This paper proposes the examination of the "rhetorical compact" as a new genre of rhetorical criticism. The paper contends that the study of rhetorical compacts and the resulting influence on rhetorical patterns can serve as a tool to the scholar seeking to identify the implicit strategies in textual analysis. It suggests a linear analysis that examines the motives, terms, and outcomes of this rhetorical phenomenon. Several historical case studies are detailed that illustrate the significance of rhetorical compacts as a genre form, i.e.: (1) Why did the 1944 Republican Presidential nominee, Thomas Dewey, refrain from making the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor a campaign issue in 1944?; (2) Why did President Eisenhower refuse to defuse the missile gap issue in the 1960 election?; (3) Why did the 1964 Republican Presidential nominee, Barry Goldwater, fail to use the Vietnam War and civil rights as a campaign issue?; and (4) Why did the 1968 Republican Presidential nominee, Richard Nixon, refrain from criticizing the Johnson Administration for their conduct of the Vietnam War? The paper concludes that rhetorical compacts can help account for patterns in historical rhetoric that would remain partially unexplained. Contains 15 notes and 32 references. (Author/NKA)
The Rhetorical Compact: Toward a New Genre of Rhetorical Criticism

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Running Head: Rhetorical Compact

Paper competitively accepted to the Rhetorical Theory and Criticism Interest Group of the 1997 Central States Communication Association Annual Convention, April 9-13, St. Louis, MO.
Abstract

This paper proposes the examination of the "rhetorical compact" as a new genre of rhetorical criticism. A linear analysis is suggested that examines the motives, terms and outcomes of this rhetorical phenomenon. Several historical case studies are detailed that illustrate the significance of rhetorical compacts as a genre form. It is concluded that rhetorical compacts can help account for patterns in historical rhetoric that would remain partially unexplained.
The Rhetorical Compact: 
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The bulk of rhetorical criticism focuses on the examination of overt rhetorical artifacts. However, the object of rhetorical analysis can also include less overt forms. In these cases, the object of analysis can include the "rhetoric of silence" (Scott, 1993) or patterns of "rhetorical omission" (Lentz, 1986) that can provide the basis for further rhetorical insight. The focus of analysis tends to be based on speculative inquiry regarding motives or textual deconstructive analysis. Brummett (1994) argued that rhetorical texts have "implied strategies" which are not always consciously perceived (p. 89). Kenneth Burke (1969) discussed categories of textual analysis which sought to reveal the hidden motives of rhetor. Thus the object of rhetorical inquiry can be constructed on a continuum from the overt to the concealed.

Many implied strategies are dictated by the rhetorical goals of the rhetor and the situational context. This essay argues that one aspect of textual analysis concerns process rules that govern the content of the text itself. Further, these rules can be the product of "rhetorical deals" that can explain patterns of rhetoric that an explicit textual analysis would not account for. Branham and Pearce (1987) established the viability of this approach in their analysis of Moral Majority rhetoric of the 1980's. Specifically, Branham and Pearce argued that the strident rhetoric of Jerry Falwell and the Moral Majority was modified by a series of process rules proposed by Senator Edward Kennedy in 1983. It can be argued that any textual analysis of Moral Majority rhetoric in the mid-1980s would need to acknowledge the process rules to gain a full understanding of the text. The example of mutually agreed upon process rules can be referred to as a "rhetorical compact."

The study of rhetorical compacts and the resulting influence on rhetorical patterns can serve as a tool to the scholar seeking to identify the implicit strategies in textual analysis. It can be argued that the analysis of rhetorical compacts can constitute a new genre of rhetorical
analysis. To qualify as a genre of rhetoric the rhetorical compact needs to be established as a re-occurring phenomenon that can provide the basis for generic form (Campbell & Jamieson, 1995). To qualify as an analytical tool, the rhetorical compact would need to help account for patterns of rhetoric that would otherwise remain unexplained. Based on these standards, this essay seeks to establish the rhetorical compact as a new genre form.

There are four historical examples of rhetorical patterns that can be partially explained by a rhetorical compact. These rhetorical patterns can be phrased as a research question(s) to help establish the rhetorical compact as an analytical framework.

R1: Why did the 1944 Republican Presidential nominee, Thomas E. Dewey, refrain from making the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor a campaign issue in 1944?

R2: Why did President Eisenhower refuse to defuse the missile gap issue in the 1960 election?

R3: Why did the 1964 Republican Presidential nominee, Barry Goldwater fail to use the Vietnam War and Civil Rights as a campaign issue in 1964.

R4: Why did the 1968 Republican Presidential nominee, Richard Nixon, refrain from criticizing the Johnson Administration for their conduct of the Vietnam War?

Pearl Harbor as an Issue in the 1944 Election

Roosevelt Running as Commander in Chief

On July 11, 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt made his formal declaration of candidacy in the form of a letter sent to National Democratic Party Chairman Robert E. Hannegan. In the letter, Roosevelt declares his availability to run for a fourth term as president. The letter, far from being a casual document, was a preview of Roosevelt’s rhetorical strategy for the upcoming election.

In the summer of 1944 the United States was in the midst of World War II. In the context of the world war, Roosevelt sought to emphasize his role as commander and chief of the U.S.
armed forces. Several passages of this letter highlight this linkage.

For myself, I do not want to run. By next spring I shall have been President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces for twelve years...The President is the Commander in Chief and he, too, has his superior officer--the people of the United States...¹

Additionally, Roosevelt sought to identify himself with the common soldier and the overall war effort.

I would accept and serve, but I would not run in the usual partisan, political sense. But if the people command me to continue in this office and in this war, I have as little right to withdraw as the soldier has his post in the line...Therefore, reluctantly, but as a good soldier, I repeat that I will accept and serve in the office, if I am so ordered by the Commander in Chief of us all--the sovereign people of the United States...²

As a rhetorical strategy, the President "would wrap himself in his Navy cape in the posture of the citizen-soldier who walks his post" (Bishop, 1974, p. 98). To further reinforce this image, Roosevelt, did not accept the nomination in person. He gave his acceptance speech from his railroad car in San Diego, California. His role as Commander in Chief was taking him to Pearl Harbor for conferences with Admiral Chester Nimitz and General Douglas MacArthur on the future conduct of the war in the Pacific. At the convention, spotlights focused on a huge photograph of the President as he was introduced as "speaking from a Pacific Coast Naval base." In this speech, Roosevelt argued that he would be "too busy to campaign in the usual sense." Roosevelt told the delegates: "In these days of tragic sorrow, I do not consider it fitting. And besides, in these days of global warfare, I shall not be able to find the time."³

On a pragmatic level, Roosevelt's rhetorical strategy made good political sense. Herbert Brownell, the Republican National Chairman observed, "World War II was in full swing at that time, so local and domestic politics were at a low pitch...the nation was poised for a wartime
election campaign, and its interest was primarily on the battlefields of Europe rather than on domestic politics." (Brownell, 1994, p. 99-100).

Rhetorical Dilemma for Dewey

Roosevelt's Republican opponent was Thomas E. Dewey, Governor of New York. Dewey and his advisors immediately recognized the significance of Roosevelt's remarks. The day after the Roosevelt's declaration of candidacy, Dewey released a press release which in part stated, "Mr. Roosevelt is the first of thirty-two Presidents of the United States to claim the title of Commander in Chief makes him a soldier and use that title as a pretext to perpetuate himself in political office."

Dewey's acknowledgement of Roosevelt's strategy, did not provide a clear means to counter its effect. The war made patriotism an even bigger issue than normal. Thus, criticizing the "Commander-in-Chief" ran the risk of being perceived as unpatriotic. Thus, Dewey faced a rhetorical dilemma. It would be difficult to effectively wage a campaign based on domestic issues. However, attacking Roosevelt as Commander-in-Chief ran the risk of boomeranging to the detriment of the candidate. Some of Dewey's campaign advisors argued that Dewey should tour the battlefields, as means of competing with Roosevelt on this level. However, Dewey did not have a war record of his own, and some of his advisers thought a tour would only highlight the fact that he wasn't a war veteran (Brownell, 1994).

Seeking to counter Roosevelt's advantage as a wartime leader, Dewey focused much of his campaign rhetoric over which candidate would be better peacetime president. However, a series of speeches focusing on peacetime domestic issues failed to stir the voters. Dewey's ratings for his radio campaign speeches were in steady decline. From a Hooper rating of 20.3 for his first campaign speech in Philadelphia, the candidate's radio audience had dipped to 14.5 in Seattle (Smith, 1982). By late September the Dewey campaign treasury was nearly empty.

For Dewey events went from bad to worse after Roosevelt delivered his first "political"
address to the Teamsters Union. He made a rousing speech in which he teased the Republicans for attacking his dog, Fala. The speech was a huge success and was broadcast nationwide. Roosevelt effectively refuted Republican charges regarding which candidate could better manage the peace. "These peace-building tasks were faced once before, nearly a generation ago. They were botched by a Republican administration. That must not happen this time. We will not let it happen this time." Longtime Roosevelt speechwriter Samuel Rosenman believed it was the finest speech he ever made (Bishop, 1974). Brownell described the speech as "a devastating blow to the Republican campaign" (Brownell, 1994, p. 103).

In reaction to this speech, Dewey made substantial revisions for his next scheduled address in Oklahoma City on September 25th. Dewey in a preview of his upcoming speech promised to examine Roosevelt’s record "with unvarnished candor."

Pearl Harbor as a Campaign Issue?

In light of his declining campaign fortunes, Dewey was forced to undertake the risky strategy of directly attacking the "Commander-in-Chief." However, this approach did hold some promise as a rhetorical strategy. Initially, some of Roosevelt’s advisors feared that the GOP would attack the war effort. A memorandum sent by Harry Hopkins to Samuel Rosenman in late 1943 argued that "opposition is likely to go after the President’s conduct of the war and the Administration’s foreign policy…this is open season for that kind of business." In reality Dewey had little choice; Roosevelt by linking himself to the war effort had limited the rhetorical ground to this area.

One particularly potent issue was presidential culpability regarding the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Roosevelt, realizing the explosive nature of this issue, appointed a presidential investigation commission dealing with the difficult issue of accountability. He named Owen J. Roberts, a prominent judge who had gained prominence as a prosecutor in the Teapot Dome scandals of the early 1920’s, as its chairman. However, the commission was restricted
"from investigating Washington's role too deeply" (Costello, 1994, p. 252). Republicans dismissed the Roberts committee report as a "whitewash" (Smith, 1982, p. 426).

Throughout August and September pressure grew towards making Pearl Harbor a campaign issue. In August Republican Senators opened discussion on the Pearl Harbor investigation made by the Roberts committee (Belles, 1963). Republican vice-presidential candidate John Bricker charged the administration was keeping secret the damaging truth about Pearl Harbor. The truly explosive aspect of this issue concerned the code breaking activities of U.S. intelligence and whether the President knew the essential facts pointing to the attack and failed to mitigate it or forestall it.

For weeks Dewey's campaign staffers had been building a case that the government had powerful reason to expect a Japanese attack somewhere in the Pacific, and was grossly negligent in failing to prepare adequately to counter it. Dewey learned that the U.S. had broken Japanese codes prior to Pearl Harbor. Dewey personally was "infuriated with Roosevelt, believing that the president had allowed an unnecessary loss of American lives" (Anderson, 1990, p. 394). He believed that the administration had reason to think that the Japanese would attack somewhere in the Pacific and had not properly warned American forces. Still, by late September, Dewey had yet to make Pearl Harbor a campaign issue.

Dewey's Oklahoma City speech is significant for it represented a potential shift in his rhetorical strategy. Specifically, Dewey was moving toward overt criticism of the administration's defense policies. Alerted to expect a more aggressive rhetorical style, Oklahoma City Republicans had packed the Municipal Auditorium to an overflowing crowd of 15,000 (Smith, 1982). "Now I had not intended in this campaign to rake over my opponent's sad record of failing to prepare the defenses of this country for war. It's all in the past-- a very tragic past. It has cost countless American lives; it has caused untold misery." Although Dewey carefully skirted the issue of whether the president had foreknowledge of the attack, he clearly implied
presidential culpability in the disaster. "Now, were we prepared for war, or were we not? It's a perfectly simple question of fact...Now listen to this: When the treachery of Pearl Harbor came we were not ready...Now, why is it we were not ready when we were attacked..."8

On purely political grounds, the Oklahoma City speech was a great success. Dewey's speech was punctuated with applause thirty-eight times. Brownell found his phones ringing off the hook with pledges of support (Smith, 1982). Contributions picked up, as did the enthusiasm of the crowds. On his way back to New York the governor continued to attack Roosevelt with increasing intensity. Polls indicated that Dewey was gaining for the first time in the campaign. A poll released early in October showed that Dewey had narrowed the gap to a slim 51% to 49% margin (Anderson, 1990).

Clearly Dewey was edging towards making Pearl Harbor an issue in the campaign. He was aware that U.S. military intelligence had broken the Japanese military code (Brownell, 1994). Dewey believed that Roosevelt was "a traitor who had willingly or accidentally condemned more than a thousand American men, and most of the Pacific fleet, to a watery grave" (Smith, 1982, p. 429).

Further, there was evidence to support Dewey's conclusion. The Army's own board of inquiry found that information available in Washington as early as the fourth or fifth of December was clear-cut in forecasting a Japanese attack. A 1945 congressional investigation concluded that intelligence available to "the President and the Secretary of State led them to the conclusion at least 10 days before December 7 that an attack by Japan within a few days was so highly probable as to constitute a certainty..."9

However, after the Oklahoma City speech, Dewey withheld this damaging information which could have conceivably gotten him in the White House (Belles, 1963). Had Dewey's own findings concerning Pearl Harbor been released before the election, "the public reaction might have been explosive" (Smith, 1982, p. 429). The American people were not prepared to pardon
anyone who might have known about the surprise attack (Belles, 1963). Thus, the central question is why Dewey would drop such a potent issue as his campaign was starting to pick up steam.

The Dewey/Marshall Rhetorical Compact

Dewey’s statements in conjunction with innuendoes made by other Republicans led to increased concern by U.S. Military Chief of Staff George C. Marshall. Marshall feared that if the controversy continued on this issue, it might compromise military intelligence efforts against the Japanese. However, given the implicit nature of the charges, the American public did not generally acknowledge the directional significance of the Republican rhetoric (Belles, 1963).

The day after Dewey’s Oklahoma City speech, General George Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, sent Dewey a top secret letter, because Marshall "had heard that Dewey was about to make an attack on FDR for his failure to avert the tragedy at Pearl Harbor" (Brownell, 1994, p. 102). The letter was personally delivered by Colonel Carter C. Clarke, head of the cryptographic intelligence unit. Dewey refused to examine the letter believing it would restrict his rhetorical freedom as a candidate. Before dismissing Clarke, Dewey insisted that: "He (Roosevelt) knew what was happening before Pearl Harbor, and instead of being re-elected he ought to be impeached." Further Dewey suspected that Roosevelt was responsible for the letter. "Marshall does not do things like that. I am confident that Franklin Roosevelt is behind this whole thing." Dewey rejected this attempt to remove Pearl Harbor as a campaign issue.

However, Marshall concluded "that the matter was so important (that) I must make another effort. So I sent Clarke to Albany in civilian clothes." Two days later Dewey received Clarke in the statehouse in Albany, New York. This time Dewey demanded that he be allowed to keep Marshall’s letter for his personal files and a witness be present as the letter was read. Both conditions were met. In the letter Marshall argued that the Japanese were still using the same code since 1941. Thus, making Pearl Harbor a campaign issue ran the risk of the Japanese
inferring the truth and changing codes. If the Japanese suddenly changed their code, Army intelligence would suffer. "He told Dewey that if he made this speech, it might result in the loss of American lives" (Brownell, p. 102).

Marshall specifically requested that Dewey refrain from making Pearl Harbor a campaign issue:

You will understand from the foregoing the utter tragic consequences if the present political debates regarding Pearl Harbor disclose to the enemy, German or Jap [sic], any suspicion of the vital sources of information we now possess.13

The Governor's dilemma was whether to believe that the Japanese were still using the same code or that Roosevelt was merely using his Chief of Staff to remove a valuable issue from the Dewey campaign. Initially Dewey was skeptical the Japanese were still using the same codes. However, Dewey "decided that he would not use the Pearl Harbor issue because of the wartime situation and because of his confidence in General Marshall" (Brownell, 1994, p. 103).

On more pragmatic grounds, Dewey and his advisors came to the conclusion that to make Pearl Harbor a campaign issue ran the risk of Democratic opponents accusing Dewey of undermining the war effort. Throughout the remainder of the campaign Dewey did not use Pearl Harbor as a campaign issue. In November Dewey lost the presidential election by a 53% to 46% margin. In this case a rhetorical compact of omission was concluded between Dewey and Marshall. Several months later during President Roosevelt's funeral, Marshall personally expressed his appreciation to Dewey.

The Missile Gap and the 1960 Election

John F. Kennedy defeated Richard M. Nixon in the 1960 presidential race by one-tenth of one percent of the vote. In an election this close almost any issue could have tipped the scales toward victory for either candidate. Thus, every issue takes increased importance in explaining the outcome of that election.
One of the biggest issues of the 1960 presidential election was the "missile gap" controversy. Kennedy's victory was due in substantial part to his charges that the Soviets had a lead in nuclear missile production (Herken, 1987). These charges dated back to 1956 when Missouri Senator Stuart Symington first mentioned the issue (Ambrose, 1984). From the very beginning President Eisenhower expressed serious skepticism regarding any missile gap: "I'll wager my life I can sit on any base we've got and in the next ten years the Russians can't hit me with any guided missile" (p. 314).

The missile gap controversy was further fueled by the bombastic rhetoric of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev. Throughout the late 1950's, Khrushchev made a series of implicitly threatening claims concerning the capabilities of Soviet military power. In Moscow, Khrushchev claimed that the Soviet Union was producing missiles "like sausages." During his visits abroad Khrushchev made boasts concerning the range and accuracy of Soviet missiles.

During the pre-election period of 1958-59 Eisenhower was continually peppered with questions concerning nuclear missile development. Eisenhower was unable to remove the missile gap issue from partisan debate. This was due in part to Eisenhower's vague re-assurances concerning U.S. defenses. One example of Eisenhower's handling of this issue occurred during a January 1960, news conference:

I want to tell you this: I've spent my life in this, and I know more about it than almost anybody, I think, That is in the country, because I have given my life to it, and on a basis of doing what is good for the Government and for the country. I believe that the matter of defense has been handled well and efficiently...such an argument as that pre-supposes that I come to any conversation in the feeling of inferiority--that I am a little bit frightened. I assure you I am not. 13

Eisenhower's, "trust me, everything is okay," response failed to mute the issue. Eisenhower's conclusion was based on hard intelligence data produced by U-2 spy flights over the Soviet
Union. By 1959 the U-2 data convinced Eisenhower that Soviet claims about a missile build-up were false (Beschloss, 1986). Thus, an explanation for Eisenhower's lack of specific refutation to the missile gap issue was a desire to protect the confidentiality of the U-2 overflights. The 1960 presidential election brought increased attention to the missile gap controversy. In private Eisenhower complained about the "sanctimonious, hypocritical bastards" (p. 154).

**The Rhetorical Trajectories of Eisenhower and Khrushchev**

Dwight D. Eisenhower and Nikita S. Khrushchev were the principal leaders of the cold war in the 1950s. Despite their differing ideologies both leaders shared similar objectives regarding military spending. During the 1959 summit meeting with Khrushchev, Eisenhower offered an assessment of their relative positions:

> My military leaders come to me and say 'Mr. President, we need such and such a sum for such and such a program. If we don't get the funds we need, we'll fall behind the Soviet Union.' So I invariably give in. That's how they wring money out of me. They keep grabbing for more, and I keep giving it to them...You know, we really should come to some sort of an agreement in order to stop this fruitless, really wasteful rivalry. (Khrushchev, 1974, p. 411-12)

Throughout his presidency Eisenhower sought to keep a check on military spending. He felt that military spending was exceedingly costly and could undermine the economic foundation of the country. In his 1959 State of the Union Address Eisenhower expressed this concern.

> "...armaments are purchased at great cost. Modern weapons are exceedingly expensive. We are buying certain bombers that cost their weight in gold. These sums are tremendous, even when compared with the marvelous resiliency and capacity of our economy...We must guard against feverish building of vast armaments to meet glibly predicted moments of so-called "maximum peril." I am equally sure that the nation will thus avoid useless expenditures which, in the name of security, might tend to undermine
the economy and therefore, the nation’s safety." (Eisenhower, 1959, p. 8)

Eisenhower was successful in cutting the defense budget as a percentage of G.N.P. during his eight years in office.

Khrushchev shared similar sentiments. In his memoirs Khrushchev expressed his feelings regarding defense spending:

Military expenditures are a bottomless pit, into which the imperialist camp would like to see us pour our economic potential...If our enemies want to go on inflating their military budgets, spending their money right and left on all kinds of senseless things, then they’ll be sure to lower the living standards of their own people. (Khrushchev, 1974, p. 534, 539)

During his years in power Khrushchev made large cuts in defense expenditures (Crankshaw, 1966). Khrushchev cut military personnel by 1.2 million men. Naval cruisers and destroyers were cut up for scrap on Khrushchev’s orders (Beschloss, 1986). Khrushchev was determined to improve the lot of the Soviet consumer by holding down military spending (Beschloss, 1991).

Similar policy goals produced similar rhetorical dilemmas. President Kennedy described the rhetorical dilemma facing a Soviet Premier and an American President trying to move toward peace:

One of the ironic things about this entire situation is that Mr. Khrushchev and I occupy approximately the same political positions inside our governments. He would like to prevent a nuclear war but is under severe pressure from his hard line crowd, which interprets every move in that direction as appeasement. I’ve got similar problems. (Seaborg, 1981, p. 299-300)

Although the dilemma was similar, the rhetorical assets enjoyed by Eisenhower and Khrushchev differed. These differences dictated differing rhetorical strategies. Eisenhower due to his great military prestige was able to rely on his personal ethos as a means of answering hard line critics
of his defense policy (Ambrose, 1984).

Khrushchev did not enjoy anywhere near the same level of credibility. Indeed Khrushchev faced almost a constant challenge to his political survival. In 1957, his hard line opponents in the presidium were almost successful in toppling Khrushchev from power. Entering the late fifties and early sixties Khrushchev’s political position was far from secure. At the 1959 summit meeting, Eisenhower noted Khrushchev’s insecurity.

...when Khrushchev and I were alone together at Camp David he was very convivial with me, especially eager to be friendly. He kept belittling most of our differences and gave every indication of wanting to find ways to straighten them out through peaceful compromise...But when Menshikov and Gromyko were with us, Khrushchev acted differently. Then he became much more reserved and guarded in what he said and in his manner. It seemed to me that he has much less confidence in himself than Stalin had, as a result, I think, of his feeling of his own insecurity in Russia. (Adams, 1961, p. 454-5)

The Eisenhower/Khrushchev Rhetorical Compact

Khrushchev’s policy goals and personal ethos dictated a high risk rhetorical strategy. Specifically, Khrushchev attempted to substitute militaristic rhetoric for a militaristic defense policy. Thus, while Khrushchev engaged in bombastic rhetoric concerning Soviet missile capabilities, he was simultaneously cutting back on Soviet defense spending. This thesis would lend a degree of coherence to Khrushchev’s rhetoric and policy that on the surface appeared mercurial. A week before his death Khrushchev commented to poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko: "You are very lucky. You are a poet. You can tell the truth. But I was a politician. I had to shout to hold my job" (Beschloss, 1986, p. 387).

For this rhetorical strategy to work Khrushchev needed Eisenhower’s acquiescence not to directly refute Khrushchev’s claims of strategic superiority. Eisenhower sensing Khrushchev’s
rhetorical dilemma never directly contradicted Khrushchev’s militaristic boasts. Thus a delicate rhetorical stasis was achieved. As long as the Soviets enjoyed the illusion of nuclear parity or even superiority, Khrushchev was able to forestall the huge expenditures that a crash Soviet ICBM buildup would require (Beschloss, 1991). This approach also dovetailed into Eisenhower’s policy interests by allowing for a rational basis to restrain U.S. military spending.

Several pieces of evidence point to a coordinated rhetorical compact. Initially, Eisenhower may have been reluctant to directly refute Khrushchev's claims in order to protect the secret U-2 program. However, in May 1960 the Russians shot down a U-2 plane and captured the pilot and the plane intact. The resulting furor ended in the cancelling of the four power summit in Paris. Even after the U-2 program became public knowledge, Eisenhower continued to reject appeals from within his own administration to expose the missile gap as false (Herkon, 1987).

When Nixon was defeated by Kennedy in the 1960 presidential election Eisenhower described his reaction as being "hit in the solar plexus with a ball bat--as though eight years of work had been for naught" (Eisenhower, 1965, p. 602). This reaction is all the more curious considering Eisenhower’s refusal to help Nixon defuse the missile gap issue. This was despite Nixon’s pleas for Eisenhower to announce there was no missile gap (Herkon, 1987; Beschloss, 1991).

However, Eisenhower did try to help Nixon short of breaking the rhetorical compact. First, Eisenhower in an unusual move, approved a request from candidate John Kennedy to allow a member of his Science Advisory Committee, Jerome Wiesner, to join the Kennedy campaign. Wiesner as a member of the committee had access to the U-2 data. Having served Eisenhower since 1956, Wiesner was initially "astounded" by Eisenhower’s approval to join the Kennedy campaign staff (Herkon, p. 133). Wiesner concluded that Eisenhower’s real intention was to provide a discreet method to inform Kennedy of the truth about the missile gap. Despite Wiesner’s efforts to persuade Kennedy’s aides and speechwriters not to overemphasize the gap,
Kennedy continued to use the issue in his campaign.

In August of 1960, Eisenhower made another attempt to get Kennedy to tone down his criticism of American defense policies. Eisenhower asked CIA Director Allen Dulles to brief the Democrat on intelligence concerning U.S. strategic military strength. Eisenhower asked Dulles to "stress America's commanding military strength" (Beschloss, 1986, p. 339). However, when asked by Kennedy about the missile gap, Dulles failed to provide an unqualified statement that a missile gap did not exist. The failure of Dulles to foreclose any possibility of a missile gap allowed Kennedy to keep the issue alive.

Privately, Eisenhower was furious at Kennedy's continued use of the issue. "By getting into this numbers racket," he said of Kennedy, "and by scaring people, they are getting away with murder" (Ambrose, p. 560). Eisenhower understood that missile gap rhetoric frightened Americans and generated pressure to escalate the arms race or reveal hard evidence revealing U.S. strategic nuclear superiority.

Breaking the Compact and the Geopolitical Consequences

Within days of his inauguration, Kennedy was exposed to hard data that incontrovertibly established that the missile gap actually favored the United States. Understanding his rhetorical dilemma, Kennedy greeted the news with a single angry expletive (Herkon, 1987). By making such an issue of the missile gap it was inherent upon Kennedy to take public action to close the gap or admit the gap never really existed at all. Thus, the choice involved accelerating an unjustified, expensive arms race or admitting he was wrong about the missile gap issue.

Due to lack of coordination within his cabinet, the Kennedy administration ultimately did both. During a February 6, 1961 news conference, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara candidly admitted that there was no missile gap. This naturally resulted in a political uproar, with the Republicans facetiously asking for the 1960 election to be rerun.

President Kennedy was concerned about the political embarrassment. Thus, publicly
Kennedy never did admit he was wrong about the missile gap. In the first months of his administration Kennedy embarked on an ambitious missile building program. This build-up was not dictated by genuine defense inadequacies. It was a political decision generated by Kennedy’s campaign rhetoric of making a contrast between his and the Eisenhower administration (Ball, 1980).

Apart from the domestic political reaction, McNamara’s admissions and other statements from the Kennedy administration, represented a breach in the tacit rhetorical compact established by Khrushchev and Eisenhower. Such declarations had the net effect of publicly humiliating Khrushchev. Khrushchev’s entire rhetorical strategy was based on "creating the illusion of Soviet military might" (Beschloss, 1991, p. 331). Khrushchev’s domestic hard line opponents were provided additional political ammunition.

The breaking of the compact put pressure on Khrushchev to do something drastic to change the perception of Soviet and American strategic nuclear power. It has been argued that the public disclosure of American nuclear superiority, at least indirectly, contributed to the Berlin crisis of 1961 and the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 (Beschloss, 1991). Khrushchev, unwilling to abandon his moderate defense policies, sought to re-establish military parity by placing nuclear missiles in Cuba. Khrushchev’s failure to re-establish a level of perceptual equivalency triggered his own downfall in 1964. Khrushchev’s successors, seeking actual strategic parity, embarked on a huge nuclear arms build-up in the 1960’s and 1970’s. Thus the breaking of the rhetorical compact helped spark a 25 year nuclear arms race.

Goldwater, Civil Rights and Vietnam

The Muted Campaign of Barry Goldwater

When the Republican Party nominated Barry Goldwater in 1964 it represented a triumph of modern conservatism. In the early 1960’s Goldwater was viewed as the most visible conservative spokesman. Goldwater believed it was his duty to lead the conservative forces in 1964.
Rhetorical Compact

Goldwater, 1979). His campaign promised a "choice not an echo."

The predicted centerpiece of Goldwater’s fall campaign was his "southern strategy" (Martin, 1972, p. 478). This was the same strategy used by Richard Nixon with great success in 1968. At the heart of this strategy was the "race issue." Two key events in 1964 brought salience to this issue: the inner city riots in New York and other major cities on the eastern seaboard and the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. These events gave force to one of the earliest catchwords of the campaign of 1964: "backlash" (White, 1965, p. 233). Backlash in 1964 can be best described as reactionary white fear of blacks as they moved toward fuller social and economic equality.

The significance of white backlash was illustrated by the surprising political strength shown by Governor George Wallace of Alabama. In 1964 George Wallace ran as a protest candidate against Lyndon Johnson in the Democratic primaries. In a surprisingly strong showing, Wallace collected upwards to 43 percent of the vote in northern state primaries. Polling data indicated that 85% of Americans thought the civil rights movement had moved too fast (Shadegg, 1965).

Goldwater was well positioned to capitalize on white backlash. In the spring of 1964, Goldwater voted against the Civil Rights Act. This vote caused much of the media to brand Goldwater as a segregationist (Goldwater, 1979). A potential coalition of white backlash in the industrial north, and traditional segregationalists in the old south was in the offing. Polls taken during this period support this premise. Other seasoned Republican politicians believed that the coalition of white votes would carry Goldwater to victory.

Another potential key issue in 1964 was Vietnam. Dissatisfaction over the Korean War 12 years earlier had helped propel Eisenhower to the presidency. Polling data indicated that the Vietnam issue troubled 59% of the American public (Shadegg, 1965). The American involvement in Vietnam grew during the Kennedy administration. Despite growing U.S. involvement, the strategic situation grew worse from week to week. In Spring 1964, Vietcong
guerrillas had up to 90 percent control in key provinces, and South Vietnamese morale was rapidly declining (Goodwin, 1988). Goldwater perceived Johnson as being vulnerable on the issue:

Had the American voters known the truth about the Kennedy White House involvement in the murder of Ngo Dinh Diem, they might well have turned against his successor in office. Through my military contacts I had a very clear picture of what had taken place...From a military standpoint it was absolute folly to involve American troops in a ground war in Southeast Asia. (Goldwater, 1979)

Goldwater had his own clear views on how the war should be persecuted. Goldwater believed in using overwhelming sea and air power or totally pulling out U.S. forces. The Goldwater campaign had prepared seven different concepts for a TV spot on Vietnam (Shadegg, 1965).

The Goldwater/Johnson Rhetorical Compact

Throughout the fall campaign Goldwater failed to rouse the electorate. This failure even extended to his own core conservative constituency. Theodore H. White (1965), in his chronicle of the 1964 Goldwater campaign offered a narrative of a typical audience member reaction to a Goldwater speech:

Was the red meat coming? But no. Goldwater went on to the national economy and the free-enterprise system, and the lady began to look around her, scanning the audience, not listening...She had come ready for the call--but Goldwater was making no such call. (p. 338)

Originally, Goldwater and his campaign had planned to raise and seriously debate the most fundamentals issues of American policy. This never actually happened (Martin, 1972). The Goldwater campaign came down to platitudinal exposition of conservative philosophy devoid of cutting edge issues. Specifically, Goldwater never tried to ride the crest of white backlash or criticize the administration’s policy in Vietnam.
Rhetorical Compact

The man responsible for this was Barry Goldwater himself, with the acquiescence of Lyndon Johnson. On July 24, 1964 Goldwater met privately with President Johnson. The meeting took place at Goldwater’s request. Goldwater proposed taking Vietnam out of the campaign and Johnson agreed. Goldwater recalled the episode in his 1979 memoirs.

"The war in Vietnam," I said, "is a national burden. The people are already divided. The legitimacy of our presence is being questioned. The conduct of the war is being criticized...I do not believe it is in the best interest of the United States to make the Vietnam war or its conduct a political issue this campaign. I have come to promise I will not do so." (p. 192-3)

According to Goldwater, Johnson seemed greatly relieved by the offer. Years later Goldwater expressed regret over removing Vietnam as a campaign issue:

Had Johnson and I squared off on the issue, the President might have revealed his intention to escalate the conflict without a military plan or diplomatic policy to win it.

We might have saved many American lives. (Goldwater & Casserly, 1988, p. 197).

This compact allowed Johnson to totally avoid the issue of Vietnam in the fall campaign. In the dozens of speeches dealing with the major issues of foreign policy, none was devoted to the conflict in Vietnam (Goodwin, 1988). The Goldwater campaign dropped plans to run televised spots concerning Vietnam.

During the July 24th meeting, Goldwater also proposed removing the issue of civil rights from the campaign. Goldwater felt that using civil rights as a campaign issue would polarize the country. Thus, two of the potentially biggest issues of the 1964 campaign were removed from the campaign. As Goldwater (1979) noted, "We shook hands. I kept my promises, and Lyndon Johnson kept his. The Vietnam war and the civil rights problems were never major issues in the 1964 presidential campaign" (p. 193). A post-election poll taken of Republican convention delegates revealed "an overwhelming belief in the minds of the delegates that Goldwater should
have discussed the civil rights problem openly and frankly (Shadegg, 1965, p. 267).

It should be noted that the Goldwater initiative totally refutes the period perception of Goldwater being a segregationist. Goldwater's opposition to the 1964 Civil Rights Act was based on Constitutional objections. Nor did Goldwater seek to capitalize on "white backlash." His campaign repudiated such organizations as the Ku Klux Klan and opposed discrimination of any kind.

Given the circumstances of that election, it was improbable that any set of circumstances would have elected Goldwater in 1964. However, the Goldwater/Johnson rhetorical compact muted the campaign of Barry Goldwater with lasting ramifications. As Theodore White (1965) noted:

The greatest "if" in the Goldwater campaign is what would have happened if Goldwater had really limned out the causes of his indignation, made concrete and vivid the problems and dangers he saw. He could not have won, but he might have brought clarity to American affairs. (p. 344)

In effect, Johnson received a free pass to the presidency in 1964. Although Johnson was elected by a huge margin, he lacked a true mandate that a discussion of the issues would have entailed.

Who did Johnson favor in 1968?

In the 1968 presidential election, Richard M. Nixon narrowly defeated Hubert H. Humphrey 43.4% to 42.7%. One of the key factors influencing Humphrey's defeat was the lukewarm support of President Johnson. Indeed, Johnson took several pro-active steps that helped insure Humphrey's defeat.

The Humphrey campaign suffered from a severe shortage of campaign funds. After the Democratic Party national convention the Humphrey campaign was completely broke. Worse the campaign had accumulated $2 million in debt (Solberg, 1984). Without campaign funds,
Humphrey could not purchase TV time to communicate to the American public. One of Humphrey’s campaign officials was quoted as saying "our number one priority is money. Number two is money. Also number three and four" (Cohen, 1978, p. 367).

Lyndon Johnson was in a position to help Humphrey’s financial shortfall. During his time in office, Johnson created the "President’s Club" for the purpose of fund raising. Humphrey had spoken at several President Club fund-raisers during his term as vice-president. In September, Humphrey asked Johnson for access to the account; Johnson refused. Further, Johnson dismantled the regular Democratic fund raising apparatus and never freed the $600,000 available in the President’s Club (Solberg, 1984). By the end of the campaign, the treasurer of the Democratic National Committee believed that Johnson never did signal his Texas backers to provide Humphrey any financial support (Cohen, 1978).

Johnson also handled the issue of Vietnam in a way that hurt Humphrey’s chances in the fall election. Nixon could avoid the issue by stating that he didn’t want to undermine the administration’s negotiating efforts. By 1968, Vietnam was the biggest issue concerning the American public. It was public frustration over Vietnam that influenced Lyndon Johnson not to seek re-election. By the fall campaign any candidate who could clearly point the way to peace would win the election. Theodore White (1969) chronicled Humphrey’s dilemma:

Richard Nixon could, wisely, be silent on the issue. But Humphrey, as Vice-President, could not attack his own administration-nor did he dare defend the issue before the electorate and his divided Party. Thus, a man of peace committed to a war, Humphrey waffled and wobbled. (p. 398)

Humphrey tried to placate the peace movement by offering a conciliatory "peace plank" in the Democratic platform. Although the language had been approved by his Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, President Johnson rejected the proposed peace plank. Humphrey abandoned his efforts toward a compromise plank on Vietnam. The rejection of the peace plank was Humphrey’s best
chance of unifying a divided Democratic Party.

The bombing of North Vietnam was viewed as a key sign of progress toward peace. Johnson’s Secretary of Defense, Clark Clifford observed that "If I were Nixon, the development that would worry me the most would be an announcement that the bombing was being stopped in response to indications that progress was being made in Paris" (Clifford, 1991, p. 563).

During the summer and fall, both Johnson’s Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense recommended a bombing halt in order to advance the peace negotiations; Johnson refused. The link between the bombing and the Humphrey candidacy was clear to Johnson. Long term Democratic advisor Averell Harriman told the President that the bombing had to be stopped to "save the nation from Nixon" (p. 570). Indeed practically all of Johnson’s key advisors recommended a bombing halt throughout October 1968. Johnson’s inflexibility led to speculation concerning his motives. Clifford was particularly perplexed:

Why did the President take such a negative position? I could only conclude that, with the election only nine days away, he was determined not to let anyone conclude he was acting to help Humphrey. I pointed out to him that at this stage of the campaign, either action or inaction would benefit one candidate and hurt the other. So what if a bombing halt helped Humphrey? Continued bombing would help Nixon…I could not help asking myself again. In his heart of hearts, does Lyndon Johnson really want Humphrey to win? (p. 581)

Additionally, Humphrey speculated that American troop withdrawals might begin in early 1969 or possibly late 1968. The next day Johnson embarrassed Humphrey by directly contradicting him. Johnson stated that "nobody can predict" when troops might start coming home. "Not an act of friendship," Humphrey concluded (Solberg, 1984, p. 376).

Finally, on October 31st Johnson announced a bombing halt. The announcement added momentum to the Humphrey campaign. But it was too little too late as Humphrey lost the
Rhetorical Compact

popular vote by less than one percent. Johnson’s ambivalent behavior may be partly explained by Humphrey’s Salt Lake City Speech, where Humphrey distanced himself from Johnson’s Vietnam policy. However, many of Johnson’s actions pre-date this speech and other factors may account for Johnson’s strange lack of support.

The Nixon/Johnson Rhetorical Compact

On August 10, 1968, Nixon and Johnson had a meeting a couple of weeks before the Democratic presidential nominating convention. Throughout the year Nixon had skillfully positioned himself as being sympathetic to Johnson’s Vietnam policy. During this meeting Nixon proposed a rhetorical compact. Nixon promised as long as the administration did not soften its Vietnam policy he would not directly criticize the Johnson administration. Johnson was pleased by the offer (Clifford, 1991). Clifford recognized the political advantage gained by Nixon:

Nixon’s game plan is to offer us his support in return for inflexibility in our negotiating position, and thereby freeze poor Hubert out in the cold...In fact, Nixon has outmaneuvered the President again, digging him in more deeply. Nixon is trying to hang the war so tightly around the Democrats’ neck that it can’t be loosened. (p. 563)

The compact was formalized in September when Nixon sent Billy Graham as an emissary to propose a set of rhetorical guidelines to be used before and after the election. Nixon made a series of observations designed to flatter Johnson:

I respect him as a man and as a president. He (Johnson) is the hardest working and most dedicated President in 140 years. Will do everything to make you (President Johnson) a place in history because you deserve it. I want a working relationship with him (Johnson) and will seek his advice continually. Nixon was presumptuous enough to propose what he would do for Johnson after he became President:

Want you (President Johnson) to go on special assignments after the election, perhaps to
foreign countries. When Vietnam is settled he (Nixon) will give you (President Johnson) a major share of the credit, because you (President Johnson) deserve it. Johnson expressed warm appreciation for Nixon’s gesture.

The proposed rhetorical compact may help account for Johnson’s attitude toward Nixon and Humphrey. Several comments made by Johnson reveal a "tilt" toward Nixon during the fall campaign. Johnson observed to his White House aides "that Nixon is following my policies more closely than Humphrey" (Solberg, 1984, p. 392). "He (Nixon) may prove to be more responsible than the Democrats. He says he is for our position in Vietnam" (Clifford, 1991, p. 563). Later Johnson concluded that if Humphrey did not stand firm on Vietnam a Nixon victory "would be better for the country" (p. 564).

The Nixon/Johnson rhetorical compact enabled Nixon to avoid the issue of Vietnam and chain Humphrey to the unpopular war. Many of Humphrey’s aides are convinced that Johnson threw the election to Nixon. Humphrey campaign treasurer Robert Short concluded that "Johnson could have elected Humphrey if he wanted to. He never used the power of his office to help us" (Eisele, 1972, p. 381). Nixon, through the rhetorical compact, was able to neutralize Johnson in the fall campaign. Given the closeness of the 1968 election, it can be argued that this was a decisive factor in the outcome.

**Toward a New Genre of Criticism**

The four historical case studies provide a means of constructing generic points of analysis. Rhetorical compacts could be viewed as a three stage linear process. Stage one is "motivation." Stage two is "process rules." Stage three is "outcome."

The motivation stage analyzes the motives behind the rhetorical compact. Motives can fall along a three point continuum which include compacts motivated by: self-interest, pragmatism and altruism. Self-interest can be defined as motivation largely based on advancing the personal agenda of the rhetor without regard to the public or national interest. Pragmatic
motives can be described as being based primarily on policy grounds that serve both the political and national interests. A pragmatic motive does not preclude an incidental self-interest impact, but does not operate on a mutually exclusive basis from the public interest. An altruistic motive involves sacrifice of self-interest to advance the public good. In assessing motives, the rhetorical scholar should first look toward the initiator of the rhetorical compact. However, a point of analysis should also include the motivations behind the acceptance of the rhetorical compact.

It is clear that Nixon’s motivation to approach Lyndon Johnson in 1968 was based on political self-interest. Nixon’s electoral fortunes were helped by manipulating Johnson in regards to Vietnam. Johnson’s acceptance of Nixon’s compact can also be described as being based on self-interest. Johnson was motivated by removing criticism of his Vietnam policies from the election campaign. Further, it can be speculated that Johnson may have been influenced by Nixon’s promises to treat Johnson with respect during the post-election period.

Based on the evidence, it can be argued that Goldwater in 1964 was motivated by primarily altruistic motives in his approach to Johnson. In this case Goldwater voluntarily abandoned two potent election issues based on his perception of the national interest. However, Johnson’s acceptance of Goldwater’s compact may have been dictated largely on pragmatism or even self-interest. Johnson, being a seasoned political operator, was no doubt delighted by Goldwater’s offer to remove the two most controversial issues from the campaign.

The Eisenhower/Khrushchev compact is somewhat anomalous in the sense that the compact was not clearly initiated by either party. However, the motives of Eisenhower and Khrushchev can be inferred from their memoirs and public statements. The primary basis for the Khrushchev/Eisenhower compact was based on parallel policy goals. Both parties could help achieve their policy goals through rhetorical accommodation. Their motivations can best be described as pragmatic.
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The motivations behind the Marshall/Dewey compact is somewhat dependent on the perception of the parties involved. Dewey held suspicions regarding the underlying motives of Marshall’s approach. Dewey speculated whether President Roosevelt was seeking to remove a valuable issue from the Dewey campaign. These suspicions never entirely disappeared. However, at least on an operational basis, Marshall’s approach can be characterized as pragmatic. Marshall was pursuing military goals that may have been compromised by disclosure of American code breaking activities. Dewey’s acceptance of Marshall’s compact can be assessed as being altruistic. Dewey agreed to modify his rhetoric based on the national interest.

The process rules of a rhetorical compact can also be assessed on a continuum. Rules can be gauged according to their specificity. Compacts can be explicit in the sense that they dictate content of the rhetoric itself. Usually this falls into a pattern of rhetorical omission. Compacts, however, can be seen in terms of coordinated aspects of rhetoric. In these cases the rhetorical text is not directly dictated by the compact, but is guided by common interests that influence a mutually accommodating rhetorical pattern.

The Nixon/Johnson compact was basically explicit in the sense that Nixon promised to follow a specific rhetorical pattern in return for policy considerations. In turn, since many viewed the bombing of North Vietnam as a rhetorical act (see Zarefsky, 1992), Johnson’s actions can also be assessed through the rhetorical compact. The Goldwater/Johnson and Marshall/Dewey compacts clearly follow a pattern of rhetorical omission. In these cases, issues were dropped from the political discourse. The Eisenhower/Khrushchev compact was less explicit in the process rules of the compact. In this case, Eisenhower coordinated his rhetoric to Khrushchev in order for both parties to reach their policy objectives. No explicit discussion or documentation has ever been identified to indicate an explicit "rhetorical deal" between the two parties. Thus the rhetorical content was not dictated by the compact directly. Rhetorical violations could only be assessed in terms of reaction to rhetoric not from any specific process
rules. It should also be noted that the Kennedy/Falwell "contract for civility," discussed by Braham and Pearce (1987), can also be characterized as being less explicit. In this case Kennedy offered four guiding principles that would guide the nature of the political debate. No explicit compact was concluded between Kennedy and Falwell.

Lastly, rhetorical compacts can be assessed according to outcomes. This assessment can be examined on two levels. A micro-level analysis would analyze outcomes based on the rhetorical goals of the compact itself. A macro-level analysis would examine the impact of the compact on society at large. It is potentially here that the true significance of rhetorical compacts can be seen. In these cases, analysis can be conducted from the perspective of historical events subsequent to the compact.

On a micro-level, the relative success or failure of compacts can be argued. The 1968 Nixon/Johnson compact was successful in terms of both parties being able to achieve their short-term political objectives. The 1964 compact can also be described as being successful in terms of keeping civil rights and the Vietnam War out of the public debate. Goldwater's concerns regarding the explosive nature of appealing to "white backlash" was a legitimate concern. The Khrushchev/Eisenhower compact produced mixed results that could ultimately be described as a failure. Although, Eisenhower's accommodation strategy worked for a period of time, it ultimately failed under the electoral stress of the 1960 campaign. The Marshall/Dewey compact can be described as a success, for it kept Pearl Harbor from emerging as a campaign issue.

Macro-level analysis can provide the basis for revisionist interpretation of history. Cumulatively the impacts of the Nixon/Johnson and the Goldwater/Johnson compacts can be seen. In regards to the issue of Vietnam, the critical elections of 1964 and 1968 failed to provide a clear choice of policy alternatives to the public. The rhetorical compacts of 1964 and 1968 effectively removed the issue of Vietnam from major party debate. It can be argued that much of the late 1960s political unrest can be traced to the lack of a full airing of the issues regarding
the costs and consequences of the Vietnam War. The geo-political aspects of the Khrushchev/Eisenhower compact have contributed to the great nuclear arms race of the 1960’s and 1970’s.

Conclusions

This paper has proposed the examination of the "rhetorical compact" as a new genre of rhetorical analysis. The examination of multiple historical case-studies provide the basis of the framework needed to conduct genre criticism. The significance of rhetorical compacts on rhetorical texts and ultimately political process has been illustrated. Lastly, a rudimentary framework has been proposed to analyze the motives, process and outcomes of rhetorical compacts. No doubt much work needs to be done to establish the viability of this form of analysis.
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Notes

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I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: "The Rhetorical Compact: Toward a New Genre of Rhetorical Criticism."

Author(s): David K. Scott

Corporate Source: 

Publication Date: 1997

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