoidance rhetoric and ambiguity facilitates the acceptance of broadly defined definitions of freedom and democracy unimpaired by the realities of competing individual freedoms and political polarization.

While this research provided a number of answers, it also suggests areas where further study is needed. For instance, this study uncovered common basic assumptions in the Presidential inaugurals believed to be instrumental to the unification of the American public: freedom, democracy and American exceptionalism. Those tenets were evident in James Truslow Adams's 1931 definition of the American Dream, but are they still relevant today? Suggestions for further study include an analysis of Presidential rhetoric with an eye on the more contemporary constructions of the American Dream that include the attainment of material wealth, home ownership, and educational opportunities, to name a few.

The research also suggests that the Presidents from the late nineteenth century forward employed the rhetorical format of the American Jeremiad as a tool with which to perpetuate these unifying tenets. One theory has been posited here that suggests that use of the American Jeremiad's avoidance rhetoric was not merely coincidental to, but perhaps even a result of, the rise of the "rhetorical presidency." This theory supposes a

“top-down” approach with popular cultural beliefs being conveyed from the Presidential podium to the people; a closer look at the reciprocal properties of the “rhetorical presidency” is warranted. And as already suggested the role that speechwriters play in the construction of avoidance rhetoric is an area that would offer further insight.

More studies would be helpful to determine whose goals are being served in the maintenance of an ambiguous and common American Dream. Educational historian, David Labaree, has examined the paradox of private good versus public good present in the goals of the American education system by separating the conflicting goals of American education into three categories: democratic equality, social efficiency, and social mobility (41-42). Labaree contends that each time that one of these categories is made the dominant goal for public schooling; it comes at the expense of one, if not both, of the other goals (42). The same three categories are applicable to the assumptions that comprise the American Dream and application of these categories to Presidential rhetoric would be instructional for determining which goal, private or public, is being served by the American Dream as perpetuated by the Presidents at any given time.

The results of this research also suggest that the study of U.S. cultural consensus theories may still contribute to discussions in American Studies in important ways, in particular with regard to the rhetoric that is used to maintain consensus ideologies. Since about 1998, when Janice Radway suggested in her presidential address to the American Studies Association that the word “American” in “American Studies” may no longer be appropriate given the diversification of the programs that fall beneath its umbrella, scholars have moved away from the study of the United States as a geographically and

politically independent cultural entity (1-32). Instead, American Studies scholars have focused a great deal of attention on multi-cultural, transnational and comparative studies. These studies highlight commonalities between the U.S. and other nations rather than differences. However, results of this study suggest that cultural consensus theories are still relevant to the study of U.S. culture. In addition, American superiority sentiments that are still evident in Presidential rhetoric are in conflict with American Studies' decidedly anti-exceptionalist methodology. This is not a recommendation that American Studies returns to a nationalist focus – the dangers of solely focusing on commonalities have comprised a large part of this paper - but rather a suggestion that discussions of American commonalities are still valid precisely as a way of highlighting those concerns. A search on the phrases, “rhetorical presidency,” “modern presidency” and “presidential rhetoric,” in the American Studies journal, *American Quarterly*, yielded only five articles since 2003 (three from the same author) and suggests that American Studies would benefit from soliciting greater input from rhetoricians to inform these discussions.

This research answered a number of questions and has led to others that beg further inquiry. However, it all began with a question about dreams – the American Dream.

Dreams can be a product of our subconscious; an encapsulation of our experiences, our emotions and our beliefs, projected back to us in often vague and distorted images. Dreams can also be a product of our conscious mind; they hold within them our aspirations and our hopes – our *ideal* image. Whether a subconscious projection or a conscious desire, a dream is still an image – and images are not reality. Yet, when

images of national identity are delivered by those holding the highest office in the land as ambiguous concepts inspired by divine providence and infused with historical importance and continuity, they take on a significance that implies reality. The adherence to the American Jeremiad in Presidential rhetoric, presents the national image – and the American Dream - as reality.

Historian Daniel Boorstin explained that “this world of ambiguity is created by those who believe they are instructing us, by our best public servants, and with our own collaboration. . . . [because] the solace of belief in contrived reality is so thoroughly real” (36). Vanessa Beasley reminds us that the Presidents accomplish this by rhetorically linking the best of the nation’s nostalgic past with an idealized present and future (10). In other words, we *want* to believe what the Presidents are telling us about who we are and we are drawn to this belief as a result of the *way* in which America’s story has been told.

Through their rhetoric the Presidents tell us that we, as a nation, are exceptional. The Puritan notion of a “city upon a hill” as a model to the rest of the world has survived and continues to be perpetuated through the use of the American Jeremiad in Presidential inaugurals. However, American exceptionalism infers a superior morality over anyone who is not American or that does not subscribe to American ideals. Nations around the world naturally find this stance arrogant and insulting (Zarefsky 33-34).

Furthermore, some believe that the American Presidents have used the notion of American exceptionalism to justify foreign policy that expands the power of the United States globally. Notable examples include the Monroe Doctrine, the invasion of Cuba, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Monroe

Doctrine (1823) warned European nations to cease any development of the Western Hemisphere at the same time as it sanctioned the development of U.S. interests in Latin America (Longley 35-36). Some say exceptionalist sentiments supplied the rhetoric behind Kennedy's failed invasion of Cuba in the 1960s and Reagan's finger-pointing edict to Soviet President Gorbachev in 1987 to tear down the Berlin Wall (Robinson). Critics of George W. Bush accuse him of using American exceptionalism following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks to justify the use of military force in Iraq to expand U.S. strongholds in the Middle East (McCartney).

The American image that includes exceptionalism not only draws criticism from abroad but also contributes to divisiveness at home. Those who embrace American exceptionalism are pitted against those who believe U.S. foreign policy to be hypocritical and condescending. Often the issues are divided among political party lines and have the result of paralyzing the democratic process as in the example of the DREAM Act legislation cited earlier. Finally, exceptionalist tendencies can often fuel bigotry against those that are perceived as "others" in the American landscape.

The national image, the American Dream, holds within it the competing interests of the individual and the common good. In their use of the Jeremiad, the Presidents maintain the ambiguity of "freedom." Freedom, in its broadest and most appealing form, paints an especially pleasing national image, especially when infused with benevolent intentions to lift foreign nations out of tyranny. Absent from the image are the tensions at home inherent within competing interpretations of freedom for the individual. In a capitalist society, a prime example of these competing interpretations is offered in the

differences between “equality of condition” and “equality of opportunity.” The example mentioned earlier of the millworker’s son versus the Occupy Wall Street movement illustrates the divide.

It is not wholly unexpected that the Presidents have historically turned to pleasing images of national heritage and lofty ideals in an attempt to unify their constituents. We do not expect the President of the United States to stand before the American public and the rest of the world and begin airing the nation’s dirty laundry. Presidents use the inaugural address to reunite a divided country after often lengthy and contentious campaign periods (Beasley 10). Vanessa Beasley suggests that in light of the fact that the American population is so diverse that it has no prevailing bond other than its democratic system of government, the image of a homogeneous “American political community” is really the only way the Presidents can attempt unification (8).

We may not expect the Presidents to address a full list of grievances, but given the fact that the inaugural is meant to be a rhetorical tool for unification, the use of the American Jeremiad may be outdated. As already discussed, different interpretations of individual freedoms create political polarity that handicaps the democratic process and American exceptionalism threatens global collaboration and fuels intolerance at home. In fact, by adhering to a structure that favors a created and imagined national identity over the everyday experiences of most Americans, the inaugurals may actually divide us more than they unite us – and the American exceptionalist sentiments that exist within the inaugurals may divide us from the rest of the world as well.

We want to believe in the Dream; we want to associate ourselves with its many possibilities. However, when the realities do not live up to the expectations of the dream, the result is cultural dissonance. Perhaps the American Dream as a prevailing notion of American national identity should be presented for what it is - an aspirational image. A nation presented as one still striving toward such high ideals suggests a nation committed to genuine self-reflection. Presented in this way, as an aspiration rather than a foregone achievement, the American Dream may still have the potential to reunite a divided country.

It does not appear that the use of the American Jeremiad is going to be abandoned any time soon – at least not for the next four years anyway. Although we must wait until January 2013 for Obama's second inaugural, if his victory speech delivered in the early morning hours of November 7 is any indication of what lies ahead, the American Jeremiad will still provide the foundation for his ritual Presidential discourse. However, there is a discernible modification. In his victory speech President Obama incorporated greater acknowledgment of Americans' diverse experiences and pointed to that diversity as the very reason why Americans must cling to common dreams. If this acknowledgment remains a focal point in the upcoming inaugural address, it could signal a movement away from avoidance rhetoric with regard to American differences. If, however, American differences are again diminished in President's Obama's second inaugural, then perhaps the change will only stand to highlight the incongruities that exist between different types of Presidential speeches.

The discussion that follows is based upon the full transcript of President Obama's acceptance speech made available in the online version of *The Washington Post*.

Many of the American Jeremiad elements are present in President Obama's victory speech and references to the American Dream patterned after his 2004 Keynote Address are present as well.

The *purpose* continues to be the perpetuation of freedom: “[We are a] country that moves with confidence . . . to shape a peace that is built on freedom and dignity for every human being” (Par. 23). The purpose is rooted in “the belief that our destiny is shared; that this country only works when we accept certain obligations to one another and to future generations. The freedom which so many Americans have fought and died for comes with responsibilities as well as rights” (Par. 35).

Less attention was given to paying *reverence to ancestors* but rather the sentiment was conveyed in references made to the nation's founding and Founding principles: “Tonight, more than 200 years after a former colony won the right to determine its own destiny, the task of perfecting our union moves forward” (Par. 1).

The *lamentations on the ills of society* included the lack of access to higher education (Pars. 13 and 19), unemployment (Pars. 15 and 16), national debt (Par. 21), and global warming (Par. 21).

President Obama borrowed the notion of the “spirit of America” from Franklin Roosevelt when he offered his re-election as a *recommitment* by the nation's citizens to the “American spirit” (Par. 2). He credited a shared American spirit with being the force

behind the nation's successes while at the same time he recognized the diversity of individual American Dreams:

It moves forward because you reaffirmed the spirit that has triumphed over war and depression, the spirit that has lifted this country from the depths of despair to the great heights of hope, the belief that while each of us will pursue our own individual dreams, we are an American family and we rise or fall together as one nation and as one people. (Par. 2)

Following the same pattern as in his 2004 Keynote Address to the DNC, President Obama expressed the hopes of individual American Dreams:

We believe in a generous America, in a compassionate America, in a tolerant America, open to the dreams of an immigrant's daughter who studies in our schools and pledges to our flag. To the young boy on the south side of Chicago who sees a life beyond the nearest street corner. To the furniture worker's child in North Carolina who wants to become a doctor or a scientist, an engineer or an entrepreneur, a diplomat or even a president – that's the future we hope for. That's the vision we share (Pars. 23-25).

In his victory speech, the dreams of the immigrant are worded in such a way as to provide support for the Obama administration's immigration agenda. In the transformation of the millworker's son of his 2004 address into the furniture maker's child in North Carolina, and in his use of specific career opportunities, President Obama avoids the conflicts of the "haves" and "have-nots" by conjuring up images of finding

medical cures, advancing technology, small business ownership and noble public service. As he did in 2004, Obama makes a subtle reference to his own attainment of the American Dream. By finishing the list of occupations with “or even president,” he provides the reader/listener with a subtle reminder of “the skinny kid with the funny name” who dared to become President.

In his reiteration that the *road won't be easy*, President Obama uses the sense of agency that is at the core of the American Dream to remind Americans of their responsibility in the work that is left to be done and to connect agency and democracy:

But that doesn't mean your work is done. The role of citizens in our Democracy does not end with your vote. America's never been about what can be done for us. It's about what can be done by us together through the hard and frustrating, but necessary work of self-government.

That's the principle we were founded on (Par. 32).

In this victory speech that is unusual for its acknowledgment of individual American differences, President Obama also links the difficulties inherent in a diverse society to democracy and freedom:

Democracy in a nation of 300 million can be noisy and messy and complicated. We have our own opinions. Each of us has deeply held beliefs. And when we go through tough times, when we make big decisions as a country, it necessarily stirs passions, stirs up controversy. These arguments we have are a mark of our liberty. We can never forget that as we speak people in distant nations are risking their lives right now just for chance to argue about the issues that matter, the chance to cast their ballots like we did today.

The sense of agency is invoked again – and combined with an inclusive list of diverse Americans in the closing remarks that express the President’s *faith and hope in America’s people and purpose*:

America, I believe . . . we can keep the promise of our founders, the idea that if you’re willing to work hard, it doesn’t matter who you are or where you come from or what you look like or where you love. It doesn’t matter whether you’re black or white or Hispanic or Asian or Native American or young or old or rich or poor, able, disabled, gay or straight, you can make it here in America if you are willing to try. I believe we can seize this future together because we are not as divided as our politics suggest. . . . We are the sum of our individual ambitions, and we remain more than a collection of red states and blue states. We are and forever will be the United States of America.

Finally, as freedom and democracy and the elements of the American Jeremiad are present in Barack Obama's 2012 victory speech, American exceptionalism is present as well. For Obama, the United States is "the global leader in technology . . . has the strongest military on earth . . . has more wealth than any nation . . . our university and our culture are the envy of the world . . . [and America] is the greatest nation on Earth (Pars. 21-47). Through his 2012 victory speech, President Obama reaffirmed his belief in American exceptionalism but he added something different to the familiar exceptionalist rhetoric. According to Barack Obama, "What makes America exceptional are the bonds that hold together the most diverse nation on earth" (Par. 34). The "bonds that hold [us] together are left ambiguous but are presumed to be freedom, democracy and American exceptionalism. While the exceptionalist sentiment remains problematic, the greater emphasis on America's pluralistic culture is a small step in the right direction.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Rhetorical Analysis

Perplexed by the general acceptance of the American Dream in spite of its ambiguities and the conflicting ideals of the American public, I sought to determine what our nation's leaders, the U.S. Presidents were saying about the American Dream; specifically using Adams's conception of the Dream as closely tied to "America's national story" (vii-viii). As mentioned earlier, the inaugural addresses were chosen as the focus for this research due to their unifying purpose following sometimes lengthy and contentious campaign periods and as they are more likely to reveal ideological clues regarding national identity than agenda-driven State of the Union addresses (Zarefsky 26).

The study was conducted in two parts. Initially, the rhetorical analysis began with the First Inaugural Address of Franklin Roosevelt as it was the first inaugural address delivered following the publication of Adams's *Epic of America* (1931) - the first time the phrase "American Dream" appears in print. All inaugurals beginning with Franklin Roosevelt in 1933 to the most recent delivered by Barack Obama in 2009 were included in part one of the study.

I utilized AntConc, "a freeware, multiplatform tool for carrying out corpus linguistics research and data driven learning" published by Laurence Anthony at the Center for English Language Education in Science and Engineering at Waseda University in Tokyo (AntConc).

Appendix A Continued

I accessed the transcripts of the twenty inaugurations (Franklin Roosevelt through Barack Obama) through an online tool, the Avalon Project, made available to the public by Yale Law School. The transcripts were then placed, back to back, into one text document and run through the AntConc freeware. Eliminated from the results were those words that are considered structure-class words (i.e. pronouns, prepositions, articles, conjunctions).

At first glance the results might lead one to conclude that the words “freedom” and “democracy” only appear 115 and 41 times, respectively (Table B1). However, when using the concordance tool to search all words based on the root “free*,” 105 more instances were revealed. In fact, the concept of freedom when added together in all of its many uses, was used a total of 210 times; a much higher frequency than Table B1 suggests, even of the most frequently listed word, “world” at 203 (See Figure A1).

Appendix A Continued

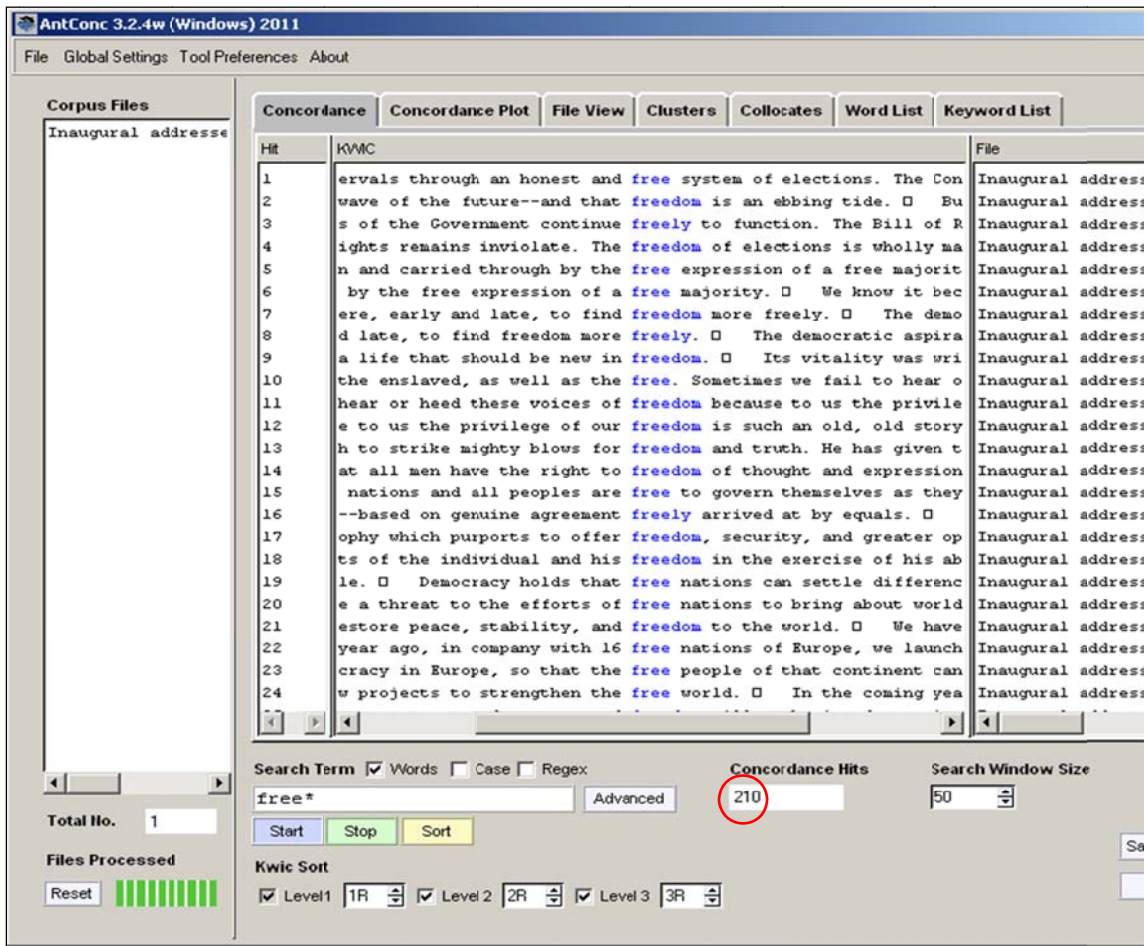


Figure A1. Concordance Results of a Wildcard Search for “free*” in the Inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.

Similarly, a concordance search on words with the root “democ*” captured 21 more instances than a search on the single word “democracy” did - for a total frequency of 62 (see Figure A2).

Appendix A Continued

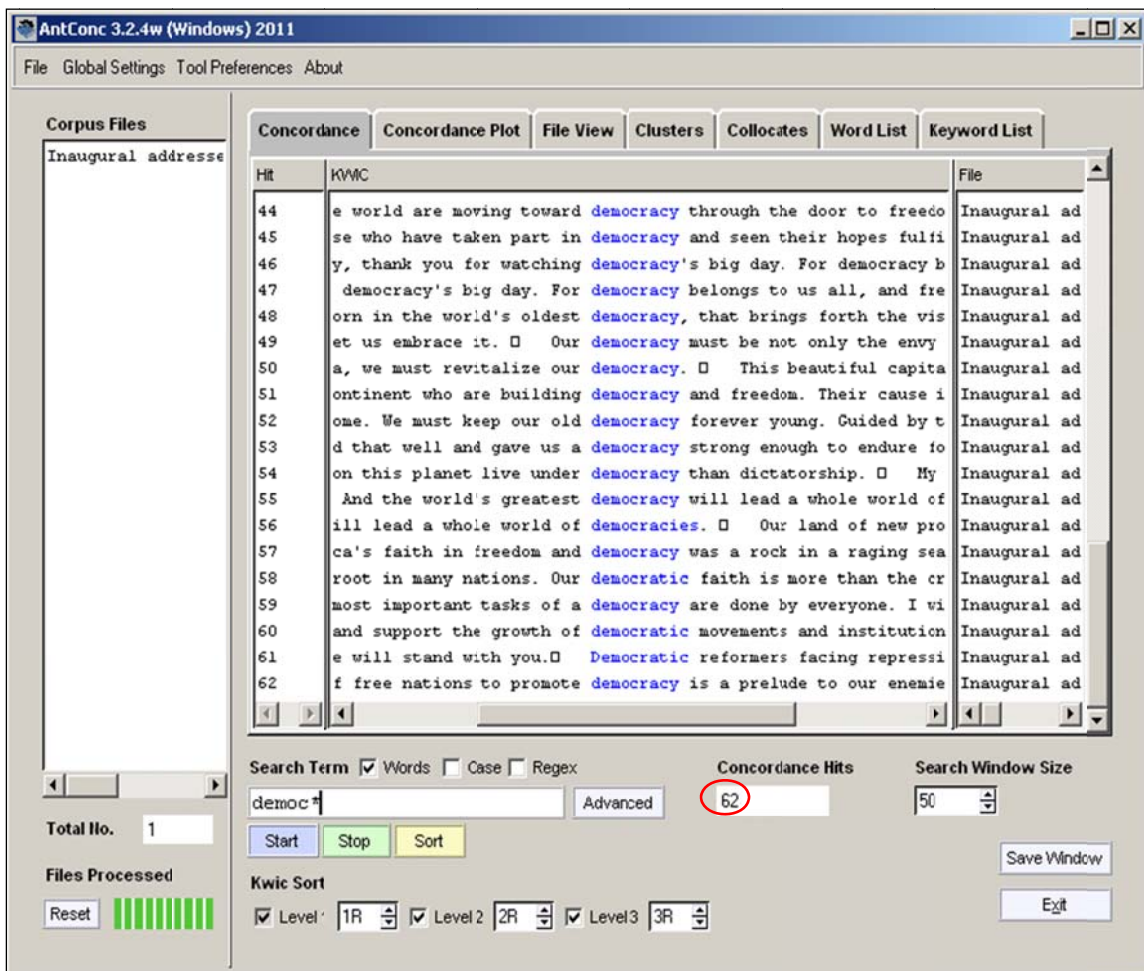


Figure A2. Concordance Results of a Wildcard Search for “democ*” in the Inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.

Furthermore, a thorough reading of the inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt through Barack Obama revealed many more references to participatory government and phrases that were used synonymously with democracy (i.e. “self-government,” “free system of elections”). A conservative hand counting revealed 74 additional references – for a total

Appendix A Continued

of 136. A sampling of phrases that the Presidents used whose meanings are synonymous with “democracy” is presented in Table B2.

The prevalent use of “freedom” and “democracy” was not unexpected. The Presidents use the inaugural address, a ritual that takes place on the heels of a national election following months – sometimes years – of contentious debate between candidates and political parties, to reunite a divided country (Beasley 10). The Presidents highlight the tenets of a national identity that the public can readily embrace. The idea of freedom, broadly defined, is one that Americans can easily rally behind. Democracy as the political structure that ensures participatory government is, for most Americans, inextricable from freedom. Therefore, these results were not surprising.

As previously mentioned, when all of the texts were combined, the word “world” placed second only to “freedom” in frequency – “world” was used 207 times. Added together with the number of times the synonymous nouns, “earth” and “globe,” were used, the frequency of “world,” in all of its uses, increased to a total of 252 – placing it again atop the list of most frequently used words (Figures A3, A4 and A5).

Appendix A Continued

The screenshot displays the AntConc 3.2.4w (Windows) 2011 interface. The main window shows a list of concordance hits for the search term "world". The search term is entered in the "Search Term" field, and the "Concordance Hits" counter is circled in red, showing 207 results. The search options are set to "Words", "Case", and "Regex". The "Kwic Sort" options are checked for Level 1 (1R), Level 2 (2R), and Level 3 (3R). The "Files Processed" bar shows 1 file processed.

Hit	KWIC	File
1	spare no effort to restore world trade by international econo	Inaugural ad
2	□ In the field of world policy I would dedicate this	Inaugural ad
3	is agreements in and with a world of neighbors.□ □ È	Inaugural ad
4	itical mechanisa the modern world has produced. It has met eve	Inaugural ad
5	bitter internal strife, of world relations.□ □ ÈIt	Inaugural ad
6	in the midst of a stricken world may require. These measures,	Inaugural ad
7	ishment of a morally better world.□□ÈÈThis new understanding u	Inaugural ad
8	the narrowing circle of the world. □ And a nation, like a pe	Inaugural ad
9	e. America has been the New World in all tongues, to all peopl	Inaugural ad
10	nd, constricted in an alien world, lived on, the America we kn	Inaugural ad
11	arned to be citizens of the world, members of the human commun	Inaugural ad
12	all peoples in an anguished world. □ So we pray to Him now f	Inaugural ad
13	on and for the peace of the world. □ In performing the dutie	Inaugural ad
14	ecisive, for us and for the world. □ It may be our lot to ex	Inaugural ad
15	occasion to proclaim to the world the essential principles of	Inaugural ad
16	e determined to work for, a world in which all nations and all	Inaugural ad
17	Communism holds that the world is so deeply divided into op	Inaugural ad
18	free nations to bring about world recovery and lasting peace.	Inaugural ad
19	ability, and freedom to the world. □ We have sought no terri	Inaugural ad

Figure A3. Concordance Results on Search of “world” in the Inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.

Appendix A Continued

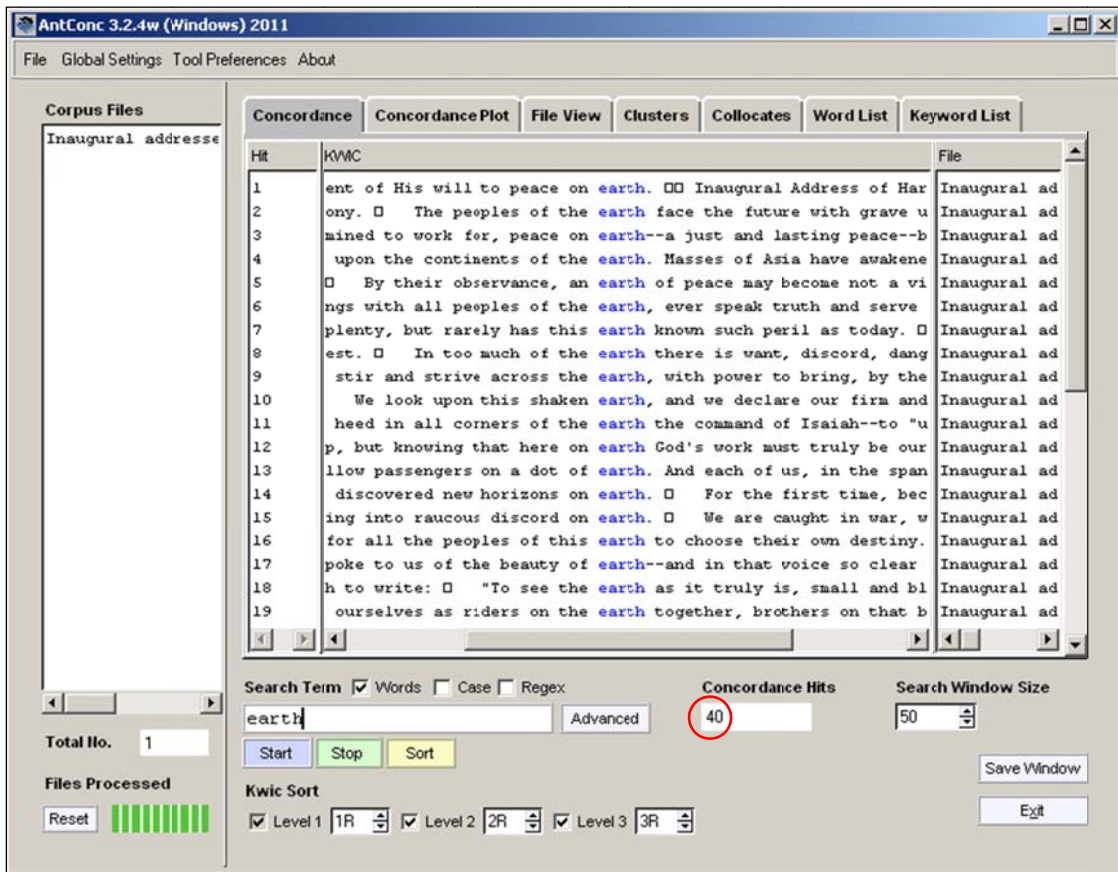


Figure A4. Concordance Results on Search of “earth” in the Inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.

Appendix A Continued

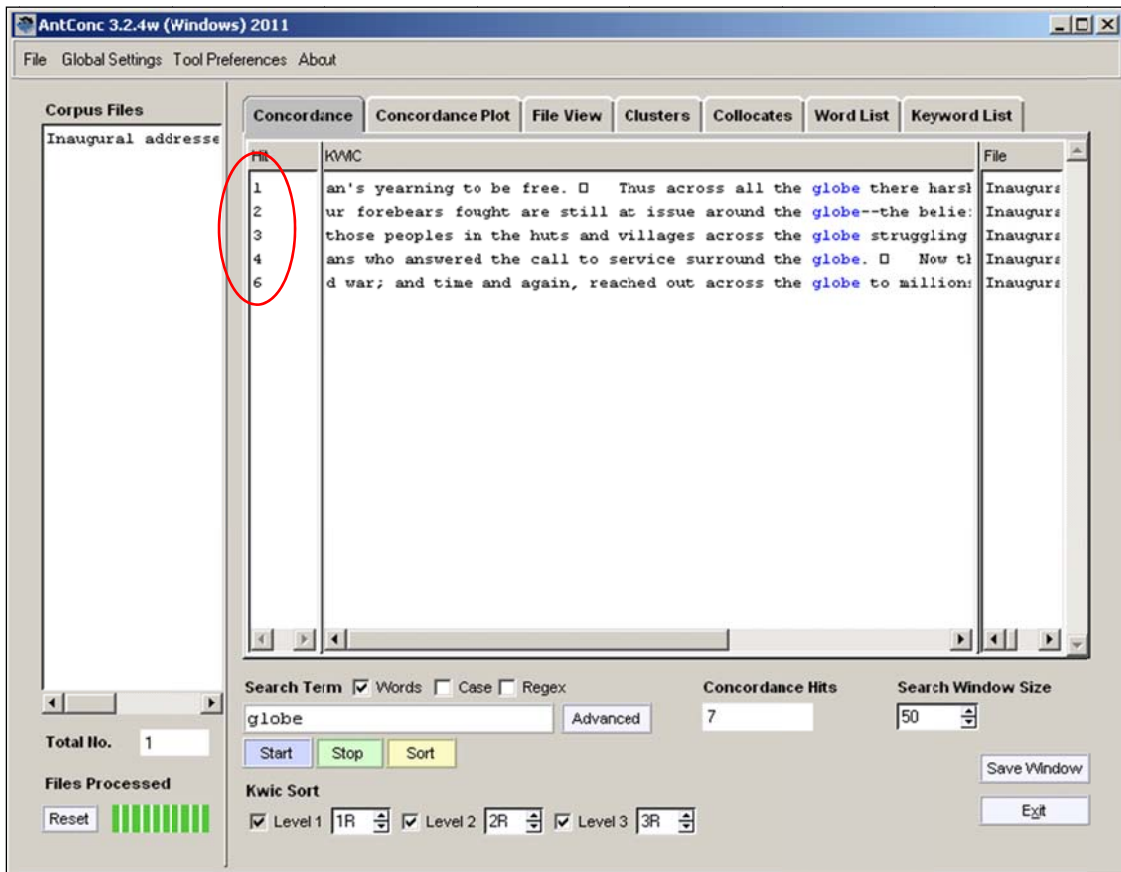


Figure A5. Concordance Results on Search of “globe” in the Inaugurals of Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama. Note that hit numbers 5 and 7 have been eliminated from the count as the use of “globe” in this instance was not used in the same way that “world” and “earth” were used in the other examples.

Next, in order to determine if there was any considerable difference between what *individual* Presidents considered to be basic tenets of national identity, I ran the individual inaugural texts separately through the word frequency tool. The overwhelming majority of Depression- and post-Depression Presidents - all but three, Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter, and Barack Obama - cited “freedom,” “democracy,” or “world” in their top five most frequently used words (Table B3).

Appendix A Continued

The top five words of each individual President were then combined to highlight the words most frequently used by the Presidential group as a whole. As in an earlier example, the mentions of “free” and “liberty” were added to the number for “freedom.” Figure A6 reveals that, in order of frequency, the top five words are: “People” and “World,” (tied in the first position), “America” (in the second position), “Freedom” and “Nation” (tied in the third position), “New” and “Peace” (tied in the fourth position) and “Must.” Democracy placed in the sixth position.

Appendix A Continued

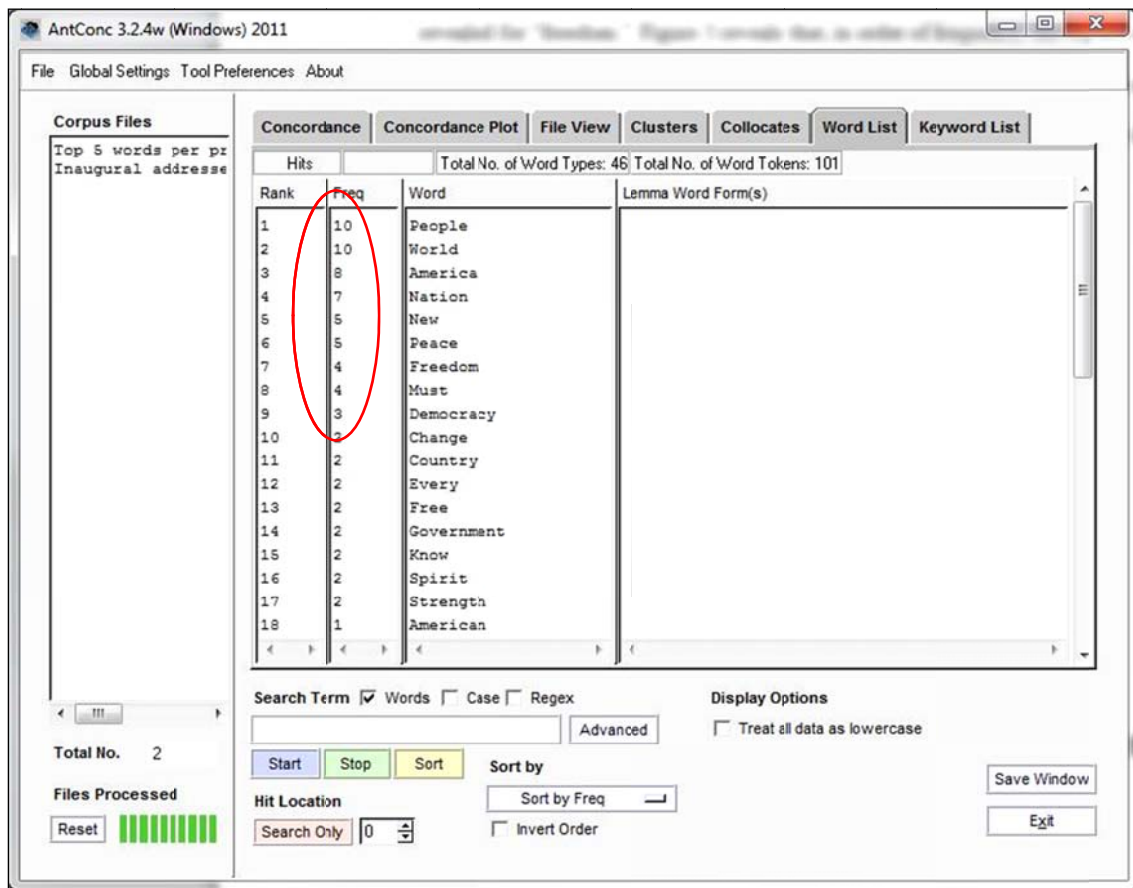


Figure A6. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency in Inaugurals Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

To ascertain whether political party affiliation influenced the word choices, the top slots were determined by political party. When the top five words of all Depression or post- Depression Democratic Presidents are combined, “world” comes in second on the list of most frequently used words, behind the words, “people” and “nation” which are tied in the first position. “World” is also tied in placement by Democratic Presidents with “America.” “Democracy is tied in third place with “new” (Figure A7).

Appendix A Continued

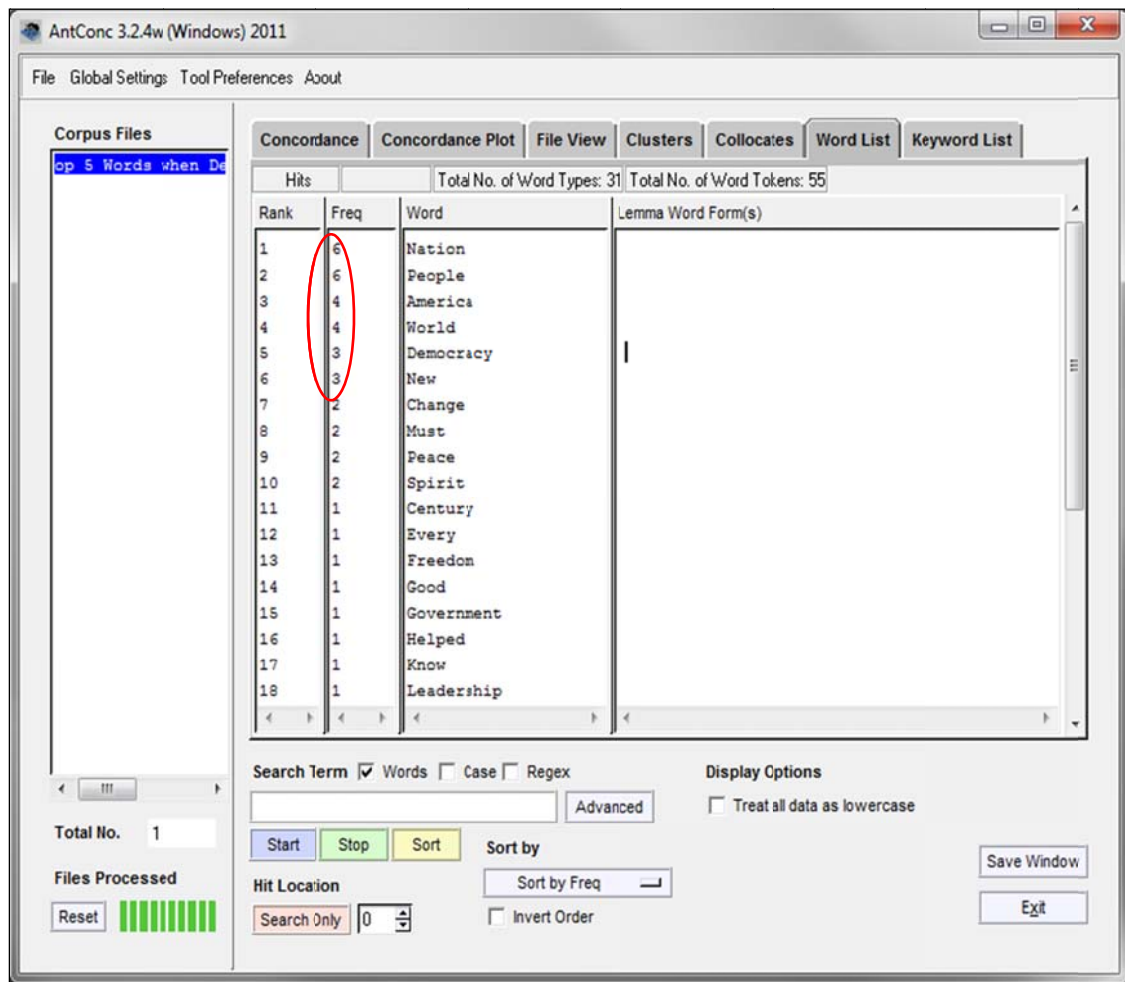


Figure A7. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When Democrats' Inaugurals Are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

When all of the top five word lists of Depression and post-Depression Republican Presidents are combined, “world” is tied for the number one spot with the combined totals of “freedom,” “free” and “liberty.” “America” and “people” share the second position and “peace” comes in third (Figure A8).

Appendix A Continued

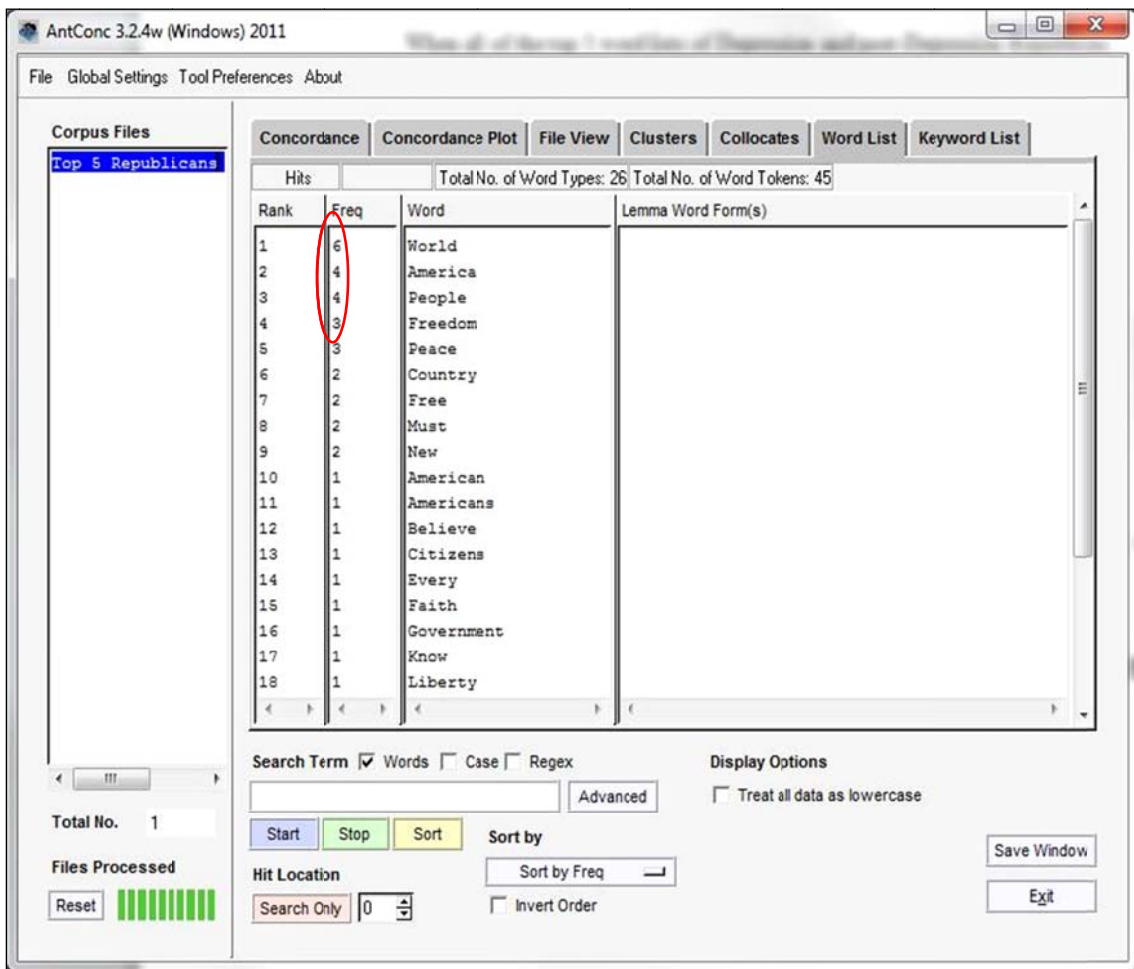
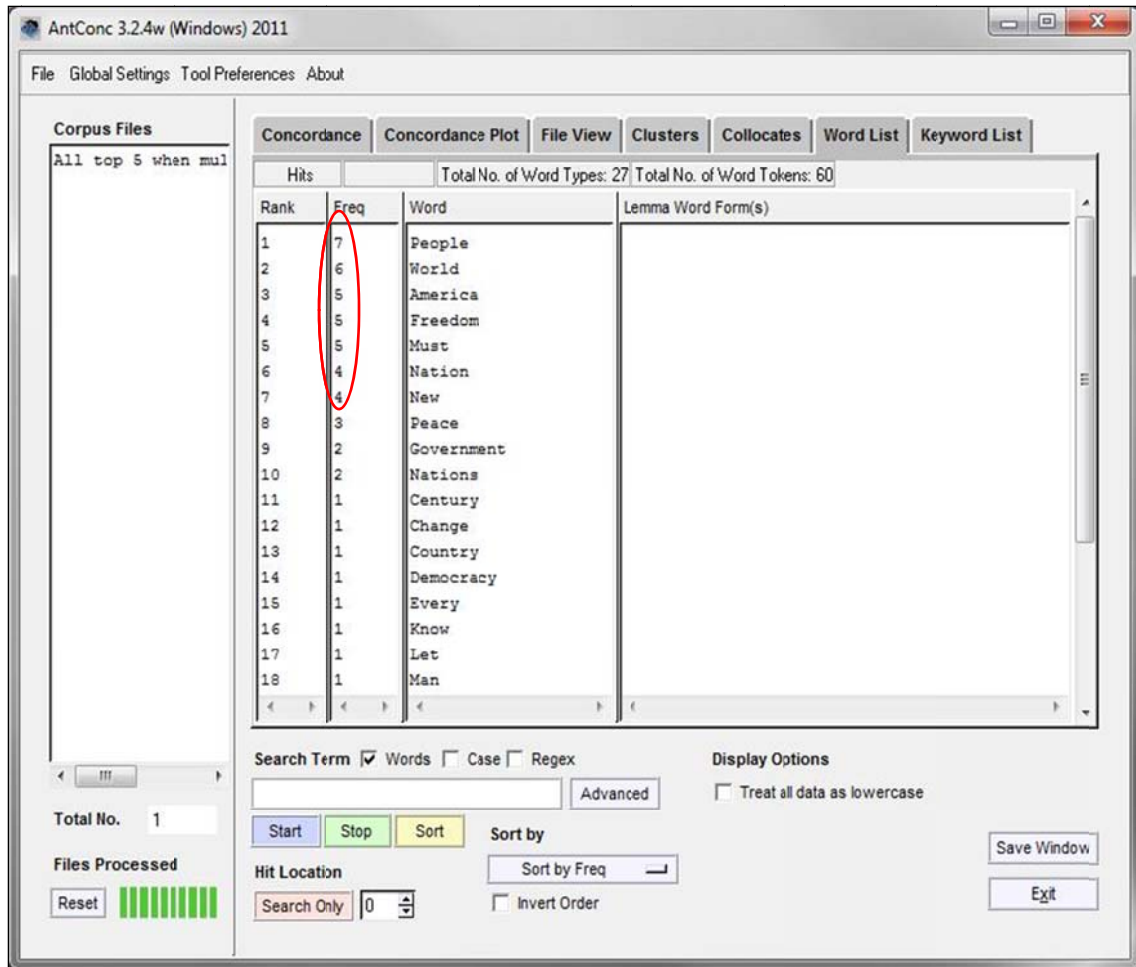


Figure A8. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When Republicans' Inaugurals Are Combined - Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.

Finally, to determine what affect personal speech styles have on the results, and given the fact that some Presidents served multiple terms, the top five lists for Presidents serving multiple terms were combined into a single top five list by President (Table B4). When those serving multiple terms were combined, “world” remains in the second

Appendix A Continued

position behind “people.” “America” drops to the third position and is tied with “freedom” and “must” (Figure A9).



AntConc 3.2.4w (Windows) 2011

File Global Settings Tool Preferences About

Corpus Files
All top 5 when mul


Concordance Concordance Plot File View Clusters Collocates Word List Keyword List

Hits Total No. of Word Types: 27 Total No. of Word Tokens: 60

Rank	Freq	Word	Lemma Word Form(s)
1	7	People	
2	6	World	
3	5	America	
4	5	Freedom	
5	5	Must	
6	4	Nation	
7	4	New	
8	3	Peace	
9	2	Government	
10	2	Nations	
11	1	Century	
12	1	Change	
13	1	Country	
14	1	Democracy	
15	1	Every	
16	1	Know	
17	1	Let	
18	1	Man	

Search Term Words Case Regex Display Options Treat all data as lowercase

Total No. 1

Files Processed 

Hit Location 0 Invert Order

Figure A9. Most Frequently Cited Words When Multiple Term Presidents’ Top 5 Lists Are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

When the list that combined multiple inaugurals was run by political party, the position of “world” for Democrats remains in the number two spot along with “must” and “nation” (Figure A10).

Appendix A Continued

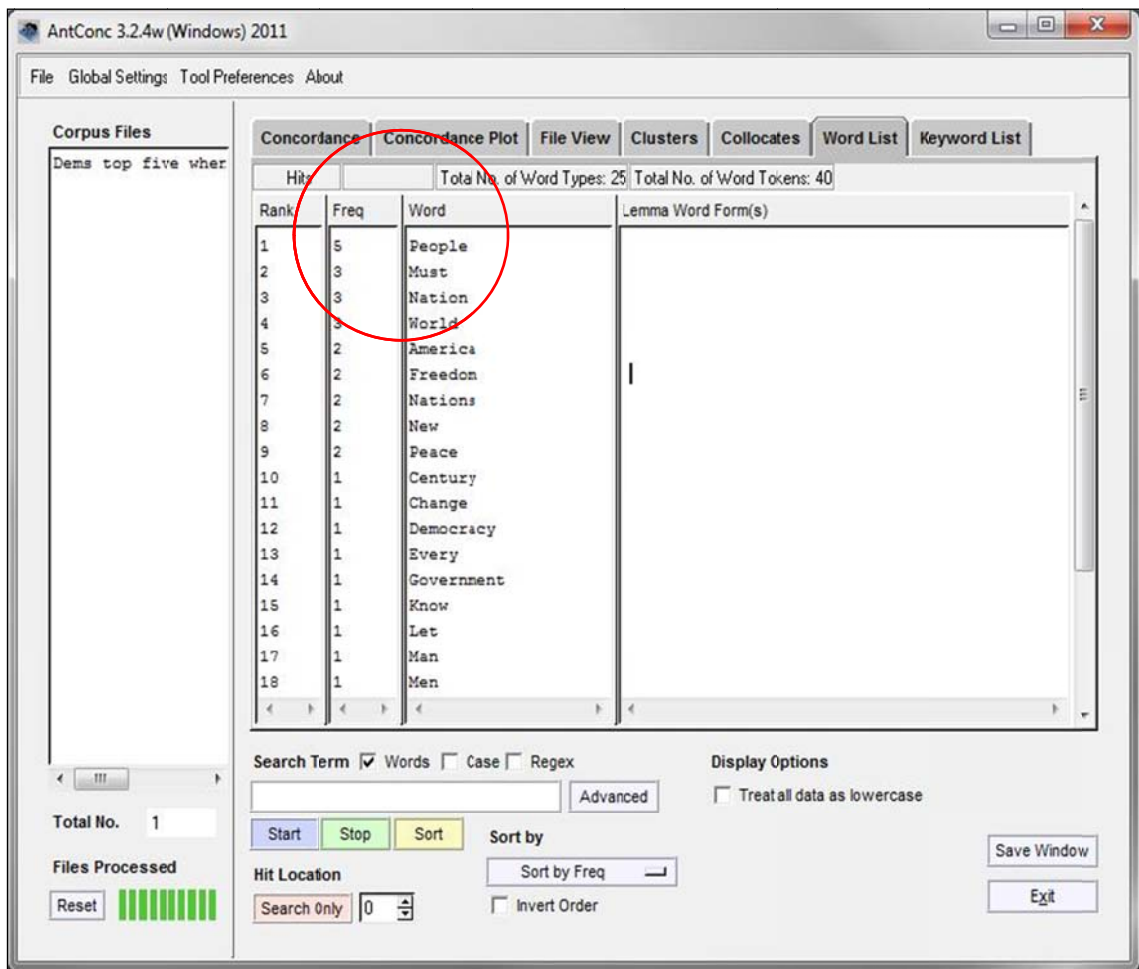


Figure A10. Democrats’ Most Frequently Cited Words When MultipleTerm Presidents’ Top 5 Lists are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.

For Republicans, “world” is tied in the first position along with “America,” “freedom,” “must,” and “people” (Figure A11).

Appendix A Continued

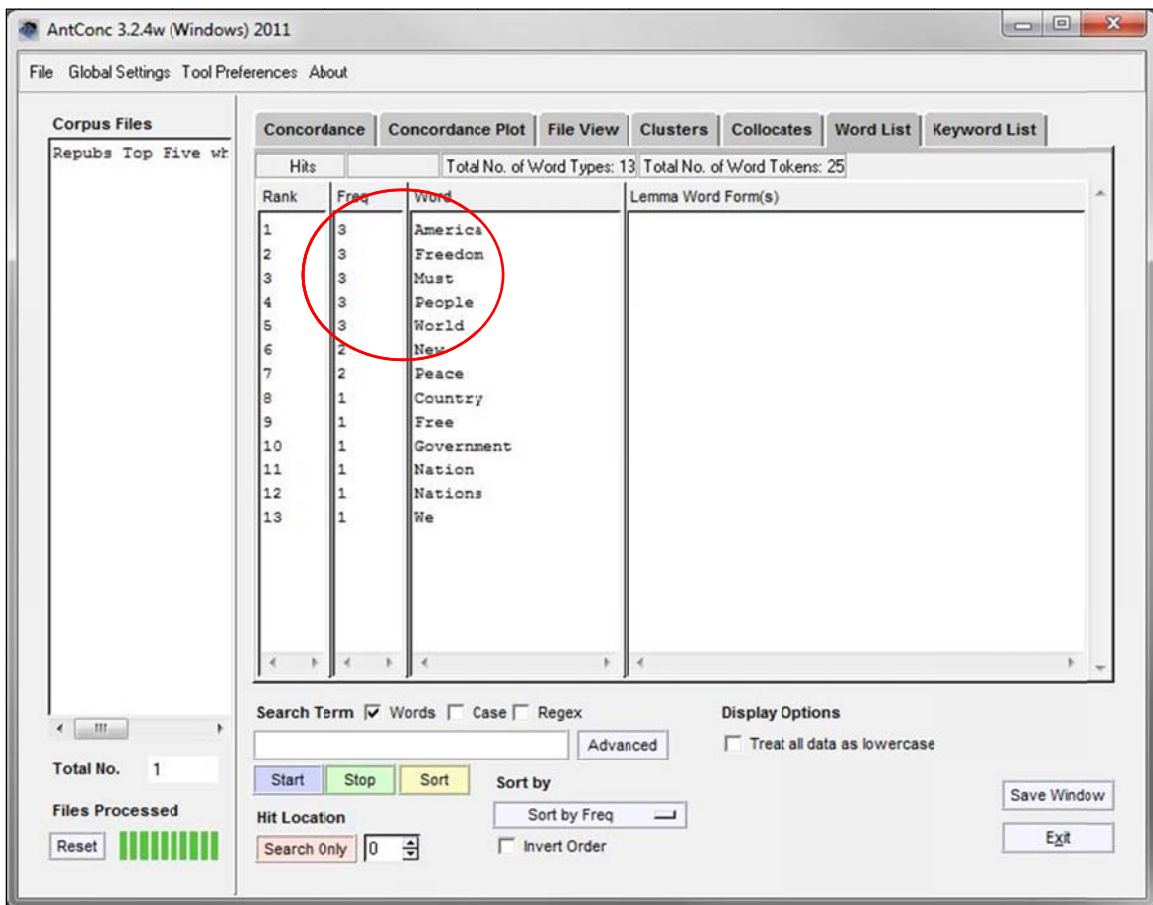


Figure A11. Republicans’ Most Frequently Cited Words When Multiple Term Presidents’ Top 5 Lists are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama.

Regardless of the many ways in which the data was run, “world” still remained in all listings in the top five most frequently used words when the texts were combined. Again, while the freeware’s word frequency tool provided a listing of key words by frequency, the results were limited from a contextual standpoint. Again, a close contextual examination was performed on each of the inaugural addresses with a focus on

Appendix A Continued

the way in which “world” was included. In the majority of the inaugural addresses, the use of “world” was used to articulate America’s mission as a global example of moral and civic ideals. This characterization of America as a model for the rest of the world is reminiscent of John Winthrop’s characterization of the first New England Puritan colony. Winthrop urged his congregation to be mindful of the fact that “We shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are on us...we shall be made a story and byword throughout the world” (qtd. in Fischer 19-20).

Results of the contextual analysis point to systematic use by Depression- and post-Depression Presidents of the rhetorical strategy known to historians and rhetoricians as the American Jeremiad; a strategy that was first used by the spiritual leaders, like Winthrop, of the Puritans who migrated to the “New World” in 1630 and settled the Massachusetts Bay Colony (Cullen 12-13). Placing the rhetoric of U.S. Presidents’ inaugural addresses next to the jeremiad structure reveals astonishing similarities. Quotes from the inaugural addresses arranged in the Jeremiad format, beginning with Franklin Roosevelt to Obama are provided in Appendix C.

As mentioned previously, the study was conducted in two parts. In order to determine if the patterns regarding the frequency of “freedom,” “democracy,” and “world” (in the context of American exceptionalism) appear in the inaugurals of the U.S. Presidents before Franklin Roosevelt, identical freeware searches were run on the inaugurals beginning with George Washington through Herbert Hoover. In addition, a

Appendix A Continued

close contextual reading was conducted to ascertain the uses of phrases synonymous with democracy and the use of the word “world.”

The texts of the inaugurals of Washington through Hoover were placed, back to back into one text document and run through the AntConc freeware’s word frequency tool. The top five words (excluding structure-class words) in order of frequency are “people,” “government,” “states,” “country,” and “great.” Table B5 provides a listing of the top 35 words and the frequency with which they were used.

As in the case with part one of the study, after combining “free,” “freedom” and “liberty” together, the concept of freedom moves up in the ranking – to the number four spot at 247 concordance hits – behind “people,” “government” and “states,” respectively (Figures A12 and A13).

Appendix A Continued

The screenshot shows the AntConc 3.2.4w (Windows) 2011 interface. The main window displays a concordance table with three columns: Hit, KWIC, and File. The search term is 'liberty', and the concordance hits are 74. The search window size is set to 50. The KWIC column shows the word 'liberty' highlighted in blue in each line of text. The File column shows the source file for each hit, which is 'full text wa'.

Hit	KWIC	File
1	tion of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the repu	full text wa
2	nd secure the blessings of liberty. The public disquisitions,	full text wa
3	ent patriotism and love of liberty to independence and peace,	full text wa
4	s of the world of virtuous liberty, continue His blessing upon	full text wa
5	nd affection without which liberty and even life itself are bu	full text wa
6	nd slaughter his long-lost liberty, it was not wonderful that	full text wa
7	high alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety. I repair, t	full text wa
8	reathing an ardent love of liberty and independence, and occup	full text wa
9	wn between the inestimable liberty of the press and its demora	full text wa
10	vated, civil and religious liberty unassailed, law and order p	full text wa
11	out standing armies their liberty can never be in danger, nor	full text wa
12	s the best aliment to true liberty; to carry on the benevolent	full text wa
13	ing, however remotely, the liberty, prosperity and happiness c	full text wa
14	nd secure the blessings of liberty. The public disquisitions,	full text wa
15	ent patriotism and love of liberty to independence and peace,	full text wa
16	s of the world of virtuous liberty, continue His blessing upon	full text wa
17	of person and of property, liberty of conscience and of the pr	full text wa
18	nnment as to preserve their liberty and promote their happiness	full text wa
19	union our independence and liberty would never have been achie	full text wa

Search Term: Words Case Regex
 Search Term: liberty | Advanced | Concordance Hits: 74 | Search Window Size: 50
 Total No. 1
 Files Processed: [Progress Bar]
 Kwic Sort: Level 1: 1R Level 2: 2R Level 3: 3R
 Buttons: Start, Stop, Sort, Save Window, Exit

Figure A12. Concordance Results on Search of “liberty” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover.

Appendix A Continued

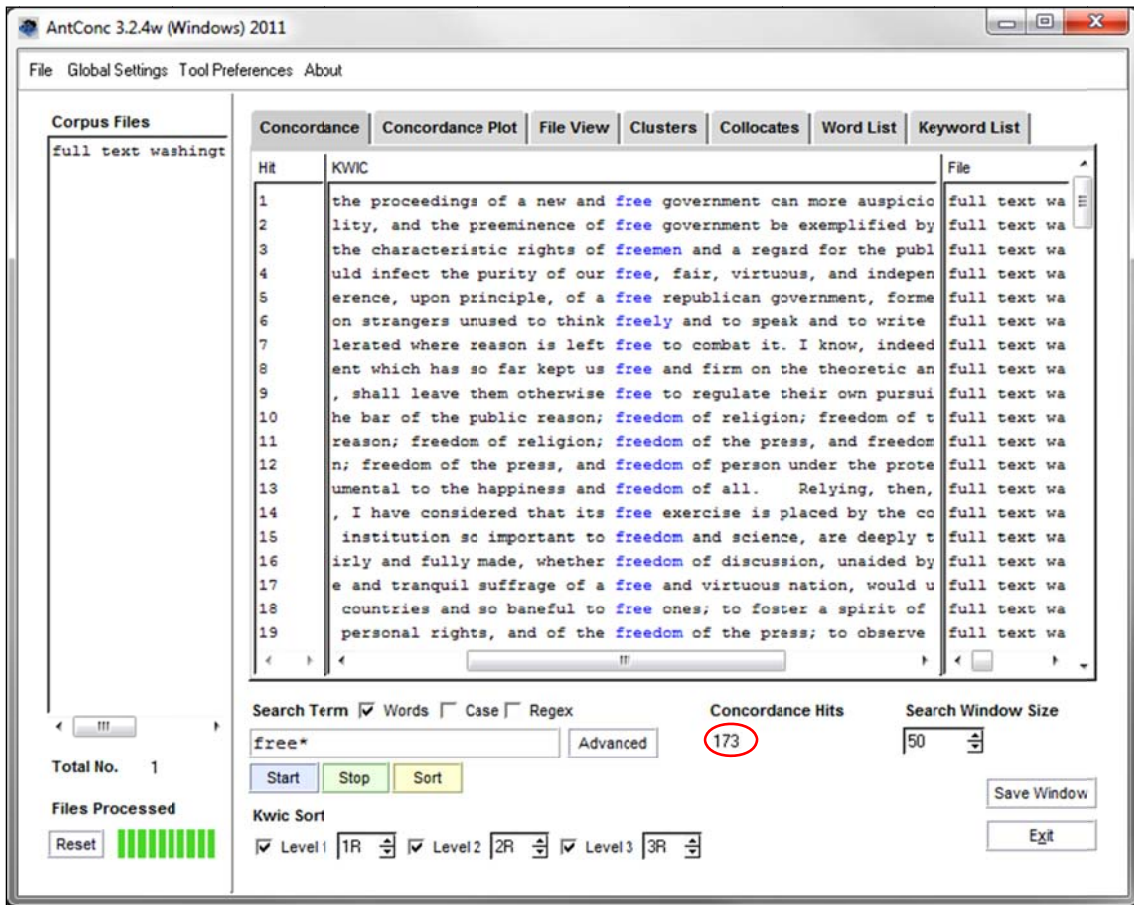


Figure A13. Concordance Results on Search of Words with the Root “free*” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover.

The concordance hits for words with the root “democ*” only numbered 20 (Figure A14). However, as was the case in the first part of the study, a conservative hand counting of phrases that are synonymous with democracy revealed another 351 instances – for a total of 371 (selected examples are provided in Table B6). This elevates the concept of democracy into second place in the top five most recently cited words or concepts in the Presidential inaugurals delivered by George Washington through Herbert

Appendix A Continued

Hoover. In fact, it can be argued, due to the wide use of phrases such as “self-government” and “the will of the people” to express notions of democracy, the words occupying the first and second spots, “people” and “government,” are used to support the concept of democracy.

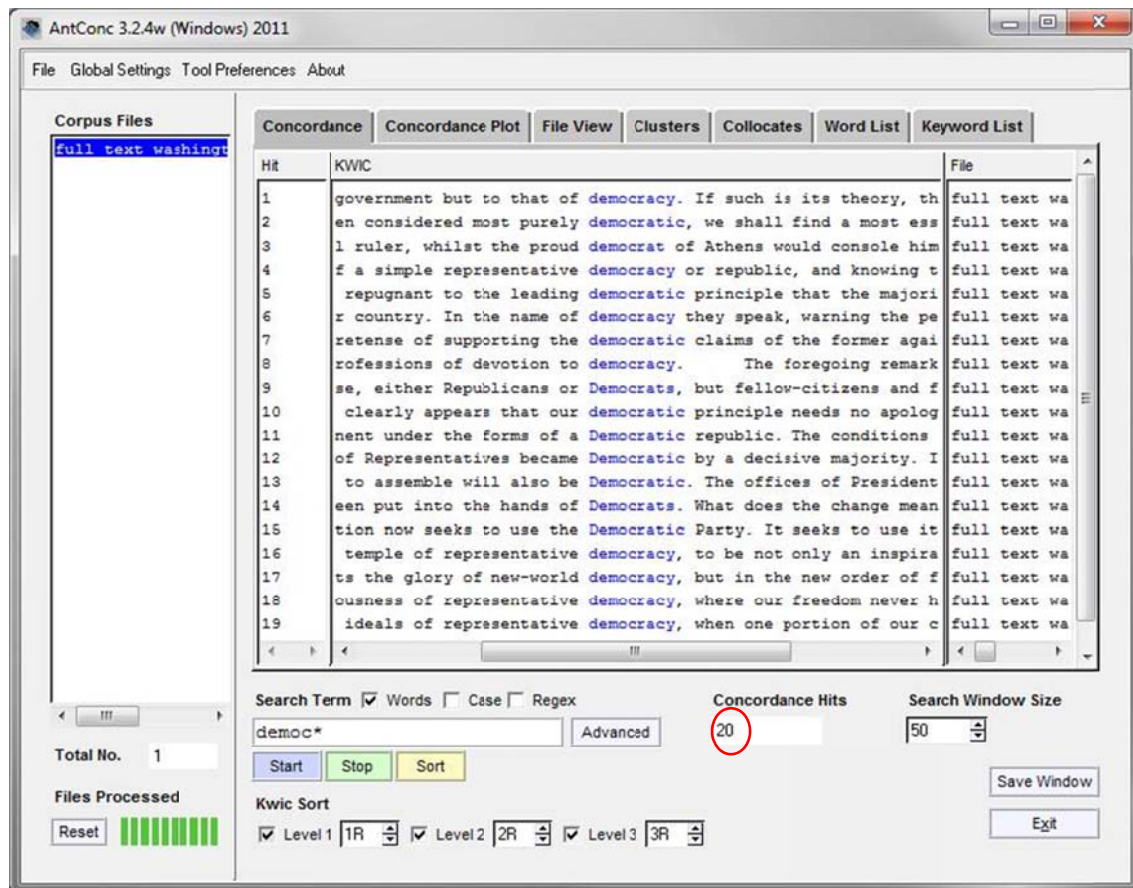


Figure A14. Concordance Results on Search of Words with the Root “democ*” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover.

Following the same method exercised in the first part of the study, the *individual* inaugurals of George Washington through Herbert Hoover were then run separately through the AntConc freeware to determine the top five words in order of frequency by

Appendix A Continued

President and political party (Table B7). When the top five lists for each inaugural were run by political party, the results indicate a focus on representative government and are in keeping with the conclusion of the hand count of phrases used that are synonymous with “democracy” previously cited. The words “government” and “people” appear in the top five word lists of each political party (Table BA8).

The top five word lists of those Presidents who served multiple terms were combined in order to reduce the affect that personal speech styles may play in the ordering of the lists. The top 5 lists for each President after the inaugural texts for those serving multiple terms were combined are available in Table B9. The words, “government” and “people” are tied in the first position; “nation,” “states,” and “constitution” are in the second position; “country,” “great” and “public” constitute the third position; and “union” and “peace” occupy the fourth and fifth places, respectively.

Finally, the words “world,” “earth,” and “globe” were run through the AntConc freeware and revealed a combined frequency of 143 (Figures A15, A16 and A17).

Appendix A Continued

The screenshot displays the AntConc 3.2.4w (Windows) 2011 interface. The main window shows a concordance table for the search term "world". The table has three columns: Hit, KWIC, and File. The KWIC column contains the search results, with the word "world" highlighted in blue. The File column shows the source file for each hit, which is "full text wa" for all entries. The search options at the bottom indicate that the search term is "world", and the concordance hits are 124. The search window size is set to 50. The progress bar shows that 1 file has been processed.

Hit	KWIC	File
1	command the respect of the world. I dwell on this prospect wi	full text wa
2	of them to himself and the world, which are daily increasing,	full text wa
3	nd benevolence with all the world; if an unshaken confidence i	full text wa
4	rotector in all ages of the world of virtuous liberty, continu	full text wa
5	ting elements of a troubled world. During the contest of op	full text wa
6	convulsions of the ancient world, during the agonizing spasms	full text wa
7	r that this Government, the world's best hope, may by possibil	full text wa
8	was it uninteresting to the world, that an experiment should b	full text wa
9	ould be unwilling the whole world should witness, can be writt	full text wa
10	he present situation of the world is indeed without a parallel	full text wa
11	. If there be candor in the world, the truth of these assertic	full text wa
12	naval heroes proved to the world our inherent capacity to mai	full text wa
13	nd respect of the civilized world. Our physical attainmen	full text wa
14	nment ever known to the Old World, with an utter incapacity to	full text wa
15	of them to himself and the world, which are daily increasing,	full text wa
16	nd benevolence with all the world; if an unshaken confidence i	full text wa
17	rotector in all ages of the world of virtuous liberty, continu	full text wa
18	only at peace with all the world, but have few causes of cont	full text wa
19	n which we stand before the world. Let us exercise forbearance	full text wa

Figure A15. Concordance Results of Search of “world” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover.

Appendix A Continued

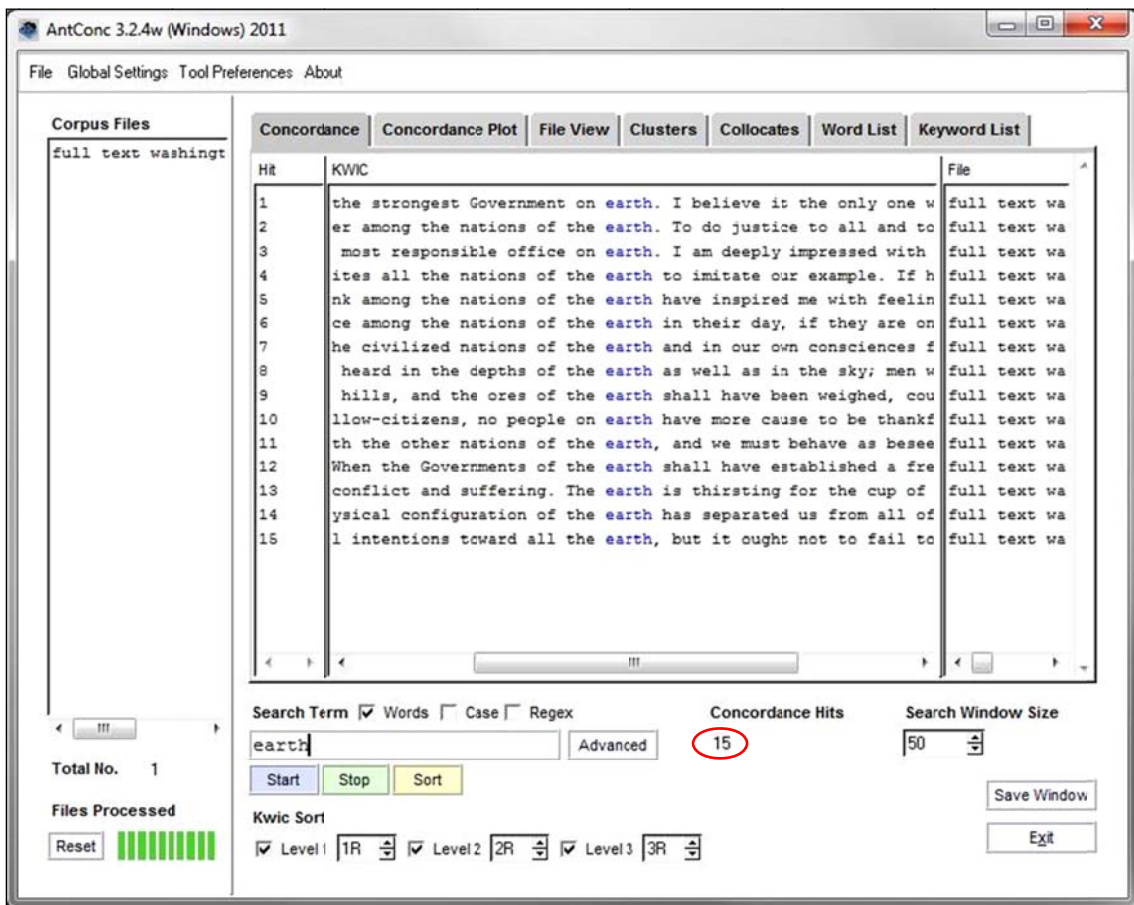


Figure A16. Concordance Results of Search of “earth” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover

Appendix A Continued

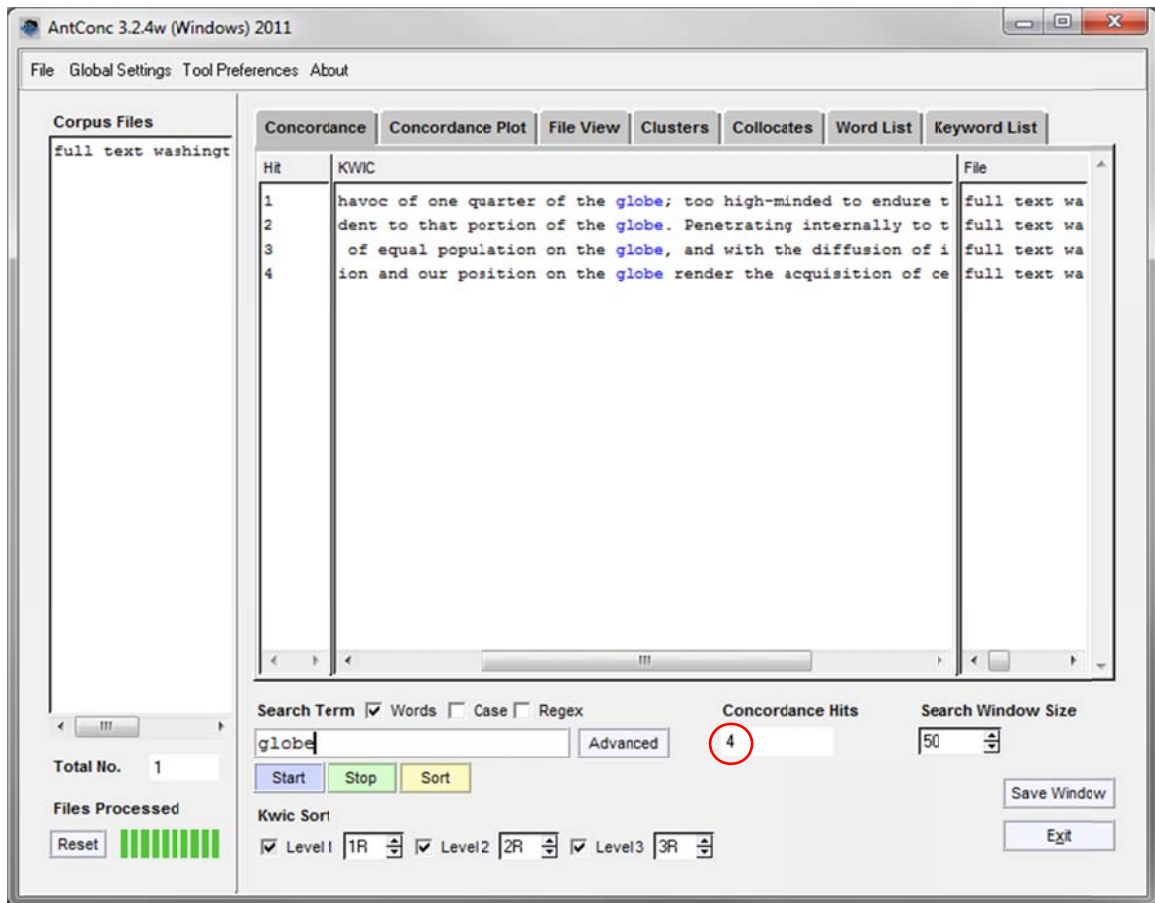


Figure A17. Concordance Results of Search of “globe” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover.

Again, while the freeware tool was helpful, it was limiting from a contextual standpoint. The word frequency results for “world” in the inaugurals of George Washington through Herbert Hoover, with concordance hits that only total 143, might at first suggest a lesser emphasis on American exceptionalism (as defined in its comparative sense with other nations), than for the Presidents Franklin Roosevelt through Barack Obama. This is partially true, although a thorough reading of the inaugurals reveals that

Appendix A Continued

the vast majority (twenty of twenty-six) Presidents in this grouping made reference to the United States in comparison with other nations, with an increasing focus in the late nineteenth century on America as an example to the rest of the world. Selected quotes from each of the twenty Presidents who made such comparisons are presented in Table B10.

Full use of the American Jeremiad rhetorical strategy is evident in the inaugurals of William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and Herbert Hoover suggesting sporadic but increasing use of this approach in the inaugurals that approach the turn of the twentieth century. The freeware's concordance plot tool, when used to search the word "world," highlighted the periods when "world" was used with greater frequency. If viewed as a timeline, the plot appears to support an increased use of the exceptionalist sentiment during periods of domestic strife when there was a concern that the United States may be judged unfavorably by foreign nations and during times of immense social and economic change - as in the period leading into the twentieth century (Figure A18). Furthermore, the plot supports the findings of the contextual analysis that suggest greater employment of an exceptionalist sentiment used by those whose inaugurals follow the American Jeremiad format.

Appendix A Continued

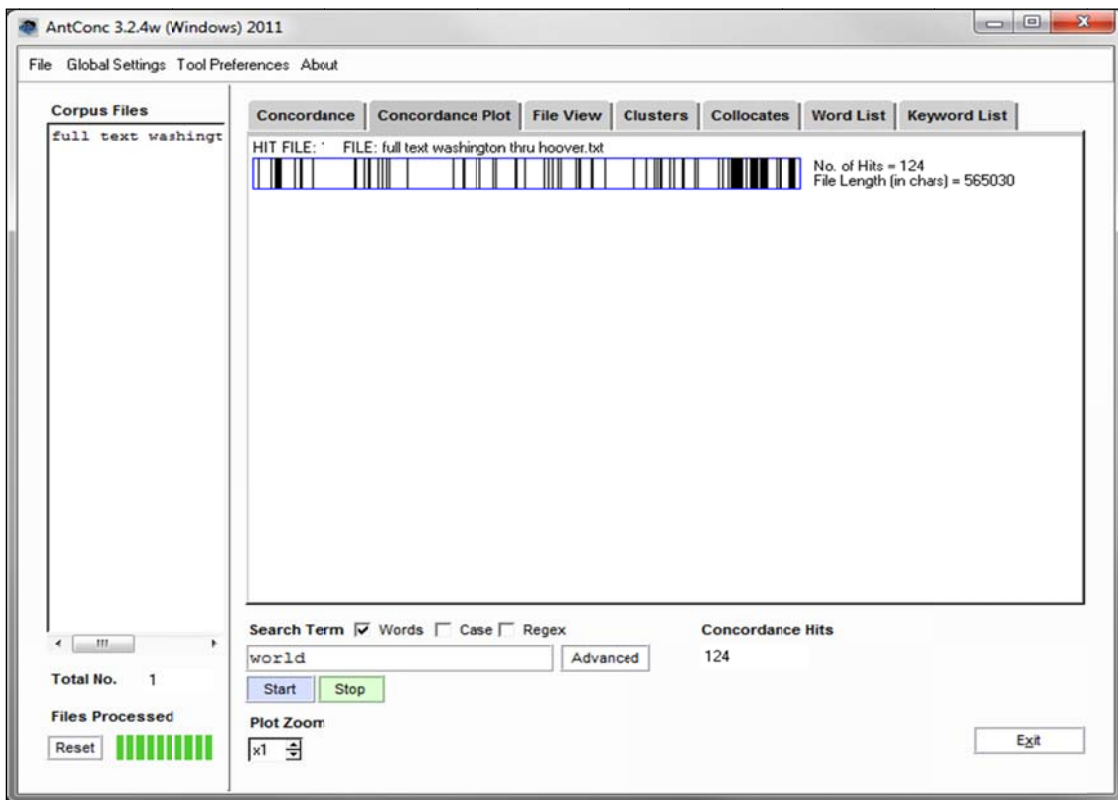


Figure A18. Concordance Plot on Search of “world” in the Inaugurals of George Washington to Herbert Hoover.

The results of the study suggest that the United States Presidents, as evidenced in the rhetoric of their inaugural addresses, frame America’s “national story” – the American Dream according to Adam’s definition – within assumptions of freedom, democracy and exceptionalism.

Appendix B: Tables

Table B1. Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama
Word List Ordered by Frequency – Top 35

Frequency Rank	Word	Frequency
1	world	203
2	people	162
3	new	146
4	must	143
5	America	137
6	freedom	115
7	nation	105
8	peace	103
9	time	101
10	liberty	86
11	government	83
12	free	78
13	work	78
14	every	75
15	know	75
16	great	71
17	life	65
18	nations	65
19	God	60
20	history	59
21	man	57
22	men	55
23	hope	53
24	country	52
25	faith	52
26	together	51
27	citizens	50
28	power	50
29	years	50
30	each	47
31	human	47
32	spirit	47
33	good	45
34	dream	41
35	democracy	41

Appendix B Continued

Table B2. Selected Examples of Phrases Used Synonymously with Democracy – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

President	Phrase Used Synonymously with Democracy	Inaugural Source
Franklin Roosevelt	“the form of government which we have inherited...”	First, par.18
Harry Truman	“free to govern themselves...”	Par. 9
Dwight Eisenhower	“The American experiment...”	Second, par. 31
Lyndon Johnson	“self-government...”	Par. 15
Richard Nixon	“our system...”	Second, par. 43
Ronald Reagan	“self-rule...”	First, par. 10
George H.W. Bush	“the political process itself...”	Par. 27
George W. Bush	“our own style of government...”	Second, Par. 8
Barack Obama	“that noble idea...”	Par. 9

Appendix B Continued

Table B3. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party -
Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

President/Inaugural Year	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency	Political Party Affiliation
Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933	national leadership people helped world	Democrat
Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1937	government people democracy good progress	Democrat
Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1941	know democracy America nation spirit	Democrat
Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1945	peace learned today way democracy	Democrat
Harry S. Truman, 1949	world nation freedom peace people	Democrat
Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953	free world peace faith strength	Republican

Appendix B Continued

Table B3 Continued. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party
– Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

President/Inaugural Year	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency	Political Party Affiliation
Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957	we world nations freedom people	Republican
John F. Kennedy, 1961	let world sides power pledge	Democrat
Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965	change nation people man Union	Democrat
Richard M. Nixon, 1973	people world peace know make	Republican
Richard M. Nixon, 1973	peace world responsibility new America	Republican
Jimmy Carter, 1977	nation new together strength spirit	Democrat

Appendix B Continued

Table B3 Continued. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party
– Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

President/Inaugural Year	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency	Political Party Affiliation
Ronald Reagan, 1981	Americans government believe must people	Republican
Ronald Reagan, 1985	world people freedom one American	Republican
George H.W. Bush, 1989	mew America world must free	Republican
William J. Clinton, 1993	world America must people change	Democrat
William J. Clinton, 1997	new century America nation people	Democrat
George W. Bush, 2001	America country story nation citizens	Republican

Appendix B Continued

Table B3 Continued. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party
– Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

President/Inaugural Year	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency	Political Party Affiliation
George W. Bush, 2005	freedom America liberty country every	Republican
Barack Obama, 2009	nation new America must every	Democrat

Appendix B Continued

Table B4. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When the Lists of Presidents Serving Multiple Terms are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

President/Years Served	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency
Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933-1945	people democracy men government know
Harry S. Truman, 1945-1953	world nations freedom peace people
Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953-1961	free/freedom peace people must nations
John F. Kennedy, 1961-1963	let world sides power pledge
Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-1969	change nation people man Union
Richard M. Nixon, 1969-1974	peace world America new people
Jimmy Carter, 1977-1981	nation new together strength spirit
Ronald Reagan, 1981-1989	people world must government freedom

Appendix B Continued

Table B4 Continued. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When the Lists of Presidents Serving Multiple Terms are Combined – Franklin Roosevelt to Barack Obama

President/Years Served	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency
George H.W. Bush, 1989-1993	new America world must free
William J. Clinton, 1993-2001	world America must people century
George W. Bush, 2001-2009	America freedom nation we country
Barack Obama, 2009 -	nation new America must every

Appendix B Continued

Table B5. George Washington to Herbert Hoover
Word List Ordered by Frequency – Top 35

Rank	Word	Times Mentioned
1	People	410
2	Government	303
3	States	296
4	Country	244
5	Great	238
6	Public/We	204
7	Must	202
8	Every	197
9	Us	196
10	Other	194
11	Those	193
12	Constitution	184
13	Government	179
14	Power	177
15	Only	175
16	Such	173
17	Would	170
18	Citizens	168
19	Peace	137
20	United	131
21	Nation	130
22	War	125
23	Law(s)	121
24	Nation(s)	120
25	Congress	118
26	Union	114
27	World	111
28	National	106
29	Rights	105
30	Free	103
31	Duty	100
32	Good	99
33	Foreign	91
34	Best	93
35	American	92

Appendix B Continued

Table B6. Selected Examples of Phrases Used Synonymously with Democracy – George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President	Phrase Used Synonymously with “Democracy”	Inaugural Source
George Washington	“a government instituted by themselves...”	First, par. 2
John Adams	“a representative government”	Par. 8
Thomas Jefferson	“decided by the voice of a nation...”	First, par. 2
James Madison	“suffrage of a free and virtuous nation...”	First, par. 1
James Monroe	“self-government...”	First, par. 3
John Quincy Adams	“republican government...”	Par. 5
Andrew Jackson	“by the choice of the free people...”	First, par. 1
Martin Van Buren	“popular government...”	Par. 6
William Harrison	“fiat of the people...”	Par. 3
James Polk	“the tribunal of the people...”	Par. 10
Zachary Taylor	“chosen by the body of the people...”	Par. 1
Franklin Pierce	“your agents in every department...”	Par. 11
James Buchanan	“the will of the majority shall govern...”	Par. 6
Abraham Lincoln	“the ultimate justice of the people...”	First, par. 33
Ulysses Grant	“government by the people...”	First, par. 3
Rutherford Hayes	“a government of the people...”	Par. 26
James Garfield	“great experiment of self-government.”	Par. 3
Grover Cleveland	“the people’s choice...”	First, par. 3
William McKinley	“free elections...”	First, par. 9
Theodore Roosevelt	“free self-government...”	Par. 3
William Taft	“when submitted to the American people...”	Par. 42
Woodrow Wilson	“consent of the governed...”	Par. 11
Warren Harding	“popular government...”	Par. 8
Calvin Coolidge	“expression of popular will...”	Par. 12
Herbert Hoover	“government by the people...”	Par. 3

Appendix B Continued

Table B7. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party –
George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President/Inaugural Year	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency	Political Party Affiliation
George Washington, 1789	every government public citizen/country/duty/people	Independent
George Washington, 1793	I shall any oath act	Independent
John Adams, 1797	people nations country government nation/states	Federalist
Thomas Jefferson, 1801	citizens government/man/own/principle others/peace/safety confidence/first/freedom/happiness industry/commerce/equal/free	Democrat/Republican
Thomas Jefferson, 1805	public citizens fellow/state Constitution other/reason	Democrat/Republican
James Madison, 1809	nations/public all/others/peace country/rights/states best/confidence/improvement advancement/agricultural/authority	Democrat/Republican

Appendix B Continued

Table B7 Continued. Top Five Words by Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party -
George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President/Inaugural Year	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency	Political Party Affiliation
James Madison, 1813	British/country/every citizens/other/spirit/states united/government/honorable/justice against/aims/captives/class public/confederate/cruel/enemy	Democrat/Republican
James Monroe, 1817	states government/great their/other every/people United Union	Democrat/Republican
James Monroe, 1821	great all states other United	Democrat/Republican
John Quincy Adams, 1825	Union country/other/government/rights peace/public first/great/nation Constitution/nations/people	Democrat/Republican
Andrew Jackson, 1829	public government national/people/power duties/federal/foreign/interests/rights accountability/aid/Congress/Constitution	Democrat
Andrew Jackson, 1833	government people states Union general powers general/powers	Democrat

Appendix B Continued

Table B7 Continued. Top Five Words by Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party –
George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President/Inaugural Year	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency	Political Party Affiliation
Martin Van Buren, 1837	every/people country/institutions government we never/other/power/states	Democrat
William Henry Harrison, 1841	people states Constitution/government great/Union law	Whig
James Polk, 1845	government states Union people/powers Constitution/country	Democrat
Zachary Taylor, 1849	country/duties/government Congress/Constitution/interests measures/other/people/public adopt/affections/American/army best/citizens/government/honorable justice/just/judicial/laws/legislative	Whig
Franklin Pierce, 1853	our their/will power every great nation/rights/states	Democrat
James Buchanan, 1857	states Constitution people great/question Congress	Democrat

Appendix B Continued

Table B7 Continued. Top Five Words by Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party –
George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President/Inaugural Year	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency	Political Party Affiliation
Abraham Lincoln, 1861	Constitution people states/Union government law	Republican
Abraham Lincoln, 1865	war God/we shall Union/years His/interest/nation/offenses	Republican
Ulysses S. Grant, 1869	country their every best/dollar/public debt/laws/office	Republican
Ulysses S. Grant, 1873	country people best office executive/good/great/proposition/subject	Republican
Rutherford B. Hayes, 1877	country government/public/states political great/people party	Republican
James Garfield, 1881	people states Constitution/government great/Union law	Republican

Appendix B Continued

Table B7 Continued. Top Five Words by Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party –
George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President/Inaugural Year	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency	Political Party Affiliation
Grover Cleveland, 1885	government people public Constitution interests	Democrat
Benjamin Harrison, 1889	states laws/public we great Constitution	Republican
Grover Cleveland, 1893	people government American/public every/support national	Democrat
William McKinley, 1897	people government Congress great country	Republican
William McKinley, 1901	people/we Congress/States/United government America/executive/peace public	Republican
Theodore Roosevelt, 1905	we life/people great/nation ourselves/problems/others affairs	Republican
Howard William Taft, 1909	business we government/Congress/law	Republican

Appendix B Continued

Table B7 Continued. Top Five Words by Frequency by Inaugural with Political Party –
George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President/Inaugural Year	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency	Political Party Affiliation
Woodrow Wilson, 1913	we great every/life justice all government	Democrat
Woodrow Wilson, 1917	all/own/we purpose action world/life/peace/people counsel/nation(al)/power/principles	Democrat
Warren G. Harding, 1921	world America war civilization order	Republican
Calvin Coolidge, 1935	we country great/people peace law/own/party	Republican
Herbert Hoover, 1929	government people progress peace world	Republican

Appendix B Continued

Table B8. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency by Political Party Affiliation -
George Washington to Herbert Hoover

Political Party	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency
Independents	every government public citizens and country duty and people
Federalists	people nation country government nation and states
Whigs	other government and state country citizens/people/peace/nation/united first/Constitution/public/rights/every/Union
Democrats	government and people power and states Constitution public/every/we/great national/all/interests/rights/Congress/Union/country/all
Republicans	government and people law and great country/we/states Constitution/Union/public/Congress/peace war/God/best/office/executive/party/America/world

Appendix B Continued

Table B9. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When Lists are Combined of Presidents Who Served Multiple Terms– George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency
George Washington	every government present/public country/people citizens/duty
John Adams	people nations country government nation/states
Thomas Jefferson	public citizens fellow government peace
James Madison	war country/other public/states every/nations United/British
James Monroe	great states United every/government people/war
John Quincy Adams	Union country/other/government/rights peace/public first/great/nation Constitution/nations/people
Andrew Jackson	government people public states Union
Martin Van Buren	Union country/other/government/rights peace/public first/great/nation Constitution/nations/people

Appendix B Continued

Table B9 Continued. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When Lists are Combined of Presidents Who Served Multiple Terms– George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency
William Henry Harrison	power people Constitution all citizens
James Polk	government states Union people/powers Constitution/country
Zachary Taylor	country/duties/government Congress/Constitution/interests measures/other/people/public adopt/affections/American/army best/citizens/government/honorable justice/just/judicial/laws/legislative
Franklin Pierce	our their/will power every great nation/rights/states
James Buchanan	states Constitution people great/question Congress
Abraham Lincoln	Constitution union people states government
Ulysses S. Grant	country best people every good/great/public/states/nation/question

Appendix B Continued

Table B9 Continued. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When Lists are Combined of Presidents Who Served Multiple Terms– George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency
Rutherford B. Hayes	country government/public/states political great/people party
James A. Garfield	people states Constitution/government great/Union law
Grover Cleveland	people we government congress states/united
William Henry Harrison	people states Constitution/government great/Union law
William McKinley	people we government Congress states/united
Theodore Roosevelt	we life/people great/nation ourselves/problems/others affairs
William Howard Taft	business we government Congress law

Appendix B Continued

Table B9 Continued. Top 5 Words in Order of Frequency When Lists are Combined of Presidents Who Served Multiple Terms– George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President	Top Five Words in Order of Frequency
Woodrow Wilson	we great life men purpose
Warren G. Harding	world America war civilization order
Calvin Coolidge	we country great/people peace law/own/party
Herbert Hoover	government people progress peace world

Appendix B Continued

Table B10 Quotes from Inaugural Addresses Expressing American Exceptionalism -
George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President/Inaugural Source	Quote Expressing American Exceptionalism
Thomas Jefferson First, par. 2	“...this Government, the world’s best hope. . . .I believe this...the strongest Government on earth.”
James Madison First, pars. 2-4	Madison goes on at length regarding the U.S. position and prosperity in comparison to the “belligerent powers” at war in Europe.
James Monroe First, par. 18	“Never did a government commence under auspices so favorable, nor ever was success so complete. If we look to the history of other nations, ancient or modern, we find no example of a growth so rapid, so gigantic, of a people so prosperous and happy.”
Andrew Jackson Second, par. 7	“The eyes of all nations are fixed on our Republic. The event of the existing crisis will be decisive in the opinion of mankind of the practicability of our federal system of government. Great is the stake placed in our hands; great is the responsibility which must rest upon the people of the United States. Let us realize the importance of the attitude in which we stand before the world.”
Martin Van Buren Pars. 3, 11	“...yet in all the attributes of a great, happy and flourishing people we stand without a parallel in the world. . . .The power and influence of the Republic have arisen to a height obvious to all mankind...”
William Henry Harrison Par. 23	“...and to that good Being who has blessed us by the gifts of civil and religious freedom, who watched over and prospered the labors of our fathers and has hitherto preserved to us institutions far exceeding in excellence those of any other people...”
James Polk Par. 12	Speaking to those who would threaten the Union: “He would extinguish the fire of liberty, which arms and animates the hearts of happy millions and invites all the nations of the earth to imitate our example.”

Appendix B Continued

Table B10 Continued. Quotes from Inaugural Addresses Expressing American Exceptionalism - George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President/Inaugural Source	Quote Expressing American Exceptionalism
Franklin Pierce Pars.3-4.	“The oppressed throughout the world from that day to the present have turned their eyes hitherward, not to find those lights extinguished or fear lest they should wane, but to be constantly cheered by their steady and increasing radiance. In this our country has, in my judgment, thus far fulfilled its highest duty to suffering humanity. . . . Preeminently, the power of our advocacy reposes in our example.”
James Buchanan Par. 10	“...I feel a humble confidence that the kind Providence which inspired our fathers with wisdom to frame the most perfect form of government and union ever devised by man will not suffer it to perish until it shall have been peacefully instrumental by its example in the extension of civil and religious liberty throughout the world.”
Abraham Lincoln First, par. 33	“Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?”
Ulysses Grant Second, par. 3	“it is my firm conviction that the civilized world is tending toward republicanism, or government by the people through their chosen representatives, and that our own great Republic is destined to be the guiding star to all others.”
Rutherford Hayes Par. 25	“It has been reserved for a government of the people, where the right of suffrage is universal, to give to the world the first example in history of a great nation...”
Benjamin Harrison Par. 33	“No other people have a government more worthy of their respect and love or a land so magnificent in extent, so pleasant to look upon, and so full of generous suggestion to enterprise and labor. God has placed upon our head a diadem and has laid at our feet power and wealth beyond definition or calculation.
Grover Cleveland Second, par. 6	“Manifestly nothing is more vital to our supremacy as a nation...”

Appendix B Continued

Table B10 Continued. Quotes from Inaugural Addresses Expressing American Exceptionalism - George Washington to Herbert Hoover

President/Inaugural Source	Quote Expressing American Exceptionalism
William McKinley Second, par. 9	“It is inspiring, too, to remember that no great emergency in the one hundred and eight years of our eventful national life has ever arisen that has not been met with wisdom and courage by the American people, with fidelity to their best interest and highest destiny, and to the honor of the American name. These years of glorious history have exalted mankind and advanced the cause of freedom throughout the world.”
Theodore Roosevelt Par. 3	“Upon the success of our experiment much depends, not only as regards our own welfare, but as regards the welfare of mankind. If we fail, the cause of free self-government throughout the world will rock to its foundations, and therefore our responsibility is heavy, to ourselves, to the world as it is to-day, and to the generations yet unborn.”
Woodrow Wilson First, par. 3	“We have built up, moreover, a great system of government, which has stood through a long age as in many respects a model for those who seek to set liberty upon foundations that will endure against fortuitous change, against storm and accident.”
Warren Harding Second, par. 9	“... we aspire to a high place in the moral leadership of civilization, and we hold a maintained America, the proven Republic, the unshaken temple of representative democracy, to be not only an inspiration and example, but the highest agency of strengthening good will and promoting accord on both continents.”
Calvin Coolidge Pars. 1, 21	“Because of what America is and what America has done, a firmer courage, a higher hope, inspires the heart of all humanity. . . . I do not hesitate to say that there is no more independent and effective legislative body in the world.”
Herbert Hoover Pars. 3, 22	“The influence and high purposes of our Nation are respected among the peoples of the world. We aspire to distinction in the world.” Speaking of those who charge the U.S. with imperialism: “They fail to see that the idealism of America will lead it to no narrow or selfish channel, but to inspire it to do its full share as a nation toward the advancement of civilization.”

Appendix C: Quotes from Presidential Inaugurals in American Jeremiad Format

Franklin Delano Roosevelt – 1933-1945

Franklin Roosevelt served four consecutive terms as U.S. President from 1933 through 1945 (whitehouse.gov). He entered office in the midst of the Great Depression and the rhetoric in his first two inaugural addresses reflects the desperate national situation. The first two addresses follow the familiar jeremiad outline; however, the elements of the jeremiad are concentrated strictly on domestic policy.

The jeremiad purpose in FDR's first inaugural is economic recovery and as the nation was suffering from a lack of confidence regarding her place as a world leader, manifestations of "a city upon a hill" are conspicuously absent. The lamentations focus on the "practices of the unscrupulous money changers" that Roosevelt blamed for the stock market crash that precipitated the Great Depression ("First Inaugural," par. 4).

Roosevelt shows reverence for his ancestors by recognizing the "American spirit of the pioneer" and the ancestors who designed the *Constitution*; both the pioneer spirit and the *Constitution* (with its balance of executive and legislative authority) would be needed, according to Roosevelt, to help place the nation once again firmly on her feet.

The road would continue to be hard for every American in 1933 as fulfillment of the purpose of economic recovery would require significant individual sacrifice on behalf of the greater good: "we must move as a trained and loyal army willing to sacrifice for the good of a common discipline" ("First Inaugural," par. 16).

Appendix C Continued

The jeremiad renewal is achieved by the President himself with a personal “pledge” to lead the country’s “loyal army” into action. The “loyal army” reference to the American people infers collective commitment to the purpose (“First Inaugural,” par. 16).

Roosevelt opens and closes with messages of hope and faith: “This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper....We do not distrust the future of essential democracy. The people of the United States have not failed....In this dedication of a Nation we humbly ask the blessing of God. May He protect each and every one of us. May He guide me in the days to come” (“First Inaugural,” pars. 1, 25).

Roosevelt’s third inaugural address follows. It was chosen an example in spite of the fact that it is unusual (in comparison to all of the others analyzed) for its focus on domestic matters. Yet, it still follows the jeremiad pattern.

By Roosevelt’s third term, the country’s confidence had been restored and the purpose for America to be the “city upon the hill” as an example to the rest of the world for freedom and democracy was restored along with it. The key themes found in this third inaugural address delivered on January 20, 1941 are: spirit and faith in America, destiny, chosen people, freedom and democracy. An outline of the use of the jeremiad, with quotations for examples, follows:

Appendix C Continued

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Continued

Purpose

“To us there has come a time, in the midst of swift happenings, to pause for a moment and take stock—to recall what our place in history has been, and to rediscover what we are and what we may be” (par. 5).

“America has been the New World in all tongues, to all peoples, not because this continent was a new-found land, but because all those who came here believed they could create upon this continent a new life—a life that should be new in freedom” (par. 25).

“[O]ur strong purpose is to protect and to perpetuate the integrity of democracy” (par. 36).

Lamenting Ills of Society

“[T]yranny and slavery have become the surging wave of the future...” (par.7).

“The hopes of the Republic cannot forever tolerate either undeserved poverty or self-serving wealth” (par. 28).

Appendix C Continued

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Continued

Reverence for Ancestors

“In Washington’s day the task of the people was to create and weld together a nation. In Lincoln’s day the task of the people was to preserve that Nation from disruption from within” (pars. 2-3).

“Its vitality was written into our own Mayflower Compact, into the Declaration of Independence, into the Constitution of the United States, into the Gettysburg Address” (par. 26).

“Those who first came here to carry out the longings of their spirit...” (par. 27)

Renewal/Recommitment

“[T]he people have renewed their sense of dedication to the United States” (par. 1).

“Our strong purpose is ... to perpetuate the integrity of democracy. For this, we muster the spirit of America, and the faith of America. We do not retreat. We are not content to stand still” (pars. 36-38).

Trials/Road Won’t Be easy

“In the face of great perils never before encountered...” (par. 36).

Appendix C Continued

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Continued

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“And a nation, like a person, has something deeper, something more permanent, something larger than the sum of all its parts. It is that something which matters most to its future—which call forth the most sacred guarding of the present...we all understand what it is—the spirit—the faith of America” (pars. 21, 23).

“That spirit—that faith—speaks to us in our daily lives...it speaks to us here in the Capital of the Nation... it speaks to us through the processes of governing ...48 states...our cities, in our towns, and in our villages....” (par. 33).

Appendix C Continued

Harry S. Truman, 1949

Harry Truman stepped in to accept the U.S. presidency upon the death of Franklin Roosevelt on May 12, 1945. Less than a month later, the Allies declared victory in Europe. In August of that same year, Truman authorized the use of the atomic bomb against Japan, signaling the end of World War II. After a tumultuous first term, Truman narrowly won the 1949 election and began a second term facing threats from Soviet Russia and the tensions that led to the Korean War (whitehouse.gov). A large section of Truman's inaugural (the first inaugural to be televised), is dedicated to comparing what he perceives to be the "false philosophy" of communism to the ideals of democracy (par. 12).

Purpose

"It may be our lot to experience, and in large measure to bring about, a major turning point in the long history of the human race" (par. 4).

"In this time of doubt, they look to the United States as never before for good will, strength, and wise leadership" (par. 5).

"[T]he United States has invested its substance and its energy in a great constructive effort to restore peace, stability, and freedom to the world" (par. 23).

Appendix C Continued

Harry S. Truman Continued

Purpose (continued)

“We have encouraged, by precept and example, the expansion of world trade on a sound and fair basis” (par. 27).

“[T]he purpose of that unprecedented effort is to invigorate and strengthen democracy in Europe...” (par. 28).

“Our efforts have brought new hope to all mankind. . . .We have saved a number of countries from losing their liberty. . . .The initiative is ours” (par. 30).

“We are ready to undertake new projects to strengthen the free world” (par. 31).

Lamenting Ills of Society

“The first half of this century has been marked by unprecedented and brutal attacks on the rights of man, and by the two most frightful wars in history” (par. 4).

“That false philosophy is communism” (par. 12).

“Communism...arrest without lawful cause, punishment without trial, and forced labor as the chattel of the state” (par. 15).

Appendix C Continued

Harry S. Truman Continued

Lamenting the Ills of Society continued

“[N]ot only against human oppressors, but also against their ancient enemies – hunger, misery, and despair” (par. 37).

Reverence for Ancestors

“The American people stand firm in the faith which has inspired this Nation from the beginning” (par. 7).

Renewal/Recommitment

“Steadfast in our faith in the Almighty, we will advance toward a world where man’s freedom is secure” (par.70).

“[T]hat we take this occasion to proclaim to the world the essential principles of the faith by which we live, and to declare our aims to all peoples” (par. 6).

“To that end we will devote our strength, our resources, and our firmness of resolve” (par. 71).

“From this faith we will not be moved” (par. 8).

Trials/Road Won’t Be Easy

“The tasks we face are difficult...” (par.1).

“Each period of our national history has had its special challenges. Those that confront us now are as momentous as any in the past” (par. 3).

Appendix C Continued

Harry S. Truman Continued

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy continued

“Events have brought our American democracy to new influence and new responsibilities. They will test our courage, our devotion to duty, and our concept of liberty” (par. 68).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“But I say to all men, what we have achieved in liberty, we will surpass in greater liberty” (par. 69).

“Steadfast in our faith in the Almighty, we will advance toward a world where man’s freedom is secure” (par. 70).

“With God’s help, the future of mankind will be assured in a world of justice, harmony, and peace” (par. 71).

Appendix C Continued

Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953

Dwight Eisenhower served two terms in office. He won the admiration of the American people following his service as a general of the victorious Allied Forces in World War II (whitehouse.gov). The rhetoric of his inaugurals demonstrates a deep conviction to a divine purpose for the United States to be the leaders, by example, in the quest for world peace. He makes frequent references to destiny and duty. He opens his first inaugural with a lengthy prayer. He meshes spiritual and secular through metaphor: “How far have we come in man’s long pilgrimage from darkness toward light?” (par. 11).

Eisenhower’s inaugurals also reveal the tumultuous racial tensions that existed in America in the 1950s. During his presidency, Eisenhower ordered desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces and utilized federal troops to ensure compliance with the Supreme Court decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education* calling for desegregation in public schools after Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus attempted to block nine African Americans from entering Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas (Knudsen 16). These tensions are highlighted in the special attention he gives to equality “regardless of station, race, or calling.... [and] differing political faiths” (par. 3).

Common themes in Eisenhower’s inaugurals include: freedom, equality, justice, purpose and peace.

Appendix C Continued

Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953 Continued

Purpose

“We are called as a people to give testimony in the sight of the world to our faith that the future shall belong to the free” (par. 7).

“[I]n the watchfulness of a Divine Providence” (par. 19).

“[D]estiny has laid upon our country the responsibility of free world’s leadership” (par. 26).

“For, as it must be the supreme purpose of all free men, so it must be the dedication of their leaders, to save humanity from preying upon itself” (par. 31).

“[W]e view our Nation’s strength and security as a trust upon which rests the hope of free men everywhere. It is the firm duty of each of our free citizens...” (par. 34).

“No person, no home, no community can beyond the reach of this call”(par. 50).

Lamenting Ills of Society

“We sense with all our faculties that forces of good and evil are massed and armed and opposed as rarely before in history” (par. 6).

Appendix C Continued

Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953 Continued

Lamenting Ills of Society continued

“Yet the promise of this life is imperiled by the very genius that has made it possible. Nations amass wealth. Labor sweats to create—and turns out devices to level not only mountains but also cities. Science seems ready to confer upon us, as its final gift, the power to erase human life from this planet” (par. 14).

“Freedom is pitted against slavery; lightness against the dark” (par. 22).

Reverence for Ancestors

“This faith is the abiding creed of our fathers” (par. 15).

“[S]trengthening our dedication and devotion to the precepts of our founding documents...” (par. 19).

Renewal/Recommitment

“At such a time in history, we who are free must proclaim anew our faith” (par. 15).

“We bring all our wit and all our will to meet the question: How far have we come in man’s long pilgrimage from darkness toward light?” (par. 11).

Appendix C Continued

Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953 Continued

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy

“For our own country, it has been a time of recurring trial....We have passed through the anxieties of depression and of war to a summit unmatched in man’s history. Seeking to secure peace in the world, we have had to fight through the forests of the Argonne, to the shores of Iwo Jima, and to the cold mountains of Korea. In the swift rush of great events, we find ourselves groping to know the full sense and meaning of these times in which we live” (pars. 9-10).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

The peace we seek, then, is nothing less than the practice and fulfillment of our whole faith among ourselves and in our dealings with others.... More than a haven for the weary, it is a hope for the brave” (par. 51).

Appendix C Continued

Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957

Purpose

“And so shall America—in the sight of all men of good will—prove true to the honorable purposes that bind and rule us as a people...”(par. 8).

“For our world is where our full destiny lies---with men, of all people, and all nations, who are or would be free” (par. 11).

“[W]e declare our firm and fixed purpose—the building of a peace with justice in a world where moral law prevails. The building of such a peace is a bold and solemn promise” (par. 18).

“We are called to meet the price of this peace” (par. 24).

“We recognize and accept our own deep involvement in the destiny of men everywhere” (par. 27).

“And so the prayer of our people carries far beyond our own frontiers, to the wide world of our duty and our destiny” (par. 27).

Lamenting Ills of Society

“We live in a land of plenty, but rarely has this earth known such peril as today”(par. 9).

Appendix C Continued

Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957 Continued

Lamenting Ills of Society continued

“In too much of the earth there is want, discord, danger...From the deserts of North Africa to the islands of the South Pacific one third of all mankind has entered upon an historic struggle for a new freedom; freedom from grinding poverty” (par. 12).

“No nation, however old or great, escapes this tempest of change and turmoil.... In the heart of Europe, Germany still stands tragically divided. So is the whole continent divided. And so, too, is all the world. The divisive force is International Communism and the power that it controls” (par. 13).

Reverence for Ancestors

“America is no stranger to much of its spirit. Everywhere we see the seeds of the same growth that America itself has known. The American experiment has, for generations, fired the passion and the courage of millions elsewhere seeking equality, and opportunity” (par. 31).

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy

“The building of such a peace is a bold and solemn purpose. To proclaim it is easy. To serve it will be hard” (par. 19).

“Splendid as can be the blessings of such peace, high will be its cost...” (par. 23).

Appendix C Continued

Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957 Continued

Renewal/Recommitment

“Our pledge to these principles is constant, because we believe in their rightness”

(par. 30).

“This, nothing less, is the labor to which we are called and our strength dedicated”

(par. 37).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“And so shall America—in the sight of all men of good will—prove true to the

honorable purposes that bind and rule us as a people in all this time of trial

through which we pass” (par. 8).

Appendix C Continued

John F. Kennedy, 1961

The story of John F. Kennedy's presidency is a familiar one. He was the first Roman Catholic elected as President; he was also the youngest President. He was a champion of civil rights and space exploration. He fought the rise of Communism on the American continent – and sometimes lost – as in the famous Bay of Pigs' incident in Cuba. He was dedicated to the cause of world peace (whitehouse.gov). His famous inaugural quote, “And so, my fellow Americans ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country” is often emphasized over the second part of that quote that speaks to the rest of the world: “My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man” (pars. 25-26). Sadly, President Kennedy only served in office a little over one thousand days before his death by assassination (whitehouse.gov.)

Purpose

“...to assure the survival and the success of liberty” (par. 4).

“Now the trumpet summons us again...a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, ‘rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation’ ...” (par. 22).

“Can we forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? (par. 23).

Appendix C Continued

John F. Kennedy, 1961 Continued

Purpose continued

“In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger...” (par. 24)

“The energy, faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world” (par. 24).

“God’s work must truly be our own” (par. 27).

Lamenting Ills of Society

“[B]oth sides overburdened by the cost of modern weapons, both rightly alarmed by the steady spread of the deadly atom, yet both racing to alter that uncertain balance of terror that stays at the hand of mankind’s final war” (par. 13).

“[A] struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease, and war itself” (par. 22.)

Reverence for Ancestors

“For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forebears prescribed nearly a century and three quarters ago” (par. 1).

Appendix C Continued

John F. Kennedy, 1961 Continued

Reverence for Ancestors continued

“And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe—the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God” (par. 2).

“We dare not forget that we are the heirs of that first revolution...the torch has been passed to a new generation...proud of our ancient heritage...” (par. 3).

“To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share...” (par. 21).

“Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service around the globe” (par. 21)

Renewal/Recommitment

“[W]e observe today not a victory of party, but a celebration of freedom—symbolizing an end as well as a beginning—signifying renewal, as well as change (par 1).

“{U}nwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this Nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today...” (par. 3).

Appendix C Continued

John F. Kennedy, 1961 Continued

Renewal/Recommitment continued

“[W]e shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe....This much we pledge—and more” (pars. 4-5).

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy

“To those new States whom we welcome to the ranks of the free...we shall not always expect to find them supporting our view...” (par. 7).

“But this peaceful revolution of hope cannot become the prey of hostile powers...we shall join with them to oppose aggression or subversion anywhere in the Americas” (par. 9).

“To those nations who would make themselves our adversaries...we dare not tempt them with weakness” (par. 12).

“All this will not be finished in the first 100 days. Nor will it be finished in the first 1,000 days, nor in the life of this Administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin” (par. 20).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world (par. 24).

Appendix C Continued

Lyndon Baines Johnson, 1965

Lyndon Johnson accepted the presidency following the assassination of John F. Kennedy. He is probably best known for his concept of the “Great Society,” based on a series of domestic reforms that include a fight against poverty and racial injustice. Johnson’s presidency suffered from the American people’s disillusionment with U.S. involvement in the Viet Nam War (whitehouse.gov).

Johnson’s inaugural is most striking for its numerous references to the “Puritan Errand” and its strict adherence to the jeremiad. In the subheading labeled, “The American Belief,” Johnson’s words are reminiscent of the Puritan jeremiad that expresses uncertainty in fate, a concern about failure, and God’s judgment in light of Americans as God’s chosen people:

Under this covenant of justice, liberty and union we have become a nation—prosperous, great, and mighty...But we have no promise from God that our greatness will endure. We have been allowed by Him to seek greatness with the sweat of our hands and the strength of our spirit.... If we fail now, we shall have forgotten in abundance what we learned in hardship...and that the judgment of God is harshest on those who are most favored (par. 25)..

As the Puritans leaders did, Johnson uses biblical metaphor (“For this is what America is all about. It is the uncrossed desert and the unclimbed ridge”) and closes his inaugural with a biblical quote from King Solomon in Chronicles 1:10: For myself, I ask

Appendix C Continued

only, in the words of an ancient leader: ‘Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?’ (pars. 32, 35).

Purpose

“For every generation, there is a destiny.... Our destiny in the midst of change will rest on the unchanged character of our people and on their faith” (par. 5).

“They came here—the exile and the stranger, brave but frightened—to find a place where a man could be his own man. They made a covenant with this land. Conceived in justice, written in liberty, bound in union, it was meant one day to inspire the hopes of all mankind; and it binds us still” (par. 6.)

“The American covenant called on us to help show the way for the liberation of man” (par. 14).

“Each of us must find a way to advance the purpose of the Nation...” (par. 19).

“For this is what America is all about. It is the uncrossed desert and the unclimbed ridge...Is a new world coming? We welcome it—and we will bend it to the hopes of man” (par. 32).

“But you must look within your own hearts to the old promises and to the old dream” (par. 34).

Appendix C Continued

Lyndon Baines Johnson, 1965 Continued

Lamenting Ills of Society

“[O]urs is a time of change...placing in uncertain hands new weapons for mastery and destruction, shaking old values, and uprooting old ways” (par. 4).

“In a land of great wealth, families must not live in hopeless poverty. In a land rich in harvest, children just must not go hungry. In a land of healing miracles, neighbors must not suffer and die unattended. In a great land of learning and scholars, young people must be taught to read and write (par. 8).

Reverence for Ancestors

First, justice was the promise that all who made the journey...Liberty was the second article of our covenant. It was self-government...” (par. 7).

“In each generation, with toil and tears, we have had to earn our heritage again” (par. 27).

“They came here—the exile and the stranger, brave but frightened...” (par. 6).

Renewal/Recommitment to Purpose

“Let us now join reason to faith and action to experience, to transform our unity of interest into a unity of purpose” (par. 23).

Appendix C Continued

Lyndon Baines Johnson, 1965 Continued

Renewal/Recommitment to Purpose continued

“If American lives must end, and American treasure be spilled, in countries we barely know, that is the price that change has demanded of conviction and of our enduring covenant” (par. 15).

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy

“Terrific dangers and troubles that we once called ‘foreign’ now constantly live among us” (par. 15).

“But more is required” (par. 19).

“[I]njustice is...[our] enemy....For 30 years or more, with the resources I have had, I have vigilantly fought against it. I have learned, and I know, that it will not surrender easily” (par. 9).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“If we succeed, it will not be because of what we have, but it will be because of what we are; not because of what we own, but, rather because of what we believe” (par. 29).

“By working shoulder to shoulder, together we can increase the bounty of all” (par. 21).

Appendix C Continued

Lyndon Baines Johnson, 1965 Continued

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose continued

“But change has given us new weapons. Before this generation of Americans is finished, this enemy, [injustice], will not only retreat – it will be conquered”

(par.10).

“The American covenant called on us to help show the way for the liberation of man. And that is today our goal. Thus, if as a nation there is much outside our control, as a people no stranger is outside our hope” (par. 14).

Appendix C Continued

Richard M. Nixon, 1969

Richard Nixon's presidency is marked by both his role as an advocate for international peace and for the Watergate scandal that marked the end of his second term (whitehouse.gov).

In light of his role of international diplomat, Nixon's first inaugural address is significant for his extending the American purpose to an international one. The destiny of America, for Nixon, became man's destiny on earth. As he entered office just weeks after a successful Apollo orbit, Nixon quoted poet Archibald MacLeish to advocate for international brotherhood.

In his final paragraph, Nixon summarizes his entire inaugural message, including the international revision, in jeremiad form:

Our destiny offers, not the cup of despair, but the chalice of opportunity. So let us seize it, not in fear, but in gladness—and 'riders on the earth together,' let us go forward, firm in our faith, steadfast in our purpose, cautious of the dangers; but sustained by our confidence in the will of God and the promise of man" (par. 77).

Purpose

"The greatest title that history can bestow is the title of peacemaker. This honor now beckons America—the chance to help lead the world..." (par. 10).

Appendix C Continued

Richard M. Nixon, 1969 Continued

Purpose continued

“If we succeed, generations to come will say of us now living that we mastered our moment, that we helped make the world safe for mankind....This is our summons to greatness” (pars. 11-12).

“The essence of freedom is that each of us shares in the shaping of his own destiny” (par. 45).

“Our destiny offers...the chalice of opportunity....steadfast in our purpose...” (par. 77).

“Apollo astronauts.... Seeing in that far perspective that man’s destiny on earth is not divisible...our destiny lies not in the stars but on Earth itself, in our own hands, in our own hearts” (pars. 72-75).

Lamenting Ills of Society

“We have found ourselves rich in goods, but ragged in spirit; reaching with magnificent precision for the moon, but falling into raucous discord on earth” (par. 20).

“We are caught in war...we are torn by division...we see around us empty lives” (par. 21).

Appendix C Continued

Richard M. Nixon, 1969 Continued

Lamenting Ills of Society continued

“In these difficult years, America has suffered from a fever of words, from inflated rhetoric that promises more than it can deliver; from angry rhetoric that fans discontents into hatreds; from bombastic rhetoric that postures instead of persuading” (par. 28).

Reverence for Ancestors

“As we reach toward our hopes, our task is to build on what has gone before...”
(par. 34)

“We have endured a long night of the American spirit” (par. 76).

Trials/Won't Be Easy

“To match the multitude of our tasks...” (par. 42).

“I do not offer a life of uninspiring ease...” (par. 44).

Renewal/Recommitment

“The American Dream does not come to those who fall asleep” (par. 38).

“[W]e will, and must, press urgently forward” (par. 36).

“[L]et us leave no doubt that we will be as strong as we need to be for as long as we need to be” (par. 60).

Appendix C Continued

Richard M. Nixon, 1969 Continued

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“I know America. I know the heart of America is good” (par. 66).

“We see the hope of tomorrow in the youth of today. I know America’s youth. I believe in them...” (par. 16).

“To a crisis of the spirit, we need an answer of the spirit....To find that answer, we need only look within ourselves” (par. 23).

“No people has ever been so close to the achievement of a just and abundant society, or so possessed of the will to achieve it...Because our strengths are so great, we can afford to appraise our weaknesses with candor and to approach them with hope” (par. 17).

“[W]ith the people we can do everything” (par. 41).

Appendix C Continued

Richard M. Nixon, 1973

Richard Nixon's second inaugural address reads more like a State of the Union address than an inaugural for its representation of the administration's agenda. For Nixon, this meant a focus on smaller government. He makes an appeal for greater individual autonomy and less government dependence for the nation's citizens and also for greater autonomy and less dependence on the United States by foreign governments. This is evidenced most clearly in his restatement of America's purpose.

Nixon continues his calls for world peace as he did in his first inaugural but now adds a call for peace at home in light of civil unrest, in the form of war protests and race riots that were so much a part of the America scene during that time.

Purpose

“But let us clearly understand the new nature of America's role.... The time has passed when America will make every other nation's conflict our own, or make every other nation's future our responsibility, or presume to tell the people of other nations how to manage their own affairs” (par. 16).

“Just as America's role is indispensable in preserving the world's peace, so is each nation's role indispensable in preserving its own peace” (par. 18).

Appendix C Continued

Richard M. Nixon, 1973 Continued

Lamenting Ills of Society

We have lived too long with that false promise. In trusting too much in government, we have asked of it more than it can deliver. This leads only to inflated expectations, to reduced individual effort, and to a disappointment and frustration that erode confidence both in what government can do and what people can do” (par. 30).

Reverence for Ancestors

“As I stand in this place, so hallowed by history, I think of others who have stood here before me. I think of the dreams they had for America...” (par. 48).

Renewal/Recommitment

“Let us resolve that this will be what it can become: a time of great responsibilities greatly borne, in which we renew the spirit and the promise of America as we enter our third century as a nation” (par. 5).

“Together with the rest of the world, let us resolve to move forward from the beginnings we have made” (par. 19).

“Let us accept that high responsibility not as a burden, but gladly...” (par. 21).

Appendix C Continued

Richard M. Nixon, 1973 Continued

Renewal/Recommitment continued

“From this day forward, let each of us make a solemn commitment in his own heart...” (par. 36).

“Above all else, the time has come for us to renew our faith in ourselves and in America” (par. 38).

“Let us pledge together to make these next four years the best four years in America’s history...and as bright a beacon of hope for all the world” (par. 50).

Trials/Road Won’t Be Easy

“In recent years, that faith has been challenged. Our children have been taught to be ashamed of their country, ashamed of their parents, ashamed of America’s record at home and of its role in the world” (par. 39-40).

“At every turn, we have been beset by those who find everything wrong with America and little that is right” (par. 41).

“We are embarking here today on an era that presents challenges great as those any nation, or any generation, has ever faced” (par. 46).

Appendix C Continued

Richard M. Nixon, 1973 Continued

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“But I am confident that this will not be the judgment of history on these remarkable times in which we are privileged to live....let us be proud ...” (par. 41).

“Let us go forward from here confident in hope, strong in our faith in one another, sustained by our faith in God who created us, and striving always to serve His purpose” (par. 51).

Appendix C Continued

James “Jimmy” Carter, 1977

Jimmy Carter served as President during a period of rising inflation, high energy costs and recession (whitehouse.gov). Many believe that these issues and the failed negotiations of the Iran Hostage Crisis, during which fifty-two Americans were held hostage for four-hundred and forty days, were the reasons that Carter failed at his attempts for re-election (whitehouse.gov).

Carter was a strong advocate of human and civil rights and the environment and his inaugural speaks to this commitment: “Our commitment to human rights must be absolute, or laws fair, our natural beauty preserved; the powerful must not persecute the weak, and human dignity must be enhanced” (par. 13). The American Dream is referred to throughout Carter’s address. He begins with a salute to “the bold and brilliant dream,” reassures the public that “The American dream endures,” and concludes his inaugural with “the affirmation of our Nation’s continuing moral strength and our belief in an undiminished, ever-expanding American dream” (pars. 6, 20, 26).

Purpose

“It is that unique self-definition which has given us an exceptional appeal, but it also imposes on us a special obligation, to take on those moral duties which, when assumed, seem invariably to be in our own best interests” (par. 7).

Appendix C Continued

James “Jimmy” Carter, 1977 Continued

Purpose continued

“Our Nation can be strong abroad only if it is strong at home. And we know that the best way to enhance freedom in other lands is to demonstrate here that our democratic system is worthy of emulation” (par. 15).

“[T]here can be no nobler nor more ambitious task for America to undertake on this day of a new beginning than to help shape a just and peaceful world that is truly humane” (par. 18).

Lamenting Ills of Society

“[W]e will fight our wars against poverty, ignorance, and injustice, for those are the enemies against which our forces can be honorably marshaled” (par. 20).

Reverence for Ancestors

“Here before me is the Bible used in the inauguration of our first President, in 1789...”

“...from the ancient prophet Micah: ‘He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doeth the Lord require of thee, but do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God’” (pars. 4-5).

Appendix C Continued

James “Jimmy” Carter, 1977 Continued

Renewal/Recommitment

“This inauguration ceremony marks a new beginning, a new dedication...” (par. 5).

“I have no new dream to set forth today, but rather urge a fresh faith in the old dream” (par. 6).

“Let our recent mistakes bring a resurgent commitment to the basic principles of our nation” (par. 11).

Trials/Road Won’t Be Easy

“We cannot afford to do everything, nor can we afford to lack boldness as we meet the future. So, together in a spirit of individual sacrifice for the common good, we must simply do our best” (par. 14).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“[W]e attest once again to the inner and spiritual strength of our Nation” (par. 2).

“The American Dream endures. We must once again have full faith in our country—and in one another. I believe America can be better. We can be even stronger than before” (par. 10).

Appendix C Continued

James “Jimmy” Carter, 1977 Continued

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose continued

“We are a strong nation, and we will maintain strength so sufficient that it need not be proven in combat—a quite strength based not merely on the size of an arsenal, but on the nobility of ideas” (par. 19).

“[T]hese are not just my goals, and they will not be my accomplishments, but the affirmation of our Nation’s continuing moral strength and our belief in an undiminished, ever-expanding American dream” (par. 26).

Appendix C Continued

Ronald Reagan, 1981

Ronald Reagan served two terms as President from 1981 to 1989. Reagan was all about image; his own and that of America (Goodnight 202-203). G. Thomas Goodnight, in “Ronald Reagan and the American Dream,” suggests that Reagan “projected the image of a President and a country unwilling to be pushed around” (202). He did not hesitate to flex American military muscles when sending bombers to Libya after an attack on American soldiers in a West Berlin nightclub, he met on numerous occasions with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to discuss elimination of nuclear missiles and he sent the Navy to the Persian Gulf to “persuade” the Middle East’s continued oil production during the Iran-Iraq war (whitehouse.gov). Reagan’s bravado is perhaps best remembered in his 1987 admonition to General Secretary Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall; many credit this remark by Reagan with ending the Cold War and opening up a whole new world of possibilities for the people of Eastern Europe (Robinson).

Purpose

“We are nation that has a government—not the other way around. And this makes us special among the nations of the Earth” (par. 13).

“[F]or so many years, we achieved so much, prospered as no other people on Earth, it was because here, in this land, we unleashed the energy and individual genius of man to a greater extent than has ever been done before. Freedom and the dignity of the individual have been more available and assured here than in any other place on Earth” (par. 16).

Appendix C Continued

Ronald Reagan, 1981 Continued

Purpose continued

“[W]e will be seen as having greater strength throughout the world. We will again be the exemplar of freedom and a beacon of hope” (par. 25).

Lamenting Ills of Society

“[C]onfronted with an economic affliction of great proportions... sustained inflation...” (par. 3).

“[U]nemployment, causing human misery and personal indignity...” (par. 4).

“It knows no sectional boundaries or ethnic and racial divisions, and it crosses party lines” (par. 11).

“[T]hose who practice terrorism and prey upon their neighbors” (par. 29).

Reverence for Ancestors

“At the end of this open mall are those shrines to the giants on whose shoulders we stand....George Washington, Father of our country....Thomas Jefferson....Abraham Lincoln,,,,Arlington National Cemetery” (pars. 31-32).

Recommitment/Renewal

“And as we renew ourselves here in our own land...we will again be the exemplar of freedom and a beacon of hope for those who do not have freedom” (par. 25).

Appendix C Continued

Ronald Reagan, 1981 Continued

Recommitment/Renewal continued

“Let us begin an era of national renewal. Let us renew our determination, our courage, and our strength. And let us renew; our faith and our hope” (par. 17).

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy

“The crisis we are facing today...does require our best effort...” (par. 38).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“With the idealism and fair play which are the core of our system and our strength, we can have a strong and prosperous America at peace with itself and the world” (par. 12).

“[T]o believe that together, with God's help, we can and will resolve the problems which now confront us” (par. 38).

“And, after all, why shouldn't we believe that? We are Americans” (par. 39).

Appendix C Continued

Ronald Reagan, 1985

Purpose

“My fellow citizens, our nation is poised for greatness...” (par. 15).

“Again, let us remember that through our heritage is one of the blood lines from every corner of the Earth, we are all Americans pledged to carry on this last, best hope of man on Earth” (par. 28).

“So we go forward today, a nation still mighty in its youth and powerful in its purpose” (par. 38).

Reverence to Ancestors

“When the first [P]resident, George Washington, placed his hand upon the Bible, he stood less than a single day’s journey by horseback from raw, untamed wilderness” (par. 6).

“[I]n a sense, our new beginning is a continuation of that beginning created two centuries ago...” (par. 8).

Two of our Founding Fathers, ...Adams and...Jefferson...” (par. 17).

Appendix C Continued

Ronald Reagan, 1985 Continued

Reverence to Ancestors continued

“And as we continue our journey, we think of those who traveled before us...Now we hear again the echoes of our past: a general falls to his knees in the hard snow of Valley Forge; a lonely President paced the darkened halls, and ponders his struggle to preserve the Union; the men of the Alamo call our encouragement to each other; a settler pushes west and sings a song...” (par. 40).

Renewal/Recommitment

“We will not rest until every American enjoys the fullness of freedom, dignity, and opportunity as our birthright” (par. 13).

“[L]et us stand as one today: One people under God determined that our future shall be worthy of our past” (par. 20).

“Let us resolve...that we the people will build an American opportunity society in which all of us---white and black, rich and poor, young and old—will go forward together arm in arm” (par. 28).

“America must remain freedom’s staunchest friend, for freedom is our best ally” (par. 36).

Appendix C Continued

Ronald Reagan, 1985 Continued

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy

“But there are many mountains to climb” (par. 13).

“There are those in the world who scorn our vision of human dignity and freedom. One nation, the Soviet Union, has conducted the greatest military buildup in the history of man, building arsenals of awesome offensive weapons” (par. 30).

“But much remains to be done” (par. 31).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“In this blessed land, there is always a better tomorrow” (par. 7).

“We believed then and now there are no limits to growth and human progress when men and women are free to follow their dreams” (par. 11).

“[W]e look forward to a world rich in possibilities. And all this because we have worked and acted together, not as members of political parties, but as Americans” (par. 38).

Appendix C Continued

George H.W. Bush, 1989

In his inaugural address delivered in January 1989, George H.W. Bush made the statement that “the day of the dictator is over” (par. 7). In August of the following year, Iraq, under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, invaded Kuwait. Bush responded by sending U.S. military troops to Iraq to conduct “Operation Desert Storm.” The show of U.S. military might was impressive and Iraq agreed to a cease-fire in just a few short months (whitehouse.gov). The event would take on even greater significance after Bush’s presidency was over, when his son, George Walker Bush, became President and sent military troops again into Iraq, this time ending in the death of Saddam Hussein.

While parts of Bush’s inaugural adhere to the jeremiad structure, it stands out among the inaugurals analyzed for its focus on administrative agenda items; namely, less dependence upon the government by the nation’s citizens and a focus on healing partisan divisiveness. When compared to the inaugurals of his contemporaries, Bush’s remarks are more reminiscent of what one might hear in a State of the Union address.

He begins with a nod to George Washington in recognition of the inaugural ceremony’s bicentennial. He follows with a prayer to “make us strong to do Your work ... heed Your will ... and to use power to help people” (par. 6). Key themes in Bush’s inaugural are freedom, democracy, and an end to drug addiction and partisan politics.

Appendix C Continued

George H.W. Bush, 1989 Continued

Purpose

“Make us strong to do Your work, willing to heed and hear Your will...” (par. 6).

“We know in our hearts...as a simple fact, that this country has meaning beyond what we see...” (par. 11).

“America is never wholly herself unless she engaged in high moral principle”
(par. 14).

“We as a people have such a purpose today. It is to make kinder the face of the Nation and gentler the face of the world” (par. 14).

Lamenting Ills of Society

“But have we changed as a nation even in our time? Are we enthralled with material things, less appreciative of the nobility of work and sacrifice? My friends we are not the sum of our possessions...” (par. 11).

“There are the homeless, lost and roaming. There are the children who have nothing, no love, no normalcy. There are those who cannot free themselves of enslavement to whatever addiction—drugs, welfare, the demoralization that rules the slums. There is crime to be conquered...there are women to be helped who are about to become mothers of children they can’t care for and might not love...”
(par. 14).

Appendix C Continued

George H.W. Bush, 1989 Continued

Lamenting Ills of Society continued

“A new breeze is blowing, and the old bipartisanship must be made new” (par. 19).

“There has grown a certain divisiveness...” (par. 19).

Reverence to Ancestors

“George Washington 200 years ago...memory of Washington ... remains Father of our Country” (par. 3).

“[O]n days like this, we remember that we are all part of a continuum, inescapably connected by the ties that bind” (par. 23).

Renewal/Recommitment

“To the world...we offer new engagement and a renewed vow: We will stay strong to protect the peace” (par. 20).

“Great nations like great men must keep their word” (par. 22).

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy

“And so, there is much to do; and tomorrow the work begins” (par. 27).

“But, of course, things may be difficult” (par. 18).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“When America says something, America means it...” (par. 22).

Appendix C Continued

George H.W. Bush, 1989 Continued

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose continued

“I do not mistrust the future; I do not fear what is ahead. For our problems are large, but our heart is larger. Our challenges are great, but our will is greater. And if our flaws are endless, God’s love is truly boundless” (par. 27).

Appendix C Continued

William J. Clinton, 1997

Bill Clinton enjoyed a fairly peaceful and prosperous presidency with low inflation rates, low unemployment, a balanced budget and low crime rates (whitehouse.gov). He was a champion of civil rights and worked hard against racial discrimination, poverty and drug crimes (whitehouse.gov).

Purpose

“We must keep our old democracy forever young. Guided by the ancient vision of a promised land, let us set our sights upon a land of new promise” (par. 2).

“America became the world’s mightiest industrial power; saved the world from tyranny in two world wars and a long cold war; and time and again, reached out across the globe to millions who, like us, longed for the blessings of liberty” (par. 5).

“America stands alone as the world’s indispensable nation” (par. 10).

“And the world’s greatest democracy will lead a whole world of democracies” (par. 25).

Lamenting Ills of Society

“The divide of race has been America’s constant curse. And each new wave of immigrants gives new targets to old prejudices” (par. 16).

“[M]aintain a strong defense against terror and destruction...threat of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons...” (par. 25).

Appendix C Continued

William J. Clinton, 1997 Continued

Reverence for Ancestors

“Our founders understood that well and gave us a democracy strong enough to endure for centuries, flexible enough to face our common challenges and advance our common dreams in each new day” (par. 11).

“Our founders taught us that the preservation of our liberty and our union depends upon responsible citizenship” (par. 15).

“Martin Luther King’s dream was the American Dream” (par. 29).

Renewal/Recommitment

“[E]very American here and every American in our land today must answer a resounding ‘Yes’” (par. 21).

“We will stand mighty for peace and freedom...” (par. 25).

“To that effort_I pledge all my strength and every power of my office...” (par. 30).

Trials/Road Won’t Be Easy

“There is work to do...” (par. 13).

“Each one of us, in our own way, must assume personal responsibility...” (par. 14).

Appendix C Continued

William J. Clinton, 1997 Continued

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy continued

“The challenge of our past remains the challenge of our future, will we be one nation, one people, with one common destiny, or not? Will we all come together, or come apart?” (par. 15).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“This promise we sought in a new land we will find again in a land of new promise” (par. 22).

“The journey of our America must go on” (par. 32).

“Let us shape the hope of this day into the noblest chapter in our history. Yes, let us build our bridge. A bridge wide enough and strong enough for every American to cross over to a blessed land of new promise” (par. 33).

“May those generations whose faces we cannot yet see...say of us here that we led our beloved land into a new century with the American Dream alive for all of her children...with America's bright flame of freedom spreading throughout all the world” (par. 34).

Appendix C Continued

George W. Bush, 2005

Only nine months after George W. Bush was sworn into office, Americans became the victims of a terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 that claimed the lives of 3,000 people on U.S. soil. Many believe this single event forever changed the world and most certainly it influenced the way George Bush led the country. George W. Bush was determined to see the country in an offensive rather than defensive position and waged both intelligence and physical wars with those whom he believed were allied with the perpetrators of the terrorist attacks (whitehouse.gov). “Freedom from tyranny” became Bush’s rallying cry in his second inaugural address; the defense of freedom at home and the spread of freedom abroad, became his purpose for America” (par. 9).

Purpose

“At this second gathering, our duties are defined not by the words I use, but by the history we have seen together. For half a century, America defended our own freedom by standing watch on distant borders. After the shipwreck of communism came years of relative quiet, years of repose, years of sabbatical – and then there came a day of fire” (par. 3).

“[N]o one is fit to be a master, and no one deserves to be a slave. Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our Nation. It is the honorable achievement of our fathers. Now it is the urgent requirement of our nation’s security, and the calling of our time” (par. 6).

Appendix C Continued

George W. Bush, 2005 Continued

Purpose continued

“[W]ith the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world” (par. 7).

“Our goal is...is to help others find their own voice, attain their own freedom, and make their own way” (par. 7).

Lamenting Ills of Society

”[W]hole regions of the world simmer in resentment and tyranny – prone to ideologies that feed hatred and excuse murder...” (par. 4).

“[T]he moral choice between oppression, which is always wrong, and freedom, which is eternally right...” (par. 11)

Reverence for Ancestors

“On this day we celebrate the durable wisdom of our Constitution...” (par. 2).

“[W]e still believe as Abraham Lincoln did: ‘Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves; and, under the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it’” (par. 17).

“When our Founders declared anew order of the ages; when soldiers died in wave upon wave for a union based on liberty; when citizens marched in peaceful outrage under the banner ‘Freedom Now...’” (par. 30).

Appendix C Continued

George W. Bush, 2005 Continued

Renewal/Recommitment

“[W]e are determined to show the meaning and promise of liberty” (par. 24).

“Renewed in our strength – tested but not weary – we are ready for the greatest achievements in the history of freedom” (par. 31).

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy

“Our country has accepted obligations that are difficult to fulfill...”(par. 21).

“[T]he issues and questions before our country are many...” (par. 28).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“Americans, of all people, should never be surprised by the power of our ideals...” (par. 13).

“These questions that judge us also unite us, because Americans of every party and background, Americans by choice and by birth, are bound to one another in the cause of freedom” (par. 29).

“We felt the unity and fellowship of our nation when freedom came under attack, and our response came like a single hand over a single heart. And we can feel that same unity and pride whenever America acts for good, and the victims of disaster are given hope, and the unjust encounter justice, and the captives are set free” (par. 29).

Appendix C Continued

George W. Bush, 2005 Continued

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose continued

“We go forward with complete confidence in the eventual triumph of freedom....we have confidence because freedom is the permanent hope of mankind” (par. 30).

Appendix C Continued

Barack Obama, 2009

Purpose

“Those ideals still light the world, and we will not give them up for expedience’s sake. And so to all other peoples and governments who are watching today...know that America is a friend of each nation and every man, woman, and child who seeks a future of peace and dignity, and that we are ready to lead once more” (par. 20).

“America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace” (par. 23).

Lamenting the Ills of Society

“That we are in the midst of a crisis is understood. Our nation is at war...our economy is badly weakened...homes have been lost; jobs shed; businesses shuttered. Our healthcare is too costly; or schools fail too many; and each day...further evidence. .threaten our planet” (par. 3).

“Less measurable but no less profound is a sapping of confidence...nagging fear...” (par. 4).

“[W]e come to declare an end to petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn out dogmas, that for far too long have strangled our politics” (par. 7).

Appendix C Continued

Barack Obama, 2009 Continued

Lamenting Ills of Society continued

“To those that cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history...” (par. 24).

Reverence for Ancestors

“We the People have remained faithful to the ideals of our forbearers, and true to our founding documents” (par. 3).

“[B]ut more often men and women obscure in their labor, who have carried us up the long, rugged path towards prosperity and freedom. For us, they packed up their few worldly possessions and traveled across oceans in search of a new life. For us, they toiled in sweatshops and settled the West; endured the lash of the whip and plowed the hard earth. For us, they fought and died, in places like Concord and Gettysburg; Normandy and Khe Sah” (*pars. 10 -13*).

“Our Founding Fathers, faced with perils we can scarcely imagine, drafted a charter to assure the rule of law the rights of man, a charter expanded by the blood of generations” (par. 20).

“So let us mark this day with remembrance...in the year of America’s birth...a small band of patriots huddled by dying campfires on the shores of any icy river...the father of our nation...” (par. 32).

Appendix C Continued

Barack Obama, 2009 Continued

Renewal/Recommitment

“The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness” (par. 9).

“Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America” (par. 15).

Trials/Road Won't Be Easy

“[T]he challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time...” (par. 6).

“For everywhere we look, there is work to be done” (par. 16).

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose

“[O]ur challenges. . . . But know this, America: they will be met” (par. 6).

“On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord” (par. 7).

“All this we can do. And all this we will do” (par. 16).

Appendix C Continued

Barack Obama, 2009 Continued

Hope and Faith in People and Purpose continued

“For they have forgotten what this country has already done; what free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose, and necessity to courage” (par. 17).

“Our challenges may be new...but those values upon which our success depends ... these things are old. These things are true. They have been the quiet force of progress throughout history” (par. 28).

“This is the source of our confidence: the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain destiny” (par. 30).

“Let it be said by our children’s children that when we were tested we refused to let this journey end, ..and with eyes fixed on the horizon and God’s grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future generations” (par. 34).